

To whom it may concern,

Due to unavoidable work commitments, I am unable to attend the inquiry in person. I respectfully request that my objection to the proposed quarry at Lea Castle Farm be read out on my behalf. I believe that this development poses serious environmental, health, safety, and social risks to the community, and I would like these concerns to be taken into consideration as part of the inquiry proceedings.

1. Environmental Impact and Biodiversity Loss

a. Ecological Disturbance

- i. The proposed quarry is close to Hurcott Pools and Wood, a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This area contains vital wetland habitats and diverse wildlife, and quarry operations could severely impact this sensitive ecosystem through noise, dust, and potential water contamination. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) specifically mandates the protection of SSSIs, stating that any development likely to harm an SSSI should generally not proceed.

b. Water Pollution and Soil Degradation

- i. Quarrying operations risk contaminating local water resources, which could negatively affect both agriculture and groundwater in the surrounding area. Policy SAL.CC7 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan requires that developments protect the water environment, a criterion this project fails to convincingly meet.

2.

3. Impact on Air Quality and Public Health

a. Dust and Particulate Emissions Near Sensitive Areas

- i. The quarry's proximity to Lea Lane Primary School and community sports facilities on Lea Lane raises serious health concerns. Increased levels of fine particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) generated by quarry operations are linked to respiratory issues, especially in children, who are particularly vulnerable. Studies on similar developments indicate that fine particulate matter can significantly impact lung function in young people, and exposure over time may lead to long-term health problems. Policy MLP 28 of the Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan specifies that developments must not harm public health, a standard that is not satisfactorily met in the current proposal.

b. Impacts on Outdoor Activities

- i. The primary school and nearby sports fields will experience elevated levels of dust and noise, directly affecting outdoor activities essential to physical health and social development. This could disrupt both structured activities and recreational use of these facilities. The NPPF also requires that developments minimise adverse effects on health, well-being, and the amenity of residents and sensitive land uses like schools and recreation areas.

- 4.
5. Increased Traffic and Road Safety Concerns
 - a. Heavy Vehicle Traffic
 - i. The proposal will significantly increase heavy vehicle traffic on local roads, particularly around DY10 3UQ, which are not designed to handle such heavy loads. This will increase road degradation, leading to higher maintenance costs, and presents serious safety risks for local road users, including children. Paragraph 111 of the NPPF specifies that development should not proceed where there would be a severe cumulative impact on the road network.
 - b. Road Safety
 - i. The safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and other residents is at risk with this increased traffic, especially given the narrow, low-visibility roads around Lea Lane. Additional road wear will further strain local infrastructure, potentially diverting public funds away from other necessary services, which would place an unfair burden on the community to accommodate a private commercial project.
- 6.
7. Negative Impacts on Local Quality of Life, Property Values, and Tourism
 - a. Visual Impact and Loss of Rural Character
 - i. The quarry's operations would permanently alter the rural character of this Green Belt area, which is cherished by residents and valued by visitors. Policy SAL.UP1 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan aims to protect Green Belt land, ensuring its openness and rural quality. The scale of this quarry would directly conflict with these protections, degrading local visual appeal and recreational value.
 - b. Property Values and Community Well-being
 - i. Proximity to quarries is known to reduce property values. Additionally, residents' quality of life will decline due to increased noise, dust, and heavy traffic, factors that have not been sufficiently addressed in the proposal. The NPPF advises minimising adverse impacts on communities, while the Wyre Forest District Local Plan promotes developments that align with community well-being.
- 8.
9. Non-compliance with Local and National Planning Policies
 - a. Conflict with Local Development Plans
 - i. The Wyre Forest District Local Plan emphasises sustainable development in alignment with environmental protection and the conservation of natural landscapes. The proposed quarry conflicts with key policies, such as SAL.UP1 and SAL.CC7, which protect rural character, water resources, and biodiversity.
 - b. Violation of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - i. The NPPF supports sustainable development principles, including the conservation of valuable landscapes and the protection of

community health. Under Sections 9, 15, and specific paragraphs such as 111 and 174, the proposed quarry falls short of these requirements, failing to adequately mitigate its impact on ecosystems, health, and infrastructure.

In summary, I urge the inquiry to carefully consider the severe and long-term impacts of the Lea Castle Farm Quarry proposal. The environmental risks, public safety hazards, quality-of-life impacts, and strain on local infrastructure far outweigh any purported benefits. The proposal is incompatible with both national and local planning policies designed to protect communities and the environment, and I respectfully request that this application be denied or, at the very least, subjected to further scrutiny and more rigorous mitigation requirements.

Thank you for considering my objections.

Sincerely,
Adam Marsters

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