

APP/M1900/W/21/3278097
WITNESS STATEMENT

Ellenbrook Area Residents Association & Smallford Residents Association
Introduction statement significant to
the proposed quarrying activity at the Hatfield Aerodrome

By:	Sue Meehan / Michael Hartung - Members of Ellenbrook Area Residents Association
Date:	17 October, 2021
Use:	Appeal APP/M1900/W/21/3278097 (Nov. 2021) on rejection of proposed quarrying activity, Hatfield Aerodrome
Witness called by:	Ellenbrook Area Residents Association (EARA) and Smallford Residents Associations (SRA)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is prepared by Ellenbrook Area Residents Association (EARA) and Smallford Residents Association (SRA) who represent the interests of over 700 households bordering the Ellenbrook Fields.
- 1.2 The land at Ellenbrook Fields was promised to the local residents as part of the redevelopment of the old Hatfield Aerodrome under a Section 106 agreement. The agreement was that the open space would be accessible to the public to use as a country park. It has been over two decades since both financial and legal promises have failed to materialise as there has been no agreement reached between all interested parties. When the quarry came to the Planning Committee in January 2020 the landowner's sent correspondence to the Council on the morning of the meeting, and indicated within this that if the quarry was to be approved by the Council, the land owners would then finally sign the s106 agreement that had been in dispute for such a long time. This caused discomfort with the Councillors and those opposing the quarry.
- 1.3 EARA and SRA conducted a lengthy investigation into the quarry proposals over a period of 5 years and as a result of those investigations objected to the original application in 2016, and again in 2019/2020. A large number of other objections to the quarry were also submitted by local residents with further support through a number of petitions and calls to stop the quarrying proposal.
- 1.4 When the "resolve to grant" planning permission was originally agreed in 2016, the bromate plume was barely referred to at the planning meeting. Since then, mainly due to the persistence of local residents, the dangers posed by the bromate plume have been highlighted and the risk to health and our water supply have become clearer.
- 1.5 In January 2020 Hertfordshire County Council refused planning permission for Brett Aggregates to quarry on Ellenbrook Fields
- 1.6 Our approach to the quarry proposal is that we believe that the authorities should adopt a zero risk strategy toward quarrying on this land which has been affected by the worst contamination disaster in Europe, namely bromate pollution. Very little research has been carried out on the bromate plume regarding the health implications and also modelling the movement of the plume.
- 1.7 As Residents Association groups, we do not understand how an application to quarry on a site, that is so close to the bromate plume, can even be considered and we have consistently asked for a proper risk assessment to be carried out by independent, qualified experts in this field.
- 1.8 Our objections will concentrate on five main areas. Other issues that we have previously objected to including Green Belt and Section 106 still stand, however we have not included these areas to avoid duplication with other Rule 6 parties. Individual statements will cover each main area.



This is our park not a brownfield site (002) taken 19/5/2018

2. Location of quarry site in relation to the two resident association areas and the University of Hertfordshire

- 2.1 The proposed quarry site is located on Ellenbrook Fields, it covers an area of 86 hectares, which is roughly half of Ellenbrook Fields. The two Residents Association areas border the proposed quarry site on the SW and SE perimeters.
- 2.2 The perimeter of the quarry site borders the area known as Ellenbrook, and the area known as Smallford. The quarry also borders the University of Hertfordshire and its associated sports facilities, and Popefield Farm, a Grade II listed building.
- 2.3 The Nast Brook which runs through the quarry site continues into the Ellenbrook area. This is an ephemeral brook, not a river and is very shallow and can only take a limited amount of groundwater.

3. Location of the bromate plume

- 3.1 Ellenbrook Fields lays over an area which is contaminated by bromate, a known carcinogen, which occurred as a result of a major pollution disaster discovered in approx. 2000. The pollution originated as a result of a major chemical spill at Steetly Chemical Factory, Sandridge, some 50 years previously, resulting in a bromate plume which has travelled underground all the way from Sandridge to Broxbourne, part of which is underneath Ellenbrook Fields. The plume has travelled approximately 20 km. This contamination is considered by the experts to be the worst ground water contamination event in Europe.
- 3.2 The spillage was not commonly known about by the general public or by the Residents Associations until much later, post the date when the local mineral plan was adopted in March 2007.
- 3.3 There is only one reference to the bromate in the Local Mineral Plan as follows:
- "The proposed site lies over an area contaminated with a plume of Bromate. A more robust risk assessment may be required at this site in order to determine the risk of impact on the Three Valleys Water source at the public water source at Bishops Rise."*

Clearly the magnitude of the bromate contamination was not taken into account when the Local Minerals Plan was drawn up.

4. Main areas of objection by EARA and SRA

- 4.1 Ground Water Management Plan & Public Water Resources
- 4.2 Flooding in our area
- 4.3 Cumulative impact on area and unrealistic timescales
- 4.4 Pollution and bromate – a risk to health
- 4.5 Environment Agency Remediation Plan

Proofs of evidence (witness statements) for each area are provided separately.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 EARA and SRA strongly oppose the Brett application to quarry on Ellenbrook Fields for a number of reasons, as mentioned above. We do not believe that the benefits outweigh the risks involved. This quarry has the potential to impact on local residents for decades to come and the significant ramifications should be fully taken into consideration and not underestimated.
- 5.2 The council's reasons for refusing the appeal are fully justified and the Inspector is requested to refuse the appeal and decline planning permission for the quarry on Ellenbrook Fields.

Reference documents

- 001. map of quarries – cumulative
- 002. Ellenbrook fields, not brownfield site
- 003. chemical potassium bromate, affects us
- 004. plume in red over EA map (not official)
- 005. bromate around quarry & chart
- 006. 66m to site from BH 201
- 007. official EA plume
- 008. drought document Affinity consultation
- 010. SLR (green) plume
- 011. EA to HCC the 3 conditions
- 012. BH 107 LMH/chalk depth
- 013. BH107 chalk depth to 23.3m
- 014. picture of bh107s and 2 x testing boreholes
- 015. Simon Tracy Brett on BH107
- 017. Debbie Jones EA transcript
- 018. Keith Spence EA transcript
- 019. flood risk to us
- 020. bromate trapped in gravel
- 021. EA 2017 excel chart
- 022. Brett phases A to G plan
- 023. map of area with boreholes, PWS supplies
- 024. Keith Spence EA reply
- 025. timescale
- 026. Brett flyer, estimate 5yrs/phase
- 027a. bromate chart
- 027b. bromate ringed BHs outside of quarry
- 028. LMP Affinity early objection
- 029. source protection zone 2 for PWS
- 030. Dr M. Rivett 14th dec 2019 expert opinion

- 031. Dr M. Rivett 18th march expert opinion – inert filling
- 032. Dr M. Rivett SLR response
- 033. P. Robe Brett transcript
- 034. Thames Water bromate
- 038. Cemex pump
- 039 Cemex lakes – silt & clear pump. Google earth.
- 040. information from experts – Brett, EA
- 041 EARA view on GWMP
- 042. bromide map/chart
- 043. EARA critic of EA on 24th Sept DCC
- 044. Affinity to HCC 18th dec 2018
- 045. SLR map piezometric ground flow UMH
- 046. our remediation plan using 6 BHs
- 047. EF to Roestock/Tyttenhanger distance map
- 048. LLFA response
- 049. map of EF & quarry
- 050. history of Steetly factory & plume