

27 January 2023

Dear Hampshire County Council

Planning Application for Proposed Gravel Extraction on Hamble Airfield – HCC/2021/0787

As the Governing Body and staff of The Hamble School, we strongly disagree with the proposed removal of aggregate from what we know as the former Hamble Airfield. Our reasons for this objection were outlined by our initial letter dated 27 February 2022; the information below reiterates this objection.

Currently there are over 1400 students and staff at the school, plus approximately 50 young children at the Early Years Centre, as well as members of the local community using the Sports Centre and Gymnasium. We believe the Health and Safety and wellbeing of students, staff and the local community will be significantly affected if the gravel extraction were to be approved. We have outlined our main concerns below:

Proximity

The former airfield is housed in a deep gully, which is adjacent to the school site (just 150 metres away). The prevailing winds will mean that noise and dust will be directed towards the school grounds. We believe that the noise, fumes and dust created by the quarry will have a serious impact on the students' education and the safe operation of the school.

Noise

The underlying background noise from the machinery and the movement of the aggregates is a major concern. The washing and movement of gravel, via machinery will be another constant and distracting noise. In addition, the reversing alarms that will be sounding from trucks as they move within the quarry site will also be a constant background noise. In the current climate we are encouraged to work in well ventilated rooms – this means that windows should be open. The noise would therefore be in all classrooms whatever the season. For some students, particularly those with Special Educational Needs, this constant noise will distract them from learning and also affect their mental health.

www.thehambleschool.co.uk

T: 023 8045 2105 • general@thehambleschool.co.uk • [f](#) [t](#) [@thehambleschool](#)

Satchell Lane, Hamble, Southampton, SO31 4NE

Headteachers (Acting): Miss L Cambridge, BSc (Hons), MA Ed. & Mrs S Pennington-Chick, BSc (Hons)



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Fumes

Fumes that are created as a result of machinery and vehicles will contribute to the pollution of the air in and around the school site. All users of the school will be subjected to these fumes. Students are taught outside during PE lessons (and during Science/ Geography fieldwork) at secondary level and in the Early Years Centre. They all have play/ break time outside which is essential for the wider education and mental health of children.

Machinery that will be running continuously during the working day will produce particulates in the air, some of which will be harmful. This will also exasperate conditions such as Asthma. A significant proportion of our students are currently known to have asthma and other respiratory health conditions. We also have members of staff who already manage severe illnesses which can be affected by fumes and dust.

Dust

The close proximity of the proposed quarry and the dust generated could have severe health consequences on those people using The Hamble School site (staff and children), particularly those with breathing difficulties as outlined above.

Traffic

Hamble Lane is acknowledged as one of the busiest B-roads in the country. We have a large number of students who either walk or ride bicycles as well as those students who commute via train or by public bus to school. All students enter the school by the gate on Hamble Lane. Our concern is regarding the number of students and the volume of traffic on the road. We have already expressed to Hampshire County Council that the large number of cars and fuel trucks using the lane at peak times (when the students are entering or leaving the site) is of deep concern, but to increase the use of Hamble Lane further would have a significant impact. The proposal of 147 trucks per day is deeply disturbing, particularly as gravel trucks are notorious for losing small quantities of material during transportation. This has potentially lethal consequences for children walking along the road.

Heavy goods vehicles and students don't mix.

Lorries due to their size, elevate their drivers well above the road height. Younger students may not be visible, especially when they are on bikes. The pavements immediately by the school gate are narrow and on only one side over the train line. Children walk and cycle in groups which potentially could have consequences for their safety. Over the years, we have had students injured by motor vehicles on Hamble Lane due to the narrowness of the footpaths. Making Hamble Lane a footpath as well as a cycle lane does not help the students' safety at peak times of use.

Impact on learning and examinations

The background noise from the site will severely impact the concentration and learning throughout a normal school day. However, the vast majority of our students also use the sports hall for examinations which is essentially adjacent to the proposed development. Noise travels in the sports hall and even with the doors closed you can hear outside noise. This means that students will be disrupted in their GCSE examinations and at a significant disadvantage compared with other students.

Workers

Employees at the proposed quarry will need to get to work, either by car, walking, cycling or public transport all of which will increase the use of Hamble Lane. Already, Eastleigh Borough Council has rejected planning permission for new housing because in their view Hamble Lane

has reached its vehicle capacity – many villagers would also say that it is already well beyond this.

Additional cars will contribute to the noise, fumes and dust on the Lane, and exasperate the problems outlined above. Staff have to travel from Satchell Lane onto Hamble Lane to get to and from work. Access at peak times is very difficult already. Students also cross the entrance to Satchell Lane on their way up to Bursledon without any assistance.

Similar to businesses located on the Hamble peninsula, the school struggles with the recruitment of staff as many prospective candidates are put off by the traffic congestion on Hamble Lane. Adding to the congestion by granting permission for this application will only make future recruitment harder and risks us not being able to recruit the best teachers.

Environmental concerns

As we have mentioned before, we are concerned about the impact that any quarry would have on the water table and its impact on the school and local homes. The school is liable to flood on occasions of long rainfall. As a school we have had to deal with this by buying pumps etc. The school has invested in solar roof panels to reduce their carbon footprint and reduce energy costs. The dust generated by a quarry will cause the efficiency of the panels to be reduced and the overall environmental gains to be lost.

Lack of consultation

As a major stakeholder, which represents a significant proportion of the community we have not received information or consultation directly from Hampshire County Council or Cemex. We find this deeply concerning as no one has considered the impact on school life and the significant issues this will have on the community.

Formal Objection

We are certain that no sensible, or responsible local authority would grant permission for new primary or secondary school to be built in very close proximity to an active quarry, therefore, why would permission for a new quarry be granted so close to primary and secondary schools?

In light of the points raised above we the Governors and Headteachers **object** most strongly to this proposed development and do not believe any serious consideration has been given to the impact on the school and the Health and Safety of its students.

Yours sincerely



Mr N Groves



Mr C Tickner



Miss L Cambridge



Mrs S Pennington-Chick

Chair & Vice Chair of Governors

Headteachers (Acting)