



**Dr James Davies MP**

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16<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Dear Cllr Mark Young,

***Planning Application 01/2022/0523 - Graig Quarry, Graig Road, Dinbych, SIR DDINBYCH, LL16 5US  
Consolidating application for the extension of winning and working of limestone, importation of  
inert waste and restoration to amenity land***

I am aware of strong opposition to the above planning application on the part of local residents. I am writing to convey the concerns of many that, should the development go ahead, it will have a detrimental impact on the environment, air quality, and local community. The sheer volume of objections submitted via the planning portal, illustrates the strength of local feeling.

It is felt that allowing the expansion of Graig Quarry would be a contradiction to the climate and ecological emergency declared by the council in 2019. Further concerns include:

**1. Reduction of Air Quality and Impact on Health**

Residents are particularly concerned about the increase in dust and suspended particulate matter arising from the operations.

I have noted the following comments made by the Environmental Public Health Services Wales: *"There is little actual assessment of the impact on local air quality. The applicant has suggested that tree planting and creation of bunds along the site boundary will help reduce impact of dust on the local area. However, without actual data to support this, we cannot agree with this statement."*

I feel that any threats to public health should be fully assessed, and sound reassurances provided. As this does not appear to be the case as of yet, I feel the council has a duty of responsibility to reject this application until such assurances/evidence can be provided.

**2. Vibrations & Noise**

Residents are already reporting damage to their property caused by blasts from the current quarry operations. The noise and vibrations emanating from the quarry, are a nuisance to residents and have a detrimental impact on their quality of life.

There is widespread concern that these issues will be further exacerbated if the quarry is permitted to expand on land in closer proximity to residential housing estates.

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Deliveries to service the site will be carried out by large articulated lorries. The noise levels emanating from HGVs may have a significant impact on neighbouring properties.

These concerns appear to be corroborated in the Environmental Public Health Service Wales submission which is a significant cause for concern.

### **3. Use of Agricultural Land**

As reported in a Welsh Government response, the expansion will result in the permanent loss of 4.0ha of “Best and Most Versatile” agricultural land. Whilst Welsh Government have not objected to this, I feel that it is particularly concerning. I recently met members of the farming community who feel that the continuous redesignation of farmland throughout Wales will have a negative impact on food production and the future of farming.

### **4. Environmental concerns**

The land identified for expansion, is bordering two Sites of Special Scientific Interest – Crest Mawr Woods and Graig Quarry – both designated as such because they provide some of the best examples of specific habitats within Denbighshire; have a key population of rare species and are an unusual or otherwise important area for wildlife.

The information provided by DCC for planning applicants on SSSIs states: *“Protection of SSSIs is achieved through prohibiting damaging operations, unless permission has been granted by NRW, and through the provision of management agreements”*. However, I have been unable to locate relevant correspondence for this application from NRW.

As highlighted in the North Wales Wildlife Trust (NWWT) report, the majority of the wildlife surveys undertaken are now likely to be out of date. This needs to be rectified before any decision can be made.

Furthermore, in the DCC Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021/22 to 2029/30 document there is specific mention to the reduction in number of the dormouse: *“354 of species known to be present in Wales are at risk of extinction. Dormouse populations across the UK, as an example, have declined 51% since 2004 and in all former strongholds across Denbighshire”*. The ecological report for this development states that *“habitat suitable for Hazel dormouse is present within the site and that records of the species exist”*.

Denbighshire County Council’s Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021/22 to 2029/30 also includes the following extract: *“Our goal is to protect, manage and restore our land as well as create new spaces for nature so that the ecosystems in Denbighshire are diverse, connected, big in scale and extent, in a healthy condition and adaptable and thus not only maintain biodiversity but enhance it”*; which I feel is very relevant when considering this planning application.

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**5. Loss of public footpath and green space**

The proposed plans include rerouting a public footpath leading to Crest Mawr woodlands. This is an extremely popular local footpath and there is worry that rerouting it will make the woodlands inaccessible. It is concerning that the Council's Public Rights of Way officer has not submitted their assessment overview, as yet.

It is widely understood that exercise and spending time outdoors is important for both physical and mental wellbeing. I feel that to reduce the availability and accessibility of green space for local residents, is a backward step and one which I cannot support.

**6. Road Safety**

The proposed access and egress to the development is also a worry for local residents, due to the large vehicles required to transport the stone and the use of an already busy road.

Following a review of documentation submitted by external bodies, it is concerning to see a number of the consultees feel that there is insufficient information for them to provide a conclusive decision.

I would be very grateful if you could take into consideration my concerns and those of local residents and reject this planning application for the good of the locality.

Yours sincerely,

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