

**Denbighshire County Council**  
**Town and Country Planning Act Section 78 Appeal**



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THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 78

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 79

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DETERMINATION OF APPEALS BY APPOINTED  
PERSONS) (PRESCRIBED CLASSES) (WALES) REGULATIONS 2015

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (REFERRED APPLICATIONS AND  
APPEALS PROCEDURE) (WALES) REGULATIONS 2017

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT  
PROCEDURE) (WALES) ORDER 2012, AS AMENDED

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

**Chiara Sirianni**

**DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

In relation to appeal by **Breedon Trading Ltd** against **Denbighshire County Council**'s refusal,  
as local planning authority (minerals planning authority) of planning permission for:

*Consolidating application for the extension of winning and working of limestone, importation of  
inert waste and restoration to amenity land*

at **Denbigh Quarry, Plas Chambres Road, LL16 5US**

Planning application ref: 01/2022/0523

PEDW ref: CAS-03423-V9Z8M3

## **1. Qualifications / Experience**

- 1.1. My name is Chiara Sirianni and I am a local resident who lives at 111 Bryn Seion, Denbigh LL16 3YG which is situated circa 105m south of the red line of the application area as shown in Appendix 1.
- 1.2. I moved to North Wales in 2009 to take up a job as a surgeon with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. Through my work, I met my husband—an intensive care anaesthetist—and in 2012 we married and purchased our home in Bryn Seion. Given that both our roles required rotation across the three acute hospitals in North Wales, we chose to settle in Denbigh for its central location and convenient access to all sites.
- 1.3. Until 2018, my work pattern included frequent on-calls and night shifts, averaging 56 hours per week. I now work daytime hours, totalling 36 hours per week. My husband continues to undertake regular overnight on-calls, averaging around 52 hours weekly. The need for adequate rest and a peaceful home environment has therefore always been essential for our wellbeing and ability to perform our demanding clinical roles safely and effectively.
- 1.4. We have lived in our current home for 13 years. It is located approximately 375 metres south of the proposed quarry extension area. Over this time, we have built strong connections with our neighbours and become active members of the Denbigh community, which we hold in high regard. Denbigh is not only our place of work and residence, but truly our home.
- 1.5. Given our long-term occupancy and proximity to the quarry, I have experienced firsthand the significant and growing impact of its operations on our daily lives, health, and home. I respectfully submit this evidence to the inquiry in the hope that the lived experience of residents like myself will be fully considered when assessing the broader social and health implications of the quarry's ongoing and proposed activities.

## **2. The Planning Application**

- 2.1. Planning application ref: 01/2022/0523/MA was determined on 23 January 2024. The application was refused planning permission for the following reasons:
  1. It is the opinion of the Local Planning Authority that the proposed lateral extension to Graig Quarry would have an unacceptably negative impact on protected species and the special characteristics and features of the Crest Mawr and Graig Quarry Sites of Special Scientific Interest. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Local Development Plan Policies VOE1 'Key Areas of Importance', VOE 5 'Conservation of Natural Resources', PSE 16 'Mineral Buffer Zones', PSE 17 'Future Mineral Extraction' and

guidance contained within adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 'Conservation and Enhancement of Biodiversity', Planning Policy Wales 11 (including updated Chapter 6), Minerals Technical Advice Note 1 'Aggregates', Technical Advice Note 5 Nature Conservation and Planning and Technical Advice Note 21 'Waste'.

2. It is the opinion of the Local Planning Authority that the proposal contains insufficient justification for the development of an extension to the quarry and the restoration by importation of inert waste material, on an unallocated site in the open countryside. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Local Development Plan Policy PSE 17 'Future Mineral Extraction', and advice contained in Minerals Technical Advice Note 1 'Aggregates', Technical Advice Note 21 'Waste' and Planning Policy Wales 11 (including updated Chapter 6).
  3. It is the opinion of the Local Planning Authority that the proposed lateral extension to the quarry would have a negative impact on the amenity and well-being of local residents. The Buffer Zones', PSE 17 'Future Mineral Extraction' and advice contained in Minerals Technical Advice Note 1 'Aggregates', Technical Advice Note 21 'Waste', the Development Management Manual and Planning Policy Wales 11 (Including updated Chapter 6).
- 2.2. The Local Planning Authority is no longer defending reasons for refusal 1 and 2 as set out above.
- 2.3. While I am not a planning expert, I am aware that the current planning permission for the Quarry would allow for quarrying until 31 August 2028. This application would extend operations to an end date of 31 December 2047 – an extension of nineteen years.

### **3. Scope of Evidence**

- 3.1. My evidence covers the lived experience associated with the proposal and the third reason for refusal. This proof of evidence will set out why I consider the development is not acceptable in relation to the harm upon amenity and well-being of local residents.

### **4. Evidence**

- 4.1. I have two main areas of concern: Blasting Vibration Impacts upon Amenity and Wellbeing & Noise Impacts. I will deal with each in turn.

## **Blasting Vibration Impacts upon Amenity and Wellbeing**

- 4.2. One of the most distressing aspects of living next to the quarry is the blasting activity.
- 4.3. It is important first to try and explain how a blast can be perceived in my property. Each time a blast occurs, I feel a deep rumbling tremor that starts in the floor of my house. It feels as though the earth itself is shuddering beneath me. As the tremor builds, it intensifies into a significant shaking of the entire house. Windows rattle, furniture vibrates, and glasses cling in my kitchen cupboards. The effect is greatly magnified if I happen to be on the top floor of my house. The shaking is so strong that it makes me feel as though my home is no longer a safe and secure place to be. This lasts for four to five seconds, although I have recently experienced a longer blast, which seemed like two blasts in a row, in January.
- 4.4. Over the past years I have experienced particularly frightening episodes when I was in my bedroom and suddenly my house shook and jolted like in an earthquake. Having lived through an actual earthquake earlier in my life, I found these experiences [REDACTED]. These episodes were accompanied by a loud rumbling sound.
- 4.5. Despite raising these concerns, I felt that my request for advance notice of blasting was not adequately addressed. This left both myself and my neighbours feeling unprepared, vulnerable, and unsupported in dealing with the impacts of the quarry operations. For several years, we received no notification of the blasting schedule. It was only after 2020 that I began receiving email notifications. However, the mailing list does not include all neighbouring residents. As a result, some local councillors have resorted to posting updates on Facebook to inform the wider public, though many elderly residents in Upper Denbigh are not computer literate and remain unaware. Furthermore, the notifications only provide a five-hour window during which blasting may occur, with no specific timing or preceding warning siren, making it impossible to adequately prepare.
- 4.6. The intensity of the blasts varies, but on multiple occasions they were so strong they could be felt in areas of Denbigh far from the quarry itself. I am aware that residents across the town have been affected by blasting.
- 4.7. This regular but unpredictable blasting had an immediate effect on my [REDACTED]. Even when I am awake and prepared, my heart rate jumps significantly.
- 4.8. As a past shift worker, I often needed to sleep during the day. On occasions, I have been woken up in distress by the blasting. It is a deeply unsettling experience to be jolted awake by a tremor that feels like an earthquake. This disruption to sleep affected my [REDACTED] and made it difficult to function well at work.

- 4.9. When speaking with my neighbours, they reported very similar experiences. Some described it as “a shower of rocks”; others said their pets would run and hide under the table. One woman shared that a commemorative plate had fallen from her wall, while another said one of her crystal bowls shattered into tiny pieces. They say they are terrified whenever a blast occurs, with several recounting being woken from sleep in a panic. They feel constantly anxious and unsafe in their own homes. One neighbour, just a couple of doors down, said he would move house tomorrow—if only he could afford to.
- 4.10. The ongoing blasting activity has had a profound and detrimental effect on my amenity, [REDACTED]. The repeated noise and ground vibrations intrude upon the quiet enjoyment of our home, undermining its function as a place of rest and recovery. As people who work irregular shifts, the ability to sleep during the day has been essential; however, the blasts have frequently disrupted this, leading to sleep deprivation and fatigue. The unpredictable nature of the explosions has created a persistent sense of [REDACTED] and hypervigilance, with each event triggering distress and, at times, a physical startle response, such as tachycardia and tremor. Over time, this has eroded my mental resilience and contributed to a sustained decline in my overall wellbeing. What should be a safe and secure domestic environment has instead become a source of [REDACTED] and unease. I respectfully ask that the inquiry take into full account the serious and ongoing impact this activity is having on residents' mental health and quality of life.
- 4.11. I do not have the evidence that the blasting is causing physical damage to my house. But I have perceived cracks appearing which were not there before. I only rely on this in so far as the emergence of these cracks has had a significant [REDACTED] impact. It has contributed to a growing sense of insecurity and helplessness in my own home, reinforcing the feeling that the structure is being steadily undermined. This has led to persistent [REDACTED]—not only about the potential safety implications but also about the long-term viability of the property. Conversations with neighbours revealed that many share similar concerns, having noticed an increase in cracks in their own homes, both internally and externally. This widespread experience has deepened the collective unease within the community, as many of us now live with ongoing worry about the damage being caused to our homes and the emotional toll that uncertainty brings.

## Noise Impacts

- 4.12. During working hours, I experience continuous machinery noise and the rumbling of stones, with louder peaks when stones are moved or lorries reverse. This has been particularly bad during the summer months, when windows are open. The noise is low-frequency and continuous, with some higher peaks that can be quite disturbing.

- 4.13. Myself and multiple neighbours have written emails to complain about the blasting and the noise from the quarrying operations. In addition to the blasting, noise from machinery and quarrying work has sometimes started before 7 am, disturbing our sleep and therefore affecting our health.

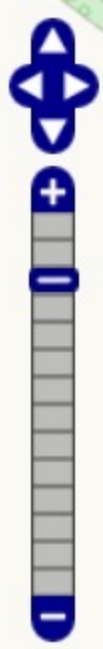
## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1. As I have stated, living next to the limestone quarry has significantly impacted my quality of life and my neighbours. The blasting causes physical shaking of our houses, generates [REDACTED] and creates fear about damage to our homes. The community frequently discusses these issues, and there is a shared sense of unease.
- 5.2. The disruption of sleep, especially for shift workers like myself, and the early morning noise from quarrying activities, has added to the sense of living under constant threat.
- 5.3. I ask the public inquiry to take into account the concerns of our community and consider appropriate measures to prevent further deterioration in the quality of life of Denbigh, such as expanding the Quarry would do.
- 5.4. I confirm that the contents of this statement are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

## **6. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Map showing address of witness related to the Quarry

**Appendix 1:** Map showing address of witness related to the Quarry



# 111 Bryn Seion

305003, 366686

Distance: 105.06 m (344.69 ft)

Path (um)

101.5m

Track

Path (um)

Play Area

