

- The application is inconsistent with the stated policy of Welwyn Hatfield Council that the (now approved) application for permission to extract sand and gravel “could only be acceptable if the remaining part of the park could be secured for the longer term as a high quality informal recreation and nature conservation resource with links to the wider network of green spaces thereby becoming a key part of the wider strategic green infrastructure belt described above.” The proposed use of the park for this large scale development would render this condition impossible to comply with.
- The site is designated as green belt and there are no special exceptional reasons why it should be developed, other than that the owner wants to develop it and profit from the development. That is not sufficient justification to destroy green belt land and the amenity that it provides and could provide to local people. The green belt forms an important separator between Hatfield and St Albans. If this development proposal was to be accepted, there would be a significant risk of coalescence between Hatfield and St Albans.
- The development could destroy archaeological remains, many recent (20th Century), but others possibly less so.
- Herts CC’s own review of the planning history of the site in 2004 noted that: “The S106 gives details of the Ellenbrook Park Trust that is to be set up with representatives from Welwyn Hatfield, St Albans District Council, Watling Chase Community Forest, Hatfield Town Council, Colney Heath Parish Council and Arlington. This Trust will be activated when a trigger point is reached and this is linked to the road system improvements, with the last modification joining Ellenbrook due to be completed in April 2004. The trigger points are linked to four Bonds as detailed in the S106 agreement.” The promised Trust was never set up in accordance with those commitments. In effect, permission for development of the land would mean that the former S106 would not achieve the benefit that it was intended for.

As Herts County Council helpfully points out: “There is an existing S106 which covers the whole of Preferred Area 1 (of the adopted Minerals Local Plan 2007) and the wider area to the east. The S106 seeks to deliver Ellenbrook Park. Ellenbrook Park is set to include formal and informal public recreation uses, landscape and wildlife resources and will allow free public use enjoyment and access at all times. The proposal to build housing on part of the area set to deliver Ellenbrook Park would therefore be in contravention to the existing S106.”

- The application dismisses a ‘do nothing’ option because it would not “allow for the provision of truly accessible amenity space and green infrastructure in excess of 35ha.” We already have a much bigger amenity space – the land owner just needs to provide proper access in accordance with the previous agreement.
- The site is used by dogwalkers, runners, walkers, cyclists, horse riders, students, and no doubt many more would use it if access were further enabled by provision of more parking. This would be lost as an amenity, if the outlined site were developed.
- This development, if approved, together with the already approved quarry, would effectively mean the total loss of Ellenbrook as a public amenity, except for a small ‘open space’.
- The site is home to a great deal and variety of wildlife. I personally have seen or heard many species of birds, including woodpeckers, cuckoos, herons, and owls, kites and other birds of prey, foxes, muntjac, rabbits and hares, and I’ve seen evidence of badgers. It is hard to imagine that this wildlife would continue to thrive between the quarry and the proposed development.

The site is also home to many species of wild plants. Much of this flora and fauna can be seen here:

- <https://www.flickr.com/photos/98651538@N08/albums/72157638795462286>; and
  - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/43324529@N04/albums/72157628150554277>.
- The site would generate noise, disturbance, and pollution, both in the construction phase and after; a significant factor in our decision to buy the house was the absence of noise and disturbance in particular. There is a risk of light pollution from the development; at present, the aspect from the front of our house at night is almost complete darkness.
  - According to the Environmental Statement, the development would be visible from our property, and have a permanent and adverse effect on our outlook. This will be on top of the visual impact of the proposed new quarry on the outlook from our home. The Statement asserts "It is considered that cumulative effect on the landscape character of the Ellenbrook Fields will be large scale, long term, and over a localised part of the character area. A high magnitude of change is therefore anticipated and the overall cumulative landscape effect will continue to be major-moderate and adverse." In fact, the statement concludes by noting that the significant impact will be confined to a few receptors. As one of those receptors, I object.
  - Finally it should be noted that the Environmental Statement makes regular reference to the impact on the East of Hatfield. The site that they are proposing is on the west. If they can't tell east from west, how many other errors have been made in the assessment?