

Formal Objection to Planning Application [Insert Application Reference Number]

Dear All

I am writing to formally and strongly factually object to the above planning application for the establishment of a new stone, sand and gravel supply business in our local area. I am a long-standing resident of Pemberley House, Sandy Lane, Caverswall, my family and I have always respected and complied with the strict regulations that apply to this Green Belt area.

If this proposal were to be approved, it would completely undermine the Green Belt rules that residents have had to follow. It would also have a serious and lasting impact on the environment, highway safety, and the quality of life for everyone who lives nearby.

Possible Intention to Enable Future Residential Development

After reviewing the submitted plans in detail, the proposed site layout appears to be designed in a way that could, in future, facilitate the construction of a new residential dwelling rather than simply a small-scale business yard. The arrangement of boundaries, the positioning of the new access, and the way the site is divided would conveniently leave both the existing and the potential new plots with their own independent entrances and substantial gardens.

While I personally would not object to a well-designed residential property in principle, this is not what the current application seeks approval for. If the true intention is to establish the groundwork for a new dwelling, this would be misleading to the planning authority and local residents. Moreover, it would further erode the openness of the Green Belt and would set a precedent for incremental residential development by stealth.

Although I am not directly affected by this aspect, neighbouring residents whose properties adjoin the site should have a clear opportunity to comment on such a possibility before any permission is considered.

Here are several key points we feel are reasons for our objection

1. Inappropriate Development in the Green Belt

This site lies within designated Green Belt land, and the proposal is clearly contrary to both local and national Green Belt policy.

- Allowing a commercial industrial-type use such as this would be hypocritical of the rules we as residents must abide by.
- The application appears to request a change from Green Belt to Brownfield use, which would set a dangerous precedent for further inappropriate development.
- There are no “very special circumstances” to justify such a change under the National Planning Policy Framework.

Approving this proposal would open the floodgates for similar developments and permanently damage the openness and character of our countryside.

2. Highway Safety and Access Issues

The proposed site access is completely unsuitable for a business of this nature.

- Sandy Lane, Handley Banks, and Caverswall Common are narrow, rural lanes with blind bends and no proper passing places. They are simply not built for heavy goods vehicles or the level of traffic this business would generate daily.
- The applicant themselves has commented several times on the volume of trucks passing their property, and has even built a wall to help give piece of mind to secure the house in case of a vehicle impact on the home, additionally had to install blind spot mirrors to exit the current driveway safely.
- Adding another entrance and additional vehicles will only increase the likelihood of accidents.
- The new entrance I believe from others statements would cross the Severn Trent water main supplying properties on the Common. Continuous heavy vehicle use over this could lead to serious damage and water disruption for local residents.

3. Noise, Disturbance, and Loss of Residential Amenity

The peace and quiet that currently enjoyed would be lost completely.

- Constant HGV movements, reversing alarms, loading/unloading of gravel, and machinery use, would create persistent noise, vibration, and dust.
- The daily disruption would diminish our quality of life, affect sleep and wellbeing, and destroy the rural tranquillity and nature we value.

4. Environmental and Visual Impact

The development would cause permanent harm to the local landscape and wildlife.

- Concreting over fields, removing hedgerows, and installing industrial gateways would scar the Green Belt and ruin the area's countryside character.
- Dust and runoff from stone and gravel handling could pollute nearby land and watercourses, further damaging the environment.

This is completely at odds with Caverswall's rural setting and conservation aims.

5. Safety for Horse Riders and Pedestrians

Our lanes are regularly used by horse riders, walkers, and cyclists.

- The introduction of more large lorries and commercial traffic will make it unsafe for anyone on horseback or on foot.
- I fear that what was once a peaceful, safe environment will become intimidating and dangerous for local people. There are no pavements for pedestrian safety.

We should be protecting these country lanes for recreation and wellbeing, not turning them into haulage routes.

6. Unnecessary Duplication and Economic Impact

There is already a long-established and successful business, Stone Valley, operating less than a mile away, supplying the same materials.

- There is no local need for another facility of this type.
- Allowing a duplicate business would only lead to unnecessary competition, excess traffic, and further harm to the rural community.

7. Insufficient Space and Practical Concerns

The proposed plans do not show adequate space for parking, turning, or vehicle storage.

- This will almost certainly lead to on-road parking, blocking the narrow lanes and causing safety hazards.
- In winter or bad weather, these routes become treacherous, and large vehicles may become stuck or cause further damage to the verges and road surface.

8. Statement Objecting to Proposed Stone, Sand and Gravel Business based on unfinancial viability alone.

Having a business of this type would be heavily polluting to the environment, creating significant noise, dust, and vehicle emissions, as well as constant heavy traffic from delivery and supply vehicles needed for daily operation. This would be entirely inappropriate within a quiet rural village and contrary to the purposes of the Green Belt, which are to safeguard the countryside from encroachment and preserve local amenity.

In addition to the environmental concerns, the claim that such a business could operate as a viable enterprise is fundamentally unrealistic when examined against the financial realities of small-scale stone, sand and gravel merchants in the UK.

Industry data shows that the average net profit margin for such businesses is only around 3.7 % of turnover. To employ three new staff as the applicant claims, a business would need to achieve a clear profit of at least £100,000 per year just to cover the additional wages, national insurance, before any operating costs or ROI.

The applicant's proposal involves a very low estimated £250,000 of capital expenditure for new site access, ground works and site preparation, before any machinery to operate. Spread this over a typical five-year ROI repayment plan, this represents £50,000 per year in loan repayments before any operating costs are covered.

Adding realistic annual operating costs brings the true financial burden into focus:

Estimated Annual Costs	Approximate Amount (GBP)
Loan repayment (site entrance/infrastructure)	£50,000
Wages for 3 staff + NI contributions	£90,000
Business rates and insurance	£25,000
Diesel and vehicle maintenance (haulage fleet + plant)	£60,000
Electricity, water and utilities	£10,000
Advertising, signage, and local marketing	£8,000
Equipment servicing, spares, and wear & tear	£20,000
General administration, accounting, and compliance	£10,000
Total Estimated Annual Overheads	≈ £273,000

For such a business to be sustainable and generate even a modest profit, total turnover would need to exceed £1.2 million per year. Given the typical 15 % gross markup on aggregate products (and far smaller net margins), this level of turnover would require sales of approximately 30,000 tonnes of materials per year.

Current UK market prices for bulk stone, sand and gravel average around £40 per tonne delivered (ranging £30–£50 depending on grade). To achieve £1.2 million in turnover at this rate:

- 30,000 tonnes per year would need to be sold.
- Assuming each delivery lorry carries 10 tonnes, that equates to around 3,000 heavy lorry movements per year, or roughly 12 truck journeys per working day.
- If smaller local customers collect their own material (averaging a high assumption of 1 tonne per visit), this would mean approximately 30,000 customer vehicle movements per year, equating to well over 100 extra vehicles per working day accessing the site.

Analysis

The business would need ≈ £2.15 million turnover per year to make a £50,000 profit at 15% margin to even become viable.

- Even at 15% margin, the business would require over 5,000 truck movements per year and over 200 customer visits per day.
- For a small village, this level of heavy traffic is completely unfeasible and would cause serious noise, dust, diesel pollution, and road safety issues.
- The scale required to sustain a seemingly “modest” £50,000 profit is still far beyond what the site could realistically handle.

This level of traffic and industrial activity would fundamentally change the character of a small rural community, introducing constant noise, diesel exhaust, dust and safety risks to local residents,

walkers and cyclists. It would also place a substantial burden on local roads that were never designed to handle heavy commercial vehicles at such frequency.

Moreover, these operational volumes are the bare minimum required to keep the business afloat. Any reduction in turnover, increase in fuel prices, or slowdown in local demand would render the venture loss-making. The narrow margins typical in this sector leave no financial resilience for unforeseen repairs, environmental compliance costs, or equipment replacement.

Therefore, the assertion that the proposed stone, sand and gravel operation would be economically viable is entirely unrealistic. The combination of high capital outlay, limited margins, high ongoing costs, and restricted local market means it could only attempt to survive by generating a level of heavy vehicle movement wholly incompatible with a Green Belt village setting.

In summary:

- The business case is financially unviable.
- The environmental and amenity impacts would be severe.
- The level of vehicle activity required to break even would destroy local tranquillity and road safety.

For these reasons alone, this proposal should be refused in full as both environmentally damaging and economically implausible within the stated location.

Conclusion

For all of the reasons above, including serious conflict with Green Belt policy, highway safety concerns, environmental harm, loss of residential amenity, and risk to public safety I must strongly object to this application.

The proposal is inappropriate for this location, and I urge the Council to REFUSE this application in full to preserve the safety, character, and wellbeing of our community.

Thank you for considering my objection.