

# FIGHT THE QUARRY

## SAVE BETCHWORTH COMMON FIELD



Write NOW  
to SAVE  
Common  
Field

### Surrey County Council agree planning permission subject to approval by Secretary of State

- On 19 December 2007, SCC Planning Committee approved the planning application by J & J Franks to extract 770,000 tonnes of sand at a new quarry site at Betchworth Common Field which would be scheduled to start in 2012 and end in 2024.
- The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will now either approve or reject the permission or call for a Public Inquiry. A Public Inquiry would provide us with a final opportunity to ensure that our views are fully considered. At best an inquiry may over-turn SCC's decision. At least, it may strengthen the constraint's imposed on the developer and help protect the village and local residents.
- CAMEL therefore urges you to write once more, this time to Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP, Secretary of State requesting that local residents' concerns be properly considered Every letter is important and it could be the very same letter of objection that you wrote to SCC—**but it must be sent today!**



## You must write today!

**As an aide-memoir, CAMEL include a few of the critical issues that we have been raising with SCC and the Minerals Plan Officers.**

- Surrey County Council suggest that the new site is merely an extension of the existing works. CAMEL argue that this is not the case. The quarry is not feasible without tunnelling under Old Reigate Road and it is now directly adjacent to Betchworth Village.
- There is an undefined threat particularly to those of any age who have respiratory problems, pupils at Acorns School, and elderly local residents who will be exposed to significant and long term dust particles from the sand extraction and from 'inert' fill used to fill the quarry. There has not been sufficient research or actions in the planning to mitigate serious health issues in the future.
- According to the Quarry Products Association and SCC there is not enough 'inert backfill' to restore the land to its former use, which is a key element in the Government's own Planning Guidance. This shortage of fill is likely to increase as more and more materials are recycled.
- There is a significant population of breeding skylarks, evidenced by the British Trust for Ornithology Breeding Birds Survey, who have made site visits to the field twice a year since 1994. Skylark populations are in severe decline and are on the Species Action Plan endangered list.
- The site is in Green Belt land, visible from an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and will scar the Surrey countryside for generations or more.
- Planning permission is premature in that the SCC Minerals Plan has yet to be adopted and is unlikely to be so until 2009.

**All of these matters and others were put before the Planning Officer and SCC's Planning Committee by local residents and yet they refused to consider any as worthy of further investigation.**

- The Planning Committee were misled by one councillor who assured it that the quarry would not be visible from adjacent properties. Officers present did not correct the councillor's assertion
- Several Councillors simply implied that it was 'Betchworth's turn' to suffer quarrying, without any consideration of the facts before them in a clear breach of Committee rules.

**It is vital you write immediately quoting: 'Surrey County Council Planning Application MO07/1036' to:**

Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP, Secretary of State Communities and Local Government, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU  
or email: [blearsh@parliament.uk](mailto:blearsh@parliament.uk)