

# Quarry campaign stepped up

DOZENS of protest signs began to appear this week alongside the B1332 Norwich to Bungay road as campaigners stepped up their battle against a proposed quarry.

The new signs have been put out after a sign opposing the development was stolen from the front garden of a resident living near the site.

Villagers in Ditchingham are determined to stop the sand and gravel pit being created near Grade 2 listed parkland near their homes.

Aggregates firm Lafarge has applied to develop land belonging to Earl Ferrers, one of the region's most senior aristocrats, and filed a planning application with Norfolk County Council last week.

People in Ditchingham, Broome, Hedenham, Woodton and Bungay have joined

forces to fight the proposal, citing damage to the environment, noise and traffic issues as their main concerns. Julian Green, campaign manager for Enraged (Norfolk residents against gravel extraction at Ditchingham), said allowing more lorries to travel along the B1332 at Ditchingham was dangerous.

"To add to the number of heavy commercial vehicles on that stretch of road and worse still to have them turning into and out of the site is to invite disaster. It is absolutely ridiculous," he said.

He added that concerns about traffic had already led to the speed limit being dropped along Belsey Bridge.

"The stretch of road that passes the site between the Hedenham crossroads and Bungay is particularly dangerous with narrow sections at Hedenham and

Hollow Hill where lorries frequently clip wing mirrors when passing," he added.

Another resident said the community was "determined to ensure this scheme is soundly rejected".

"We have no objection to gravel extraction from a suitable site," he said. "East Anglia is not short of sites and there are existing quarries at Earsham, Flixton, Aldeby and Raveningham and consent given for one at Mundham all within a few miles of Ditchingham.

"But this is not a suitable site for a gravel quarry. It is part of a historic landscape and only accessible via a dangerous section of road."

Viscount Tamworth, Earl Ferrers' son, has so far declined to comment, while Lafarge said that they have an "ongoing dialogue with the community".