

Comment for planning application WSCC/028/21

Application number	WSCC/028/21
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Type of Comment	Objection
Comments	

Objection on the ground of:

- Previous application DC/401/07 for non-inert waste unanimously rejected, many of the bases for rejection remain the same. A full objection was submitted by CLAG, a local campaigning group that includes various professional commissioned studies (hydrogeology, ecology, health impacts etc) providing an objective evidence base for the objection. Much of this evidence remains unchanged and I urge you to reference to it for inclusion within the Officer's Report.

Key objections from me for this application include many of the same issues raised in the previous application objection, including transport/access, Southern England groundwater potable supply pollution threat, local health impacts from increased pollution, adverse effects on the local amenity and egregious impacts on protect wildlife and ecosystems. Additionally and shamefully, there has been no public consultation on this major application.

- Transport and access - previous application as stated above included an Objection from WSCC Highways on the basis of new lorry movements. This application is similar at up to 500 new lorry movements per day. A283 is already an accident blackspot. A24 is already heavily congested at Washington roundabout. Storrington is already on red list for congestion and related air pollution. These new lorryload movements cannot be simply absorbed into the existing transport network without major issues, and if Highways are consulted on this application, an objection based on the previous application precedent is required.

- Potential water supply issues - the leachate from the neighbouring Windmill non-inert landfill site is already causing local issues for wildlife and landscape. Allowing the groundwater to rise in the Rock Common site up to the level of the Windmill site even with inert fill will inevitably pollute the existing potable groundwater rising into the quarry and thus the main supply for a large swathe of S England. With climate change making drinking water supply more and more challenging, this is not a risk worth taking.

Inert waste may claim to be clean, but in practice is often contaminated with non-inert polluting materials such as asbestos and chemicals that the proposed "visual inspection" of each lorryload of waste would inevitably miss. Sadly it is standard building practice to bury such materials at the bottom of loads. These contaminants will inevitably end up in the groundwater and thus the drinking water supply.

The EA policy document on groundwater protection in the Landfill section states "The EA's approach is to steer the development of landfills into less sensitive hydrogeological location such as unproductive strata". Given the role played by the aquifer under the sand quarry in the water supply chain it is hope that their consideration of this application and their stated policy will lead to an objection as happened with the previous application.

- Health impacts - the previous application objection from CLAG included a detailed health impacts report which remains accurate in respect of those issues not arising directly from non-inert waste disposal. The pollution health effects of vehicular exhaust on the respiratory system and death rates resulting from same have become better understood since the last application. Coupled with this, the stated climate change policy of all local public bodies is to seek to reduce fossil fuel vehicle movements where possible, and this application will achieve the opposite.

- Loss of amenity - the vehicle movements, noise and dust for long hours 6 days a week will blight both the local community and the beautiful area of this planning application and those who visit this area.

- Destruction of the natural environment - for the previous application a full ecological impact study was submitted as part of the objection from CLAG that sets out the full range of loss of species and habitats incurred with using this hole in the ground for any form of landfill. There are Schedule 1 species and protected species such as peregrines and sand martins within the quarry that will lose their habitat and many other irreversible impacts.

- Lack of public consultation - when the previous application was refused, the Goring family who own Wiston Estate made a promise to both CLAG and the local community that the site would never be proposed for landfill again. It is sad that this promise has been broken, and even sadder that there has been no form of public consultation about this application, the "public exhibition" about the application being scheduled well after the closing date for objections, that it was submitted during the pandemic and to coincide with peak holiday time. Anyone would think they didnt want people to know about the application and for it to fly through under the radar...

The sand extraction was due to cease imminently after around 100 years of mining and the restoration plan as stated in the existing planning approval due to be implemented as part of the

conditions of that planning approval. This is a lower risk, lower impact and more sustainable solution than the proposals put forward in this planning application. The planned visitor facilities and open space indicated in the Wiston Estate Plan could still be incorporated to provide income from this land while protecting both local residents and the outstanding natural features of this site.

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Attachments