

**David Johnson**

7, the Holt,  
Washington RH20 4AN



**19th August 2021**

**Sir/Madam**

**Planning Application No: WSCC/028/21**

West Sussex County Council,  
County Hall,  
West Street,  
Chichester,  
West Sussex PO19 1RQ

*Dear Sir/Madam*

I feel it necessary to go into writing about the proposed "amendment to restoration" application in regard of Rock Common Quarry in Washington. To my knowledge, the application for landfill (and I do not kid myself that this is anything other than a revised attempt to landfill, even with "inert" materials) at Rock Common Quarry has been thrown out on two previous occasions. That Wiston Estates and Dudman should come back for a further attempt is nothing short of shocking, presumably entirely for reasons of financial gain, and particularly since, in the intervening period, the South Downs has been given National Park status and their proposed activity will sit inches from the boundary of the Park. There are of course many well-known reasons for objecting - impact on the local environment, traffic in an area with insufficient access (the A283 is already a dangerous road and a bottleneck), noise and pollution, effect on wildlife - but my main objection remains the fact that the quarry sits atop a natural aquifer. It should be blindingly obvious to anyone with a care that landfilling with any form of material (how can they guarantee that the material imported in such huge quantities will be entirely inert and clean?) on top of an aquifer risks creation of a "landfill soup", which will be devastating and have wide-ranging repercussions for the foreseeable future.

With an eye on the traffic issues, I have read much of the material on the Wiston/Dudman web site, and the "analysis" seems naive in the extreme. The desire for to fill with 5.5m tons of inert material (and where will this all come from?) over a ten-year period, in two-ton trucks, will, we are told, give rise to 300 two-way movements of HGV trucks a day via the tight A283 turning into the Hollow. Has no-one considered that this will mean, over a ten-hour-a-day timescale, one truck turning every minute? This is entirely unrealistic, and badly thought-out. The A283 will crumble in a very short time scale under the weight of such a volume and will doubtless resemble a car park for most of the day. I think it only reasonable to expect that, as a resident of Washington village, the southern access from the A24 will be opened in a northerly direction to all traffic (not just buses) to permit resident access, and I trust that the Council will be taking this on board and planning two-way access. Furthermore, if [REDACTED] is genuine in his desire not to impede local A283 traffic, he might also give consideration to the construction of a compulsory new route across his land from Washington triangle (east side) to Steyning, purely for use of local traffic, while the A283 is given over entirely to his HGVs. I appreciate the land is within the National Park, but that

appears to be of scant concern to the applicants, and seems only reasonable in the face of what will be a long-term operation at the Quarry. The usual promise of eco-lodges and public access detailed in the application is, again, seen as just a smokescreen, and fools no-one, given that promises have not been met in the past regarding restoration. Local people have little faith that this will be carried out now. Granting of this application will just lead to continued future requests for more of the same until the site is filled to the top in, I assume, thirty to forty years when the area will look like a wasteland. Money matters most, I do not doubt it.

Local sentiment is already running high as it has on previous occasions. CLAG3 has been established to fight this proposal, and will doubtless do all it can to publicize this application and prevent it from going ahead. I have already written to my MP and will do all I can to support CLAG3's efforts. Their recent publication, issued to local residents, has pointed out, sagely, that the "development" will have a massively detrimental effect on quality of life in the area, increasing local pollution for many years to come, whilst the Storrington Road is already apparently one of the most polluted routes in the country. The aquifer supplies drinking water as widely as an area from Brighton to Portsmouth, and previous landfill is, of course, now failing and causing the leaching of toxic waste into a local stream and woodland. I would take much convincing that any future activity will be any safer, and various

If we think of the impact this will have on the stunning landscape of the South Downs, it is quite clear to me that any "restoration" of the quarry should be sympathetic to the local environment, and not involve continued industrial use of any sort. The access is just too poor to support it. I understand traffic soundings have been presented by Wiston as favourable, but these soundings have no doubt shown a pandemic/lockdown picture and, assuming traffic returns to pre-lockdown levels, this is already a crippled area at rush hour, a rush hour that will last for ten hours each day if the plans go ahead. To me, in that case, access to and from the site could only be via the A24 via Rock Road without substantial changes to the access via the A283 which, on that corner, can be a death-trap even on quieter days.

In summary, I think the residents of Washington and surrounding villages must be wondering what we have done to deserve so much adverse attention at the moment. On the one hand we have the potential for the Rampion 2 windfarm to be cutting a vast swathe across the local fields and the A283, exactly adjacent to the quarry, to permit cable laying, whilst [REDACTED] want to bury us under pollution at exactly the same time. In principle, I support the advance of windfarms, but I remain to be convinced that cutting a trench diagonally right the way across Sussex is a sensible answer, but that is for another day. This is an area that has a timeless quality about it, too much of our native landscape is disappearing before our eyes, and one would have hoped that being given National Park status would have meant that this would be a protected area. To allow this self-seeking commercial venture to proceed, based on so many naïve assessments and statement of apparent half-truths, and so soon after the new Park status was given, would be unthinkable, and I can only offer my objections in the strongest terms. I am sure my sentiments are shared by many others locally and further afield.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
David Johnson