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If Calling Please ask for: Nicola Pettifer  
Date: 12th July 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Proposed concrete crushing and soil recycling facility**

#### **Kilmarnock Farm Charlwood Road Ifield Crawley**

I refer the consultation received in this office on 20th June 2019 concerning the above site.

#### **Summary:**

This Authority **objects** to the above development for the following reason:

The Council considers the proposal to represent inappropriate development within a rural area which would lead to a significant level of harm and visual intrusion in what is currently an open and rural area, erode the wider rural characteristics of the area and lead to serious adverse neighbour harm. The nature of development, representing a 'Major Development' within the Gatwick Safeguarded Land area, would therefore be contrary to local and national planning policies.

#### **Assessment:**

The site falls within the open countryside, where the undeveloped nature of the countryside and rural character of the district are expected to be protected against inappropriate development (HDPF26). Any development within the rural area must therefore be essential to its countryside location, with the policy including a criteria which allows for the extraction of minerals and disposal of waste (HDPF26(2)). However, any development must also be of a scale that is appropriate to its countryside character and location, which does not lead to a significant level of increase in the overall level of activities, whether individually or cumulatively. The key characteristics and features of the landscape character area are expected to be maintained, including the pattern of development in the area, historical and ecological qualities, tranquillity and sensitivity to change, pattern of woodlands and fields and the landform of the area.

The proposal would amount to a significant increase in activity over and above the existing site, which is noted to include a number of authorised and unauthorised land uses and mobile homes. The proposed facility, and arising vehicular movement, would represent a sizable expansion over the historic agricultural history of the site.

It is noted that the site falls within the Landscape Character Area K1 (Upper Mole Farmlands) as defined in the 2003 Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, which has key characteristics of small to medium irregular field patterns, divided by thick hedgerows, predominantly

pasture farmland, with occasional small blocks of woodland and copses. Noise and visual intrusion is noted owing to the area's proximity to Crawley and Gatwick.

Increasing traffic which is eroding the road edges and hedgebanks is noted as a key issue, along with localised visual impact of 'urban fringe uses' including untidy small scale industrial uses and the overall loss of hedgerow field boundaries.

Largescale commercial development and incremental changes which erode the rural character are noted as key sensitives of the area.

The Council considers that the proposal would contribute to the significant and harmful visual erosion of the rural area, by way of the large and fully enclosed area of hard-standing dedicated to the stated commercial waste processing, at a level that would be detrimental to the landscape character.

Furthermore, the visual impact of the proposed 4.5m high and 200m long perimeter fence, albeit seeking to mitigate the visual impact and noise arising from the process, would create an unduly solid and unnatural feature within a predominantly flat and open landscape setting, affecting mid-range views and long-range views across the landscape. The resulting development would lead to a highly intrusive and harmful feature that would be visible from the surrounding countryside, in direct conflict with HDPF25.

It is noted that the proposed landscape plan shows a new hedgerow set outside of the application site boundary. In any event, the proposed use of external boundary hedgerows would be insufficient to mitigate the substantial visual harm arising from the proposed scale and nature of the perimeter fence to the proposed compound.

Proximity to the adjacent uses immediately to the west of the site would need to be carefully considered. In particular the existing residential property at Kilmarnock Farm and the associated horse rescue centre, along with the proximity of the nearby residential dwellings to the south, Little Foxes Hotel and Fox Hollow Cottage, to the south-east, and the Outreach 3 Way centre to the east, with more residential properties.

Accordingly, the Council considers that the proposal would unduly and harmfully impact the residential amenities of neighbouring and nearby occupiers and users of land and property, contrary to the provisions of HDPF33.

It is also noted that the proposed application site falls entirely within the land designated as part of the Gatwick Safeguarding Area, set aside for a potential second runway at Gatwick. Reference is made to Crawley Local Plan Policy GAT2:

"Safeguarding for a second runway The Local Plan Map identifies land which will be safeguarded from development which would be incompatible with expansion of the airport to accommodate the construction of an additional wide spaced runway (if required by national policy) together with a commensurate increase in facilities that contribute to the safe and efficient operation of the expanded airport. Minor development within this area, such as changes of use and small scale building works, such as residential extensions, will normally be acceptable. Where appropriate, planning permission may be granted on a temporary basis. The airport operator will be consulted on all planning applications within the safeguarded area."

To conclude, the Council considers the proposal to represent inappropriate development within a rural area which would lead to a significant level of harm and visual intrusion in what is currently an open and rural area, erode the wider rural characteristics of the area and lead to serious adverse neighbour harm. The nature of development, representing a 'Major Development' within the Gatwick

Safeguarded Land area, would therefore be contrary to local and national planning policies. The Council raises **objection** accordingly/

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Childs', with a horizontal line underneath.

Barbara Childs  
Director of Place