

Comment for planning application WSCC/004/20

Application number

WSCC/004/20

Name

Gordon Andrews

Address

CHESTERTON CLOSE, 1, CHESTERTON CLOSE, EAST GRINSTEAD, RH19 4BE

Type of Comment

Objection

Comments

Ref: Planning Application WSCC/004/20 (and MSDC DM/20/0362) This is to inform you that my family and I are totally opposed to the recapping of the former landfill site at Evergreen Farm, with the resulting damage to the site and travel chaos and dangers it would involve, for the following reasons:-

1. Already capped. This site is NOT an uncovered and dangerous condition landfill, as can clearly be seen from aerial photographs. It is my understanding that the landfill was active in the 1970s and was then capped in the 1980s, nearly 40 years ago. There is absolutely no need for such extensive recapping.
2. Existing condition. It is understood that since then the land has been used for animal pasture, and is thus fully in keeping with its AONB location.
3. There is little evidence of any protruding rubbish, dangerous gas or fluid emissions requiring remedial work. Indeed it is understood that the area is at times used as a campsite, which surely proves the point!
4. Remedial work, if needed, would not require 62 lorry movements a day for two years! The only logical assumption must be that this application is simply an excuse to dump more landfill into an already filled site purely for monetary gain?
5. AONB. This site is wholly within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). By reshaping this landscape it could spoil the integrity and beauty of the landscape in this scenic area, and threaten several Objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan, as expressed in their own submission. As per the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) great weight must be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs. If my understanding is correct, we are talking about 18,000 HGV loads of landfill, which must call into question whether this is a major development. If it is, planning permission should be refused per the NPPF.
6. Ecology. The 2006 Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Development Framework (LDF) states "The natural environment of the District has been shaped by land management and as a result there is a variety of good quality landscapes and habitats, supporting a wide range of species. Disturbance may lead to a loss of habitat and species. It is important that the LDF ensures that biodiversity and the habitats that support it are protected." The Ecological Assessment admits that many species will be affected, particularly bats (no less than seven species noted) and badgers, as a Main Settle is located less than 20 metres from the proposed extended cap.
7. Ancient Woodland. The Ecological Assessment admits that the scheme will impact on ancient woodland, specifically Rockingshill Wood, which feeds various local streams which lead directly to the headwaters of the River Medway. National Planning Policy says that any scheme must avoid direct loss of this ancient and irreplaceable habitat, and that there should be a minimum 15 metre buffer of undeveloped land and any new scheme. These proposals clearly contravene National Policy!
8. Control of new landfill. By elevating the level of this site, drainage from it would increase, thus threatening further detrimental effects upon biodiversity in surrounding areas. It is not clear what controls will be used to mitigate these impacts.
9. Disturbance and Pollution while the work takes place. There is bound to be major noise, air, dust, smell and vibration pollution (depending upon the controls if any) while the work takes place, which is believed to be for two years. All would cause detrimental effects upon the close by amenities of Standen and the many historic routeways in this extremely sensitive area.
10. Visual impact. This site is close to extremely popular ancient public byways and the National Trust property of Standen. By raising the level of this site views from these very popular leisure routes could be adversely affected. It would be particularly visually obtrusive as the site is on a slope visible from the southern side of East Grinstead.
11. Major access safety risks. Evergreen Farm exits onto a narrow part of West Hoathly Road. Although there are some plans to try to mitigate the risks of lorries turning, the dangers here cannot be overstated. Immediately to the south of the site the road narrows further, resulting in single alternate line traffic congestion along the road and adjacent to the entrance to Standen itself. This would be dangerous for traffic travelling in both directions. Due to its location between East Grinstead town and Standen/Saint Hill, many walkers and cyclists use West Hoathly Road. It is feared that the existing risks here would be greatly exaggerated by 62 extra HGV movements per day. Fatalities could well result.
12. Wider access traffic and safety problems. These extra HGV movements would all have to feed through the already acknowledged seriously congested over-capacity junctions at Felbridge and Imberhome Lane. Safety risks are greatest passing Imberhome Lane School, crossing Turners Hill Road (limited visibility of slow moving HGVs crossing) and at the tight Saint Hill Triangle, where there are already warning signs for concealed entrances.

Yours sincerely, Gordon Andrews

Received

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Attachments