

# Comment for planning application WSCC/030/21

Application number	WSCC/030/21
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Type of Comment	Objection
Comments	

## Introduction

The proposal for a clay quarry and building waste recycling centre in Pephurst Woods has no merit on the grounds of commercial need, environmental and ecological damage, air, noise and dust pollution, increased HGV traffic etc etc. It would appear to me that there are no benefits to be gained by anyone from this proposed development as it stands, not even the landowners due to its commercial flaws.

Below are some, but by no means all, of the reasons why this proposal should be rejected by West Sussex County Council.

### Demand for Clay in West Sussex

As detailed in the recently updated WSCC Minerals Monitoring Report there is no demand for additional clay in the county. Across the board there is over 25 years supply of brick making clay in the county and only one individual site falls below that level by one year. All of the brickworks have their clay supplies on site and it is uneconomic and environmentally unsound to transport clay from other places to these existing brickworks.

### Construction and Demolition Waste Recycling

There is currently no requirement for additional facilities in West Sussex. In any case it is clearly stated in WSCC policy that such sites should be located on brown filed sites adjacent to main highways so that the associated HGV traffic is straight onto suitable roads. The proposed site in Pephurst Woods does not meet these criteria.

### Proposed Location

As stated above, the proposed location is a greenfield site when national and county policy states that such developments should be in built-up areas and/or on brownfield sites. The proposed site is over a kilometre from the nearest road through woodland and is along a woodland track which would require significant widening and surfacing to handle HGVs. The road that the HGVs will join is totally unsuitable for large, heavy vehicles being little more than a country lane. Much of it is barely over five metres wide with many blind bends meaning that a car encountering an HGV coming in the other direction often has to take evasive action. Two HGVs will have to slow to walking speed, and often go onto the verge, in order to pass each other. The proposal includes a 15,000 square foot building in the middle of the woods. This building will be as high as a three storey house and no doubt have a concrete floor. In addition to the access route being through woodland it will cross farmland resulting in impact on the use of that land for grazing.

### Conformance with Local Plans

The proposal is not in line with policies stated in the Chichester Local Plan or the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan regarding development on rural areas. The development is not sensitive to its setting in terms of size, bulk or location and does not enhance, protect or complement the natural environment in any way whatsoever. In addition it brings no demonstrable benefit to the local community. In fact, by closing at least one public footpath and the access road crossing many others, it will impact the amenities enjoyed by the local community.

### Environmental Impact

The construction and operation of this development will require many large machines and vehicles which will produce huge amounts of pollution in the form of CO2, noise, dust and light. The proposed site is in woodland, much of it ancient woodland, which is currently very quiet and at night has no light whatsoever. It is utterly tranquil and this tranquillity will be destroyed for the entirety of the 33 years of operation and probably forever. The development will have very significant impact on the prolific wildlife in the area including many rare and protected species such as bats, badgers and orchids. The need to wash waste at the site and the wheel wash facility adjacent to the road will require large amounts of water in an area which is already stressed for water. Waste water from operations and wheel washing will also have to be dealt with.

### Traffic and Road Safety

As previously mentioned the road onto which HGVs will emerge from the woods is totally unsuited to such vehicles. The proposed number of HGV movements will result in a four to five fold increase in such vehicles on the Loxwood Road. It is proposed that all these extra vehicles will travel to the A281 (over three kilometres away) to join the main road at an already dangerous junction. The Loxwood Road is too narrow (down to 5.1 metres at some points) to accommodate such vehicles and the junction with the A281 has poor sight lines on both directions. The narrowness of the road makes it inevitable that road edges and verges will suffer significant damage, especially at corners, creating a significant hazard for other road users. Although it is proposed that vehicles will take this route it is

highly likely that this will be impossible to enforce meaning that HGVs will go in the other direction to join equally unsuitable roads. All of these local roads are used by many walkers, horse riders and cyclists and the additional HGV traffic will increase the risk of injury or death to these road users. There are numerous listed building along the Loxwood Road and these will very likely to impacted by potentially damaging vibration. Despite the wheel washing facility in winter weather it is very likely that mud will be carried onto the highway by the heavy vehicles creating an additional risk to other road users.

Summary

As stated in my introduction this development has no merits whatsoever and for all of the above reasons I urge WSCC to reject this proposal.

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