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Mr Sam Dumbrell
West Sussex County Council
Development Control
County Hall, Tower Street
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RH

Date: 3rd May 2018
Your Ref: WSCC/015/NH
Our Ref: 050

Dear Mr Dumbrell,

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)

FORMER WEALDEN BRICKWORKS SITE, LANGHURST WOOD ROAD, HORSHAM, RH12 4QD

OBJECTION TO APPLICATION FOR RECYCLING, RECOVERY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES AND ANCILLARY INFRASTRUCTURE REFERENCE: WSCC/015/NH

We write on behalf of Verve Properties, the owners of the Graylands Estate, Langhurst Wood Road, in objection to the application for recycling, recovery and renewable energy facilities and ancillary infrastructure at the former Wealden Brickworks site, Langhurst Wood Road, Horsham, RH12 4QD. We are extremely disappointed that Verve were not informed directly about this application and were reliant on a local resident to inform us of the application three days ago. The owners have not received notification of this application and were not aware of any public consultation event announcing the new plans for the site.

Introduction

The boundary of the Graylands Estate lies approximately 250m to the northeast for the furthest extent of the application site. There are a number of residential properties on site amounting to approximately 20 dwellings, in addition to commercial properties (use classes B1-B8) which cater for small and medium-sized businesses. Sole access to the site is from Langhurst Wood Road.

The application is not significantly different to the withdrawn application (Ref: WSCC/062/16/NH) of December 2016 on the two key issues identified to be of concern at that time including: noise and light pollution. In addition, the Council has now permitted the Horsham northern extension with 2,750 new homes and businesses to come forward over the coming years. The implementation of this consent will transform the character of land to the north of the A264, creating a conflict with the existing and proposed industrial waste transfer activities at the former Wealden Brickworks site. It will particularly require HGV vehicles servicing the Recycling, Recovery and Renewable Energy Facility (3Rs Facility) to use the same access road proposed to service the western end of the new urban area, which constructs a new part of Langhurstwood Road through the new residential estate. Again a conflict with residential sensitive users.

Grounds of Objection

Policy W19 of the West Sussex Waste Local Plan (2014) requires emissions from developments (including lighting, noise, odour, et.) to be controlled to avoid adverse impact on public health and amenity. The proposed development is contrary to this policy and would result in adverse amenity impacts on the surrounding properties including those on the Graylands Estate. Whilst Verve acknowledge the site currently operates as a waste transfer station and materials recycling facility, it objects to the proposed application for the following reasons:

- The construction and operation of the site would result in noise disturbance of the surrounding properties, particularly in the evenings and at night time.
- The 24hour operation of the site and the aviation lighting would result in light pollution to the detriment of the surrounding properties and wider countryside. The applicant suggests that dimmer lights will be used at night but it is not known how this will be enforced/controlled.

Noise Disturbance

The proposed development would increase noise for the surrounding area at both the construction and operation phases of the development, through both operational activities and vehicular movements.

Operation

The Environmental Statement (ES) suggest the cumulative impacts of the operational noise will only be 'minor adverse'. However, Verve contends that the type of noise and its 24 hour duration would have a greater impact on surrounding properties than a simplistic measure against baseline standards.

Although there are some pre-existing waste transfer and other industrial uses on the site and its immediate surroundings, the site is currently in a rural location and all other noise producing businesses are not operating at night time. This development would introduce operational noise 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. From our understanding of the development, the noise would be constant and not intermittent (like aviation traffic). Any increase in noise from the operation, particularly at night-time would add to the ambient noise level at a constant level and not decrease at any time. Paragraph 8.8.4 of the ES notes that the night-time noise levels would exceed the background sound level by a significant level at Graylands Lodge. Therefore, the residents of Graylands Lodge and other nearby residential properties would experience an increase in noise at a continuous level, permanently, which would significantly impact their amenity.

This is compounded by the change in the character of the ambient noise. It is acknowledged in the ES that 'the character of the sound would be different'. Given the rural night-time experience of Graylands and the surrounding properties, we argue that the effects of increased noise are more keenly felt by residents as the noise would be easily distinguishable from the existing background noise.

The 24hour operation of the site would also result in extra night-time vehicular movements on Langhurst Wood Road. Although the application states that HGV movements would only be between 07:00 and 19:00 hrs.

Construction

The Environmental Statement acknowledges that construction noise will be heard from surrounding properties. The construction hours proposed under this application are increased from condition 19 of the previous permission (ref: WSCC/018/14/NH). The latening of construction hours by 1 hour during weekdays and 4 hours at the weekend, would be significantly detrimental to the amenity neighbouring residential properties. As a result of the increase in hours, both the construction noise and the resultant vehicular movements of construction and construction workers' vehicles would increase noise levels at a time when the roads would generally be less busy and ambient noise levels lower.

The Planning Statement notes that there might be up to 182 construction workers on the site at any one time. The movements of these workers by vehicle, plus the delivery of construction materials

would take considerable time to arrive and depart from the site at the before and after the hours of construction, extending the time when the site and site traffic would create noise disturbance to neighbours.

Furthermore, the applicant states that construction will take place outside of those hours. This should be expressly forbidden so that construction noise is adequately controlled for the amenity of surrounding residents.

Light Pollution

The introduction of 24 hour operations at the site would result in increased night-time artificial lighting at the site both at the external accesses of the site and the car park, but also at high level due to the required aviation safety lighting. The impacts of this light pollution on the surrounding properties have not been adequately assessed. The applicant suggests that dimmer lights will be used at night but it is not known how this will be enforced/controlled.

The Planning Statement states that the developers aim to minimise light pollution by improved landscaping at the boundary. The lighting scheme shows a significant number of external lights, particularly along the borders of the site at a height of 6 meters. However, the landscaping is proposed to be grass, wildflower meadows and scrub. These would not mitigate the emission of light into the surroundings, except at a very low level. The light pollution impacts of the additional night-time lighting of the site does not appear to have been assessed in the application documents. For example, if there are cumulative impacts with other night-time sources, or whether light pollution might be increase in winter months with the loss of foliage on surrounding vegetation.

The proposed aviation safety lighting is proposed to be 'medium intensity' at a level of over 90m. This will, of course, be visible from the surrounding area, however its impacts on the surrounding properties has also not been assessed.

The proposed 3Rs Facility would have significant impacts on the amenity of the surrounding properties, including those on the Graylands estate, which are unacceptable and contrary to *West Sussex Waste Local Plan Policy W19*. The current operation of a waste transfer and recycling facility on the site should not be used to set precedent for the proposed incinerator as the increase in hours and change in nature of operations would significantly alter the site's impacts on the surrounding properties. The 24 hour operation of the site would increase night-time noise levels overall and introduce a different character of noise which would disturb neighbouring residents throughout the night. The 24 hour operation of the site and the proposed 95m stack require external lighting which could result in detrimental light pollution. However, the application documents do not adequately assess the impacts of these.

The application documents use the proposed Land North of Horsham (LNH) site to create a more 'urban context' to the site. However, the closest part of that development to this site would be a cemetery and allotments, which would be largely green open spaces, which would not be used at night time. Further south the residential properties would also be quiet at night. Since these are not proposed to be constructed for at least 10 years, the impacts of the proposed incinerator would sit in isolation for a considerable amount of time.

For the reasons set out above, we respectfully request that planning permission be refused for the proposed recycling, recovery and renewable energy facilities and ancillary infrastructure at the Former Wealden Brickworks Site, Langhurst Wood Road.

Yours faithfully,

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