

WEALDEN 3Rs BCR 2.1 SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE OF CORINNA DEMMAR

Landscape and Visual Resources

On behalf of Britaniacrest Recycling Limited

In relation to an appeal against the decision of West Sussex County Council to refuse planning permission for a proposed Recycling, Recovery and Renewable Energy Facility and Ancillary Infrastructure at Wealden Brickworks, Horsham

PINS Reference: APP/P3800/W/18/3218965

JSL2921
Landscape and Visual
Summary Proof of Evidence
Final
September 2019

1 SUMMARY

Witness for the Appellant

- 1.1 My name is Corinna Demmar. I am a Chartered Landscape Architect and Senior Director (Landscape) at RPS Group plc.
- 1.2 I understand my duty to the Inquiry and have complied and will continue to comply with my duty. The facts stated in my proof and this summary proof are true and my professional opinions expressed therein are correct.

Evidence

- 1.3 My evidence is concerned with the landscape and visual resources of the land of and surrounding The Wealden Brickworks site, Near Horsham, West Sussex.
- 1.4 The remaining Reason for Refusal given by WSCC in the Planning Decision of the 1st July 2018 is the second one, that the proposed 3Rs facility will have an unacceptable impact on the landscape and visual amenity of the area, contrary to Waste Local Plan Policies (WLP) Policies W12: High Quality Developments and W13: Protected Landscapes.

Landscape Planning Policy Context

- 1.5 Both WSCC and HDC have considered the siting of built waste management facilities, at the Warnham Brickworks/Brookhurst Wood site, the effects on landscape and visual resources/receptors and the protection afforded by the various policies and assessments, from at least 2004. Following assessment and reassessment of potential waste sites in the intervening years, it remains an allocated site in the current WLP.
- 1.6 WLP policies, other than Policies W12 and W13, have locational requirements. These policies are not been reasons to refuse this application.
- 1.7 WLP Policy W10: Strategic Waste Allocation, allows for the 'in principle' development of a built waste management facility at the Brookhurst Wood site. It requires proposed development to satisfactorily address the development principles for the site. This policy is no longer a Reason for Refusal.

1.8 WLP development management Policy W11: Character, is concerned with unacceptable impacts on character, distinctiveness and sense of place. WLP policy W11: Character has never been a reason to refuse this application.

1.9 Those matters covered by the Appellant’s witnesses are set out in the tables below.

Table 1: WLP Policy W12: High Quality Developments – points covered by Appellant’s witnesses

WLP Policy W12: High Quality Developments		
Part	Covered/not covered	Location
Part (a)	Covered	Planning proof of evidence
Part (b) (i)	Covered	Planning and Landscape proofs of evidence (different aspects)
Part (b) (ii)	Covered	Landscape proof of evidence
Part (b) (iii)	Covered in part – townscape and streetscape are not relevant to the Appeal Site	Landscape proof of evidence
Part (b) (iv)	Covered	Landscape proof of evidence
Part (b) (v)	Covered	Planning proof of evidence
Part (c)	Covered	Planning proof of evidence
Part (d)	Covered	Planning proof of evidence
Part (e)	Covered	Planning proof of evidence

Table 2: WLP Policy W13: Protected Landscapes – point covered by Appellant’s witness

WLP Policy W13: Protected Landscapes		
Part	Covered/not covered	Location
Part (a) (i) (ii) and (iii)	Not covered – proposed 3Rs facility is not within a protected landscape	-
Part (b)	Covered	Landscape Proof of evidence

WLP Policy W13: Protected Landscapes

Part	Covered/not covered	Location
Part (c) (i) (ii) and (iii)	Not covered – proposed 3Rs facility is not within a protected landscape	-

Baseline Conditions

- 1.10 The landscape baseline is described in ES Volume 1: Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual Resources. Further site visits were undertaken on the earlier in 2019 to update the landscape and visual baseline.
- 1.11 The landscape character area descriptions of both the District Landscape Character Areas within the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (2003) do not acknowledge the presence of the Warnham Brickworks. The proposed 3Rs facility will not significantly change the existing character of the Warnham Brickworks, or that of the surrounding landscape.
- 1.12 The Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment (2014) most accurately describes the Warnham Brickworks (Local Landscape Character Area 15). It assesses the landscape value as Low. I confirm that my assessment of the site concurs with that of the capacity assessment.

The Design of the Proposals

- 1.13 In consultation with WSCC's Planning and Landscape Officers, the design of the 3Rs facility has evolved. Details of the architectural changes are given in Appendix 1: Statement of Design Approach, to Mr Lecointe's proof of evidence.
- 1.14 The proposed building will replace a tired facility with a high-quality, modern building. The location and landscape setting of the proposed 3Rs facility is suitable.
- 1.15 The changes made to the proposed facility enabled the Landscape Officers at both WSCC and HDC to support the 2018 application.

Assessment of effects on Landscape and Visual resources and receptors

- 1.16 Representative viewpoints were agreed with the Landscape and Planning Officers at WSCC. Additional viewpoints from within the Land North of Horsham

development area were also suggested. The agreed photographs and additional photography was undertaken and was included within the assessment and within my proof of evidence.

- 1.17 A summary plan of the operational significance of effects is included at P29 of BCR
- 1.18 Both the WSCC and HDC Landscape Officers agreed with the findings of the Landscape and Visual Assessment in ES.
- 1.19 The further fieldwork has not changed my general assessment of the effects on landscape resources and receptors. However, should the inaccuracies of the DCLA boundaries be corrected, the significance of the effect on DCLA P1 would reduce, as there would be no direct effects on the landscape character area.
- 1.20 The nature of the available views will not change. The views will still consist of the upper parts of large buildings and stacks rising out of woodland, with a backdrop of the wooded ridge to the north of Horsham. The muted colours of the proposed 3Rs facility will help screen the light grey of the MBT plant and will blend in with the dark colours of the surrounding woodland. The stack will rise above the woodland, when viewed from most directions, but due to its slender proportions it will not be a dominant feature in views and even in elevated, middle-distance views will be barely distinguishable from trees on the skyline.

Consideration of Proposals with Reference to Policy and Guidance

- 1.21 The redesign of the 3Rs facility has taken account of the comments of the WSCC officers and other consultees. The WSCC and HDC Landscape Officers responded positively to the changes made and did not object to the revised scheme when it was submitted in 2018. They do not consider the proposal will have an unacceptable impact.
- 1.22 This is reflected in WSCC not having alleged a breach of WLP Policy W11: Character, which states that proposals will be permitted provided they do not have an unacceptable impact on character and local distinctiveness (amongst other matters).

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- 1.23 Only Part (b) of WLP Policy W13: Protected Landscapes, applies to the proposed 3Rs facility. There is no impact (direct or indirect) on the Chichester Harbour AONB. Due primarily to distance, but also to the revised design, the facility does not conflict with WLP Policy W13 when considering the effects on the SDNP and the High Weald AONB.
- 1.24 The proposed 3Rs facility will not compromise the objectives of the designated landscapes within West Sussex, as set out in the WLP Policy W13, or those of the Surrey Hills AONB.
- 1.25 The Warnham Brickworks site has been a preferred site for a major built waste facility/energy from waste plant from at least 2004. Throughout the assessment and reassessment of visual impact and impact on landscape character, including on designated sites, undertaken since this time, Warnham Brickworks has remained a preferred or allocated site for such a facility.
- 1.26 The revised 3Rs facility minimises the impact on both landscape and visual resources and receptors. It is a high-quality building that is appropriate for its location. While there a few significant visual effects, these are not unacceptable.
- 1.27 The WSCC and HDC Landscape Officers both find the proposed 3Rs development acceptable. All other relevant statutory consultees have no objection to the proposed revised 3Rs development.

Landscape and Visual Representations Submitted by Third Parties

- 1.28 The WLP explanatory text records the involvement of statutory and other consultees, including residents and community groups in the site selection process prior to the publication of the WLP in April 2014.
- 1.29 A number of specific objections were raised in Ni4H's Interested Party Submission and further objections were put in Ni4H's Statement of Case. The Statement of Case did not include some of the original objections of the Interested Party Submission, however, for completeness, they are considered in my proof of evidence.

Conclusions

- 1.30 The allocation of the Warnham Brickworks/Brookhurst Wood landfill site has persisted through the plan-making processes of both the West Sussex Waste Local Plan and the Horsham District Planning Framework. It remains an allocated site for a built waste facility.
- 1.31 There have been no objections to the proposed 3Rs facility, from any statutory consultees.
- 1.32 In my professional judgement I conclude that, in landscape and visual terms, the proposals for the Wealden 3Rs Facility are acceptable and do not breach WLP Policies W12: High Quality Developments and Policy W13: Protected Landscapes. I respectfully request the Inspector to allow the Appeal.