

UPDATE SHEET TO AGENDA ITEM 7

Planning and Regulatory Committee 14 October 2015

Minerals and Waste Application: WA/2014/0005

Site: Alton Road Sandpit, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 5EL.

Application: Extraction of sand (770,000 tonnes) and clay (512,000 cubic metres) from a site of 36.2 ha; filling of existing and resultant void with (2.6 million cubic metres) non-hazardous industrial, commercial, household and inert waste; installation of plant and equipment; alterations to existing site access onto A31; and comprehensive restoration of the site over a period of 11.5 years without compliance with Condition 1 of planning permission ref. WA99/0223 to allow the development be completed in all respects not later than 31 December 2029.

Please note the Committee Report should be amended / corrected as follows:

Parish/Town Council and Amenity Groups (*comments after publication of attached report*)

22. Wrecclesham Village Society / TRASH Campaign made additional comments to those set out in either the attached report or the 3 September 2014 P&RC Report, as follows:
1. The Section 106 Agreement has been produced by the applicants and there are too few safeguards in place to ensure the proposal could or would progress in accordance with objectives;
 2. The agreed conditions are inadequate to deal with landfill gas. The applicants have had two years to provide a detailed redesigned gas management system, the County Planning Authority should have applied the precautionary principle to give this matter more consideration, and should compile a list of new conditions to deal with this landfill gas;
 3. Significant amount of unauthorised activity at the site means that conditions 40 to 47 on ecology need to be reviewed. There needs to be a full independent ecological assessment undertaken of activities at the site before the Committee could consider this application;
 4. The applicants have not complied with conditions 6b, 7, 15 and many others, along with informatives 11 and 12;
 5. In the absence of a truly independent air quality assessment, as well as a new condition providing assurances on air pollution levels, the Committee should not afford this application further consideration.

Officer's assessment (updated information for paragraphs 27 & 28 of the attached report)

27. Replace final three sentences with: 'This was primarily due to the granting of planning permission for the extraction of 4.1 million tonnes (mt) of soft sand at Mercers South Quarry, Nutfield in August 2014, together with reserve reassessments carried out in 2014 at: (i) Land North East of Pendell Farm, Bletchingley; (ii) North Park Quarry, Godstone; and (iii) Queen Mary Reservoir, Ashford, which also contributed to the increase in permitted reserves. At the end of 2014, permitted reserves increased to 8.5 mt for soft sand and fell to 1.5 mt for concreting aggregates.'

28. Amend second sentence to read: 'Over the same period, the landbank has increased significantly from 8.7 to 17.1 years for soft sand, and fallen from 1.9 to 1.7 years for concreting aggregates.'

Officer's Note:

In respect of the first point raised by Wrecclesham Village Society/TRASH Campaign, as noted at paragraph 36 of the attached report, the completed Legal Agreement has been signed by all relevant parties and Officers do not agree that it is incomplete or inadequate. With reference to second point raised, as noted at paragraph 39 of the attached report, this matter was previously addressed in the 3 September P&RC Report.

Paragraph 33 of the attached report notes that neither the National Planning Policy Framework nor the National Planning Practice Guidance draw on the 'precautionary principle' for planning decision making. Paragraph 24 of the attached report makes clear that recommended Condition 16 would ensure that no capping or restoration works of the historical landfill areas known as Riverdale and South East Landfill would take place until a detailed ground gas management plan had been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. No objections to this application have been raised by either the County Geotechnical Consultant, Environment Agency or Waverley Borough Council's Pollution Control, and they would all be consulted by the County Planning Authority when such 'pre commencement' details are received.

With reference to the third point raised, in respect of activities at the site since September 2014, this matter is addressed in the attached report from paragraphs 43 to 58. The comments of the County Ecologist are also set out in Appendix C to the attached report. Specifically, in view of condition 40, the presence of an Ecological Clerk of Work and the relative recent age of ecological surveys, the County Ecologist considers that they are still fit for purpose and no updating is required at the present time.

In respect of the fourth point raised and the suggested non-compliance with recommended conditions, the CPA's monitoring of the site and discussions with the applicant are set out at paragraphs 47 to 58 of the attached report. The CPA judged it to be reasonable to expect the operator to maintain compliance with the EA's Permit requirements and carry out ecological work during appropriate weather conditions. With reference to the last point raised, Officers also note that the adequacy of the recent air quality assessment submitted by the applicant is addressed in the attached report. Officers do not agree that Members are unable to determine this application today following the 'Kides' protocol.

In respect of the replacement sections of paragraphs 27 and 28 above, Officers do not consider that the updates provided alter the conclusion of the attached report.