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13 May 2010

Mr M Lee
Case Officer, Planning Department
Wokingham Borough Council
PO Box 157, Shute End
WOKINGHAM RG40 1WR

Dear Mr Lee,

Application F/2010/0662: Land at Gravelly Bridge Farm, Grazeley Green Road, Grazeley

At last night's meeting of our Planning and Transportation Committee it was unanimously resolved to record our strong objection to the above application for a change of use from B1 to Sui Generis in order to operate a waste facility. Our objections are as follows:

- 1) As a preliminary, please note that the site is off Grazeley Green Road as correctly recorded by the applicant and not Bloomfieldhatch Lane as referred to in your documentation.
- 2) The site lies in designated open countryside, thereby warranting protection and whilst its current use as an agricultural training facility is acceptable under National and Local Planning Policy as an agricultural related development or agricultural diversification, a waste facility most certainly is not.
- 3) A prime basis for objection is the resultant generation of noise and dust from the operation of the screening and crushing equipment, as well as the proposed lorry movements along an unmade track. Such activity would be to the detriment of the local residential amenity of a number of properties within a 1km radius by causing harm to human health and the environment in contravention of PPS10.
- 4) Your pre-application advice stipulates a need for evidence to be provided of local need together with an explanation of how the proposals adhere to the proximity principle, but we were unable to find such an assessment, which would appear to seriously undermine the credibility of the application.
- 5) Our members are particularly concerned about the establishment of such a substantial industrial activity processing some 20,000 tonnes of waste material per annum, with the potential to increase to 30,000 tonnes if the delivery capacity of 600 tonnes per week (six 20-tonne lorries per day) is realized.
- 6) There is no mention of the two current buildings and toilet facility that currently occupy the site, and we are unclear as to whether these buildings need or indeed have planning permission.
- 7) We are aware of Great Crested Newts occupying the site and as their habitats are protected under European law, call for a thorough survey to be conducted. No such survey was found in the documents
- 8) Similarly, the flood risk assessment appeared to provide minimal information and given that the site is close to the flood-plain of Foudry Brook, we would have expected a more sophisticated survey.

*Shinfield Parish includes the rural communities of Grazeley, Ryeish Green,
School Green, Shinfield Rise, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross.*

9) Again, we would have expected a landscape assessment to have been conducted with definitive proposals for planting, screening and bunds to mitigate both visual and audio impact in this open countryside location, but once more this was absent.

We would therefore urge you to refuse this application on the basis that the applicant has failed “to demonstrate that there is a proven local need for such a site and that it would not conflict with the objectives of the countryside location”, these words constituting a requirement of the pre-application advice that you issued to Guardian Waste Management in your letter to them of 20th November 2009.

Finally, we confirm that we shall be requesting our local Borough Ward members to seek a listing were you minded to recommend the approval of this application.

Yours sincerely,

Jacqui Barnes, Clerk

Copies: Cllrs B Patman, A Pollock & C Haitham Taylor