



HELEN WHATELY MP
Member of Parliament for Faversham and Mid Kent

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Alan Marsh, Chairman, Planning Applications Committee
Kent County Council
By email

HW/AE/113446

20 June 2018

Dear Alan,

Planning Application: KCC/SW/0090/2018 - East Kent Recycling

I am writing as the Member of Parliament for Faversham and Mid Kent, to set out my views about the above application.

I understand that EKR's previous application, submitted in October 2017, was withdrawn and this new application has been submitted in its place.

The East Kent Recycling plant (EKR) is located at the western edge of my constituency on the outskirts of the village of Oare. It is a family-run business providing skip hire and waste recycling services to businesses and households, employing 19 staff. I am keen to encourage local business and note that the application would support at least three additional new jobs and improve the working conditions for those staff, for instance the provision of buildings to enable materials to be managed undercover, where currently these are open to the elements.

I have however received many letters and emails from constituents raising concerns about the negative impact that the business already has on the surrounding communities and local area including noise, dust, vibrations and great numbers of daily lorry movements.

The challenge is that whilst the site has always housed commercial business, the setting within which it now finds itself is much changed. In particular, the residential community of Faversham has grown, and new housing developments are planned close by to the EKR and along the Western Link and the A2.

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Hard copies are available upon request. Please let me know if you have any questions about these arrangements.



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This begs the question of whether the site is still appropriate for industrial activity of this type. Given the development of Faversham, I would support a longer term action on the Planning Department's part to identify appropriate locations for industrial activity, particularly where it is relatively antisocial (noise, dust, light etc.) and needs HGV access.

In the meantime, I am writing to object to the latest proposal to develop the site.

I would like to emphasise the following concerns that have been shared with me:

Lorry movements

Already lorry traffic stemming from the site is affecting my constituents in Ospringe and Davington. This includes dust, vibrations, noise and light pollution. Whilst the number of lorries entering the site at the moment should be restricted to 40 trucks per day, local residents have measured the actual number to sometimes be in excess of 100 lorry movements per day. I worry about how enforceable this will be going forward.

I am concerned too about the residential routes through which the lorries are travelling – including through narrow West Street in the Conservation Area – in order to reach their destinations, which are simply not sustainable for a historic market town such as Faversham. Not only does this impact on the built heritage, but reduces the air quality, already a problem in Ospringe, which is already an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

I understand that the both size of the lorries and the hours of their operation is set to increase, in order to expand capacity at the recycling site. Residents are concerned about the impact these larger vehicles will have, particularly when travelling through the residential areas.

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Noise from the site

Residents have raised concerns about the noise level from the existing site, for instance from the crushing of materials, and this will continue as the amount of waste coming to the site is not planned to reduce. Noise stemming from the construction phase of the application will add to this in the short term.

The application states that the proposed development will retain the existing boundary treatments, which comprises fencing and earth bunds. Clearly these are insufficient to cushion nearby residents from site noise and I would urge this to be reviewed to ensure that adequate noise screening is introduced.

Pedestrian safety on the footpath

The access road to the site, used by the lorries, is along a marked and well-used footpath, alongside the Saxon Shore Way, that might link to the National Coastal Path. Walkers report feeling unsafe using a path shared with heavy lorry traffic, and it's clearly not the experience intended for the National Coastal Path. This will only get worse with even larger lorries.

Short length of time to comment on the application

I am very concerned that only a small window of opportunity has been provided for local people to comment on this application. The Supporting Statement alone is 54 pages long and, when added to the other reports, this is a vast amount of often technical information for people to digest and comment upon.

For these reasons, I believe enlargement of the site and increased activity on it as proposed is unacceptable and I would be grateful if your committee would take into account the comments above when considering the application.

Yours sincerely

Helen Whately MP

Member of Parliament for Faversham and Mid Kent

cc: James Bickle, Planning Case Officer