

**Minutes of a Meeting of Little Chalfont Parish Council Planning Committee
Held in Little Chalfont Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont
Tuesday 30 September 2014 at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllr B Drew; Cllr J Hinkly; Cllr M Parker (Chairman); Cllr V Patel; Cllr D Rafferty and Cllr J Wyper.

In attendance: Mrs J Mason (Clerk).

Members of the public: Ms G Roberts.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Received from Cllr J Walford, OBE.
2. **Approval of the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 9 September 2014:** These were approved as a correct record and were duly signed as such by the Chairman.
3. **Proposal to suspend standing orders enabling members of the public to speak (10 mins):** Not applicable.
4. **Declarations of interest:** All councillors present declared an interest in application CM/59/14, Proposed Development of a Waste Transfer Station at London Road East.
5. **Items of any other business – the following items were approved by the Chairman for consideration under item 13:**
 - i. Draft Delivery Plan Document (DDPD);
 - ii. Planning applications for proposals at Harewood Downs.
6. **The following applications were considered:**

Application number and address	Summary of Proposed Works	Little Chalfont Planning Committee recommendation
CH/2014/1585/FA 17 Chessfield Park, Little Chalfont, Buckinghamshire, HP6 6RU	Single storey rear extension	No objection
CH/2014/1535/FA Treetops, 20 Beechwood Avenue, Little Chalfont, Buckinghamshire, HP6 6PL	Part first floor, part single storey rear extension incorporating first floor balcony, first floor front/side extension, conversion of garage into habitable accommodation and associated alterations to fenestration	Because of maintenance work, councillors had been unable to access adequately CDC's planning website to view the associated documents. It was agreed therefore to defer this application until the following week when a short, extraordinary meeting would be held before the start of the 8 October Council meeting.
CM/59/14	Proposed development	Little Chalfont Parish

Buckinghamshire County Council Highway Services Council Depot, London Road East, Amersham	of a Waste Transfer Station (WTS) at London Road East.	Council object. See the attachment to these minutes for the detail of the objection.
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7. **Decisions of Chiltern District Council's Planning Committee:** These were received.
8. **Appeal notices and decisions** - *CDC had advised that an appeal had been allowed by the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol relating to the following application:*
APP/X0415/D/2216953 (CH/2013/2004/FA), Hunters Green, Nightingales Lane, Little Chalfont, front and rear dormer windows and alterations to fenestration to provide accommodation in roofspace (part retrospective).
9. **Licensing applications:** None.
10. **Enforcement updates:** None, although the Clerk advised that she would remind the enforcement officer about the outstanding response following an investigation into fencing at a property in Elizabeth Avenue.
11. **Department of Communities and Local Government Technical Consultation on Planning July 2014:** It was noted that the Council's response, agreed on 9 September, had been sent to DCLG by e-mail on 22 September 2014 (closing date 26 September).
12. **Donkey Field update:** Cllr Parker reported that he had still not received a response from Countryside on the one name still outstanding for proposals to CDC. It was therefore agreed that Cllr Parker should advise Countryside that the Parish Council were setting a deadline of next Friday 10th October for receipt of a response. If a reply is not received by that date, the Parish Council will take responsibility for the outstanding decision, and inform CDC that Countryside has agreed all but one of the names.
13. **Any Other Business:**
 - i. *Delivery Development Plan Document (DDPD) – Claire Jones-Hughes' 26 September letter, with attachments, about the arrangements and procedures for the inspector's examination of the DDPD, was received. As previously noted by the Council, the tracked changes version of the document submitted to the inspector was incorrect in sections dealing with Westwood Park and the Nature Park. It was agreed that Cllr Parker should contact Graham Winwright, Temporary Planning Policy Manager, at CDC to see if he could arrange corrections to the document. If this approach failed, it was agreed the Clerk should make a formal submission to the inspector. The closing date for submission of further statements is Friday 24 October 2014.*
 - ii. *Planning applications for proposals at Harewood Downs CH/2014/1553/FA and 1554 – Cllr Drew reported that these two applications, for work within Little Chalfont, were approaching the expiry of the neighbour notification period. However, the Parish Council had not been included in the consultation despite its status as statutory consultee. It was agreed that the Clerk should raise this matter with CDC and request that the consultation period be extended to enable the Parish Council to comment.*

14. Dates of next meetings:

- a. Extraordinary meeting Wednesday 8 October 2014 at 7.30 pm in Little Chalfont Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont.
- b. Tuesday 21 October 2014 at 7.30pm in Little Chalfont Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont.

Signed.....

Date.....

Attachment to Parish Council Planning Committee Minutes 30 September 2014
Response to Buckinghamshire County Council Planning Application
CM/59/14, BCC Highway services Council Depot, London Road East, Amersham
Proposed Development of a Waste Transfer Station at London Road East

1. Summary

The Parish Council is surprised that these latest proposals have been made since all of the reasons for refusing consent for the previous planning application to build a Waste Transfer Station on this site remain valid. In particular, the development now proposed would be inappropriate in Green Belt, would have a significant adverse impact on an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, would have an adverse impact on the amenity of local residents and would cause substantial harm to the setting of a Grade II listed building. (For ease of reference, the Parish Council's objection to application CH/2011/60005/BCC is attached as an Appendix to this current response).

In addition, the Parish Council is concerned about the likely impact of vehicles carrying commercial waste on the local traffic load which is already under threat from the additional traffic generated by the proposed High Speed 2 train line. It must also be pointed out that the street lighting on the A413 has been switched off, significantly increasing the danger of an accident involving vehicles turning into and out of the site on this fast and increasingly busy stretch of road. In the event that permission for this development be granted, such permission must be conditional on the street lighting being turned back on before any development begins.

Finally, the Parish Council is alarmed to find that in the current application serious concerns previously expressed about the disturbance of contaminated ground have still not been addressed. Indeed, this reapplication has been made without both a full investigation of the site and *prior* sign off by the Environment Agency.

2. Detailed Comments

The planning application for a waste transfer station at London Road East, Amersham, was turned down in 2012 for the following reasons shown in italics:

- i. *The development would be inappropriate in and affect the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt and very special circumstances do not justify making an exception to the policies protecting the Green Belt;*

In this context, the screening now proposed will not provide any bar to visibility of the WTS shed from the elevated parts of the South Bucks Way, and the noise mitigation measures will themselves harm the openness of the Green Belt.

- ii. *The development would have a significant adverse impact on the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural beauty and that the applicant has totally failed to demonstrate that exceptional circumstances in the public interest justify making an exception to policies protecting the Chilterns AONB;*

In the latest application, the applicant asserts that:

- there is an established need for the development at Amersham as outlined within the M&WCS (and hence this application does not have to establish need);
- there are no alternative non Green Belt sites that are allocated, available and suitable;
- and
- there are very special circumstances that result in the proposed development being acceptable in the proposed location.

The Parish Council does not accept any of these assertions. The Parish Council supports the detail in the submission from The Wasters action group, that there is no need for a waste transfer station handling 50,000 tonnes of residual waste. The existence of 40,000 tonnes of residual MSW is unrealistic since the total residual MSW arising in South Bucks and Chiltern Districts at 2025/26, including that taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs), is forecast at 34,078 tonnes, **and** whereas the application is for part of South Bucks not all of it. Even if it were to be proved that capacity is a problem, there are also other more suitable sites available.

- iii. *The development would be sited unacceptably close to and would have an adverse impact (noise, vibration, odour, illumination etc) on the amenity of the residents at Nos 1 – 4 London Road Cottages, situated just 51 metres from the proposed waste transfer system shed;*
and
- iv. *The development would cause substantial harm to the setting of the Ivy House Grade 11 listed building.*

While the lowering and re-positioning of the proposed building serves to reduce (but not nullify) the strength to the last two objections, a building which is 10.4 metres high is difficult to conceal, particularly from the further elevated positions enjoyed by the Ivy House, as well as Harewood Downs Golf Course, especially in spring and winter. Tinkering with the height of the building does not address the fundamental issue of a failure to demonstrate any "very special circumstances" that would be necessary to justify the application.

Therefore, it is the Parish Council's view that all these objections still apply to the latest application, which should therefore be rejected.

3. Contamination

In the Parish Council's response to the previous application, we expressed concern about the disturbance of contaminated ground. We find it alarming that this reapplication has been made without a full investigation of the site and *prior* sign off by the Environment Agency. We understand that, to comply with national and local planning policies, Waste

Transfer Stations should not be built within 50 metres of any well, spring or borehole used as a source of water for human consumption. The proposed development is on land which is particularly vulnerable to interference due to its stratified nature, introducing unacceptable risk to this highly sensitive water environment above a major aquifer that is a source of drinking water for the Home Counties.

In this case, where investigations of the former landfill site indicate potentially contaminating material, we consider it alarming, and unacceptable, that consultation with the Environment Agency is ongoing and the outcome uncertain at the time of the application.

The application should therefore be refused.

Appendix

Little Chalfont Parish Council Objection November 2011: CH/2011/60005/BCC -
Buckinghamshire County Council Highway Services, Council Depot, London Road East,
Amersham: **The Parish Council Objects.**

Little Chalfont Parish Council is conscious that waste disposal methods are essential and that, once the principle of incineration has been established, transfer stations are necessary. However the Council objects to this application for the following reasons:

Noise – The Council is aware that existing noise from the present London Road site impacts on residents living in Cokes Lane and other nearby roads. The additional noise generated by the proposed facility will cause distress to many people in the area. There will be noise from the opening and closing of shutter doors. Even though measures will be put in place to reduce the noise of the transfer vehicles reversing warning sounds, other vehicles will have reversing klaxons. In addition there will be the noise that lorries will inevitably produce when driving in and around the site. Within the building, there will be more noise, some of which will be audible and offensive to neighbouring properties.

If a bio-filter is used (see under 'Odour'), an unspecified amount of further noise will be noticed the extent of which has not been assessed or taken into account in the application.

Odour – The application is ambiguous on the use of a bio-filter. Before any consent is considered, the impact of such a filter must be properly analysed, and, if planning consent is granted, we suggest that the fitting of a bio-filter system should be a condition.

Contamination – The Council is concerned about possible contamination from the operation into the River Misbourne. Even before the site is operational, there will be disturbance of the ground with the construction work. As an old landfill site, there will be contaminants which may be brought to the surface or otherwise displaced into the river.

Transportation – The Council has serious concerns about the access and egress from the site. The A413 is a busy road and there is a junction (Cokes Lane) almost opposite the site entrance. We are not convinced that the proposed (minor) alterations to the site entrance will make for safe traffic management. Large transfer vehicles entering the site will often have to wait in the centre of the road before an opportunity to turn right presents itself. There could be two or more such vehicles waiting at any one time, causing potential problems, especially for other vehicles exiting Cokes Lane and turning right along the A413. Many vehicles, of all sizes, exit from Cokes Lane including a number of school buses during the mid-afternoon period and the Council is very concerned about safety on this junction. HGVs already make up a significant percentage of accidents and this proposal could exacerbate the problem.

We are also concerned that the traffic management within the site will create problems with heavy transfer and other waste disposal vehicles sharing some of the same pathways as private vehicles.

A further concern is the fact that vehicles carrying C&I waste will be adding to the total number of vehicle movements. Any increase will increase the noise and odour problems.

Size – there is a danger that the excessive size could mean that, at some time in the future, the amount of waste brought to the site could exceed present expectations e.g. out of County C & I.

The height of the building causes concern as it will be obtrusive.

Other issues – The application does not have comprehensive landscaping and lighting scheme proposals. When questioned about this at the public exhibition, a WRG representative stated that these would follow but it is impossible to comment on proposals that are not yet ready for inspection. It is also noted that the site is in the green belt and an AONB; the Council considers this contrary to the present local development plan and as proposed in new Chiltern Core Strategy.