



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Duncan Evans
Case Officer, Whitehall Farm application
Land, Planning and Development
Surrey County Council
Surrey

SCC Ref 2021/0023
Our reference: BS14134

1 June 2021

Dear Mr Evans,

I am writing as the Member of Parliament for Runnymede and Weybridge in response to the planning application on Land at Whitehall Farm, Stroude Road, Egham, Surrey TW20 9UZ, SCC reference 2021/023, RBC reference RU.21/0597 for extraction of sand and gravel together with the erection of a processing plant and associated mineral infrastructure.

While I welcome the interest in investment to the area and in principle I support measures to provide local employment, we must ensure any proposals do not damage our extremely precious local environment and impact unduly on residents.

With regards to the specifics of the proposal, I have a range of substantial concerns around these proposals, concerns which have been articulated to me by local residents and I believe these need to be properly addressed and further meaningful consultation take place before any permission should be given to the proposals.

1. Flood Risk

I agree that, if approved the site should be restricted to the 'wet working' mode of working as I understand that it should not increase flood risk. Conditions should be applied to the application so that not only are increased flood risk from the works alleviated, but the net results of the works should be a reduction in local flood risk.

We are also anticipating over the course of the next few years changes into the local hydrodynamics due to the construction of the River Thames Scheme. Has this been taken into account within the proposals?

2. Infill

I agree with the assessment of residents' groups that no infilling of the site should take place so as not to increase flooding risk and to reduce the volume of materials and vehicle trips taken to and from the site.

3. HGV and other Vehicle Traffic

The proposed haulage routes to the site would risk severely affecting residents living nearby. The (southern) Route 1 would include Thorpe Lea Road which is already extremely busy with HGVs going to and from the Thorpe Trading Estate on narrow roads. The (northern) Route 2 would include Vicarage Road and the Pooley Green railway level crossing which has lengthy gate closures, and this route has a similar number of large number of HGVs using it on a regular basis. We already have stretched local infrastructure and upcoming works on the

A320 and the M25 will create further pressure. The application should take this into account and consideration should be given as to whether there is any acceptable route of increased HGV traffic to the site and whether the above problems could be mitigated.

4. Air quality

There is considerable concern over the generation of hazardous dust particles and PM0.1 (particulate matter of 0.1 micrometres diameter), affecting residents' health. The site is very close to Manorcroft Primary School downwind of the site and there may soon be 1400 university students accommodated at Rusham Park (formerly the Procter & Gamble Research Laboratories). Restricting the site to wet working would reduce these problems but I believe that this needs to be thoroughly investigated to ensure the works do not generate harmful dust. The impact on air quality from HGVs also needs to be taken into account.

5. Need for the scheme

With various major schemes set to be announced which would generate huge quantities of sand/gravel, further consideration should be given as to whether there is in fact the urgent need to extract from this site – the River Thames Scheme, the Esso pipeline and possibly a Heathrow Rail Link could provide future opportunities for material extraction with material that will need to be moved out of area.

Should the Outline Business Case for the River Thames Scheme be approved, given the large amounts of aggregate that this will produce as part of its construction, I strongly recommend that Surrey's mineral plan be urgently reviewed and this taken into consideration as part of this application, pausing the process if necessary.

6. Noise, vibrations and hours of operation

If approved, conditions should be placed on the site to restrict noise generated by the operation of the site, vibrations from machine equipment/extraction, and the hours within which it can operate to reasonable and tolerable levels for nearby residents. Further consultation is needed in this area and consideration should be given as to whether this is even possible given the proximity of nearby residents. What is the meaning of 'temporary works' and why has a noise limit of 70dB been set for this?

7. Impact on the Green Belt

Though this site has long been identified as part of the Surrey Minerals Plan Core Strategy Development Plan, careful consideration should be given to the impact of operation of the site on the vital Green Belt in Runnymede and whether operation of the site and any buildings required would represent inappropriate development which would harm the openness and character of the Green Belt.

8. Consultation with nearby residents

I am concerned to hear from residents of nearby Luddington House that they have not been sufficiently consulted on the proposals for the site and that the site is listed as derelict in the consultation documents when it now houses around 21 dwellings. I would ask that the consultation period for the proposal is extended to ensure that it is compliant with the statutory requirements.

I look forward to each of these points being addressed in the council's report on the application and also being considered by the applicant as they assess how to move forward with this proposal.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Ben Spencer MP
Runnymede and Weybridge