

## **Wapeys Wood planning application CM/17/16**

My name is Chris Brown, Chairman of Gerrards Cross Town Council. The Wapeys Wood site is located in Gerrards Cross.

For the last 10 years, I have been attending the Wapeys Wood Liaison Committee meetings that was chaired by our previous local member, Cllr Peter Hardy.

The residents of Gerrards Cross would like to see this site returned to agriculture and woodland, opened up for public access as soon as possible. They have already had two recent extensions to the site closure to 2012 and then to 2017.

The original contouring plan included the excavation and landfill of the central area. As it was decided in 2015 not to excavate the central area, a revised contouring plan was due to be submitted in January/February 2016. This contouring plan has now been extended to include the new proposal for a waste recovery and anaerobic digestion facility, pending the acceptance of the emerging Local Minerals and Waste plan. This has resulted in a delay in the submission of the restoration plan that may well delay the restoration beyond the agreed end date of December 31<sup>st</sup> 2017. The Town Council contents that the re-contouring plan and waste recovery plan constitute two separate planning applications and should have been submitted as such.

The site is due for closure by the end of 2017; there are a number of comparisons in the proposal that compare the proposed traffic with existing traffic and site opening hours. These comparisons are not valid, in that there will be zero traffic and zero opening hours; nor will this be a co-located facility after 2017.

For Green Belt purposes, there is no dependency of this particular location. None of the materials are sourced on site. The application by Tarmac for a Mortar Plant in August 2014, which previously depended on sand and gravel from Wapeys Wood was refused on appeal by the Secretary of State because this dependency was no longer the case and all materials would need to be transported onto the site.

The application makes reference to the emerging Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2016 – 2036) to justify the proposed Waste Site; this plan has not been adopted by BCC, is still in consultation and has no relevance to this application.

We understood that the Greatmoor incinerator was designed to process all non-inert waste arising in Buckinghamshire. This new development is therefore not required by BCC, nor is it included in the current Minerals & Waste local plan.

The A40 is frequently heavily used when either the M40 or M25 is closed. The Wapeys Wood site was opened prior to the construction the M40 motorway and we contend that, should the application be granted, it should have a dedicate entrance/exit route directly onto the M40.

As a result of the existing vehicle movement to and from Wapseys Wood, the A40 to the west of the site has deteriorated badly. There is also a considerable amount of mud and debris dropped on this unlit section of the A40, making it very dangerous at night. If this proposal goes ahead, this will be continuing hazard.

We are surprised to see that the rights of way officer has no objection in view of the fact that walkways have been diverted to poor locations (eg alongside the M40 motorway) and there is no safe cycleway between Gerrards Cross and Hedgerley.

The proposal has not considered all alternative sites. One of these is Springfield Farm in Beaconsfield. Whilst Gerrards Cross does not support using this site as an alternative, its omission from consideration invalidates the Green Belt special needs requirement.

In Section 122 of the officer's report, it states that noise from vehicle movement would be no more than existing and that SBCD Environmental Health Officer has no objection. This is incorrect, as existing movement will be zero by the end of 2017.

Our residents at Moat Farm in Gerrards Cross adjacent to Wapseys Wood have expressed their concern that the return of Wapseys Wood to agriculture and woodland may result in incursion by Travellers and seek reassurance from BCC that this will not be the case.

Gerrards Cross Town Council would request that this application be refused.