

By email to:
info@wtiharewood.co.uk



Cllr Phil J North
Leader of the Council
Beech Hurst
Weyhill Road
Andover, Hampshire, SP10 3AJ

26 November 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below my response to the pre-application stage consultation on the proposed Wheelabrator Incinerator at Harewood. I note that as this is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, it will be decided by the Planning Inspectorate, via a Development Consent Order.

Whilst I'm not opposed to waste-to-energy facilities in principle, which have the twin benefits of creating energy and preventing unnecessary landfill, this proposal at Harewood is in completely the wrong place. Having read the consultation document there is also a significant lack of detailed information, which I suspect if included, would only add to the evidence of why this incinerator should not be constructed in this location.

The Hampshire Waste Partnership (which as a waste collection authority, Test Valley is a member) already has sufficient capacity for turning household waste into electricity with sites most notably at Chineham, Basingstoke and two other sites in the county. I know the proposal is to incinerate business and well as household waste but it is a perverse policy to drive household waste from other parts of the country to the outskirts of Andover to be burnt. This will generate up to 400 unnecessary lorry movements per day, which is completely at odds with the 'environmental benefits' the proposal tries to promote.

Talking of the environment, the structure would be a massive eyesore with two 80m high chimney stacks, taller than one and half Nelson's columns, on the edge of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Huge incinerators like these should be located on industrial estates rather than on greenfield land, not to mention the impact to immediate neighbouring communities at Longparish and Barton Stacey. Considering the effects of this proposal on the environment, the Statement of Community Consultation should provide detail on alternative sites and reasons why the proposed site has been chosen ahead of them. This is a requirement of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017 but it is simply not there. Considering the site is above an aquifer, there is also many unanswered questions on the risk to soil or groundwater contamination.

I am also deeply concerned about the associated infrastructure which would be required to connect the facility to the grid. There is little detail in the document apart from a suggestion about seeking further consent or using permitted development rights for an underground trench. I am led to believe that this could be up to 10km long – and I'm concerned about the impact this would have on the countryside and the disruption to communities. This is crucial for the overall scheme and I find it extraordinary that no detail on this has been included.

Finally, the Borough Council works extraordinarily hard to keep Test Valley beautiful, both for the enjoyment of local residents and to attract visitors, who spend millions of pounds in our beautiful Borough each year. Many of these visitors choose Test Valley because of our world-renowned river and fantastic countryside. A huge incinerator on the banks of the River Test will do nothing for our tourist economy – at a time when we are spending a lot of money rejuvenating our town centres, including Andover, to try and attract more people in.

For the reasons I have outlined above, I strongly object to this application being submitted to the next stage.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Phil North
Leader of Test Valley Borough Council