

FROM Rufforth with Knapton Neighbourhood Planning Group

Ref Yorwaste Planning Application 16/00357/FULM

Erik,

Further to the comments from Highways ref the above application we wish to clarify the position of the Neighbourhood Planning Group. Should proposals to alter the site entrance as indicated in the application [or something similar] be withdrawn then we would oppose the application.

The Rufforth with Knapton Neighbourhood Planning Group understands the reasons for not putting a weight restriction on the B1224 through the village of Rufforth and have never asked for such a restriction nor does it feature in the emerging Plan. It is true that residents are very concerned about the traffic environment through the village and we are asking for reasonable measures to improve the situation in return for accepting development in the Green Belt

The requirement for an alteration to the site entrance to prevent HGV's entering or leaving the site via the village should be seen in the wider context of the Harewood Whin site. When permission was granted for the landfill in 1986 after a Public Inquiry residents were assured that this was for a lifespan of 15 to 20 years. 30 years later and the landfill is due to be closed only to be replaced by a Waste Transfer station. The previous planning application was approved by CYC, but called in by the Secretary of State and subsequently withdrawn. Harewood Whin is situated in the Green Belt and as such the proposed development is inappropriate unless very special circumstances can be proved. Since the previous application was withdrawn we have embarked on the process of producing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Rufforth with Knapton and are now at an advanced stage and expect to go out to pre submission consultation within the next 3 months. We recognised that Harewood Whin had been designated as a site of strategic importance for Waste Management in the Mineral and Waste Joint Plan and the CYC draft Local Plan 2014. and with the support of The Parish Council and fully endorsed at a residents meeting [14 November 2015] we have followed a policy of working with Yorwaste to arrive at a solution which meets that strategic requirement whilst minimising the effects on the community. With the help and co operation of the Yorwaste team we felt we had arrived at an answer

which met the key requirements of residents and the Policies of the Emerging Neighbourhood Plan namely any development should be within the current operational site boundary thus protecting the surrounding Green Belt and the aforementioned site entrance alterations should be undertaken.

Having worked in a spirit of community involvement as laid down in the principles of Neighbourhood Planning and obtained a commitment from Yorwaste to make alterations to the entrance it would be deeply disappointing and frustrating if this was reversed as a result of the Highways comments, particularly as at the start of this whole process we raised this very issue with Highways at a meeting on 14 October 2015 and were clearly told that whilst Highways would not request a change to the site entrance there would be no problem with it in principle should Yorwaste propose changes and indeed were told that we could inform Yorwaste of this.

We accept that Yorwaste forecast a slight reduction in vehicle movements as a result of their proposals but this site will be in operation until 2030 and no guarantees are being given nor could reasonably be given on vehicle movements over such a long period of time. Yorwaste figures indicate a forecast 3590 movements per month but each movement is classified as one vehicle both entering and leaving the site meaning in effect 7180 lorry movements along the B1224 every month, a vast number by any standards. However our major concern is that drivers of vehicles to and from Allerton will be tempted to use the B1224 to avoid congestion on the A59 thus actually increasing the traffic through the village. It should also be pointed out that these will be very large vehicles with a 44 tonne gross weight.

The suggestion is that this could be managed through a good will arrangement but this is a totally unsatisfactory basis for a fifteen year period. We are aware of the management team's offer and whilst we have considerable confidence in the current team, planning approval should legislate for the inevitability of change in structure, personnel and even ownership of the business over such a timescale. As road traffic legislation is unlikely to be able to achieve the desired objective then a very detailed 106 agreement would be required and we would have major concerns over how it could be enforced.

Whilst we fully appreciate that road safety cannot be compromised we do not accept that CYC's expert engineers cannot design an entrance configuration which achieves the objective without compromising safety. There are many road junctions which are at an angle and are not regarded as road hazards. We accept that we are not professional engineers and had hoped that a positive approach from Highways would result in a solution.

During the consultation process as described In Yorwaste's statement of community engagement residents were promised an alteration to the site entrance and their responses were on this basis. If these proposals were altered then evidence from the consultation becomes invalid and the credibility of Yorwaste and in particular CYC will suffer a major blow

We wrote to you on 4 March 2015 with our concerns over the proposals as submitted in the planning application and our desire for a complete solution preventing HGV's entering or leaving the site in a westwards direction and this remains our position. The absolute minimum acceptable would be the proposed alterations to the entrance as submitted by Yorwaste [preventing vehicles turning right out of the site] supported by a strong 106 agreement for vehicles not to leave or access the site via Rufforth supported by a disciplinary code making it a disciplinary offence for any driver to do so unless by express permission of management [only to be given on occasions of ,major incidents on the A59] and for such a code to be adopted by Yorwaste's own fleet and any contractors and be enforceable by an outside authority if necessary.

As a neighbourhood Planning group and following the principles of community engagement we would be more than happy to work with Yorwaste and CYC Highways to arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution to the site entrance and request an involvement in the wording of the 106 agreement.

We as Group have worked extremely hard to arrive at a solution for Harewood Whin which meets the strategic objectives and to convince residents that the effect on the community is minimised and the proposals acceptable. In this we have received a great deal of co-operation from the Yorwaste management team and hope that we can receive the same from CYC Highways