

**EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE
24 AUGUST 2022**

UPDATE REPORT

Item No: 2 **Application No:** 20/02029/COMIND **Page No.** 63 – 187

Site: Reading Quarry, Berrys Lane, Burghfield, RG30 3XH

Planning Officer Presenting: Elise Kinderman

Member Presenting: N/A

Parish Representative speaking: N/A

Objector(s) speaking: Graham Hudson – In Person

Supporter(s) speaking: N/A

Applicant/Agent speaking: Mark Westmoreland Smith on behalf of Applicant – In Person
Jay Mould – In Person
Jennifer Hepworth (J Mould) – In Person
Kevin Parr – Enzygo – In Person
James Whatton – Enzygo – In Person

Ward Member(s): Cllr. Bridgman, Cllr. Mayes, Cllr. Longton

1. Additional Consultation Responses

Public representations:	<p>An additional 21 representations have been received from 20 contributors. Comments are summarised as follows:</p> <p><i>Objections</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The application is about a mile south of Fords Farm and winds often blow here from that direction.• Strong opposition to proposal.• Air pollution is a worry for the elderly and children, especially those with Asthma.• Only solitude consultation has been attempted with residents of local areas.• Only just learned of this application; surely a major public consultation should have been held.• HGVs will almost certainly travel along Burghfield Road through
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	<p>residential areas. The numbers of HGCs from the site along this route have increased dramatically over the last few years. It is a totally unsuitable route and the proposal will increase movements even more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residents deserve better than this.• There is no need to have a waste facility that burns waste.• The site is far too close to residential areas, and should be located much further away from housing. The proposal puts a significant population at risk in the short/long term.• The risks of pollution, noise etc. are far too high to be ignored.• Neither the Air Quality Assessment, not the Alternative Land Assessment is thorough.• The Air Quality Assessment notes that the proposal will be detrimental to the air quality of the area.• No sites were modelled in residential areas where base pollutants are likely to be higher; therefore the addition of this development is likely to exceed Defra parameters.• The Health Impact Assessment, doesn't link to the Air Quality Assessment regarding changes to air quality. This interpretation is critical and should have been made available to the public.• The Health Impact Assessment doesn't assess the health disaster that would occur with plant failure.• The alternative land assessment is a key piece of analysis that should have been done by someone with experience.• Many of the alternative sites were rejected on the basis that previous applications were rejected; however it doesn't make those sites unsuitable. The assessment doesn't state why the site was chosen over many other available sites.• Further analysis is needed as to why alternative sites aren't suitable.• Reading is the most densely populated town that borders West Berkshire; to protect its citizens the proposal must be rejected.• Pollution to wildlife, environment and local residents.• Disruption caused by vehicles bringing waste to the site will be detrimental.• This type of development should not be allowed in this area.• West Berkshire Council should place greater emphasis on recycling.• The Council risks being sued for allowing such a proposal to harm people's health and ignoring its duty of care.• Risk to groundwater contamination.• The proposal will be an eyesore and threaten health and wellbeing.• Reading is already heavily polluted, and having an industrial plant in close proximity will increase air pollution and decrease the quality of life for residents nearby.• Vehicle movements will also exacerbate bad air quality and noise pollution.• The need for such a facility has not been demonstrated.• There is a lack of compliance with local waste strategy.• In March 2021 the Welsh Government announced an immediate moratorium on new Energy Recovery facilities and in June 2022 the Scottish Government also announced that no further planning permission for incinerators would be granted.• In July 2022, the English Government announced they would
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	<p>conduct a review of England's energy recovery capacity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Berkshire has long term agreements in place with surrounding authorities and operators to managed its waste destined for landfill or incineration. • If there is a local need, why does the Transport Assessment assume that 130,000 tonnes will be imported, with only 20,000 tonnes coming from the adjacent waste facilities? • Only approximately 5,000 tpa was suitable feedstock from the adjacent waste facility in 2019. The implications are that the facility will import 145,000 tpa of waste to West Berkshire. • The implications are that up to 88 HGV movements per day will be required, up to 23,000 per year. These are in addition to current movements. • There is no need at a local level, rather the need is justified a need based on the import of waste from further afield. • I concur with the Local Waste Assessment that there is no need at a local level for the proposed ERC. • The statements on climate change in the application overlook recent reports including the 2020 Sixth Carbon Budget. • It is not mentioned whether carbon capture and storage will be incorporated to mitigate fossil emissions. • If the committee is minded to approve the application, I request that the use of carbon capture and storage be made a condition on the grant of planning permission. • The proposal will have an effect on quality of life, as well as human health, wildlife and crops. • Urge you to reject/refuse this application. • Socio-economic bias in the site location assessment. • The proposal requires a large amount of water which isn't appropriate in the current drought situation. • The impact on human health report has not been made available. • There are a number of concerns about the air quality assessment: • The report has identified NO₂, PM₁₀ and heavy metals will all increase in the area. • The modelling has serious flaws – the base data was not specific to the site or the surrounding area, up to date readings were not taken to verify base data, which could lead to modelling based on artificially low pollutant levels. • Modelling also did not include sites in residential areas, only sites around the application site. Once the higher pollutant levels on Bath Road are taken into account, the model may have a different result. Sensitivity testing was not doe thoroughly. • The model did not assess the impact of a full or partial failure. • The risk to local residents of pollutant load and likelihood of risk wasn't conducted. Despite this the project appears to be going forward. • The assessment was undertaken by the applicant; an independent assessment should be done before the project can be assessed. • A proposal that burns waste and generates CO₂ should not even be considered. • There should be a public inquiry into this proposal. • The idea that the proposal will generate electricity is
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	<p>greenwashing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At a time when residents are being asked to recycle, and be aware of the environment and climate change, this proposal is hypocritical. • Alternative sites have only been considered in a brief report by a graduate. Little effort has gone into investigating alternatives. • No consideration has been given alternatives for storing, disposing or recycling this waste. • No justification for burning waste has been given. The waste is already being disposed of somewhere but why it cannot continue to do so has not been explained. • The location is sceptical, as it will process West Berks waste, but is located close to Reading where residents won't have the time, expertise or energy to challenge it. • Short or long term risk to health should not be justified by a quick, easy or profitable solution for the Council or private companies. • The applicant did not provide an analysis of need at the local level. Unable to find the same level of information and detail provided in the report as in the applicant's submission. • 130,000 tonnes of waste will be imported into West Berkshire. • The report highlights that waste currently sent elsewhere from West Berkshire could be diverted to the facility, however this wasn't part of the proposal. • There is no certainty or guarantee that West Berks waste could be dealt with at the facility as these arrangements are underpinned by long-term contracts. Therefore, this argument is flawed and should be put aside.
WBDC Trees:	<p>In the light of the revised TPP, yes this is acceptable (although extending the no-dig pedestrian access to include the Root Protection Area of tree T3 in the NW of plan 001 would be preferable).</p> <p>So please update the requested Condition to reflect the new TPP.</p>

2. Site Visit Actions/Information

The following information has been supplied in response to questions at the site visit as follows:

i. Traffic Movements/Access

Traffic movements are noted in the Highways Officer Responses of 30th October 2020 and 22nd February 2022, and Transport Assessment Addendum Dated December 2021 (ES Appendix 6.1). In summary, HGV movements will be 78 per day (39 in, 39 out). All are expected to use Burghfield Road to the north of Berrys Lane, whereupon 50% are expected to then use the A4 west to access M4 J12, and 50% are expected to use the A4 east and A33 (Berkeley Avenue) to access M4 J11.

Staff travel (car) movements are expected to be 33 movements in and 33 movements out per day. 75% are expected to use Burghfield road to the north of Berrys Lane with the remaining 25% using Burghfield Road to the south of Berrys Lane. Shift patterns will mean that none of these movements are during peak times.

Site access will be as for the existing Reading Quarry site. The access and sight lines are shown on the plan entitled 'Existing Access Visibility Splays and Visibility from Proposed Footway/Cycleway' (Drawing Number 1059-010, Rev A, dated Sept 21).

ii. External Finish for the Data Centre

The design and access statement outlines that the data centre will have a natural pallet using greens and browns (para 2.6.6). There is a proposed condition (Condition 47) requiring a schedule of materials to be submitted and approved, so these details will be able to be considered at this stage.

iii. Site Levels

Site sections/levels are shown on the plan entitled 'Site Sections Showing Existing Ground Levels' (Drawing no. 2120, Rev C, dated 31.5.22). This has been included in the plans pack.

iv. Data Centre Owner

It is understood that there is not currently an owner for the data centre prior to securing planning consent.

v. Back Up Generators

It is understood that the backup generators will be used in emergency use for the data centre only, less than 50 hours a year for testing. They will also need to obtain an environmental permit prior to operation.

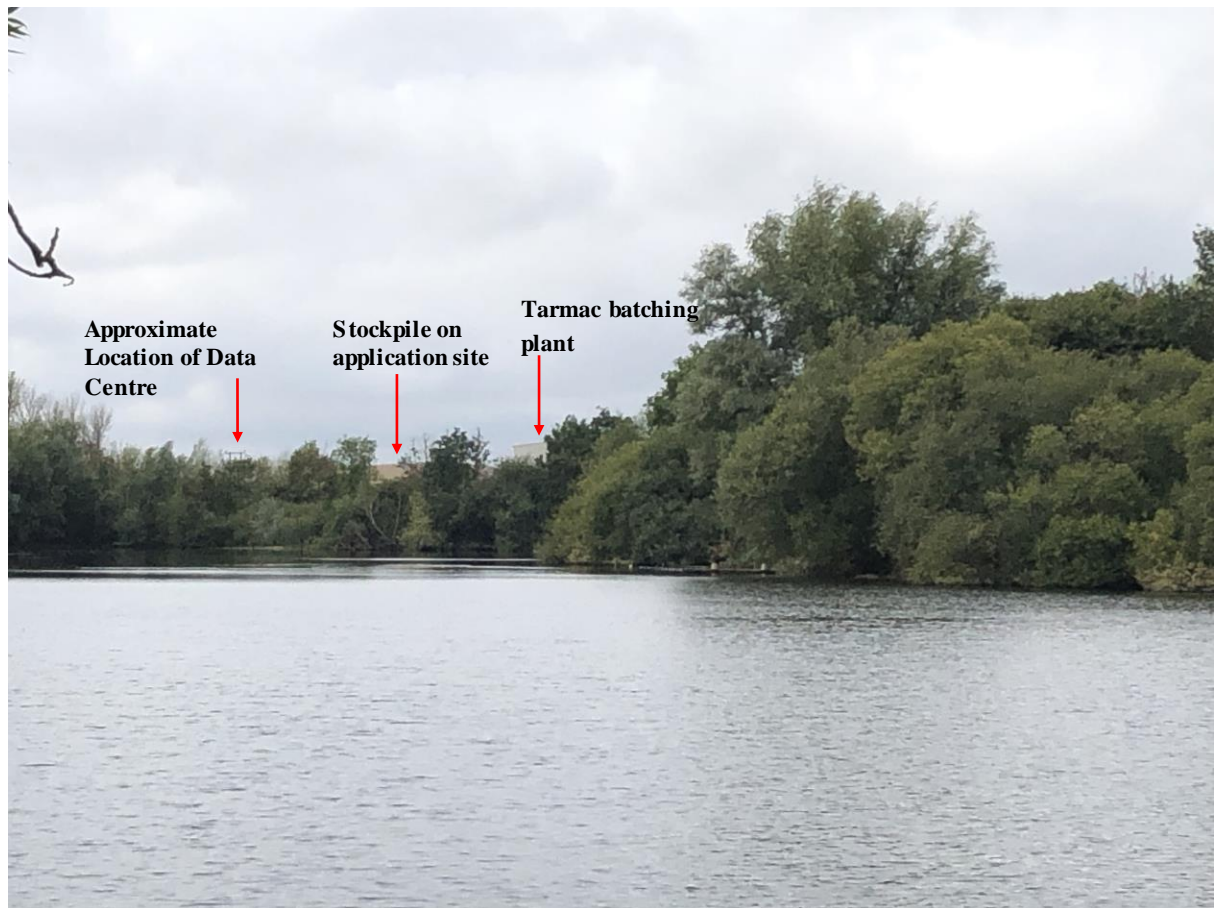
In addition, proposed condition 21 requires all noise generated from the proposed development to be attenuated to a level deemed acceptable by Environmental Health.

vi. Photograph from Residences on Kirtons Farm Road (Viewpoint 2)

It had been advised that the Tarmac batching plant and proposed development could be seen from the residences on Kirtons Farm Road (the Tarmac batching plant is absent from Viewpoint 2).

On further inspection, Viewpoint 2 appears to be from a point slightly further north than the residences on Kirton Farm Road, and the curvature of the lake may be screening the concrete batching plant from this angle.

A photograph towards the application site was taken from the garden of White Cottage on Kirtons Farm Road (as below), although please note that due to summer leaf cover the Tarmac plant will be more visible in winter.



3. Updated Recommendation

The recommendation remains as set out in the agenda committee report, subject to the following amended condition.

40.	<p>Tree Protection (Scheme Submitted)</p> <p>All Tree Protective Fencing shall be erected in accordance with the submitted plans, reference drawing numbers 1144-010-ENZ-XX-01-DR-AR-45-001 Rev PL02 and 1144-010-ENZ-XX-01-DR-AR-45-002 Rev PL02, by Enzygo Environmental Consultants (Revised Jun 22).</p> <p>The protective fencing shall be implemented and retained intact for the duration of the development.</p> <p>Within the fenced area(s), there shall be no excavations, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles or fires.</p> <p>Reason: Required to safeguard and to enhance the setting within the immediate locality to ensure the protection and retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with the NPPF, Policies ADPP1, CS14, CS17, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006 – 2026 and Policy 18 of the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.</p>
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