

August 2019

Dear Sir/Madam



**Re Application P/17826/000**

The Colne Valley Park CIC exists to maintain and enhance the Colne Valley as the first taste of countryside to the west of London for the benefit of more than three million people who live within 10 miles of the Park. The Park covers an area from Rickmansworth to Staines, across parts of Herts, London, Bucks, Berks and Surrey. The six objectives of the Park are:

1. **To maintain and enhance the landscape**, historic environment and waterscape of the Park in terms of their scenic and conservation value and their overall amenity.
2. **To safeguard the countryside** of the Park from inappropriate development. Where development is permissible it will encourage the highest possible standards of design.
3. **To conserve and enhance biodiversity** within the Park through the protection and management of its species, habitats and geological features
4. **To provide opportunities for countryside recreation** and ensure that facilities are accessible to all.
5. **To achieve a vibrant and sustainable rural economy**, including farming and forestry, underpinning the value of the countryside.
6. **To encourage community participation** including volunteering and environmental education. To promote the health and social well-being benefits that access to high quality green space brings.

This application does not meet the above six objectives and therefore we object strongly to this application.

The whole of the application site is located within the Colne Valley Regional Park. The development will result in:

- Significant impact on landscape and countryside directly in conflict with CVRP objectives 1 and 2
- Adverse impact on the countryside setting of the Colne Valley Trail in conflict with objectives 1 and 4
- Loss of habitat for reptiles (Heathrow's surveys have shown a large population of Slow Worms nearby), bats (European protected species) and other species, impact on Annex 1 birds using the nearby Old Slade Lakes complex. This is in conflict with objective 3.
- The loss of potential agricultural land in conflict with objective 5

**Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company**

Registered Office: c/o Colne Valley Park Visitor Centre, Denham Court Drive, Denham, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB9 5PG

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- Inadequate measures for wider mitigation/ compensation to offset the adverse effect of the development on recreation, biodiversity and visual impact on the CVRP

In addition, we disagree with the developer's case for locating this development in this part of the Green Belt and consider the Very Special Circumstances necessary to justify such an inappropriate development have not been demonstrated. There is no certainty with regard to the need for relocation as this will be determined by the DCO process for Heathrow Expansion. I also attach a response to a Parliamentary Question which indicates that the role of the existing facility – should Heathrow expansion go ahead – could satisfactorily be fulfilled by others elsewhere.

A recent decision by the Secretary of State to refuse an energy-from-waste plant in Hertfordshire was made on the basis of significant adverse landscape and visual impact, and clear conflict with local and national policy. The need for such a facility did not outweigh its harmful impact.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/819027/19-07-19\\_DL\\_IR\\_Addendum\\_Rattys\\_Lane\\_3195373.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/819027/19-07-19_DL_IR_Addendum_Rattys_Lane_3195373.pdf)

This land was also the subject of an appeal against a proposed strategic rail freight depot (SIFE), turned down by the Secretary of State in July 2016 because of its impact on this strategic gap, part of the Metropolitan Green Belt and the Colne Valley Regional park. This would have resulted in a severe loss of openness, as well as breaching local planning policy. .

The circumstances that led to this appeal decision have not changed. In fact, the Heathrow expansion proposals which threaten the Green Belt nearby make this land even more valuable as a strategic gap, preventing infill development in the remaining space between Harmondsworth (and London) and Slough.

The application should therefore be determined in the light of these material considerations.

Other matters of local concern to the CVRP are as follows:

The application recognises there will be adverse effects in terms of visual impact, air and light pollution on residents, and by implication also on recreational users of rights of way north of the M4.

There will also be a general and negative impact on the attractiveness of the public rights of way in the vicinity of the site for walkers, horse riders and cyclists. The development will create a barrier in a very narrow part of the Colne Valley Regional Park, reducing its attractiveness compared to the existing open countryside feel of the area.

There is also inadequate protection of biodiversity on this site, and a failure to meet the requirement to provide a net gain.

In conclusion, we believe the Very Special Circumstances required to justify this application in Green Belt terms have not been demonstrated. The proposal in this

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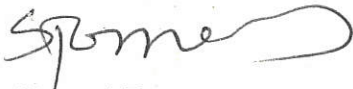
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location is detrimental to the openness of the Green Belt, and the potential for relocating outside the Green Belt and/or finding suitable alternative provision using energy from waste plants elsewhere, has not been sufficiently proven. Therefore, the application should be refused

If, however, this application was to be approved by the Secretary of State –which would be a departure from existing planning policy – we would welcome the opportunity to discuss with the developer how the CVRP can be compensated, and what mitigation can be provided, to address the very real harm that would be inflicted on the Regional Park. We set out some ideas which go some way towards this mitigation and compensation in the appendix. To this end we would welcome being part of any section 106 agreement.

Yours etc



Stewart Pomeroy  
Managing Agent  
For and on behalf of the Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company

**Attached**

**Appendix 1 Parliamentary question and answer**

**Appendix 2 Compensation and Mitigation package to be discussed as part of the S106 negotiations**

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## Appendix 1 Parliamentary question and answer

### Lakeside Energy from Waste:Written question 152119

Department for Transport Commons 152119 Lakeside Energy from Waste

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which waste disposal facilities with High Temperature Incinerators his Department has assessed as having enough spare capacity to deal with the loss of Lakeside Energy from Waste in the event of the construction of a third runway at Heathrow.

**Q** Asked by **Adam Afriyie** (Windsor) [N] Asked on: 11 June 2018

**A** Answered by: **Jesse Norman** Answered on: 18 June 2018

DEFRA used publicly available data on waste disposal held by the Environment Agency to confirm that the Lakeside energy from waste plant is not a strategic asset and its loss would not affect the UK's ability to meet environmental targets e.g. diversion from landfill. Therefore there is neither a statutory nor a policy reason to mandate replacement of the plant in the proposed Airports National Policy Statement.

The Lakeside energy from waste High Temperature Incinerator (HTI) mainly treats clinical waste. In the South East and London Regions (which includes the Lakeside facility) there are three HTIs (including Lakeside) with permitted capacity of 68kt. However, in 2016 only 57kt of waste was treated in total at these facilities and 5kt (or 9% of the total capacity) at Lakeside. The clinical waste burned at Lakeside does not have to be dealt with by an HTI. There are six clinical waste plants in the South East and London Regions (including Lakeside) therefore the loss of the clinical waste tonnage at Lakeside could be met by other facilities.

Grouped Questions: 152118

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## **Appendix 2 Outline of Compensation and Mitigation package as part of the S106 negotiations**

The EfW site is located within the Colne Valley Regional Park. Because of the impact on the Park the developers have a responsibility to contribute towards the protection, enhancement and maintenance of the land around the EfW to a higher standard. If the EfW site is approved there must be a S106 to enable implementation of the 6 objectives of the Colne Valley Regional Park (see <https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/whats-special/>) in the southern half of the Regional Park.

This could include the following Green Infrastructure opportunities

- Habitat and access improvements to nature reserves, woods, lakes and green spaces
- Enhance landscapes & visual amenity through improving roadside and footpath landscape including views of the countryside
- Improvement and promotion of the CVP short walks
- River habitat enhancements
- Delivering community events, conservation volunteers and guided walks
- Explore opportunities for local traineeships or apprenticeships

The Colne Valley Park CIC would need resourcing to cover the enabling role that we can play where the land is not under direct control of the developer, local authority or CVP. This could be delivered through a Countryside Management Service approach.

### **Justification**

- The number of large scale infrastructure projects proposed in the Colne Valley Park is unprecedented. If the area is to host these developments then each development must contribute towards ensuring a better landscape as part of the mitigation for the developments effects on the landscape
- This is compliant with the NPPF Para 138 “..... Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should... also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land”.
- This also helps the local authority to meet its duties in NPPF para 141 to “plan positively to enhance their (green belts) beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land”.

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