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Date: 10 September 2018
My ref: Ms Johnson
Your ref: -
File ref: Response to (via Theresa May MP)



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Growth and Delivery Team
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Dear Ms Mann,

SUBJECT: STAR LANE, KNOWL HILL, RG10 9XY.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your correspondence from [redacted], of the above address, to Mrs May. The correspondence concerned the Star Works Waste Facility operated by Grundons at Knowl Hill.

Before going on to comment on the matters raised by [redacted], I thought it best that I first explain some of the background.

Wokingham Borough Council (the council) are working with Reading Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to update planning policies through a joint Minerals and Waste Plan. This will ensure we have the tools to manage where minerals extraction and waste management development occurs and where it is restricted. Planning over a larger geographical area also provides a more strategic and cost effective way of planning for minerals and waste.

The four councils have jointly commissioned Hampshire Services of Hampshire County Council to prepare the plan. Hampshire Services have considerable expertise in preparing minerals and waste plans, having already adopted their own Minerals and Waste Plan for Hampshire. The Minerals and Waste Plan will replace the existing outdated Waste and Minerals Plans for Berkshire from 1998 and 2001, and will ensure each council has greater influence over minerals extraction and waste management sites and applications.

At an early stage of the plan making process, in 2017, landowners were invited to nominate land they felt was suitable for potential development through a formal Call for Sites process, an action required by government guidance. Due to the low response level, a further Call for Sites was undertaken later in 2017.

The councils must follow clear process and requirements set out in legislation and government policy in updating the Minerals and Waste Plans. This includes assessing all sites promoted into the process, and consulting on potential approaches towards managing minerals and waste development. As part of this process an Issues and Options consultation was undertaken for 6 weeks in June-July 2017. This was the first formal stage of the consultation process, with the purpose of engaging in discussion on the issues and managing minerals and waste over the

long term, and providing an opportunity to gather more evidence to inform later stages of the plan. Details of this consultation are available on the Hampshire Services website: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/berksconsult/berksconsult-io>

Following the Issues and Options consultation significant work has been undertaken to refine the evidence base and preferred strategy to inform the next stage of the plan making process, the Draft Plan. This includes a detailed assessment of sites across the four boroughs, including technical reports on transport, flooding and landscape and other matters.

The Draft Plan sets out the councils' preferred long term strategy for minerals and waste development, and proposes specific sites to help support this strategy. In making future decisions, the councils undertaking the joint plan will have regard to all reasonable options across the four boroughs to deliver sustainable minerals and waste development. Future decisions will be fully transparent and subject to further consultation. The Draft Plan is not a final document and the proposed sites and policies may be subject to changes following a detailed review of the additional evidence gathered through consultation.

The consultation seeks to engage residents, landowners, operators, and any other interested parties on the long term management of minerals and waste. It is therefore an opportunity to gather more local evidence to determine plan policies and site allocations.

Consultation on the Draft Plan runs for 10 weeks from 6 August until 5pm on 12 October 2018. The Draft Plan, response form and background evidence are available on the Hampshire Services website: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult>.

It is recommended that all comments are submitted as part of the current consultation to ensure they can be taken into account as the plan progresses. All responses to the consultation will be carefully reviewed before preparing the Plan for the next stage in the process, the pre-submission version next year.

To enhance engagement with interested parties the council organised two pre-consultation events to publicise the forthcoming consultation and explain the background and the process involved. One event took place at Knowl Hill Village Hall on Tuesday 24 July, which was well attended by local residents.

As part of the council's ongoing engagement, a further event took place on Tuesday 4th September at St Peter's Church, Knowl Hill, where officers from the council and Hampshire Services were available to discuss the Draft Plan and answer questions. Two further events will take place in Arborfield and Three Mile Cross.

I will now return to _____'s specific focus on the Star Works site.

The Star Works site on Knowl Hill is operated by Grundon. There are two distinct components to the site:

- A waste conditioning and treatment facility; and
- A landfill operation.

The part of the site used for landfill operation is due for completion in 2020/21 with restoration works ongoing, which includes bringing inert material such as soils, into the site. There are no proposals to extend or increase the landfill operations. The waste conditioning and treatment facility has permanent planning permission and is currently in operation.

Grundon have promoted the existing waste conditioning and treatment facility site as part of the plan making process. This includes the continuation of the waste collection treatment facility and other recovery operations.

The Draft Plan therefore proposes the allocation of the waste collection and treatment facility, along with potential new uses for recycling and other recovery operations, with the increase in capacity up to 100,000 tonnes per annum. It is anticipated that the completion of the landfill operations and proposed increase in recycling and recovery operations will result in negligible change in traffic volumes from existing conditions.

At this time, no detailed plans have been provided that set out Grundon's future development intentions for the site. A planning application would need to be submitted and approved before any change or expansion of the current operations could occur, during which residents would have the opportunity to comment on any proposals.

I trust this is of assistance, however should you have any further enquires please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Church

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