

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration

Address SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL OUTBOROUGH MIDDLESEX

Development: Out of Borough consultation for a replacement Energy from Waste (EfW) facility including a High Temperature Incinerator (HTI), provision of a new access road and new junction with the A4, visitor centre, car parking, temporary construction compound, associated works, ancillary buildings and structures.

LBH Ref Nos: 39710/APP/2020/17

Drawing Nos: Letter dated 13 December 2019

Date Plans Received: 06/01/2020 **Date(s) of Amendment(s):**

Date Application Valid: 16/01/2020

1. SUMMARY

This application is being reported to the Major Applications Planning Committee so officers may issue another objection on behalf of the London Borough of Hillingdon (LBH) to Slough Borough Council (SBC) for the the construction and operation of a replacement Energy from Waste (EfW) facility and High Temperature Incinerator (HTI) on land located to the west of the Iver South Sludge De-watering Centre and south of the M4 motorway, in Slough.

Following the Court of Appeal decision issued on 28 February 2020, LBH strongly objects to the application. There is no policy justification or Very Special Circumstance case to allow this development in the Green Belt. In an email dated 27-02-2020, the Officer at Slough Borough Council noted that in the event that the Third Runway does not go ahead, the existing facility will simply demolished. The fact that the existing facility will be demolished to make way for a facility on a nearby land parcel does not make this development acceptable in planning terms.

LBH maintain strong objection to the proposal. The proposal was based solely on the delivery of Heathrow Expansion which is unlikely to go ahead and as such, there is no need for a new EfW and HTI.

The proposal is subject to an environmental impact assessment (EIA) and the current EIA is considered to be deficient as it does not properly address the above matters. LBH request that the application is refused by SBC.

2. RECOMMENDATION

OBJECTION:

The London Borough of Hillingdon objects to the replacement facility which is inextricably linked to the Heathrow Expansion. This proposal represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt and the Very Special Circumstances case has fallen away in light of the Court of Appeal decision dated 27-02-2020 and this application should be refused.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Site and Locality

The application site is situated to the south of the M4 and to the west of the M25. The entire site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The West London Waste Authority currently hold a contract for a portion of West London's Waste to be processed through the existing facility. LBH sent more than 31,000 tonnes to the facility in 2018/19.

3.2 Proposed Scheme

The site is located approximately 600m to the north west of the existing Lakeside EfW and HTI facility at Colnbrook, Slough. The site comprises 13.7ha which includes:

- 3.5 ha for EfW and HTI facilities;
- 1ha for junction with the Colnbrook bypass, access road, footpath and cycleway;
- 4ha for batters, grass verges, native planting and sustainable drainage features;
- 2.4 ha temporary working area (required during the early stages of earthworks/construction only); and
- 2.8 ha temporary construction compound that will be reinstated after use.

The proposal is not located close to any LBH residential properties. If it is solely a replacement facility then highway impacts should be no greater than the existing facility.

3.3 Relevant Planning History

39710/APP/2019/2503 Slough Borough Council Outborough Middlesex

Out of Borough consultation for the replacement Energy from Waste (EfW) facility including a High Temperature Incinerator (HTI), provision of a new access road and new junction with the A visitor centre, car parking, temporary construction compound, associated works, ancillary buildings and structures at Land West of The Iwer South Sludge Dewatering Centre, South of M. Slough

Decision: 16-10-2019 OBJ

4. Planning Policies and Standards

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

UDP / LDF Designation and London Plan

The following Local Plan Policies are considered relevant to the application:-

Part 1 Policies:

Part 2 Policies:

5. Advertisement and Site Notice

5.1 Advertisement Expiry Date:- Not applicable

5.2 Site Notice Expiry Date:- Not applicable

6. Consultations

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

7.01 The principle of the development

The site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Paragraph 144 of the NPPF (2019) sets out that, when determining applications, Local Planning Authorities "should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt and states that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations".

As set out in paragraph 145 of the NPPF (2019), the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The proposal is inappropriate development within the Green Belt and its very special circumstances (VSC) are that this facility needs to be up and running before the existing facility closes in 2023 to make way for Heathrow Expansion to maintain continuity of service.

There are very strong objection to the application as the replacement facility is inextricably linked to the Heathrow Expansion and Heathrow Expansion is unlikely to proceed. In light of the decision issued by the Court of Appeal, the applicant's VSC case has fallen away. This proposal represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt and this application should be refused.

10. CONCLUSION

For the reasons set out in this report, Officers request the Major Applications Planning Committee agree the response to Slough Borough Council.

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