

## **Iron House farm application LCC/2020/0061 Out Rawcliffe Parish Council objections**

### **Background**

This recycling centre was established without planning permission sometime prior to 2008.

It was legitimised by a Retrospective planning permission for a change of use of land to create a green waste composting facility was granted in June 2009 subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement relating to ensure all HGV's and tractors and trailers delivering waste materials to and from the site do so via Rawcliffe Rd and it's junction with Lancaster Rd.

### **Current application**

This operation has expanded considerably from its original permission, by virtue of application after application to vary condition after condition. Expansion by stealth. It would not be unreasonable to assume that had this operation been applied for in its current form today that it would not be approved.

### **Parish Council objects on a number of issues:**

The size of the building is out of keeping with the existing landscape and is a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of what is a largely flat landscape. There is no building of comparable size, which protrudes so far on to the flat mossland.

Condition 7 of the original permission requires that no stockpile shall exceed a height of 3 m above ground level. The reason given was in the interests of visual amenity of the area and to conform with policy 99 of the Lancashire and policy SP 14 of the Wyre Borough local plan.

This building is a height of 8.2 m – what has changed in those policies that the application justifies the change from the existing condition. That this business now has a need for a building of this size is not on its own a satisfactory reason to override the condition of the original permission. It is not a statutory requirement for the Environment Agency.

This building would encroach Westward onto a totally flat landscape of moss land, which is not characterised with buildings of any description agricultural or otherwise.

## Photo of land north of site



The Parish Council noted that Wyre council initially objected to the application and then in a single line reversal of the decision withdrew their objection. The Parish clerk wrote the following:

We note that you have responded twice to this application

On 19/11/2020 your response was:

The proposed building by reason of its scale and bulk and siting, would out as visually obtrusive in the landscape. This would be harmful to the rural character and appearance of the countryside in which the application site and surrounding area is located. Furthermore the proposed building will be notably larger than the existing buildings at the site and inadequate information has been provided with the application to demonstrate that this large-scale building is necessary. This would be contrary to Policies SP4 and EP8 of the Adopted Wyre Local Plan.

On 26/08/2021 your response was:

Wyre Borough Council gives notice that no objection is raised to the above proposal.

Please could you provide us with details of the changes to the planning policy which have resulted in this change of position or, in the absence any such policy changes, your reasons for withdrawing your objection. In particular we would like to know whether your reasons are linked in any way to the Council's business relationship to the applicant (green waste processing).

Please provide a response as a matter of urgency in order that we can compile our submission to LCC before the expected hearing date of 20 October 2021.

The site is based on “ the moss” – which has been widely recognised as an area of critical national importance in the fight to control and store carbon. About 98% of lowland mosses of Lancashire have now been reclaimed for agriculture or otherwise lost. The habitat is so rare that all cultivated remnants, whether they are cut over and regenerated or not, are considered to be of great importance, a key part of the Counties critical environment capital.

This proposal conflicts with the aims of Lancashire County Council’s climate change strategy and as such should not be permitted.

### **Objections on grounds of Highways**

The roads in the area are almost entirely moss roads. This means that they have no substantial underlying structure and were not designed for the weight of the modern day vehicle. The cumulative effect of vehicles from businesses along the Lancaster Road (Preston plastics, BWA fabrications, Wilkinsons plant hire, 40 pitch touring caravans at Wilson house farm, SEL Environmentals, Valiants ) has caused substantial deterioration in not only the surface but the foundations of these fragile roads, for whom Lancashire County Council are responsible.

The damage and destruction to these roads is not sustainable and causes disruption to residents, road safety concerns (some of the subsidence is so severe that vehicles have been banking on the road surface), Large vehicles have become unstable and have turned over, on occasion taking power and telephone lines with them again causing disruption to residents.

The County Council highways department repeatedly fails to consider the wider access roads and the effect that these applications have on them, when considering their responses to applications. It is disappointing and difficult to explain to our residents when, what they assume is obvious, is completely disregarded. These roads and repairs then have to be funded by the taxpayer. Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that proposals should only be refused on highways ground if there would be an unacceptable

impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Whilst this application refers to only five journeys leaving the site, the cumulative effect of these applications does have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and the road network.

This is not a sustainable location for any business requiring access by regular HGV movements. Planning applications have to demonstrate sustainability.

Many of the vehicles arriving at the site do so via Skitham Lane, the subject of these photographs. Signage on these roads and on Lancaster Road at the junction of Skitham Lane clearly show that both roads are deemed unsuitable for large vehicles. How then does the Highways Department justify the lack of objection when their own signs state the roads are unsuitable. Since all access roads to the site are moss roads, the default position should be objection.

The 106 condition of the original permission is being consistently breached, traffic to the site is accessing it from Skitham Lane from the east and through the village and Crookgate Lane from the west. These are 60 mph country roads (save for a short stretch of 30 by the former school) and we regularly receive completes of waste lorries travelling too fast and there being too many of them.

In view of the above, The Parish Council of Out Rawcliffe respectfully request that the committee refuse this application in its entirety.

The Parish Council supports the County Councils view that the controls on the volume of waste been imported to the site are commensurate and proportional to the historic limitation on compost exports. Given the historical records of HGV movements between 11 and 29, this is clearly not commensurate with the volume of waste being exported. The consequences of which can be assumed that either that the number of HGV vehicles exiting the site is greater than the permission allows, or waste is being stockpiled at the site beyond the 3 m height restriction.

However, should the development control committee be minded to permit this application, the Parish Council respectfully request that following conditions be added, along with their existing proposals;

1. That in line with the County Councils advice from their own consultants that no more than 10 HGV vehicle loads per day (Monday to Friday) and 4 HGV vehicle loads per day (Saturdays) , enter the site.

No HGV vehicles be permitted to enter or leave the site on Sundays and bank holidays.

That the seasonal maximum entering be limited to 13 HGV Mon to Fri . 4 on Saturday and zero on Sunday.

For the avoidance of doubt HGV to be anything over 7.5 tons and to include tractor and trailers

That conditions be rigorously enforced.

Reasons :The road network is part of the Wyre cycle network, there are no pavements or street lighting and the movement of vehicles on a Sunday and bank holidays would have a detrimental impact on the enjoyment and safety of residents of and visitors to the area.

2. Further development rights for the site, for the avoidance of doubt to include the adjoining land, within the company's ownership or control ,be removed.

No further variations of conditions be permitted.

Reasons :In order to ensure that the rural nature of the area, the fragility of the road network and the imposition upon residents be limited to no more than it is now.

That the adjoining mossland, a vital source of carbon capture is not lost to further development which would be a contradiction of the County Councils Climate Change Policy and have a long term detrimental impact on the environment.

4. That the vehicle movements are recorded and that those records are regularly inspected by County officials and spot checks implemented.

Reasons: to ensure that vehicle movements do not exceed those permitted by condition.

Evidence of average of 20 tractor / trailer combinations, per hour, removing material from the site , throughout daylight hours on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2018

5. That the word " multipurpose" be removed from the "application for the erection of a multipurpose storage building."

Reasons: to ensure that the building operates only within the confines of the planning permissions that it has.

Sign on Lancaster rd



Damage to road edge.



Damage to power and phone lines caused by HGV overturning. Unrepaired for months.

Damage to the foundations of the road causing unevenness. Vehicles have been banking the area in the centre



Sign on Skitham Lane and damage to road edge.

