

Pinkham Way Alliance

Press Release - for immediate release

Photo opportunity April 12, 6.30pm, Town Hall, Hendon

Lobby of Barnet councilors tonight ahead of meeting to decide future of waste plant

Angry north London residents will turn out in force tonight (Tuesday) to renew their efforts to stop the building of one of Europe's biggest waste disposal plants in the middle of their communities.

They will demonstrate outside Barnet Town Hall in The Burroughs, Hendon, as the north London local authority's 63 councillors gather for a full council meeting, during which a final decision on whether to go ahead with the plant will be taken.

The residents have received support from Chipping Barnet Tory MP and transport minister Theresa Villiers, who has told one residents' association that she is opposed to the plant. Hornsey and Wood Green Lib Dem MP Lynne Featherstone has also expressed concerns about the plant, which if built will sit astride the boundary between the two neighbouring constituencies.

The North London Waste Authority wants to build the plant alongside one of the busiest stretches of the North Circular Road between Bounds Green and Friern Barnet. It will deal annually with more than 300,000 tonnes of rubbish drawn from the seven boroughs that run the NLWA.

But unlike similar plants across Europe and elsewhere in Britain, the proposed site – bought by the NLWA for £12 million from Barnet Council – is in the middle of an area of 10,000 homes and seven schools within a one kilometre radius. In Europe, such plants are built away from built up areas. A similar plant on Frog Island, in Dagenham, is 1.4 kilometres from the nearest homes.

The plant will work every day of the year and traffic experts are predicting that if built, it will be responsible for more than 1,000 heavy truck movements a day.

Bidesh Sarkar, chair of the Pinkham Way Alliance, the main opposition group, said: "We fear residents in the immediate vicinity and the surrounding areas will suffer from the pollution and noise caused by this huge movement of big vehicles, on top of any toxic emissions that come out of the plant itself.

“We have serious concerns that there will also be vibration damage to the foundations of homes along the routes, as well as roads and sewers underneath with so many heavy vehicles using roads that were not designed to take that kind of punishment.

“If the government can listen to public opinion and think again about its plans for the NHS, the NLWA and the seven boroughs should listen to the fears and genuine concerns of the thousands of people whose health and wellbeing could be seriously affected by this plant.”

Residents have accused the NLWA of carrying out a cursory consultation that many of them were unaware of and that the project is being steam-rolled through on the nod.

Ends

Notes for editors

The North London Waste Authority (NLWA) is due to put for the North London Waste Plan before Haringey council in May. See our website www.pinkhamwayalliance.org for more information.

The former industrial site, untouched since the 1960s, has become a refuge for bats and rare plants. In 1988 Barnet and Haringey councils designated it as public open space and designated some of it for nature conservation.

The waste plant would be the biggest of its kind in the UK - similar plants in Europe are built far away from towns and cities where they do not disrupt people's lives.