

## **Pinkham Way Alliance**

**Press Release - for immediate release April 13 2011**

### **Residents condemn Barnet Council's decision to ratify north London Waste Plan**

More than 300 angry north London residents protested outside Barnet Town Hall last night (Tuesday April 12) to show their disgust about plans to build one of Europe's biggest waste disposal plants built in the middle of a residential area at one of the busiest junctions on the North Circular Road (Colney Hatch Lane).

The majority of councillors voted to approve the scheme, effectively dumping the problem on to neighbouring Haringey, where a planning application is expected to be made by the North London Waste Authority in May.

Despite the presence of approximately 150 members of the public inside the town hall at the start of the meeting at 7.00pm and another 150-plus outside waiting to hear the council's decision, the councillors refused to move the item up the agenda and the decision was not made until after 10.00pm, by which time most people, adults and children, had gone home.

Local resident Colin Parish, who waited more than three hours to hear a cursory discussion about the decision, said council members were clearly intent on denying people the opportunity to see local democracy at work.

'It was shameful. They knew why we were there but they ignored councillor Rawlings's plea for this to be dealt with earlier in the meeting. They were obviously ruffled to see the strength of feeling about this crazy scheme and too embarrassed to let people see them make this decision.

'This was one of the biggest decisions the council has had to make in years and there was no debate. Councillor Rawlings brought up the fact that the people living nearest to the site in Muswell Hill and Friern Barnet had even not been consulted, but people living ten miles away in Potters Bar had. He was ignored.

'Now we face a situation where Barnet councillors, along with those in Islington, Enfield, Camden, Hackney and Waltham Forest, have smugly washed their hands of the problem and dumped it on to their colleagues in neighbouring Haringey who will have to make the planning decision. If the plans are approved the people of Haringey, and those of us in Barnet and Enfield who live close to the site, will have the privilege of having at least 300,000 tonnes of waste each year trucked in and churned up in a 23 metre high building on our doorsteps.

'In addition, Haringey will get the benefit of having all of Barnet's waste trucks, road cleaning vehicles and minibuses on its land, while Barnet council gets to pocket 12 million quid for the Pinkham Way site and removes its own dump-truck and vehicle depot into a neighbouring borough. It will then be able to sell the current depot site in Mill Hill to developers for millions to build 2,500 dwellings and increase its council tax yield by more than £3 million a year.

'There is a real democratic deficit here, and it stinks.'

Chair of the Pinkham Way Alliance Bidesh Sharkar said: 'We will continue to fight this disastrous scheme. The councillors' high-handed approach to their constituents will only encourage more local people to get involved with our campaign and increase their determination to defeat this proposal.

'London needs truly local solutions to the problem of waste management, not a massive factory close to schools and 10,000 homes that will blight the lives of local people, increase already high levels of pollution and bring the road system in north London to a grinding halt.'

**Ends**

**Notes for editors**

The North London Waste Authority (NLWA), a quango set up by seven London boroughs, is due to put plans for the North London Waste Plan before Haringey council in May. See our website [www.pinkhamwayalliance.org](http://www.pinkhamwayalliance.org) for more information.

The former industrial site alongside the North Circular road at Pinkham Way, has remained untouched since the 1960s. It is now 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.

There will be at least 1,100 vehicle movements each day through the already congested Colney Hatch Lane/North circular Road junction.