

Pinkham Way Alliance

Press Release - for immediate release May 09 2011

Locals enraged over waste plant plans Pinkham Way Alliance meets with waste authority

In recent weeks representatives of the Pinkham Way Alliance have communicated with thousands of people from Barnet, Haringey and Enfield, about plans to build a 300,000 tonne waste treatment plant on Pinkham Wood, at the junction of the North Circular road at Pinkham Way and Colney Hatch Lane.

At awareness raising stalls set up on Muswell Hill Broadway, Alexandra Farmers' Market and the Tesco superstore in Friern Barnet, the overwhelming response from residents has been shock and anger.

Pinkham Way Alliance chair Bidesh Sarkar said: 'There is a widespread feeling that we have been ignored and people are furious that this plant is being planned in the heart of our community.'

'Despite claims that we have been consulted about the proposals, most people are only now hearing about it for the first time. They cannot understand how public servants can have progressed these plans away from the public eye.'

'The development of a scheme of this size would devastate the quality of local life for decades to come. No wonder people are telling us that they are angry as hell and that they will do everything in their power to stop it happening.'

To find out exactly what is planned for the Pinkham Wood site, representatives from the Pinkham Way Alliance have started holding a series of meetings with senior staff from the North London Waste Authority (NLWA), including its chief executive David Beadle.

Mr Sarkar said: 'We have been told by the NLWA that we 'misunderstand' what is planned. We want to use our meetings with them to find out the truth about what they want to build right on our doorstep: the boundary of the site is just 85 metres from the nearest homes.'

'After our first meeting we can now confirm that they really are planning for there to be 1,120 vehicle trips a day, that's 560 vehicles in and 560 vehicles out. Most of these vehicles will be lorries - 670 trips, 335 in and 335 out, every day - with payloads of between eight and 24 tonnes. Just so you understand what this means, a lorry with an eight tonne payload is one of those great big trucks that collects the bins, and a 24 tonne truck is as big as the lorries used by Tesco.'

'Staff from the NLWA have also confirmed that the 300,000 tonnes of waste they plan to treat on the site each year will be coming from all directions, from the boroughs of Barnet, Enfield, Haringey and Camden, and, when asked about air quality, they confirmed that there will be an increase in air pollution in the area.'

Worryingly although the NLWA's plans for a waste treatment plant at Pinkham Wood are due to go to Haringey Council's planning committee by the end of this month, it is only publishing the final version of its waste plan for North London this week: the overall plan is not due to be approved until a public hearing in early 2012.

Local resident Colin Parish, a member of the Pinkham Way Alliance who lives about 400 metres from the proposed site, said: 'It is perverse that the outline planning application is going in to Haringey this month, but the overall plan into which it is supposed to fit is only now going out for public consultation. How can this be right?'

'The proposed waste treatment plant is too big and it should not be built in a residential area. If you want to see where waste treatment plants should be situated - miles away from anyone's home, school or business - take a look at the Donarbon waste plant in Cambridgeshire (go online to Google maps and look at postcode CB25 9PG in satellite view).'

That plant is in the middle of nowhere and it is cleaner than the proposed plant at Pinkham Wood because the waste is more thoroughly sorted and recycled, and it doesn't produce any fuel for incineration.'

Ends

Notes for editors

Residents and businesses will have six weeks to review and comment on the latest version of the North London Waste Plan: the consultation period is from May 11 to June 22.

Residents fear that if the plant got the go ahead it would fundamentally change the nature of the area, which has at least 10,000 homes within one kilometre of the Friern Barnet/Muswell Hill site. They are concerned, among other things, about traffic congestion, loss of amenity, noise and air pollution, health effects and the overall impact on what is an exemplar community in London that is really working well.

Pinkham Wood is a mature piece of woodland and home to rare bee orchids and bats, which are a protected species. It has been identified by Haringey Council as having 'Borough Importance (Grade 1)' for conservation, the same as Coldfall Wood and Alexandra Park.

The proposed waste plant would be one of the biggest of its kind in the UK – the size of two football pitches and 75 feet high. Similar plants in Europe are built far away from towns and cities where they do not disrupt people's lives.

See our website www.pinkhamwayalliance.org for more information.