

9th July 2020

Statement from The Bourne Group in regards to Gardenscape's Environmental Permit Application

The following information is all in the public domain, either in the documents pertaining to Planning Consent RR/2018/3144/P, and/or the supporting documentation and detailed management plans submitted with the Environmental Permit Application.

In November 2019 Rother District Council Planning Committee voted unanimously to grant the above mentioned Planning Consent, and soon after the Environmental Permit Application was submitted. Throughout the planning documentation, all in the public domain, reference is repeatedly made to the activities therein being subject to an Environmental Permit. We apologise therefore if the application for an Environmental Permit comes as a surprise following granting of the consent. Notice of the intention to make the permit application further to consent was given throughout the planning documentation, and indeed specific mention was made of it in our Open Letter to the village distributed in 2019. Unfortunately the planning process took almost a year.

Anyone seeking to make an informed comment on the Permit Application should read all the associated documentation, including detailed management plans pertaining to noise, odour and dust. The following summarises some of the main points for those unwilling to read the documents in detail before passing comment.

- The Environmental Permit Application merely reflects the activities specified in the planning application and subsequent consent. This application was widely read and commented on across the village and beyond. The planning application documents make numerous references to the activities being subject to an Environmental Permit and this has been discussed with the Parish Council and/or their representatives, as well as individuals within the village;
- Many people are concerned about the volume of waste specified in the application. You apply for the permit by weight category, not specific weight/volume. <75,000 tonnes is the smallest category it is possible to apply for. Our application would, therefore, on the face of it look the same were we intending to transfer 75 tonnes per year, or 75,000 tonnes – you must read the details of the planning and permit applications. We have not the intention, desire or indeed space to transfer anywhere near that volume;
- All waste comes in in bulk bags, in our own lorries. These lorries would all be returning to site empty anyway, so the application will not result in any additional lorries coming into the site. Equally, sorted waste will be taken from the site to various recycling centres in our own lorries which would otherwise be leaving empty;
- The permit is for a Waste Transfer Station as specified in the planning application. There will be no processing, treatment or, as has been suggested, incineration of waste. It is non-hazardous waste brought in in bulk bags and sorted manually under cover, with as much as possible being recycled;
- The planning consent clearly states that waste activities are 'ancillary' ie a very minor part of our operations. Our main intention is to maximise the potential of existing lorry movements, providing an opportunity for the recycling of waste that might otherwise be sent to landfill. Our main business is, and will remain, the production and distribution of quality gardening and landscaping products.

If, following reading of both the above and the documents submitted as part of the planning application and permit application, you have any questions or concerns please address them to us directly in the first instance. Conjecture and dissemination of false information without clear understanding or appreciation of the facts, or our intentions, is unhelpful. All we ask is that comment passed on whatever platform you choose to make it, is fair and well informed. Thank you for taking the time to read this statement.

