



Highwoods Preservation Society
Preserving Britain's Woodland Heritage

Highwoods Preservation Society
c/o 86 Cranston Avenue
Bexhill-on-Sea
TN39 3NL

November 25th 2009

Waste & Minerals Policy, ESCC Preferred Strategy for Waste

We, the committee of the Highwoods Preservation Society, are writing to convey our objections to the identification of the Ashdown Brickworks site as a 'Preferred Option' for the land disposal of waste in the Preferred Strategy.

The Bexhill Highwoods lies under 150 metres away from the site. The woods are direct neighbours of the quarries separated only by Pear Tree Lane.

The Highwoods is 87acre semi-natural ancient woodland and a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest. The woods are owned by Rother District Council. The Highwoods Preservation Society (HPS) manages the woods under an agreement with this council. This situation has pertained for nearly thirty years.

The woods are popular with the community who are very supportive with fund raising etc. It is estimated that the woods receive at least twenty thousand visits per annum.

HPS is very concerned about the effect of a landfill at Ashdown Brickworks. Landfill sites attract rodents and scavenging birds in large numbers, which unbalances the natural order of things in a particular locality. We are concerned on the effect of predation to small birds and mammals.

There are several ponds in the woods, which in recent years have suffered from less water than in the past. Any alteration of the local watercourses could affect our water supply to these ponds and the knock-on effect on their attendant wildlife. Any leaching would also cause problems.

The part of Pear Tree Lane that passes the woods is already a used as a rat run, which is most unsuitable as the road is very narrow. Any more traffic would render the road extremely dangerous. There is also a threat from fly tippers, especially at busy times and when the site was closed.

We would in any case draw your attention to your **Strategy Policy CS6** where land disposal locations need to demonstrate that **'there is no unacceptable impact on the environment'**. We do not believe, in the light of the above, this could be demonstrated in the case of the Highwoods.

Moreover, your 'Preferred Option' is said to be, under Issue W6, a combination of Options W6a, W6c and W6d. Yet **Option W6a** considers strategic locations for land disposal sites **500 metres away from 'valued environments'**, which of course, include SSSIs. **Option W6c** is even more relevant as it considers specifically minerals voids-such as Ashdown- but again only those 500 metres away from such environments.

In sum, HPS considers that the Ashdown Brickworks site is not only totally unsuitable for a landfill site and would have egregious effects on the Highwoods, but it does not satisfy the criteria of your own policy regarding the identification of land disposal sites. The brickworks site should be used for recreation purposes for the benefit of the community.

Highwoods SSSI
Peartree Lane, Bexhill-on-Sea