

Oare Parish Council
50 Park Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1DY
T: 07941 987691 E: oarepc@aol.co.uk

Roger Gough
c/o Leaders Office
Sessions House
County Hall
Kent

OPEN LETTER

5th February 2021

Dear Mr Gough,

As you will be aware, East Kent Recycling (EKR) operates a waste management premises near Oare in Faversham. You will also be aware that an application to redevelop this facility (part retrospective) was granted permission in August 2019. A number of conditions were imposed, including a limit of 80 HGV movements (40 in and 40 out) in any one day; the maintaining of records of these movements by the site operator and the submission of these records to the Waste Planning Authority; the provision of pedestrian refuges along the access road; and various conditions relating to noise and dust.

The granting of permission was of great concern to local residents and community groups but we were assured by Kent County Council's planning department that these conditions would be imposed and non-compliance would be dealt with.

This has not been the case.

Since the grant of permission, local residents have observed many instances of non-compliance, including no attempt to install the pedestrian refuges, noise and dust over and above the acceptable level, and HGV movements in excess of the permitted amount. Residents were encouraged by KCC to keep records which could be used as formal evidence, which they have done. KCC has been sent data from lorry counts, time logs of instances of excessive noise and dust, and photos of pedestrians struggling to use the footpath with no safe refuges from large vehicles passing. Still nothing has been done.

Following involvement from Helen Whately MP, we were finally granted a meeting with KCC in November last year. Officers stated that they need to work with EKR to achieve compliance but we see little evidence of this and the deadlines for the conditions were clearly meaningless if they cannot be enforced.

The Secretary of State's recent approval of the coastal route from Whitstable to Iwade makes the improvement of the footpath even more crucial as the route is likely to see an increased footfall. It is unacceptable that pedestrians, often walking dogs or with young children, have to step into the verge to avoid EKR vehicles, and that EKR is not being held to account for its failure to provide the required refuges.

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We therefore strongly request that you take action to enforce compliance and impose sanctions on EKR immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Bex Ratchford
Oare Parish Clerk

Cllr Andrew Bowles
Chairman – KCC Regulation Committee

Louise Bareham
Faversham Town Clerk

Harold Goodwin
Chairman – Faversham Society

cc: Cllr Susan Carey
Cllr Mike Whiting
Cllr Lloyd Bowen
Gordon Henderson MP
Helen Whately MP