

# Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

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17 February 2016

West Suffolk Operational Hub Consultation Feedback  
West Suffolk House  
Western Way  
Bury St Edmunds  
IP33 3YU

Dear Sir / Madam

## West Suffolk Operational Hub Consultation Feedback

The considered view of the Parish Council can be summarized as follows:

1. the creation of a combined waste hub within Suffolk is fundamentally flawed;
2. without information regarding project costs neither residents nor councillors are in a position to agree the proposed project irrespective of its location;
3. the County and Borough Councils weigh sustainability issues too heavily and thereby reach the wrong conclusion.

The Parish Council recommends consideration of the following points:

- (a) It is insufficient justification to argue that Suffolk will be trailing a new path by creating a combined waste hub. There are good reasons there are no other examples within the UK. These include:
- the resistance of local residents;
  - the physical impact on local communities – noise, smells, traffic and air pollution;
  - safety issues arising from use of facilities by both residential and commercial clients.

While all three Suffolk Councils should be commended for considering the idea of a combined Hub it seems to have become a project carried forward by its own momentum, and possibly the need to safeguard political reputation, rather than by a clearly articulated business case.

- (b) Although the County and Borough Councils have entered into yet another round of public consultation they are either unwilling, or unable, to produce information regarding the cost of the proposed project. Without such information neither residents nor councillors can make an informed judgement as to whether the Hub, wherever located, makes financial sense.

The project costs ought to have been clearly articulated to the electorate who will, in large measure, be footing the bill. There is a strong sense of outrage amongst local residents that this information has been withheld. Local views can be succinctly summarized in the phrase:

**NO COST- NO CASE - NO HUB!**

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- (c) As indicated above, it is the view of the Parish Council that the case for a combined hub has not been made. Furthermore, the Parish Council believes that process used by the County and Borough Councils in recommending the Hollow Road Farm site is flawed for 3 reasons:
- (i) central to the consultation process is the expectation that members of the public are able to make judgements about the suitability of potential sites and what criteria should be used when assessing sites. Furthermore, we believe the criteria used are very subjective and appear to have been created to justify the decision for Hollow Road Farm.
  - (ii) neither option 3 nor option 5, both having positive impacts, were articulated to the same extent as the Hollow Road Farm option;
  - (iii) the Parish Council believes that, if cost and public opinion are taken into account (as well as sustainability) one of options 3 or 5 may prove to be a more attractive option. The Parish Council believes the Symonds Farm location is worthy of consideration in this regard with Rougham HWRC being maintained and dual location of a Transfer Station and Depot.

Following the repeated representations of electors, St Edmundsbury Borough Councillors are already aware that locating a combined Hub at Hollow Road Farm is unpopular and flies in the face of residents' deeply held concerns about the loss of a local green field site, the close proximity of the combined Hub to residential dwellings and the impact on roads and local infrastructure of an additional 610,436 vehicle journeys.

In conclusion the Parish Council calls on the County and Borough Council to abandon the creation of a combined Hub and to take account of both cost and public opinion before taking any further decisions regarding local waste management.

For further comment on this response please contact Mike Collier, Chair of Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely



Paul MacLachlan  
Clerk