

**SGA AGM May 2020**

**North London’s 13-year journey to nowhere - NLWP Update**

Despite the many evidence based submissions made to the North London Waste Planners over the past two years explaining why the Pinkham Way Nature Conservation Site was not suitable for inclusion in their waste plan, and why their predictions for future waste capacity in North London were hugely overestimated, the planners persisted in ignoring them all and submitted the NLWP to the Planning Inspector without amendment.

Last November the Planning Inspector found the proposed NLWP so unsound that he refused to make any proposals for modifications that might rectify it. At the end of the hearings he advised that ***so much*** was required – some of it fundamental – that the Boroughs should consider whether to attempt modification at all or start again.

PWA considers that the NLWP is beyond rectification by modifications. The *“Enfield Planning Update – Spring 2020”[[1]](#footnote-1)*, produced by Enfield Council, offered a different picture, wholly misleading, which asked the reader to infer that with a tweak here and there the plan will sail smoothly towards adoption.

North London’s 13-year omnishambles has produced one failed plan (2012) and a second whose survival the Inspector now publicly doubts. To put this into perspective, the West London Waste Plan took some six years from inception to adoption, the East London Plan five, and the South London Plan four. The North London Boroughs talk about further consultation on proposed Main Modifications (now postponed because of Covid 19) but given the Inspector’s comments at the Examination in Public last November its hard to imagine what proposals they can come up with that could put this fundamentally flawed NLWP right.

Virtually since drafting began in 2007, the NLWP has been tainted by predetermination directly related to the North London Waste Authority (NLWA):

* The first waste plan was distorted by the requirements of the Authority’s 30-year waste procurement.
* The strategy underlying the replacement plant at Edmonton remains confusing: rather than sizing its capacity to available regional waste, the NLWA instead will source feedstock elsewhere in SE England to satisfy built-in over-capacity. Its field of search extends way beyond the borders of its member North London boroughs, the boroughs to whom it owes its statutory duty. Irrationally, though, it’s the waste data for these same boroughs that has had to supply evidential support for the plant, and it was no surprise that this contrived justification crumbled under rigorous scrutiny last November.
* The NLWA purchased Pinkham Way specifically for its waste procurement in 2011 shortly after the first NLWP was initiated. The Procurement was abandoned in 2013.
* Before the Procurement was initiated, the Pinkham Way site was placed in the ***bottom 20%*** of the dozens of N London sites assessed for inclusion in the first NLWP; in PWA’s opinion, this remains the only objective assessment. It was unacceptable to NLWA, however, which had already included the site in the Outline Business Case for its procurement, and, within a matter of days, a Haringey *‘re-assessment’* had catapulted PW into the NLWP’s top 10 preferred sites.
* Since then, the imperative to deliver PW for waste use at all costs has contaminated Haringey Council’s Local Plan, and in turn has infected the objectivity of the preparation of the NLWP.
* Its highly suspect inclusion in the present NLWP was a convenient way of avoiding any embarrassing explanation of why the Authority is land banking a Grade 1 Nature Conservation Site for which it paid £12m, a site for which a) it has no planning permission and no plans and b) has never shown either need or suitability. To say nothing of £170m plus of expenses related to the site and the procurement of which it formed part. Its time to stop this waste of public resources.

The NLWA requirement to source feedstock from the far reaches of SE England runs contra to a principle NLWP objective to reduce *‘waste miles’*; the costs have nearly doubled, meaning an increased funding burden on N London boroughs for a very long term fixed capacity plant operating against a fast-changing background.

The downtrend in waste will be hastened by the development of the Circular Economy (CE), which is forecast to reduce overall waste levels significantly whilst increasing recycling.

We await the publication of whatever NLWP amendments the planners produce and will be scrutinising them with the same attention to detail that we have been doing over the past 10 years. This important nature conservation site grows in value as time goes by and PWA is determined that it, and all the species that inhabit it, is properly protected for future generations.

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1. https://www.google.co.uk/search?safe=active&source=hp&ei=9t3PXr3GC86TlwTq-rzQBw&q=Enfield+Planning+Update+Spring+2020&oq=Enfield+Planning+Update+Spring+2020&gs\_lcp=CgZwc3ktYWIQAzoFCAAQgwE6AggAOgYIABAWEB46BQghEKABOgcIIRAKEKABOggIIRAWEB0QHjoECCEQFVCAEFj5TWCPUWgAcAB4AIAB1AGIAakTkgEGMzIuMi4xmAEAoAEBqgEHZ3dzLXdpeg&sclient=psy-ab&ved=0ahUKEwi9mffk9NbpAhXOyYUKHWo9D3oQ4dUDCAg&uact=5 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)