

EWHURST BRICK AND TILE WORKS

A meeting of the Ewhurst Brickworks Community Liaison Committee was held on 3rd October 2017 at Wienerberger's visitors' centre.

As this was the first meeting of the liaison committee since Wienerberger submitted their planning application for changes to the quarrying areas and the building of a tile factory, the chairman highlighted how aggrieved some of the community members of the committee felt because of the late stage at which the building of a tile factory had been introduced to the ROMP (review of mineral planning) document. Its introduction in April, days before the planning documents were submitted to Surrey County Council, gave no opportunity for the impact of the tile factory on the community to be considered or for there to be engagement with the community to allow their thoughts to be reflected. (Wienerberger explained that their board had decided to include the building of a tile factory in the ROMP submission at a late stage and that the committee were made aware of it when it became known.)

It was agreed that a number of lessons had been learned over the past few months and hopefully the committee could move forward positively to try and re-instate some goodwill towards the company that has been eroded.

Some time was spent ensuring that all sectors of the community are adequately represented on the committee. It was agreed it would be beneficial for a representative from Ellens Green to join the committee, as well as replacing the representative from Ewhurst Parish Council who recently resigned from the Council. It was also agreed to extend the lines of communication between the committee and the community to hopefully include the websites of the three parishes that the brickworks impacts on (Abinger, Ockley and Ewhurst) and the Ewhurst parish newsletter.

From discussions with residents and our local councillor at the information evening held by Wienerberger following submission of their planning application they concluded that the key concerns of the community to the application are **transport**, the **location of the tile factory** and **emissions from the tile factory**.

Transport: the validity of the traffic statistics in the transport document support the planning application was raised with the "no collisions" data being questioned as an appropriate measure of the risks associated with traffic movement to and from the site. Some committee members thought recording "near misses" would be useful and/or photographs of such incidents (if safely possible) being sent to planners. Others suggested taking the distribution of bricks and tiles in house would give more control over the behaviour of drivers; avoiding Okewood Hill entirely; or having a distribution site on the edge of a trunk road.

Wienerberger propose to:

- follow up an earlier request to TomTom satellite navigation to remove certain routes that are entirely inappropriate for HGVs from their recommended routes to the brickworks (Here maps have already agreed to the request made to them for this to happen);
- install three additional signs at various places on the recommended routes to the site;

- create a task group dedicated to reduce the transports issues;
- endeavour to convert the proposed diverted footpath (identified in the planning submission) to a bridleway, and to link existing bridleways on their land, so that cyclist and horse riders can avoid the roads.

Location of the tile works: it was explained that the present proposed location avoids removing ancient woodland and uses the tile factory to shield local properties from the noise of the stock yard.

It was agreed that Wienerberger would continue discussions with Surrey County Council to see if the location of the factory can be improved. (An alternative site suggested by committee members would involve the removal of some ancient woodland – although not ideal, the present planning consent allows for this.)

Emissions from the tile works: Wienerberger will produce a statement explaining the permitted emissions from the factory, the stack height and its impact on the community.

Other non-planning application related items discussed or raised were:

1. Hauliers have been complaining that overhanging branches are forcing them in to the middle of the roads. An initiative was agreed to identify the location of these branches and the land owners. Wienerberger will then approach land owners asking them to trim their trees. (Surrey County Council will be asked to cut the trees on land they own but are unable to cut privately owned trees.)
2. There are no updates on any activity relating to the old Ewhurst Brickworks site. It has not been sold.
3. There had been on complaint about the emissions from the brickworks' stack. It was explained that there is scope within permitted emissions for the colour of the plume from the stack to be varied, but that any concerns should be reported to the environmental health officer at Mole Valley District Council and they will be investigated.
4. The installation of the scrubber on the brickwork's stack is due to be completed and operational by the end of November when emissions will be tested by MVDC. The limestone required within the scrubber will be transported by 12 lorry movements (six lorries in and out) a year.
5. Wienerberger are donating pavers to the Centenary Garden at Snoxhall Fields in Cranleigh which is due to open on 11th November 2018; and have donated £135 to the children's section of the Okewood Hill Flower Show and £250 towards the snooker table at Okewood Hill Cricket Club

The next meeting of the liaison committee will be held towards the end of November.

Rosemary Thompson - Chairman of Ewhurst Brickworks Community Liaison Committee