

Oliver Hoban

From: Lorayne Wall
Sent: 15 December 2023 11:27
To: Development Control
Subject: FW: 4/21/2432/0F1 - FORMER MARCHON CHEMICAL FACTORY, HIGH ROAD, WHITEHAVEN
Attachments: Marchon Reconsultation.pdf; 4/21/2432/0F1 139 DWELLINGS (FULL) AND RESIDENTIAL & RETAIL (OUTLINE), FORMER MARCHON FACTORY AND LAND TO THE NORTH, WHITEHAVEN

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Dear Planning Team

Friends of the Lake District welcomes the opportunity to comment on the re-consultation relating to the above application. We are the only charity wholly dedicated to protecting and enhancing the landscape and natural environment of Cumbria and the Lake District. We previously objected to the scheme just over 2 years ago. Whilst we recognise that revised documents have been issued, our fundamental concerns relating to landscape impact and impacts on the heritage coast, particularly of the area of development to the west of the Wagon Way, still apply.

In addition, the preparation of the new Local Plan for what was the Copeland area has moved on and is now at an advanced stage, with the Examination having commenced and hearings having been held. Accordingly, the plan should carry some weight. Strong policies are set out in the emerging local plan for the protection of landscape, the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast and the undeveloped coast. To allow the proposed development to go ahead would conflict directly with and would serve to undermine the existing and proposed policies affecting this area.

According to the local plan examination webpage, the next stage will be a consultation on Main Modifications. Whilst the list of Main Modifications for consultation has not yet been issued, we note that none of the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions queried or questioned the proposed inclusion of the Heritage Coast extension area and in fact the Inspector herself referred in the Matters, Issues and Questions to the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast (i.e. the full name covering the extended area). Furthermore, neither the list of 'suggested main modifications' nor the post-hearing Action Points list, which identifies proposed actions that would result in main modifications, include any modifications that relate to weakening the policies that relate to the heritage coast, undeveloped coast or landscape. One of the actions states "Policy N7PU: 2nd paragraph: amend wording to state 'inappropriate development includes that which affects its scenic qualities and views within or towards/from the Heritage Coast'." We note one of the modifications suggested by Historic England includes making a specific reference to the historic Wagon Way affected by this proposal, highlighting its importance.

It therefore seems unlikely that any of the main modifications will change the position currently set out in relation to protecting the heritage coast, undeveloped coast or landscape.

For the reasons previously set out and taking into account the increased weight to be given to the emerging local plan, our view is that the proposal would result in the loss of a valuable stretch of undeveloped coast and a part of the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast and would clearly compromise the landscape character, scenic qualities and features (such as the Wagon Way) of the heritage coast and its setting, including views within, towards and from the heritage coast.

As such, our concerns remain as set out in our previous response and our objection still stands. I attach our previous response for reference.

With regards,

Lorayne Woodend Wall MRTPI
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The only membership organisation dedicated to protecting and enhancing Lake District and Cumbrian landscape

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