

225 tonnes of non-waste materials among items removed from the Stoney Castle site in Pirbright

We have removed 225 tonnes of non-waste materials, 66 cars and caravans, more than 100 tyres, a barn and 3,000 litres of unidentified liquids including oils and fuels from Stoney Castle in Pirbright, which our contractors have safely disposed of. These items were stored on the land in breach of enforcement notices and environmental health notices.

There were also occupiers on site who we offered housing and welfare support prior and during our work on site.

Lead Councillor for Development Management, Cllr Tom Hunt says:

"This has been one of our borough's biggest planning and enforcement cases. Our officers and contractors have worked hard over the last three weeks to make sure that the site is cleared safely. The list of items that we have removed speak for themselves and shows just how big this operation was.

"We started our work on site almost three weeks ago after serving planning and environmental health notices. It is the responsibility of the landowner and those on site to comply with these notices. To clear the site we budgeted £180,000 and we are looking to recover these expenses from the landowner. We have now closed the entrance to the site with concrete bollards to help prevent further breaches."

Lead Councillor for Environment, Cllr James Steel, says:

"We will continue to work with Surrey County Council and the Environment Agency. After listening to residents' concerns about claims of toxic waste, we will

be supporting the Environment Agency as they test the nearby canal and stream for any contamination caused by the illegal waste on site, as is their responsibility. These were tested in 2019 and did not show any contamination.

"We understand residents' frustrations with what we have been able to say during our work at Stoney Castle. This has been a longstanding case and we have been encouraging the landowner and their representatives to be aware of their duty to comply with our notices. We do not make decisions like this lightly and we have followed a long and comprehensive legal process. We are really pleased that we been able to clear the site of materials within our area of responsibility."

We originally served two planning enforcement notices in 2013 after those at the site built a barn and changed the usage of the land for storage and for residential purposes, without planning permission. In 2015 Surrey County Council issued a notice on the land for bringing waste on the land without permission, which the landowner's representatives were prosecuted for in 2018. We also served Environmental Health notices. After working with our partners, Surrey County Council and the Environment Agency, and following Surrey County Council's successful prosecution, we started work to achieve compliance with our notices, however, this was postponed due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

Published on: 05 August 2021