

Docking Closure – Consultation Responses Report Oct 2015

APPENDIX E

A four week consultation on the closure of Docking Recycling Centre took place closing on the 25 October 2015. The online consultation was based on Norfolk County Council's Consultation Finder and responses were accepted via an online form, by letter or phone call. The consultation was advertised through flyers distributed at Docking Recycling Centre and through the Norfolk County Council website. Local stakeholders including the Borough Council, local members, the parish council and surrounding parishes were informed. Additionally, Councillor Coke attended the Docking Parish Council meeting on the 15 October along with two officers from the waste management team.

The consultation was based around 3 questions:

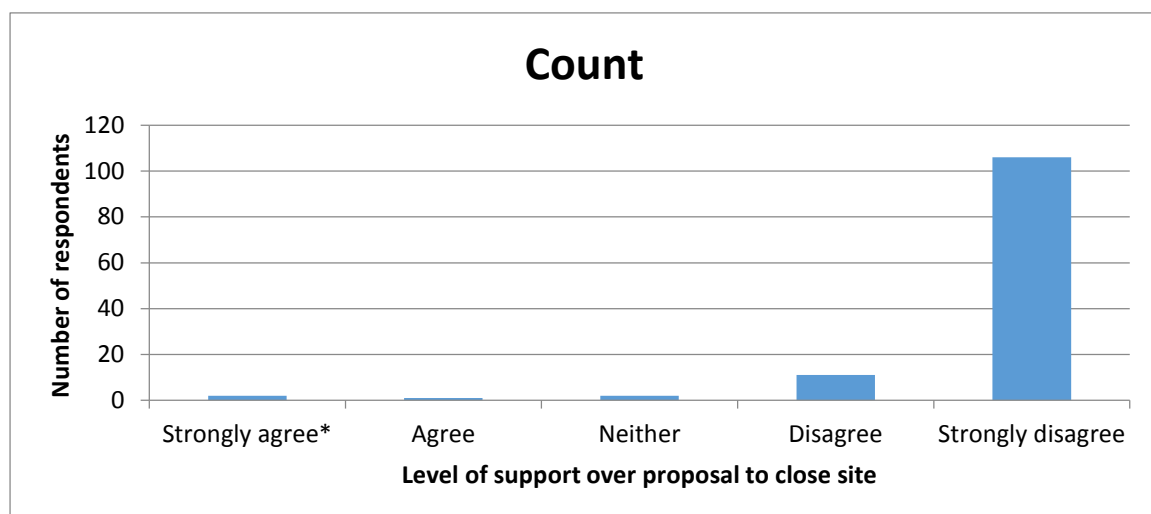
1. How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to close Docking Recycling Centre?
2. Why do you say that?
3. If our proposal to close Docking went ahead what impact, if any, would this have on you?

The questions were put together with input from the Waste Reduction and Recycling Team and the Consultation Team and were approved by the Chair of the EDT Committee.

122 responses were received through the consultation, of which 117 disagreed or strongly disagreed with the closure, 3 agreed or strongly agreed and 2 neither agreed nor disagreed as shown in table 1.

Responses were received from 2 district or borough councillors, 4 town or parish councils, 1 business and 115 members of the public.

Table 1 Summary of Responses - Q1 How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to close Docking Recycling Centre?



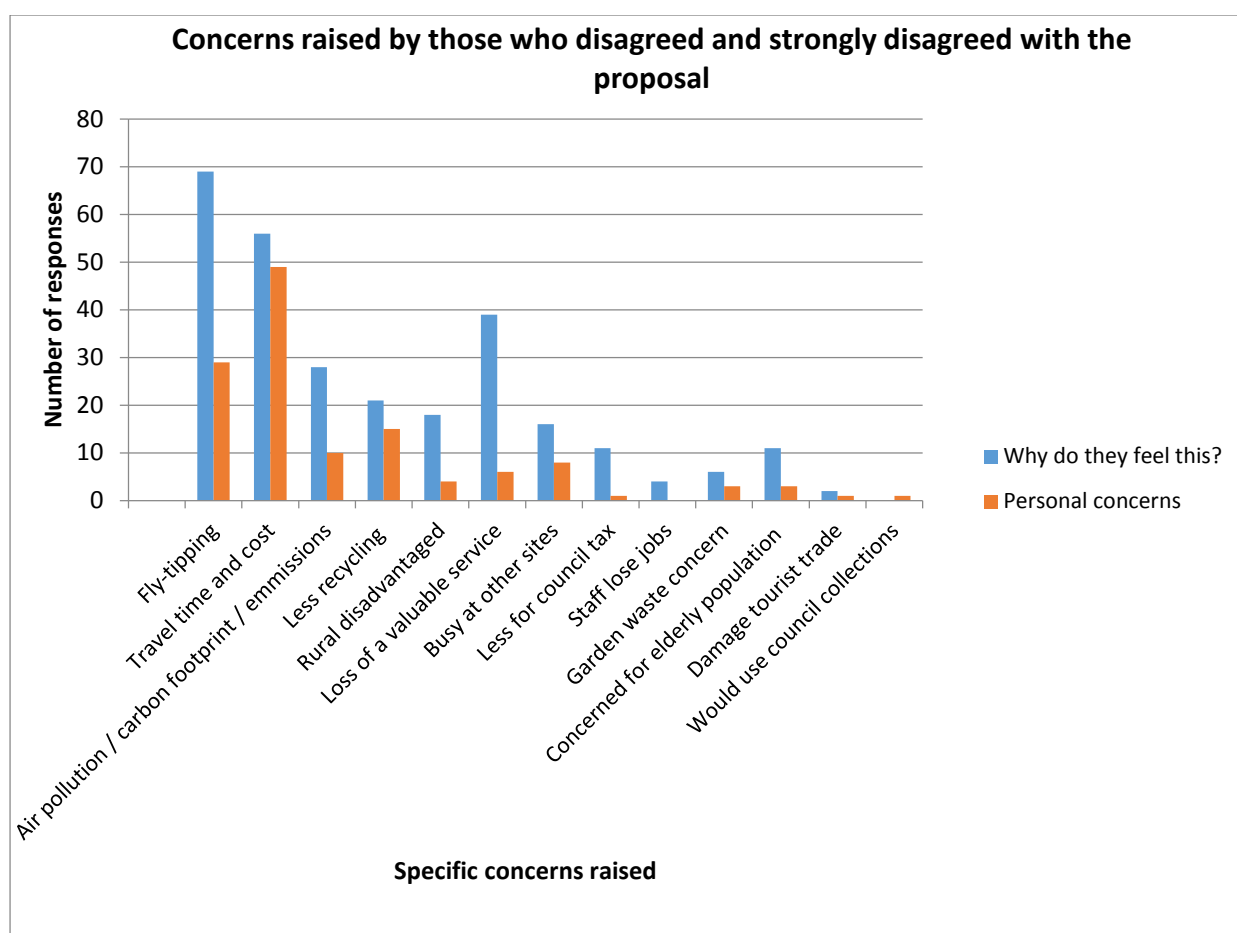
Docking Recycling Centre receives around 15,000 visitors per year (2014/15), or 1,250 per month.

Key Themes

Disagree or Strongly Disagree

The themes in responses from the public around why they disagreed with the closure of Docking are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Summary of themes on why people disagree with the proposal to close Docking Recycling Centre



The reasons noted for rejecting the proposal:

- Fly-tipping (59%)
- Travel time and cost to another site (48%)
- Loss of a valuable service (33%)
- Air pollution / emissions (24%)
- Less recycling (18%)
- Rural residents being disadvantage (15%)

- The queues or how busy alternatives sites are (esp. Heacham) (14%)
- Getting less for their Council tax (9%)
- Elderly population not coping with additional travel or less assistance offered at other sites (9%)
- Difficulties now with their garden waste (5%)
- Site staff losing jobs (3%)
- Damage the tourist trade in area (2%)

When asked how it affected them personally:

- Travel time and cost to another site (42%)
- Fly-tipping (25%)
- Less recycling (13%)
- Air pollution / emissions (9%)
- The queues or how busy alternatives sites are (esp. Heacham) (7%)
- Loss of a valuable service (5%)
- Rural residents being disadvantaged (3%)
- Elderly population not coping with additional travel or less assistance offered at other sites (3%)
- Difficulties now with their garden waste (3%)
- Getting less for their Council tax (1%)
- Damage the tourist trade in area (1%)
- Use district collection service instead (1%)

Key observations:

The top three personal reasons people have for disagreeing with the proposal (question 3) are slightly different to the concerns expressed in question 2 as to why they disagreed with the proposal.

Flytipping features both as the main reason for rejecting the proposal and also as a personal impact of the closure. Points were raised around flytipping degrading the local area. The personal impact of flytipping generally related to the eyesore of flytipped waste or the cost of clearing up on landowners. No respondent said that the closure would make them consider flytipping.

Concerns were raised about the increase in travel times to sites. The provision of sites in this area meets the old 8.5 mile service standard and the new 20 minute drive time standard should Docketing close bringing it in line with provision across the rest of Norfolk.

Other points raised include:

- Closure of Docketing is making it harder for holiday homes to dispose of their waste. It should be noted that holiday home owners should not dispose of waste at recycling centres as this is considered business waste.
- Concerns raised over elderly population and the impact making them travel further. Some notes that they received assistance at Docketing and didn't at other

sites. Assistance is available at all sites on request. It is recognised that due to the quiet nature of Docking Recycling Centre, staff had time to ensure assistance was given to everyone but assistance can be requested at all sites if required. Additionally, the staff at Docking will be given the opportunity to relocate to other sites.

- Concerns raised about other sites were mainly aimed at Heacham, noting the traffic problems in summer and staff not being as helpful. Additional traffic from Docking to Heacham has been considered by the Highways Team and the number of additional vehicle movements is not considered significant.

Neither Agree nor Disagree

Two respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal but raised concerns about the loss of a good service and one noted the additional time to travel to an alternative site

Agree or Strongly Agree

Three respondents were in support of the proposal for the following reasons:

- Other sites nearby with 2 of 3 respondent citing this reason (67%)
- Lower visitor numbers at the site currently with 1 respondent stating this
- Way to save money with 1 respondent stating this

Personal reasons for supporting the proposal:

- 1 respondent stated it would save other sites they use being affected
- 1 respondent said it would mean their council tax wouldn't increase.

Proposed Closure Plan

It is proposed that Docking Recycling Centre is closed from 1 January 2016.

In order to address concerns around flytipping, as part of the closure the area supervisor for the recycling centres will regularly drive past Docking to check and report any incidents of flytipping to the District council. Additionally, CCTV will remain in situ on the site for up to 3 months following the closure to assist with evidence for cases of flytipping in the immediate vicinity of the recycling centre.

Evidence from previous changes to the recycling centre service, such as making sites part time, has not shown an increase in flytipping.,

Flytipping is the responsibility of the district council to clear and the County Council to pick up the disposal costs. Incidents are monitored through Flycapture and liaison between the district and county council.

Based on previous postcode surveys carried out on site, it is estimated that 49% of Docking users will visit Heacham instead, 32% will go to Hempton, 18% to Wells and

1% to King's Lynn. These sites have the capacity to absorb both the visitor numbers and tonnage of waste from Docking. Highways development control and the local area engineer have advised that as Heacham is off a principle road (A road) with a right turn lane and suitable signage the additional traffic is not considered to be a problem. The additional traffic at Hempton, Wells and King's Lynn is also not considered to cause traffic issues given the low volume of additional vehicles accessing these sites.

Residents are advised when visiting recycling centres to try and take larger quantities of waste less often and to visit recycling centres when making other journeys rather than making a special trip.

Members of staff are on hand at recycling centres to provide assistance when required. Residents may request assistance on arrival at a site if needed and site staff will do their best to help where they are able.

Norfolk County Council will continue to provide advice to local community groups on a number of areas including installation of recycling banks, applying for recycling credits, community composting and food waste.