

Rookery South RRF Community Liaison Panel Meeting 10 Notes

Rookery South RRF Community Liaison Panel Meeting 10 Monday 24th May 2010, 18.30 – 20.30 Notes

Introductions and actions from last meeting:

New CLP member Robina Chatham, a resident from Lidlington, was able to attend the first hour of the meeting.

Sue Marsh from Central Bedfordshire Council is now an observer member of the CLP, and will be presenting about the Local Impact Report she will be producing to the next CLP meeting.

Rachel Ness (RN) was unable to attend the meeting as a result of an accident, Simon McKee represented Covanta at the meeting – this resulted in one issue being deferred, but following the meeting Covanta have responded to the issue raised regarding the refusal of the Middlewich Incinerator, see below.

Actions from the last meeting:

CLP members to advise any additional agenda items by May 10th – request for a response from Covanta regarding the planning refusal for the Middlewich Incinerator; Covanta has submitted and appeal which has now been validated so that the Planning Inspectorate will now hold a Public Inquiry into the reasons why Cheshire East refused the application. Covanta are prepared to respond more fully to a later CLP meeting when RN is able to attend.

Covanta to provide a full set of views and photomontages to be used in the application on disc – discs circulated at the meeting – KF to circulate by post to absent members, completed.

Letter from English Heritage to be circulated to the CLP members; circulated at the meeting – KF to circulate by post to absent members: Completed

Covanta to describe how lower costs will flow through to the local authority; deferred to the next meeting.

Noise Impacts - Presentation by Colin English of English Cogger Partnership attached

Questions

What Decibel (dB) level are typical noises for reference?

A lorry passing at 7 metres is about 85 dB; a busy high street is 70 – 75 dB.

The plans refer to 10 months of piling during construction, surely this phase must be noisier than the presentation suggests?

The plans are for augured piling not impulse piling (hammer blow effect) and the chosen method is much quieter.

Is the direction of the wind taken account of in the projected figures?

Yes, the model provides noise levels on a light downwind which increases noise by 2dB compared with calm conditions. The projected noise levels are produced from the international standard noise propagation model (ISO 9613).

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The additional projected noise from traffic seem very low, particularly at 5.00 am – is it because these are averaged noise levels rather than maximum levels, and does the model take account of the movement of traffic away from the A421 when the new road is functioning?

Yes, these are averaged figures, the Environmental Report will present maximum levels as well and these can be provided to the CLP.

The traffic noise levels within the site and on the access road will be low, but there may be potholes or other surface problems on the surrounding roads that cause additional noise, but if these are present all traffic would be affected – Covanta have committed to continuing the CLP so that any nuisance of this nature can be reported and action taken.

The model uses traffic figures for the de-trunked A421 for assessment of the additional noise from the Covanta operation, and Marston Moretaine noise levels are taken from the quietest part of the village.

Action Covanta to provide maximum traffic noise figures as presented in the Environmental Report, and the forecast traffic for the A421 once de-trunked

The projected noise from the EfW plant once operational seems very low?

The majority of the plant is contained within a building which will operate at a slightly negative pressure. Doors will be kept closed where possible to maintain this pressure and ventilation openings will be fitted with silencers. Quiet fans have been selected for the major source of external noise (ACC).

Could Covanta change its operating hours so that 5.00 – 6.00 am are avoided, this is an operational decision that CLP members strongly feel would reduce local loss of amenity?

Covanta have set flexible hours including these early morning opening for operational reasons – Lorries may have to set off this early to get to the receiving stations to pick up waste without getting caught up in the rush hour. However there are only planned to be 18 lorry movements at this time of day so the impact is not high.

Are there noise figures for an operational plant of this size that Covanta could provide?

There are none from the UK and those from other countries may not be comparable as different environmental factors would apply.

Action Covanta to investigate any comparable figures from an operational plant

Air Quality Impacts – Presentation by Roger Barrowcliffe of ERM attached

Questions

Why does the model assume ingestion of dioxins rather than inhalation?

The modelling considers both pathways, but for many substances, ingestion is the more significant pathway in terms of human exposure.

You mention other views that suggest emission are more harmful than your model suggests – is there an alternative point of view the CLP could hear?

The material presented here does not represent a 'pro- incineration' position. Instead, the evidence presented is based firmly on the consensus mainstream scientific opinion – while there are other viewpoints, Covanta are taking ERM's impartial advice based on the most widely

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accepted evidence. 'Balance' is therefore not achieved by someone delivering a presentation from an 'anti-incineration perspective,

Do the figures take account of vulnerable groups?

Yes, the 'exposure-response' relationships used to quantify health outcomes from exposure to PM_{2.5} and NO₂ are based on epidemiological studies on large populations which will include pregnant women, children, people with asthma etc. Particles seem to affect everyone over time. In the assessment of exposure to dioxins, the effects are calculated separately for children and breast fed infants, including assumptions about ingestion of soil.

We have read that Covanta does not have a good record on meeting environmental standards in the US, how can we have confidence that emissions will be monitored effectively here?

In England and Wales, the EA monitors emissions rigorously, making inspection visits without notice and requiring operators to monitor some pollutants continuously – Covanta will be required to report ½ hourly and 24 hour average monitoring of emissions and the results have to be provided to the EA. There is complete transparency on these reports; they can be accessed by the public, providing a means of inspecting the compliance of particles and other pollutants emitted with limit values.

Is the definition of safe emission the same as it always has been or has it changed?

The standards for emissions of pollutants at incineration facilities have changed a lot over time, as the technology to abate emissions has improved. In particular, emission limits have become much more stringent as a result of the Waste Incineration Directive. The concentrations a plant is allowed to emit are now very low and industrial pollution control is highly regulated. With regard to effects on human health, the effect of particles has become a greater issue in recent times and it is recognised that there is no observable threshold of effect.

Are there other means of disposing of waste that would not generate these levels of emission? The new Government is saying anaerobic digestion is the way forward.

Whatever method of waste disposal is chosen, there are environmental impacts – anaerobic digestion produces emission to atmosphere through the combustion of biogas and the digestate residue has to be disposed of. Thus, a direct comparison is not straightforward and the problem has to be considered in the context of total human exposure to the emitted pollutants in all media. The new minister has said he wants to see an increase in anaerobic digestion, but he is not against EfW.

Would the throughput of pollutants expressed as grams per second be lower for a smaller plant?

Yes, but the plant has a higher stack than a smaller plant and this reduces the concentration of pollutants in the air you breathe at ground level.

Are emissions monitored to check for spikes – there has been report of radioactive waste getting into landfill, how would such a failure be managed?

The plant is taking in municipal waste from the doorstep and commercial and industrial waste. Any sharp increases in the emissions concentrations of those pollutants measured continuously will be acted on immediately. In such cases, the flow of reagents used to abate acid gases, for example, can be increased to suppress emissions. In the event of significant problem, the facility can be shut down by stopping the waste feeds. In these circumstances, the pollution abatement equipment will continue to operate, thereby ensuring that emission rates of pollutants will be lower

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than in normal operation. All incidents have to be logged and reported to EA. Any unintentional burning of radioactive waste will be transient and have no consequences for human health.

Action Covanta to comment on the report of radioactive material getting into landfill and the methods they will use to prevent dangerous material from getting into the incinerator

Health Impact Assessment briefing – Presentation by Roger Barrowcliffe of ERM attached

Questions

Can CLP members invite other interested parties to the HIA workshops, have GPs been invited?

Yes, the dates are 5th and 8th June and CLP members should advise ERM of any extra people they feel should be involved. GPs are always invited to such events, but never come because of time commitments – ERM plan to pick up views of GPs via one to one conversations with them to ensure their input into the HIA is achieved

The output from the workshops will be how the people at the workshop feel about the issues – how can this be quantified?

The views expressed will be subjective but will be added to other evidence gathered, such as the scientific literature and the community profile data. This latter information is sourced from National Statistics and ERM recognises that there will be important sub sets of the population at sub ward level e.g. concentration of older in people in Stewartby who are ex brickworks employees. The workshop report will pick up high priority issues, ideas for reducing impacts and making the most of benefits (e.g. employment opportunities).

The report will include a list of all the comments made by workshop attendees so the views of everyone will be represented.

Date of next meeting and items to cover

Next meeting agreed 21st June, 18.30 Marston Forest Centre

Items:

- Local Impact Report process briefing from Sue Marsh
- Bottom Ash Handling and Recycling issues
- Noise impact presentation to address CLP follow up queries
- Covanta comment on how financial benefits to Local Authorities will be achieved
- Detail on monitoring of air emissions

Follow up queries to be answered:

Covanta comment on the report of radioactive material getting into landfill and the methods they will use to prevent dangerous material from getting into the incinerator – to be addressed at the July meeting.

Covanta comment on the planning refusal for the Middlewich Incinerator - to be addressed at the next meeting RN is able to attend.

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Attendance

Nigel Milway	Chair of "Revamp" Ampthill - Apologies
Hugh Roberts	MMAG
Barry Halton	Volunteer with Beds CPRE - Apologies
Tony Talbot	MD Forest of Marston Vale
Gary Summerfield	Ampthill Town Council - Apologies
Lisa Frangiamore	Houghton Conquest P. C.
Jennie Thomas	Millbrook Parish Meeting – First hour only
David Cooper	Stewartby Parish Council
Alan Barnard	Maulden Parish Council – First hour only
Peter Neale	Marston Morteyne Parish Council
Richard Franceys	Resident
Ed Hiam	Resident - Apologies
Robina Chatham	Resident - First hour only
Independent Observers	
Sue Marsh	Principal Minerals and Waste Planning Officer, Central Bedfordshire Council
Alasdair McKellar	PPC Compliance Officer, Environment Agency - Apologies
Covanta representatives	See below
Kate Fairweather	Independent Chair

Attending this meeting for Covanta:
Rachel Ness Director of Planning - Apologies
Simon McKee Planning

Presenters:
Roger Barrowcliffe ERM – Air Quality and HIA
Colin English English Cogger Partnership – Noise