

Rookery South RRF Community Liaison Panel Meeting 3 Notes

Rookery South RRF Community Liaison Panel Meeting 3 20th October 2009 - Notes

Meeting held at Marston Forest Centre.

Attended – See attached.

Terms of Reference update, actions from last meeting:

KF reported that Kay Lynch had withdrawn from the CLP because she felt that by being a member it was assumed that she supported the development. Covanta were very keen to emphasise that the CLP is only about communication, not support or objection to the proposal. KF tabled a revised form of the Terms of Reference for the CLP which made this clear, and **the CLP agreed the changes** (see attached).

KF explained that she had contacted the Wootton Parish Clerk to clarify if they wished to replace Kay on the CLP, but had had no response.

KF asked the CLP for their view on whether they would like a representative from the Bear project to attend a future meeting, as the relationship between the two projects was on the list of issues for the CLP. **The CLP agreed that this was not appropriate** as there could be a conflict of interest - the one project will be asking for tenders that Covanta would bid for. Members can take the opportunity to attend a Bear Roadshow as advised in KF's email.

KF advised that a number of CLP members had responded to her request for ideas for community benefits from the project and that if there were any further ideas to come in she would pass them on to Covanta. RN explained that the request was to progress the CLP issue on what the benefits of hosting the plant would be to the community. Covanta has had a wide range of responses from local people from its consultation activities. **CLP members to provide ideas to KF if they wish.**

Update on design and landscaping:

Alan Lamb and Alistair Kratt provided a booklet which covered each of the following topics (further copies available on request to KF) -

- Response to issues raised at CLP Meeting 1
 - How the current form was developed
 - The number of stacks
 - A comparison of 1, 2 and 3 stream plants in terms of scale and operation
 - Material and colour studies
 - Options for green / brown roofs
- Potential to lower the building - presentation of work done since CLP1
- Integration in the landscape through bunding/landscaping

The presentation provided details on the considerable efforts that the project team had made to play down the building in the landscape. This includes a building design that is stepped; the structure has "nest of tables" effect so that shadows fall across the elevations and breaks up the scale of the building in the landscape. The tallest part of the building has been compressed to 43 metres high, reduced from 47 metres.

Originally there had been a plan to produce three chimneys to reflect the old brickworks chimneys, but this made the chimneys seem larger from most views, so a single stack was now planned, and would be

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105 meters high representing a reduction of 10m from the original of 115m. The chimney design permits different material options to be considered including colours similar to the old brick chimneys.

The plans of a 1, 2, and 3 stream plant were provided to show that the highest part of the building remains the same at 43 metres regardless of the number of streams, but the width of the building is larger as capacity increases. The stack is slightly smaller for lower capacity.

Details of colour studies were provided, showing examples of the impact of different colours in the countryside. The building will have materials of predominantly dark colour which are considered to be more regressive in views and with materials which will minimise the reflection of sunlight.

There are parts of the building that will have 'green' roofing, using a variety of plants sympathetic to the local environment. These areas of roofing have been incorporated to address local views including the Forest of Marston Vale Visitor Centre.

The CLP had asked for Covanta to specifically look at ways to lower the building - the result of this has been to reduce the height of the stack by 10 metres, and the highest part of the building by 4 metres. Covanta has commissioned engineering reports on sinking the building further into the ground, but this has proved to be impractical – the water table is high and environmental projections suggest will increase with potential for more regular flooding, meaning that there would be a danger of the buildings flooding, endangering workers. Additionally the water pressure even at 4 meters down would require major engineering work to stabilise the building.

Details of plans for landscaping and bunding around the plant were presented – these mainly assist with hiding the building from the south and east views.

The building will be large in the view from Ampthill Park, but colour, materials and design will reduce the impact.

Questions and Answers:

When the design will be fixed: RN replied that it will be fixed in a fortnight to allow the Section 36 application to be made before Christmas (environmental impact assessments have to be completed on a specific design), however once the application is made the consultation period begins and the design will be open for changes if required as a result of that consultation.

The CLP asked for photos to be taken on a clearer day so colours selected would be more clearly demonstrated as examples provided were on grey days. **Covanta agreed to make these available with colour modelling; more photos are being taken shortly.**

Do the plans take account of projections for water levels to rise in response to global warming: Covanta stated that the plans take account of projected changes, and that this is a requirement from the Environment Agency.

The CLP asked for context views showing the plant plus NIRAH and the Cardington Hangars. A plan showing NIRAH was provided. EH and Bedfordshire Borough have already asked for the view with Cardington Hangars and this is in hand **Covanta to provide plan also showing Cardington Hangars.**

How visible will the discharge from the stack be: The plume will only be visible on colder days and a heat haze on warm days. Covanta noted that the impact assessment would have to establish the frequency of a visible plume based on typical weather patterns. **Covanta to provide impression with a plume.**

What will levels of light pollution be, will the stack be a danger to light aircraft from Cranfield airfield: There will be floodlighting on the pit floor to provide safety for workers as lorries move around, however this will only be on during working hours (the plant is 24 hour, but people are working from approx 6 am to 8 pm. Safety lighting will be kept to a minimum, no lights on the access road, low levels on the ramp. The CAA have agreed that the stack does not need to be red and white striped, and that it only needs

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two constant red lights, positioned 1 meter from the top. Covanta have met with Cranfield Airfield about light aircraft training flight plans to avoid any danger.

How mature will trees used for landscaping be: Plans are to put in saplings 2 – 3 ft high, which grow at 1 – 1.5 ft a year. These would be supplemented with more mature trees to provide year one screening, but evidence from the Forest Centre shows that smaller trees grow more quickly and are more healthy.

What level of extra support do green/brown roofs need: Extra 2 meters allowed in plans to provide structural support for these roofs where proposed, may require less if lighter covering used.

What is the life of the plant if it will take 15 years for trees to mature: Plant is planned to run for 35 years.

Substitute members asked some questions re air quality and levels of residual waste in Covanta's catchment area. **KF to copy meeting notes and supporting data to substitutes and new panel members.** Additionally the CLP would like more information about the carbon reducer credentials of the facility – how is it calculated that EfW facilities have an overall effect of reducing carbon emissions. **Details of how an EfW facility reduces overall carbon emissions to be brought to the next meeting.**

AOB

Ian Tomkins circulated some papers he had found on the internet containing allegations about Covanta's US operations. **CLP agreed to add this to next meeting's agenda for Covanta to respond.** RN said that Covanta is aware of the allegations, many of which are unfounded and others out of context and exaggerated. They have arisen from a trade union dispute at one plant in the US. She would be happy to respond to them in detail at the next meeting.

Date of next meeting and items to cover

The CLP agreed the following were its key issues for the next meeting:

- How the plant is arranged and why it has to be so large
- How does an EfW facility reduce overall carbon emissions – calculations
- Is EfW an efficient way to produce energy – how does the facility work as a power station
- A layman's version of the traffic planning model showing the projections for traffic effects on key local junctions and the level crossing (provide as a document for circulation or at meeting 4) – to also include consideration of taking traffic under the railway instead of through the level crossing
- The Section 36 planning process (provide as a document for circulation or at meeting 4)
- Response to allegations about Covanta's US operations

NB If these subjects are too large to cover effectively in one meeting, KF to arrange a second meeting prior to the application being made.

The next meeting will be on Monday 16th November at 18.30, at the seminar room at the Forest Centre.

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Meeting 3 Attendance

Nigel Milway	Chair of "Revamp" Ampthill – Apologies Jen Dancy substituting
Hugh Roberts	MMAG
Barry Halton	Volunteer with Beds CPRE - Apologies MD Forest of Marston Vale – Apologies James Russell substituting
Tony Talbot	
Gary Summerfield	Ampthill Town Council
Lisa Frangiamore	Houghton Conquest P. C.
Jennie Thomas	Millbrook Parish Meeting - Apologies
David Cooper	Stewartby Parish Council
Alan Barnard	Maulden Parish Council - Apologies
Peter Neale	Marston Morteyne Parish Council
Richard Franceys	Resident – Apologies Sean Tyrell substituting
Ed Hiam	Resident
Ian Tomkins	Resident
Covanta representatives	See below
Kate Fairweather	Independent Chair

Attending this meeting for Covanta:

Rachel Ness Director of Planning, Paul Cole Engineering Director

Presenting to the meeting:

Alan Lamb – AEW Architects

Alister Kratt – LDA Design