

**ROOKERY SOUTH RRF COMMUNITY LIAISON PANEL
NOTES MEETING 5, HELD ON 14TH DECEMBER 2009, 18.30 – 21.20**

Marston Forest Centre Seminar Room

Attending - See attached

Kate Fairweather was unable to attend the meeting due to transport problems and sent her apologies. The CLP agreed the meeting should continue, with Tony Talbot acting as Chair for the evening.

Issues from the last meeting – actions

Agenda items at this meeting covered actions on the graphical representation of the traffic impacts of the facility, the public consultation strategy details, and the policies that apply to the planning application.

NB The meeting over-ran so the policies item will be covered at the next meeting on January 11th. **Action: CLP to consider paper on policy and provide any questions – NB completed, general presentation requested**

Covanta had produced a paper on alleged emission breaches in the US as presented to the last meeting, and this had been circulated with the notes of that meeting.

The action regarding disposal of the APC bags at the end of their useful life to be followed up at a later CLP meeting. **Action: Covanta to advise on what happens to APC bags once they have been re used.**

There were some matters arising from the last meeting:

Re consultation ideas: Rachel Ness (RN) (Covanta) referred to Meeting 3 and a request to see relationship of EfW Facility with Cardington Hangars. This work had now been completed see attached 'Cardington Hangars – Comparison Study'. The CLP asked if they could see a photomontage of the proposed RRF as seen from Houghton House with both NIRAH and the Cardington Hangers in view. **Action: Covanta to provide this additional Photomontage from Houghton House**

There had been a suggestion in response to a request for additional consultation ideas for height balloons to be flown to show the scale of the built development. RN advised that she thought this was a helpful suggestion and she is investigating it in terms of the mechanics and accuracy. The CLP requested that the balloons should be presented on the site and show the key heights of the development i.e. stack and EfW Facility building. **Action: Covanta to confirm use of height balloons.**

The CLP advised that it also wished to understand the impact the RRF would make on views from Station Road, Millbrook e.g. at the Church. RN confirmed that English Heritage and local authority Landscape and Heritage Officers had been involved in agreeing view point locations, which had included some discussion about Cardington Hangars and also a location at Millbrook. **Action: Covanta to share the agreed viewpoint locations to CLP, and to consider whether there ought to be additional viewpoint locations along Station Road, Millbrook. The CLP to advise on other viewpoints they would like to see considered.**

An additional point raised concerned the presentation made by Covanta at Mtg 4 on the EfW process. The CLP asked for more information on planned CHP delivery to local developments, particularly Centre Parcs. RN responded that work is still underway and that all options are being explored. Jim Cleland (Covanta) had a meeting with Centre Parcs on 7/12/09 but RN had not seen note of meeting to date. **Action: Covanta to present to a future CLP meeting**

Traffic Assessment – Presentation from John Hopkins, PBA

John Hopkins (PBA) presented two documents covering these issues: a copy of the PowerPoint presentation and Transport Handouts (attached).

JH confirmed that the HGV numbers provided in the presentation included RCV collecting in local villages, and that one delivery movement = 2 trips - i.e. the trip to the facility and the trip away from the facility.

Questions:

From how many villages would local RCV (refuse collection vehicles) be travelling, via Stewartby to Rookery South?

This is unknown at present as detail rests with the local authority and has not been released to date. When this information becomes known it can be incorporated as appropriate into a Lorry Routing Agreement. Lorry Routing Agreements are legally binding on Covanta; they are not simply a gentleman's agreement.

Are the Bedfordshire or Luton local authorities in contract negotiations with Covanta?

No. Covanta has had general discussions with the authorities, presenting the Rookery South and Covanta's interest in bidding, but no contract negotiations or discussions have taken place.

Have the recent changes to BEaR project changed planning assumptions?

The BEaR project will be looking to procure a residual waste management facility – that facility may be the one proposed at Rookery South or another. The authorities will be inviting bids, to which Covanta will respond. Covanta is reviewing the recent changes to the BEaR project and any knock on effects to the Rookery project.

The CLP asked how vehicle movements would be controlled.

Jason Baldwin (JB) (Covanta) confirmed that:

- Bulk haulage vehicles would be contracted via credible firms, not 'one-man-bands'; all would be subject to Covanta movement control regardless whether these vehicles are operated directly for Covanta;
- All vehicles in Covanta's control would be fitted with GPS system so that their route and time of travel can be monitored (these systems are used by other major distributors, e.g. Tesco and other waste operators), these systems also have a second purpose in regard to fuel efficiency and ability to reroute drivers in the event of traffic incidents
- The weighbridge is fitted with a vehicle recognition system to record the vehicle entry to the site, so their time/ weight of entry would be recorded, and that they are authorised to enter site;
- drivers not conforming to Covanta requirements would be reprimanded, with appropriate severity (including financial penalties or ultimately a complete band) so as to prevent reoccurrence;
- Covanta engineers and operational managers have experience of running and controlling vehicle fleets

RN confirmed that ultimate control rested in planning conditions and legal agreements that would accompany the permission.

JB clarified hours when the Rookery facility might expect most HGV movements:

- Household Waste deliveries tend to generate one or two peak movement periods per day, i.e. late morning and mid afternoon.
- Commercial and Industrial waste carriers tend to travel early in the morning to avoid peak hours (i.e. 6am to 7am) but should be finished by 4pm as drivers will not have any more driving time left "on their tachos"
- Covanta will look to bulk up waste deliveries in order to produce fewer traffic movements, however until contracts are in place, the associated traffic movements cannot be known. This is common for these types of planning proposals and reasonable working assumptions are made to address this uncertainty. Covanta is therefore quoting longer working hours and maximum traffic flows at present to enable operational flexibility subject to the environmental impacts being acceptable – this is presently being assessed and hours could change again.

Questions:

What had driven the wide range of hours now proposed (5am to 11pm)?

A mix of operational requirements and a better understanding of environmental constraints – particularly ongoing discussions with the Local Planning Authority Environmental Health Officers. Covanta do not believe there will be many instances when vehicles would travel up to 11pm, but need to build in operational flexibility where it can be demonstrated to be environmentally acceptable.

Action: RN to ask EHO to visit Stewartby PC.

The CLP commented that they are very concerned about the uncertainty in the hours of vehicle movements for the RRF proposal given that that local experience showed a lack of control at other facilities.

Action: Covanta to follow up with more detail at a future meeting.

How many vehicle movements will there be on Saturdays?

Numbers presented are for Monday to Saturday. However Covanta expect Saturday vehicle movements to generally be less than Monday-Friday. There will be no vehicle movements proposed on Sundays, or between 11pm to 5am at any time. Enough material is stored on site to enable the EfW Facility to continue working over these times.

What has happened to suggested use of railway?

Work is ongoing to understand railway options and it is still under review, but current advice indicates that it may not be feasible – there are many constraints on site (e.g. impact on ecology and noise) and it could be cost prohibitive. Rail provision is unlikely to be included in the current application, but it may be in the future should appropriate land resources and waste contracts be forthcoming.

Also, available sources of waste would need to be rail linked at source, and that is not currently achievable. There are sometimes pathway restrictions on the rail lines – i.e. just not enough capacity for rail freight transport as domestic routes take priority.

The Renewable Energy Strategy requires multi modal transport and promotes use of rail – why not choose a site where rail can be delivered? How will the IPC consider this point?

Covanta needs to demonstrate that they have an appropriate site, including highway capacity, access and consideration of environmental benefits and burdens. They are looking at what options would be appropriate should rail be feasible. The Preliminary Environmental Report will set out the rail options considered to date – this issue has not been shelved, it is being kept under review.

The vehicle movements presented refer to 585,000 tonne Nominal throughput capacity plant, but not to vehicles required for lime, fuel delivery, nor the disposal of ash etc.

Covanta confirmed that the throughput relates to the tonnage of waste only. The other movements are shown separately in the handout and are included in the assessment.

The CLP asked about the definition of a “sensitive receptor” and how this was used in the Environmental Assessment of Traffic. Covanta confirmed that Stewartby is the main place where sensitive receptors were identified but that there would be virtually no HGV movements within Stewartby. Covanta confirmed that, reflecting the Institute of Environmental Assessment’s Guidelines for Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic, residential houses are not specifically identified as sensitive receptors. This does not mean however that residential houses are not considered as sensitive receptors for other environmental impact reasons e.g. noise and these are being assessed as appropriate.

The CLP felt that local experience should be included in assessment i.e. the known pinch point at junction with current A421, relationship with level crossing, the major highway routes. Covanta agreed that more work needed to be done to double check sensitive receptors and to clarify conclusions going forward.

Action: Covanta to reconsider sensitive receptors across a greater area and to clarify further at future CLP meeting. The CLP to suggest other sensitive receptors that it considers should be included in assessment

The CLP was concerned that Covanta will not have same control over construction related HGVs as they expect to have over operational HGVs delivering to the site.

Covanta recognise it would be a more difficult task, but that they will have measures in place, such as CCTV at the entrance so that they can see which routes HGVs use to access the site. Again, suitable financial punishments would be applied to transgressors. Only a certain amount of parking will be provided so contractors will need to use bus to transport workers – so reducing vehicle movements. Covanta recognise

there will always be some who seek to break the rules, but Covanta would, as a responsible occupier, do all in their powers to control movements.

Consultation Timetable

RN tabled a summary of the consultation going forward, reflecting the CLP comments gained via email feedback. CLP took away to consider. RN also tabled the Explanatory Memorandum that accompanies the draft SOCC. RN confirmed these would be on the Project website shortly.

Action: RN to check that Greensand Ridge Trust is on list of consultees – NB this has been confirmed

Questions:

Would it be possible to have a site visit? Would it also be possible to have markers on the ground in addition to balloons, so that the scale of the development can be better understood?

Covanta agreed that these suggestions seemed sensible and would seek to organise this, barring H&S or landowner opposition (the latter is not expected). **Action: Covanta to organise a site visit.**

The final agenda item was to cover details of key policies against which the application will be determined, however because the previous items produced more discussion and questions than expected the CLP agreed to defer this to be the main item at the next meeting:

Next Meeting – **Has now been reset for 25th January, 18.30 at the Forest Centre**

Attending:

Nigel Milway	Chair of "Revamp" Ampthill	Apologies
Hugh Roberts	MMAG	Attended
Barry Halton	Volunteer with Beds CPRE	Apologies
Kim Hewlett	Head Teacher Broadmead Lower School	Did not attend
Tony Talbot	MD Forest of Marston Vale	Attended
Gary Summerfield	Ampthill Town Council	Attended
Lisa Frangiamore	Houghton Conquest P. C.	Apologies
Jennie Thomas	Millbrook Parish Meeting	Apologies
David Cooper	Stewartby Parish Council	Attended
Alan Barnard	Maulden Parish Council	Apologies
Peter Neale	Marston Moretayne Parish Council	Attended
Tim Hill	Bedfordshire Borough Council	Did not attend
Richard Franceys	Resident	Attended
Ed Hiam	Resident	Apologies
Ian Tomkins	Resident	Attended
Covanta representatives	See below	Attended
Kate Fairweather	Independent Chair	Apologies

Attending this meeting for Covanta:

Rachel Ness, Director of Planning

Jason Baldwin, Director of Transport and Logistics

Presenting to the meeting:

John Hopkins – PBA, transport assessment, in place of Simon Davis

Kirsten Berry – ERM, relevant policy