

MARSTON MORETEYNE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council

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1st April 2010

Rookery South Project Team
c/o Rachel Ness
Covanta Energy Ltd
Unit 7
Water End Barns
Water End
Eversholt
Milton Keynes
MK17 9EA

Dear Ms Ness,

Preliminary Environmental Report – Rookery South Resource Recovery Facility at Rookery South Pit, Nr Stewartby, Bedfordshire.

Marston Moreteyne Parish Council is totally opposed to the proposal to build an incinerator with generating capacity within Rookery South Pit. Your proposal states (Waste 4.11.8) that “The project is inherently concerned with waste management...” Given that Central Bedfordshire is currently pursuing its own management solution we can see no good reason, other than for the profit of Covanta, for this proposal to go ahead. We believe that this proposal is an opportunistic attempt to use the 2008 Planning Act and the new Infrastructure Planning Commission to circumvent the existing planning system; and to impose a facility for the incineration of other Local Authority’s rubbish on the Marston Vale which is at total variance to existing policy.

Current national guidance for the collection and disposal of waste promotes local responsibility. The Waste Strategy for England 2007 discusses the roles of both Local and Regional Authorities and promotes the idea that waste management should be undertaken within Local Authority boundaries but allows for individual Waste Authorities to join together so as to better manage the waste generated within their area. The implication being that such agreements will be within regional boundaries. The power to establish Joint Waste Authorities (JWA’s) is contained within the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Any local authorities wishing to join in such a way must first submit their proposal to the Secretary of state for approval.

The management of waste within the Eastern Region is contained within section 11 of the East of England Plan. Section 11.15 states:

“National guidance promotes local responsibility for waste, with the region and each constituent local authority providing so far as possible for the management of their own wastes.”

The management of waste within the South Eastern Region, of which Buckinghamshire is a part, is contained within the South East Regional Plan. Policy W3 Regional Self Sufficiency states:

“Waste authorities and waste management companies should provide management capacity equivalent to the amount of waste arising and requiring management within the regions boundaries...”

As can be seen from the above, the management of waste is a function that should be undertaken at the local level. Nowhere, either in National or Regional guidance is there a facility for one local authority to discharge its responsibility for waste management by entering into an agreement with a private contractor to build a plant for the sole management of that authority's waste in another local authority's area. No agreement to form a JWA exists between any other Local Authority and Central Bedfordshire.

Your proposal is that all rubbish will be delivered by road, despite the fact that Rookery Pit lies between two rail systems. The transportation of upwards of 585,000 tonnes of rubbish per year will take place along the de-trunked old A421. These movements can take place between 0500 and 1700 hours 365 days a year and will have a negative impact on the residents of the village.

We believe that the sheer size of the proposed plant will have a major impact on the visual amenity of the area. The site was always considered to lie within an “area of great landscape value” and whilst the weight attributed to this definition may have changed the sites relationship to some of the best panoramic views in Central Bedfordshire have not. It will detrimentally affect the views from the vale to the surrounding Greensand Ridge; and the panoramic views from the ridge across the entire vale, especially those seen from Ampthill Park, will be materially impaired.

Finally we have severe reservations about the emissions, both from the stack and other processes, which will be released into the atmosphere. Experience has dictated that as knowledge increases acceptable thresholds decrease. Your own statement (Air Quality 4.3.5) does not state categorically that there will be no effect on health. We believe that the risks to residents of the Vale should not be in any way compromised to provide other authorities with a convenient solution to the political problem of what to do with waste generated within their areas.

Yours sincerely,

H. Trustam

Mrs. H. Trustam
Parish Clerk