



Central Bedfordshire Press Release

For Immediate Release

19 November 2010

Council questions Covanta proposal

Central Bedfordshire Council in its role as local planning authority and consultee on the planning application has written to the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) to express its concerns regarding Covanta Energy's plans for a Resource Recovery Facility at Rookery South Pit near Stewartby.

In August the IPC accepted for examination purposes, Covanta's planning submission, but the public and interested parties were given until today (19 November) to make sure that their views are heard during the examination hearings – the next phase of the IPC's planning process.

The council has sent the IPC a 16 page document which lists its objections to the proposed facility with the main issues being:

- that the size and bulk of the proposed facility will adversely impact on the amenity of local residents and on the highway network near the site and in other parts of the authority area; and
- the size of the proposed facility means it would need to source waste from a much greater area than Bedfordshire and this goes against national and local planning policy to handle waste sustainably by using the nearest appropriate facility and to make provision for local waste disposal requirements.

The submission also raises a number of other concerns based around procedural and legal issues that need to be addressed to make the facility 'fit for use' should the application be approved.

Cllr Tom Nicols, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development at Central Bedfordshire Council said: “We have thought long and very hard about the Covanta proposal and officers have worked meticulously through the application, addressing every detail and presenting our case to the IPC.

“With a proposed 530 heavy goods vehicle movements every day, there will be a significant adverse impact on the communities closest to Rookery Pit and we have serious issues based around highways, transport and alternative routing.

“There will be a massive visual impact on the area as well as increased noise, potential air quality issues and concerns over odour. We have also raised serious concerns over the entire planning process.

“I hope that the IPC take on board these comments as they progress with this application and I expect them to fully justify their decision to residents in Central Bedfordshire if they do decide to grant permission.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

The full relevant representation document concerning Rookery South Energy from Waste can be found at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/major_dev/Covanta/default.aspx or on the IPC website <http://infrastructure.independent.gov.uk/projects/eastern/rookery-south-energy-from-waste-generating-station>