

Rookery South ERF Community Liaison Panel Meeting 6

15th January 2018, 18.30 - 19.45

Marston Forest Centre Seminar Room

In attendance: J. Thomas; S. Marsh; S. Watt; R. Chatham; T. Fossey; D. Cooper; S. Clark; L. Greenwood **and** D. Cowan; N. Grimstone; M. Sirven; T. Koltis; J. Harper.

Facilitator: R. Treacher – robin@quantumpr.co.uk; **07818 515770**.

NOTES

Introductions

Robin Treacher introduced Louise Greenwood from the Environment Agency who is replacing Ross McIntyre on the Panel.

Apologies were received from Cllr Hill; R. Franceys and S. Tyrel.

Robin explained the CLP was moving into the second of three phases (planning, construction, monitoring). The planning phase was now coming to a close to be replaced by the construction phase. In the future it is expected the CLP will become the community-based group for the third phase - monitoring and compliance.

Louise Greenwood introduced herself as the new representative on the Panel from the Environment Agency. She had no updates on the Permit other than to say she expected a decision at the end of January. The Agency will inform the public of its decision.

Question: Does the EA have to work to a timescale for determining the Permit?

Answer: No. The Agency has to do a thorough job and can take as long as it needs to do the job properly.

Question: How much of the work on the Permit has the Agency done itself?

Answer: A large EA team has been working on the Permit – from consultation to a detailed assessment.

Question: Is there a right of Appeal against the EA's decision?

Answer: Only the Applicant has the right of Appeal.

It was agreed the facilitator would circulate the Environment Agency's decision to all CLP members when the announcement is made.

Louise Greenwood left the meeting.

Actions from the meeting held on October 16th

- Sunday working. David Cowan could not find any evidence that there had been work carried out on site (Millbrook end) on a Sunday during the autumn and had checked the security gate records. He thanked the Panel, however, for bringing it to his attention.
- Flood water levels. David Cowan explained how a "nil detrimental effect" would be achieved with flood water within the pits and said Green Lane already forms part of the flood zone under extreme conditions, within the flood alleviation scheme, Rookery North Lake and the new attenuation pond at Rookery South will be used to "balance" water volumes. The sluice on Green Lane (overflow to Elstow Brook) is maintained by the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and is to maintain Stewartby Lake at a standard level, but cannot cope with a lot of rain. DC undertook to circulate a note to CLP members. **See slides.**

Question: T Fossey was concerned about water being pumped into Stewartby Lake causing it to flood, and polluted water being pumped in.

Answer: Only clean surface water would be discharged to the lake as currently. The attenuation pond has substantial capacity to balance levels rising in Rookery North before pumping to Stewartby Lake.

- Neighbourhood information. Tom Koltis said the project is looking to provide more and regular information on-line and in print form starting in the Spring with topics such as the construction schedule; the energy subsidy scheme and the local employment plan. The Panel asked the company to take into account that not all neighbours are computer literate. He was asked to ensure information on the electricity subsidy scheme is in writing/newsletter (in addition to announcements on its website). The distribution area would be the same as before.

Electricity subsidy scheme

The presentation on the electricity subsidy scheme to be given by its administrators Grantscape was postponed until a future meeting.

Project Update

David Cowan said the current phase is focussed on the access road construction; works immediately into the site should be completed in the next two weeks along with other associated matters such as wheel wash facilities and drainage (from Green Lane entrance down to the area of Rookery South). He said he felt the site was being managed well and if issues arise (like mud on the road) they have been dealt with swiftly. The internal road should be finished in mid March.

The next phase will be work on the junction to widen the road and provide a 3rd lane for turning traffic and provide a wide entrance into the site. David to bring drawings to a future meeting. The extra land for the 3rd lane will come from the "site side" of the current road and has been designed to reduce queuing traffic when turning right. However the main site gates will be at Rookery South so traffic will not be queuing on Green Lane to enter the site.

Question: Can we see things progressing for ourselves?

Answer: That is a good idea. Perhaps a bit later in the year but in the meantime photographs and e.g. a time-lapse video of the works will be taken which can be shared with CLP members – see the Dublin web site as an example.

Local Employment Plan

Judith Harper gave a presentation of the Local Employment Plan – a requirement of the planning consent. This has met with the required approval over the autumn months from Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council. The plan has been designed to place an emphasis for local people looking to work on the project during its various stages of construction and once the plant is up and running. **See slides.**

During construction there will about 320 jobs created over a three year period with recruitment starting in the next few weeks. This will peak midway during the construction. There will be a further 60 operational jobs starting in the Spring 2021 (with recruitment being undertaken 12-15 months in advance).

The recruitment process is to be monitored and its impact recorded and reported to the two local councils.

Question: Is there a target figure for local employment? Is there a target for local spend?

Answer: There is a 5% employment target for the construction phase and 10% for the operational phase - but no target for local spend.

Question: Can the Cranfield School of Management be involved on the training provider scheme?

Answer: Yes – and welcomed.

Matters held over

- Public Rights of Way. It was reported this is a planning condition but not one which has to be signed off before work on site can commence and there is nothing to report at this moment in time.
- Community Trust. Covanta/Veolia are still waiting to see the proposed modus operandi, which they expect to see in a developed form for presentation at a CLP meeting later this year.
- Filtration system design. Covanta has drafted a response to the CLP to be circulated with these notes. In addition there was a similar question asked by the Environment Agency, which has been responded to. A copy of this 'Question' and 'answer' will be included in the response being sent out. Furthermore responses to questions by the EA have been sent to the Environment Agency and are available on the Agency's web site.

Questions from CLP members

Question: When do people need to register to qualify for the electricity subsidy scheme? (it was to be January 2018).

Answer: Later this year. The dates will be announced as part of Grantscape's presentation and it will be set out in the next newsletter.

Question: Is the ash processing plant included in the Environment Agency's permitting?

Answer: A decision is still to be taken whether ash will be processed on site or taken off site. The Environment Agency's view was to ask Covanta to consider enclosing the process and storage if processing was to take place on site. This element is outside of the current planning consent. There will be no difference to lorry movements if the processing is done either on – or off – site.

Question: Where will the ash be stored (irrespective of where it will be reprocessed)?

Answer: It will be contained within a building in a storage bunker. The Environment Agency has a preference for bottom ash to be stored inside. A small amount of unprocessed ash will be stored on site in a building (as was always the case). At this stage the intention is that the ash would be removed from site before processing and no post-process ash stored. If this changes a planning amendment would be submitted first.

Next meeting: It was agreed to hold the next meeting as soon as possible after the publication of the Environment Agency's Permit determination. TK noted that the draft Permit is already available and largely represents the final issue. Conditions will not change substantially. Covanta can identify and highlight to the CLP what has changed.

Robin Treacher to liaise with the Environment Agency for a date – probably in February.

Held over

- Electricity subsidy scheme
- Community Trust and Memorandum of Information
- Drawing for work to widen entrance into the site.
- Arrangements for a site visit