

## NEWHURST ERF LOCAL LIAISON COMMITTEE (LLC) MEETING NOTES

MEETING HELD 27<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020, 1830-2000HRS (VIA ZOOM)

### In attendance:

Cllr Christine Radford (CR)	LCC County Councillor, Shepshed
Cllr Max Hunt (MH)	LCC County Councillor,
Cllr Jane Lennie (JL)	Shepshed Town Council
Cllr Peter Grainger (PG)	Shepshed Town Council
Cllr William Bebbington (WB)	Shepshed Town Council
Cllr Maureen Havers (MH)	Charley Parish Council
Cllr Joan Tassell (JT)	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr John Savage (JS)	Charnwood Borough Council
Julia Howard (JH)	Local Resident
Peter Wood (PW)	Local Resident
Peter Cunnington (PC)	Local Resident
Daniel Galpin (DG)	LCC Planning Officer
Mark Revill (MR)	Environment Agency
Helen Powers (HP)	Environment Agency
Ann Green (AG)	CBC Environmental Health
Alan Twells (AT)	CBC environmental Health
David Spencer (DS)	Covanta
Craig Burdis (CB)	Covanta
John Orchard (JO)	Biffa
Mary Tappenden (MT)	Biffa

**Apologies for absence:** Lynn Hobson, Pat Bailey, Garry Newborough

**Disclaimer:** Membership of the LLC does not imply either support for, or objection to, the Newhurst Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) development. Rather it is an opportunity to facilitate the flow of information between the developer and local communities.

The Terms of Reference for the Newhurst Local Liaison Committee as approved in September 2008 can be found on the facility's website ([info.covanta.com/newhurst](http://info.covanta.com/newhurst)).

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### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 MT introduced everyone present at the meeting. It was agreed that MT would chair the meeting on this occasion with the position of Chair a point for discussion later on the agenda.
- 1.2 A copy of the slides that were used during the meeting are available on the Newhurst ERF web site using the link:

<https://info.covanta.com/newhurst#communityengagement>

## **2. Apologies for absence**

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Pat Bailey and Garry Newborough. Lynn Hobson had informed MT that she did not wish to continue as a member of the Committee.

## **3. Terms of Reference for the Committee**

- 3.1 MT explained that the original terms of reference (ToR) were agreed in 2008 when the liaison committee was first set up after Biffa had submitted the planning application for landfill at the site. The ToR define the composition of the committee and its role. The Committee has no decision-making ability but is a format for exchanging information about the project.
- 3.2 The ToR were included in an abridged version in the s106 Agreement that accompanied the 2011 planning permission for the ERF. This includes the same composition for the committee as was in the original ToR. The ToR have been carried through the subsequent two planning permissions (2015 and 2019) unaltered.
- 3.3 *Q: JH asked whether it is possible to have a couple of stakeholders included, specifically the University and the Golf Club. Graham Howard, the Facilities Manager at the University has particularly expressed an interest. A: MH thought it would be useful to have someone from the University but that would open it up to all comers. CR was concerned the liaison committee will get too big. We already have too many members from Charnwood BC and Shepshed TC. MT said she would take that up with both organisations.*
- 3.4 MT asked JH to send some info about the suggested Loughborough University representative. She also commented that we already have direct contact with the Golf Course. As the meeting notes will be included on the project's website (see point 6.2), the Golf Course will be able to see the discussions and answers to any questions raised in the minutes.
- 3.5 With the resignation of Lynn Hobson, there is a Local Resident vacancy on the committee which is available to be filled. It was agreed that this should be done in a democratic way. MT will email all members to request they send details of anyone that they think may be interested in taking up the position. If there are a number of applicants, this will be discussed at the next meeting and LLC members will be able to vote for the Local Resident they would like to join the committee

## **4. Planning, Permitting and Financial Close**

- 4.1 MT ran through the planning and permitting history of the site. The site now has all necessary planning and permit approvals and is under construction. Financial close on the project was reached on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and construction commenced in June 2020.

## **5. Newhurst Construction Update**

- 5.1 CB presented slides of the construction update (see website).

- 5.2 CB is the project manager for Covanta. Project reached financial close in February 2020. Contracts signed with Hitachi Zosen Inova (HZI) as the principal Engineering, Procurement and Contractor (EPC). HZI are European leaders in Energy from Waste engineering, procurement, and construction. HZI have been carrying out the detailed design the plant.
- 5.3 Ecological mitigation measures have been put in place including translocation of a small population of Great Crested Newts. Site construction activities commenced 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020. 85 people are on site now in a temporary compound. A more permanent compound will be constructed later in the year.
- 5.4 Excavation of the waste bunker is now underway.
- 5.5 Generally, the first year comprises civil works, the second year is mechanical erection and the third year is commissioning. It is anticipated that Covanta will take over the plant in May 2023.
- 5.6 CB presented a slide that presents the relationship between all the parties. Newhurst ERF Ltd is a 50/50 partnership with Biffa owning 50% and Covanta/Green Investment Group owning the other 50%. There are also two management service agreements, with Covanta as the project manager through an Operation & Maintenance agreement, and Biffa as fuel supplier.
- 5.7 CB showed the general arrangement of the site and a slide showing what it would look like once it has been built. **Q:** *JT asked if any fly ash would be stored on site or taken away daily in sealed containers.* **A:** *MT answered a small amount will be stored on site in silos, but it will be safely handled and will be taken off site regularly in sealed tankers with no external storage or loading.*
- 5.8 Finally, CB presented some up to date photos to show how the construction is progressing on site. The site has a Covid-19 action plan and that is what is being worked to. Site staff are taking full account of all the UK government and Public Health England guidance and this is regularly reviewed, and changes made, as necessary.
- 5.9 **Q:** *JH asked if the design includes the new BAT air emission limits (AELs) that are coming down the track and come into force 6 months after Covanta take control of the keys.* **A:** *MR for the EA said that the new BAT (ael's) were signed off in December 2019. Existing plant has a 4 years grace period to implement the new limits. Any new plant operational after the end of 2023 will have to meet the new AELs. Although Newhurst does not have to comply until December 2023 it is likely the plant will comply upon commissioning. CB said he was sure this would happen. WB commented it is much better and more cost effective to include a change that you know is coming along in at the design stage than trying to retrofit.*
- 5.10 Cllr Jane Lennie commented was also concerned about the BAT regulations. Saying "I'm sure that will happen" is not enough really. **Q:** *Please can we have in it in writing to say you will actually be doing this.* **A:** *DS said we will address this in more detail as part of the range of questions to be addressed before the next meeting.*
- 5.11 **Q:** *JH said she spoke with MH of the EA about noise limits and asked for clarification on the limits that the plant will operate to. The planning only has 18-month noise monitoring and the assessment that went in the permit application says there is an adverse impact at night identified through the permit.* **A:** *MT said that two things are being mixed up here. The 18 months monitoring referred to through the planning is air*

*quality, not noise. We are required to do 6 months pre-construction air quality monitoring (we have completed approximately 18 months pre-construction monitoring), 6 months construction monitoring and 6 months operational monitoring. On noise, the planning permission sets noise limits of 55dBA at noise sensitive properties during the day and 42dBA at night. We have to achieve these limits at all times throughout the life of the plant. A fuller response will be provided in advance of the next meeting.*

- 5.12 CR asked that Biffa send out the answers to the questions to everyone present.
- 5.13 MH said if any other questions crop up after they leave the meeting then please put them to him. The EA left the meeting at 19.30.

## **6. Other Project Activities**

- 6.1 DS gave some background on Covanta. Many years of experience with EfW, predominantly in the USA. The UK government is encouraging us to move away from landfill. One of the most prudent solutions is energy from waste. Covanta has many years of experience of partnering up with others in the EU to treat residual waste that cannot be recycled or composted. Building at Newhurst, Rookery South etc.
- 6.2 DS said there is now a project website. This gives an introductory overview of the project at the moment, but we will be adding more content to it as the construction phase progresses. In particular we will be introducing an FAQ section. We are also using time lapse and drone cameras to produce quarterly films so you can see what is happening on site. We will also be producing a community newsletter. Initially it will be a print edition, but it will move to an e-format to reduce carbon footprint.
- 6.3 We also want to encourage people to come to the site, but at the moment we are constrained by Covid-19. We are going to progress some branding work for the project so it has an identity. In general, because it is under construction we do want to get out and talk to people so that any concerns can be raised. Our aim is to be as open and transparent as possible.
- 6.4 Looking to try and capitalise on the heat off-take from the plant. In the EU some plants export heat to local industrial users. We have been looking for a heat user, potentially the University, but we want to explore all opportunities. It is a sensible thing to do, it makes the plant more efficient and it is good use of a by-product from the process.
- 6.5 MH found this reassuring and put across a very human face of the organisation. The single concern is the emissions from the plant. A lot of papers make all sorts of claims about the emissions. Unfortunately, Covanta or Biffa are not the best people to say how safe the plant is. The people we trust most are the local EHO's. Please can you discuss with them to explain how you control emissions and monitor the plant in language that can be understood.

- 6.6 DS said he has the job of articulating what these plants are, and also what they are not. The regulations in the EU and the UK under which we have to operate are amongst the strictest. There are clear reporting responsibilities on the operator under the permit to give real time data about how the plant is performing against the permit. We will definitely address this and will produce a position statement as well as addressing this in the FAQ along with other issues such as noise, transport etc.
- 6.7 I know people will find a lot of information on the internet and if they do, please send it through and I will be more than willing to try and answer questions in a way that is not overbearing or too scientific. We will use third party information that has been peer reviewed. MH commented that this is very reassuring.
- 6.8 CR said you were going to do away? with the print copy of the newsletter. DS said we will send newsletters out to homes within a particular radius of the site. Print edition will be in September time, then another e-edition approximately 3-4 months after that.
- 6.9 CR do you do any grants to the local area? DS said we don't at the moment on this site. MT confirmed there are no planning conditions that require this to happen. Covanta do have trust funds that can be applied for, for local projects. DS said the team would need to speak to see how this might be taken forward.
- 6.10 CR you are talking to the University about heat, but we have in Loughborough, Rainbows for children at end of life. If possible, could free electricity or heat should go to them rather than the University. DS said EfW's generate electricity that goes directly to the national grid which is distributed in the normal way to homes and businesses. There are plants in the UK that distribute heat locally. We are going out early on this to see what inward investment might arise from the use of the heat. MT commented that the heat would not be given gratis to the University.
- 6.11 Bob Bebbington commented that in order to use the heat, you need a user very close to the plant for efficiency. The University is an obvious choice as they are very close to the site. The fact remains that the shorter the distance the more efficient it is.
- 6.12 PW asked about traffic routing. Now the M1 improvements have been put in place, traffic coming off the M1 is not an issue, but the traffic travelling along the A512 to the west is still an issue, particularly at peak times. PW suggests we might want to consider requiring drivers to go via the A42/M1 rather than the A512. It adds about 5 miles but most of this is at 56mph rather than 30mph. We will put the question in and will consider it.
- 6.13 CB has had communication from Gavin Fletcher at Nottingham City Council who is the Regional Senior Energy Projects Officer for the Midlands Energy Hub. CB will be setting up a meeting with him.
- 6.14 DS said the UK Government recognises the importance of EfW's and there was a Policy Connect paper released recently on this point. One thing that came out is paper is that the Government is very keen to support heat use to maximise the efficiencies of plants and to lower the carbon footprints of other developments that may be nearby.

## **7. Consideration of the Role of Chair**

- 7.1 Liaison groups are facilitated by developers but very much guided by the members. Peter Wood has chaired the meetings up to 2014, but we now want to ask if we should

consider an independent facilitator? They would chair and would produce notes from the meeting. They form a conduit between you as members and us as the developers. Do people think this is a sensible idea?

- 7.2 DS gave an example from the Rookery South project, where Covanta went to the UK's Association of Facilitators, as we wanted to get someone with the skills and background to chair the meetings and make sure it runs in an efficient way. Covanta interviewed four candidates who were local to the site, but also had the professional background as an independent facilitator. If members agree we could plan to do the same here, by identify candidates and interviewing them.
- 7.3 CR – we have this quite often with meetings at the County and it works well. MH agreed. It is such an onerous job and it would take a lot of pressure off us and make sure we are all heard in the right way. CR – going into a significant period for the site and we need to make sure everything is alright. As you know, I opposed this, but it has approval and we now need to work with it and get the best that we can so we do need someone who is good at Chairing, as it keeps us all under control. Quite happy for this to happen but I do want someone local.
- 7.4 It was agreed by the meeting that we should seek out an independent facilitator. Alan Twells suggested that one of the residents be one of the selection group, so it is truly independent. JH said she would be happy to do it. MT said she would invite a member of the LLC to support the interview process.

## **8. Any other business**

- 8.1 CR asked that the first community newsletter be given to all member of the LLC, some to Charley PC, some to the Town Council and some to be put in public areas.
- 8.2 JH said Woodhouse Eaves should get it too. DS said that when it is produced, it will be in an electronic format, as well as printed edition for the first time and it will be sent out to all members of the LLC before it goes on general release. It will also be offered to other parish councils outside of the sphere of the distribution area. Equally if there are any major milestones on the project, or a larger delivery of equipment that may impact on the local road network, then we will share any press releases etc. with the group.
- 8.3 JH – the questions that I sent you, will they come out with the minutes or the question and answer thing. DS – we will produce a set of minutes. Over the next 24 hours if you have any more questions, then email himself or Mary, and we will add these questions to the end of the meeting notes so you can see what we are going to respond to before the next liaison meeting. When the agenda is sent out, we will have the questions and the answers too, so if you want to discuss it at the next meeting then we will be able to do so in greater detail.

## **9. Date of next meeting**

- 9.1 The date of the next meeting was agreed as **12<sup>th</sup> October 2020**. Format to be advised closer to the date.