

Waterbeach Parish Council

Clerk: **Shelley Mason**

Tel: 01223 441338

E-mail: council@waterbeach.org.uk

**The Old Pavilion
Recreation Ground
Cambridge Road
Waterbeach
Cambridge
CB25 9NJ**

6 February 2018

Emma Fitch – by email
Business Manager, County Planning, Minerals and Waste
Cambridgeshire County Council
SH1315, Shire Hall
Cambridge, CB3 0AP

Planning application S/3372/17/CW for Energy to Waste Facility, Waterbeach,

Following its meeting on the 30th January and informed by discussion of the proposal at the planning meeting on the 16th January and following the public meeting on the 29th January in relation to the proposal; the **Parish recommends refusal for the Energy from Waste plan as proposed.**

On balance it is not considered that the benefits offered by the proposal outweigh the significant and ongoing harm its presence in the landscape and operational impacts would cause to the immediate and wider locality.

Community involvement

The council consider that the level of engagement that has been carried out by the applicant in respect to such major proposal has been poor for such a significant and evidently contentious application.

It is noted that the applicant's approach contrasted with the major developers of the Waterbeach barracks site who both leafleted residents and ran consultation exhibitions in the village. The public meeting held by the applicants on the 30 January evening was too little and too late to be a genuine consultation but was essentially an explanation. Feedback from the meeting has shown that many residents found the presentations and answers from the public meeting unhelpful and confusing.

It is considered that the public engagement carried out is not adequate, is inappropriately timed and fails to address the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and the provisions of the NPPF particularly Para 188.

Robustness of data

The Parish Council has significant concerns in relation to the credibility and robustness of the data underpinning the application submission, this is evidenced by the fact that CCC commissioned an independent noise assessment review that concluded the application underestimates its effects leads the Council to question whether other claims on environmental impacts are also unduly optimistic and therefore are reliable as a basis for decision making. The importance of 'the right information' to accompany an application is stressed in the NPPF Para 192 particularly in respect to EIA development.

Pollution – effects on health

The Parish Council is mindful of widespread concerns as to the potential health impacts of incinerators and that these are shared by a significant number of local residents. It is understood that matters of emissions from incinerators and public safety are largely the responsibility of the Environment Agency and the parish council does not feel able to dissect the competing scientific data, however it would advocate a safety first approach.

Without prejudice and notwithstanding the parish councils objection, should the development be approved it is crucial that the County Council as waste planning authority and the Environment Agency set their conditions at the highest possible level for all the different elements and not only the 10 in the industrial strategy.[see paras 206-7 of the Defra publication Energy from Waste – a Guide to the debate):
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284612/pb14130-energy-waste-201402.pdf The same high limits should also apply to any additional elements that may be monitoring in the future.

It is noted that the District Council is pursuing a new settlement of up to 9,000 homes north of Waterbeach through the emerging local plan and notwithstanding the Parish Council's opposition to this it is noted that the closest dwellings on the planned settlement are only approx. 1km from the proposed site and as such will potentially be the most vulnerable to emissions.

The relationship of a significant new strategic housing development so close to a planned waste site is a material consideration that need to be balanced in the wider health and amenity interests.

Traffic

The Council took note of a recent independent report commissioned by CCC suggesting that the applicant has underestimated the effects of noise in its proposal. In view of this, and the recent Ely to Cambridge Transport Study 2018 which concludes that the A10 has significant problems, the Council would like to see an independent review of the data on creation of traffic to be assured that the figures are valid.

It is considered that the increased traffic along the A10 particularly from large lorries servicing the plant would adversely impact on the flow of traffic along the A10 with is severely congested throughout long periods of the day at this point.

Without prejudice and notwithstanding the Parish Councils opposition to the proposal; should the development be approved the Council believe that Amey should be required to make a financial contribution (S106) to ameliorate the additional traffic and effects on the A10, and on local residents especially those close to the site. Moreover, the Council would ask that it is consulted by the County Council during its deliberations on what type of contribution is appropriate.

Visual Impact

The Council voted that the current design was unacceptable in visual impact terms. The scale and overall bulk of the proposed building is at odds with the surrounding landscape and built development. Policy CS2 of the County's Minerals and waste Core Strategy confirms that a core aim of the plan is to safeguard and enhance the distinctive landscapes of the county; it is the Parish council's view that the proposal would be significantly and materially harmful to the surrounding flat Fen landscape due to its scale, design and height.

It is noted that the LVIA submitted with the application acknowledges that there will be significant local impact on landscape character.

Without prejudice, and notwithstanding the Parish Councils objection, should the development be approved the parish requires better visual impact and landscape mitigation measures than those currently proposed. These should be in the form of screening the facility with semi mature trees comprising a mix of native species to protect against the risk of single species disease.

Noise/Light

The Parish Council is concerned that the proposal will have an adverse environmental Impact by virtue noise and light emissions from the plant and note that this is contrary to the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy policy CS2.

Procedural Requests

As referred to above, the Parish Council would like to be any S106 money from this development if it is passed, be made available for our parish, i.e. improvement to the A10, etc. due to the increase of traffic, etc. It recognises that S106 contributions for Highways are proposed/negotiated by the County Council and asks that the Parish Council can be consulted during that process.

Finally please note that the Parish Council also requests an opportunity to speak at the relevant CCC planning committee meeting (in May?) when they discuss this.

Shelley Mason