

# PROPOSAL TO BUILD A CHP PLANT AND LEACHATE TREATMENT WORKS AT WARBOYS LANDFILL SITE

## Extracts from the April May edition of the Diary

### Joint update from Parish Council and Warboys Landfill Action Group (as at 13 March 2018)

First thank you to all who took the time to write letters of objection to Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC). They were overwhelmed dealing with them. 180 people copied their letters to Warboys Parish Council (WPC) who fully understand local feelings. About 70 parishioners attended the WPC planning meetings and saw our council register an equally strong recommendation of refusal.

If you have missed all this, the CHP Combined Heat and Power plant would burn 48,000 tonnes a year of waste wood including paint and glue. It would create a small amount of electricity to the grid and a lot of heat, some to be used in the WWTF, and most of it to escape into the air. The concern is that this would release pollutants into the local atmosphere and endanger our health possibly causing cancers and/or respiratory illnesses.

The attached Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF) would take in 65,000 tonnes a year of leachate and other waste water and use the heat from the CHP to evaporate it into the air. Leachate is the liquid waste created as landfill waste rots down, which from Warboys landfill site includes 250,000 tonnes of hazardous waste. The claim is that only water vapour would escape, but this technique is untested in the UK. The potential pollutants from the six chimneys would again risk our health.

Over the past 25 years the village has fought many battles to protect us from the risks of a local landfill site. This included a public enquiry in 2005 into the refusal of retrospective planning permission for hazardous waste disposal at which WLAG and WPC employed an expert, Alan Watson, to act for us, who did a great job. In 2017 CCC in the screening process had decided that this new proposal did not require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We were shocked and contacted Alan to work for us again. He wrote a letter of objection on behalf of WLAG in which he demonstrated that the CCC was wrong in their interpretation of the relevant technical procedures and the application does require an EIS. Alan informed CCC that WLAG would be writing to the Secretary of State to challenge their decision and taking legal action if necessary.

On 22 February we heard from CCC that:

*'Having received preliminary advice from the council's legal adviser, we will re-screen the development proposal and will, of course, let you know the outcome. Due to the annual leave commitments of the relevant officers this is likely to be towards the end of March.'*

On 8 March, earlier than expected, we have again been contacted to say that Sycamore is keen to get on with the EIS. Caulmert, part of the Sycamore group, have submitted another request to the County Council for a scoping opinion to determine what supporting documentation should accompany the application. The County Council will be consulting statutory bodies for their advice and although the Parish Council and the public are not statutory consultees, Alan Watson will be drafting a response on our behalf. When their new documentation appears there will be a further consultation period, this time over a 30 day period. Watch for posters and on the websites for the additional consultation period beginning. We have clarified this with Helen Wass, the CCC planning officer who states:

*'The County Council expects the applicant to submit more information in connection with the planning application. When they receive it, they will notify everyone who commented on the original submission. If the new information does not change your views you do not need to write to the County Council again – **they will take into account your original comments.** You only need to write to the County Council again if you want to change all or some of your comments.'*

Employing Alan Watson at the public inquiry back in 2005, was paid for by fundraising and by the Parish Council. After the public inquiry both WPC and WLAG recovered their costs and set them aside, in case we should need to fight again. WLAG and the Parish Council are working together and are in a position to employ Alan's services, as we need them. WLAG are lucky to have expert volunteers in some

technical areas who have come forward to help. If YOU have expertise please contact us – we need you.

We will keep you informed via Warboys Diary and through occasional posters. You can also check on the [www.warboyspc.info](http://www.warboyspc.info) and the library site [www.fowl.org.uk](http://www.fowl.org.uk). Thanks again for your support.

Contact Betty Ball by email [WLAG@warboys.co.uk](mailto:WLAG@warboys.co.uk) or by phone 01487 822083.

**Note:** **Sycamore Planning** were invited to send us an update for publication in the Diary, but their reply stated they '*do not have anything to submit at the present time*'.



## **Extracts from the January-March edition of the Diary**

### **1. A NARRATIVE FROM SYCAMORE PLANNING**

#### **Introduction**

Sycamore Planning has submitted a full planning application to Cambridgeshire County Council for the proposed construction of a Biomass Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Facility and Waste Water Treatment Plant on land adjacent to Woodford Recycling.

#### **Biomass CHP Facility**

The Biomass CHP Facility will have the capacity to process up to 48,000 tonnes of non-hazardous waste wood annually. The waste wood will be burnt in a fluidised bed combustor (that complies with the Industrial Emissions Directive) at temperatures in excess of 850°C producing steam which is used to generate electricity. A Continuous Emissions Monitoring System analyses the flue gas in real time and controls chemical dosing to ensure emissions to atmosphere are compliant with air quality standards and limits set in the Environmental Permit. Particulates will be captured in bag filters for disposal offsite at an appropriate waste management facility. All waste wood burnt in the combustor will be supplied by Woodford Recycling.

#### **Waste Water Treatment Plant**

The Waste Water Treatment Plant will utilise waste steam from electrical generation to process up to 65,000 tonnes of non-hazardous waste water annually. The waste water will primarily come from local landfill sites delivered in road tankers and will be chemically pre-treated before storage in bunded tanks. Waste water will be pumped to evaporator units through an ammonia stripper and sprayed over heat exchangers which facilitate thin film evaporation to produce water vapour which is discharged to atmosphere. Suspended solids within the waste water will be recovered from the evaporator units and taken offsite to an appropriate waste management facility. Sampling ports are provided in the evaporator flues to allow emissions to atmosphere to be checked with air quality standards and limits set in the Environmental Permit.

#### **Waste Acceptance**

The development will operate strictly in accordance with waste acceptance criteria, detailed in the Environmental Permits, to ensure only non-hazardous waste wood and waste water are received on site.

#### **Proposed Operating Hours and Delivery Times**

The development is designed to operate continuously. Deliveries and collections will only take place between 07:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday and 07:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays. There will be no deliveries on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

#### **Vehicle Movements**

The development will generate an average of 18 deliveries/collections per day (36 lorry movements) including waste wood, waste water, consumables, etc. as well as removal of combustor ash and solid residue from the Waste Water Treatment Plant. This assumes waste wood is being sourced directly from the open market but in reality a significant proportion will come directly from Woodford's adjacent Materials Recycling Facility.

All HGVs will be required to access and egress the development from the A141 via Fenside Road to avoid HGVs travelling through the village of Warboys. It is proposed that these HGV restrictions are enforced through a legal agreement between the site operator and Cambridgeshire County Council.

#### **Renewable Energy**

The Biomass CHP Facility will process up to 144 tonnes of waste wood per day, which previously would have gone to landfill. The 16.5MW of waste heat will be used to process up to 195 tonnes of waste water per day and 0.75MW of electricity generated will be exported to the grid. This contributes to Government targets for increasing energy generation from renewable sources and diverting waste from landfill.

## Regulation

The development will be regulated by the Environment Agency and operated in accordance with the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2014.

## 2 A VIEW FROM WARBOYS LANDFILL ACTION GROUP

On Monday 8 January villagers attended a Warboys Parish Council (WPC) planning meeting to hear a presentation by Sycamore Planning Ltd (SPL). Thanks go to WPC for opening up this meeting to the public and allowing villagers to question and raise issues of concern. It was pleasing to see so many attending and raising a large variety of issues.

- ◆ Woodford Recycling Services Ltd would continue to run the waste transfer station. The new plant would be owned and run by a separate firm.
- ◆ The proposed plant would burn Grades B and C waste wood (untreated wood) in a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plant producing steam to drive a generator to produce electricity with excess exported to the grid. This process is widely used in the UK. In addition SPL would import leachate from waste sites in the area (including Warboys Landfill), and would seek to evaporate the liquid and discharge the vapour into the atmosphere (monitored but not controlled) through six 12 meter high chimneys.

The combined process is new and untested in the UK and the several companies involved in the scheme were not formed until 2016. SPL describe this release into the local atmosphere as 'water vapour' – this gave concern to many of those present. These emissions could affect the air quality locally and affect our and our children's health. The remaining slurry would be tankered off for hazardous treatment.

Concerns were also expressed about the access to the site via Fenside Road, a single track with passing places in bad repair. The lorries to be used are large articulated units containing loads of 24-27 tonnes, said to mean less journeys – 36 trips a day expected plus the smaller skips from Woodford. The junction with the A141 is also considered very dangerous, especially for long lorries exiting from Fenside Road.

SPL applied for planning permission on 8 Jan and will also need to apply to the Environment Agency (EA) for a Permit for the operation. If they obtain both of these they will purchase part of the landfill site land for the scheme. Many were concerned to hear that Cambs CC planners do not require this proposal to have an Environmental Impact Statement.

Assurances from SPL that the site would be regulated by the EA, and any failure to comply with the permit would mean that the site would instantly be closed down by the EA were met with derision. The landfill site has never been in compliance with the leachate regulations and the EA have never taken any action on this.

Warboys Landfill Action Group (WLAG) will be working to respond to the planning application over the next few weeks and WPC will have to consider the submission in light of the application and documents submitted before making a decision. WLAG has been involved with the landfill site for nearly 30 years but our numbers are seriously depleted by the deaths of John Dennis and Nigel Holmes who brought considerable expertise to the work. **We need to hear from any of you who can help especially those who have any relevant experience or skills.**

Watch the WPC website page for timing on when and where you can write with your concerns. It is important that you write your own letter in your own words – signed petitions and multi-copied letters are ignored. The planning proposal will be available on the Cambs CC website. Also watch for posters with more information.

**Please contact me, Betty Ball, to offer help urgently on [WLAG@warboys.co.uk](mailto:WLAG@warboys.co.uk) or 01487 822083.**



### 3. FROM WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Cambridgeshire County Council is the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority and will be the authority responsible for determining the planning application when it is submitted. The applications and supporting documentation should be available to view on the County Council's website when they have validated the application. It's important to remember that there is a **statutory period of 21 days in which to comment once the consultation period starts**. Comments submitted after that date may be unlikely to be taken into account.

The Parish Council is a statutory consultee and similarly has 21 days in which to comment on the application. The Council will consider the application at a meeting of its Planning Committee. In view of the interest in the application, a special meeting of the Planning Committee will be held, which the public are entitled to attend.

As soon as the Parish Council is consulted on the application, the Council will publish the link to the County Council's planning portal on its website and Facebook page. Comments on the application should be addressed to the County Council but if anyone wishes to copy the Parish Council into their response, these views will be taken into account by the Parish Council in determining their recommendation.