



AGENDA

Rookery South ERF - Community Liaison Panel

Monday January 16th 2023

Rookery South Visitors' Centre

-
- **Introductions/Group ground rules/Apologies** (5 mins – BF)
 - **Approval of notes from previous CLP Meeting** (5 mins - BF)
 - **Matters arising from last meeting** (15 mins - BF)
 - **General Manager Update:** (15 mins – NG)
 - **Plant Manager Update:** (15 mins – PK)
 - **Questions** (10 mins)
 - **Regulator and Local Authority Feedback**
 - - Environment Agency
 - - Planning (+ Questions)
 - **AOB** (5 mins)
 - **Date of next CLP meeting**

Rookery South ERF – Community Liaison Panel – 16th January 2023

Facility Manager's update



**ROOKERY
SOUTH**
Energy Recovery Facility

| | OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER | YEAR 2022 |
|----------------|---------|----------|----------|-----------|
| WASTE (tonnes) | 50,760 | 49,420 | 48,552 | 459,900 |
| POWER (MWh) | 44,724 | 39,357 | 40,502 | 397,751 |

Plant Operations

- Plant Performance
- Recruitment
- Water management
- Bottom Ash recycling



Rookery South ERF – Community Liaison Panel – 16th January 2023

General Manager's Update

Waste Supply

- Sourcing
- Composition
 - Fossil fuel?
 - Bio content

Community Programmes

- Community Trust Fund (3rd round open for applications)
- Electricity Subsidy Scheme for 2023
- Charitable donations
- Rookery Circular path
 - Opening
 - Signage

Electricity Sales

- PPA
- Capacity Market
- REGOs
- Generator levy

Other Activities

- Visitor Centre completed
 - Arranging visits
- New website under development
- Solar Roof project
- District Heating project
- Planting/grounds maintenance



Rookery South ERF – Community Liaison Panel – 16th January 2023

Water Management

Process Water

- Process water e.g. boiler blowdown, spills → sealed drainage system and settlement tank
 - i. Used for bottom ash quenching
 - ii. Maintaining combustion conditions
 - iii. Tankered off site

Surface Run-off

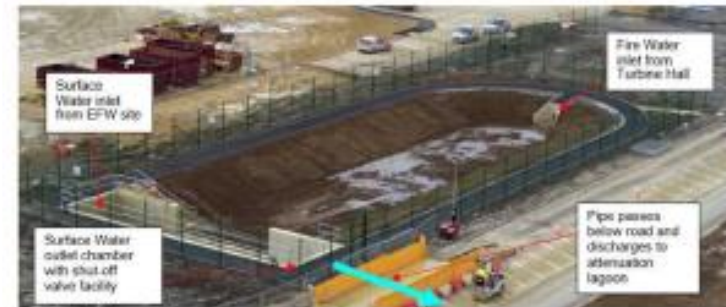
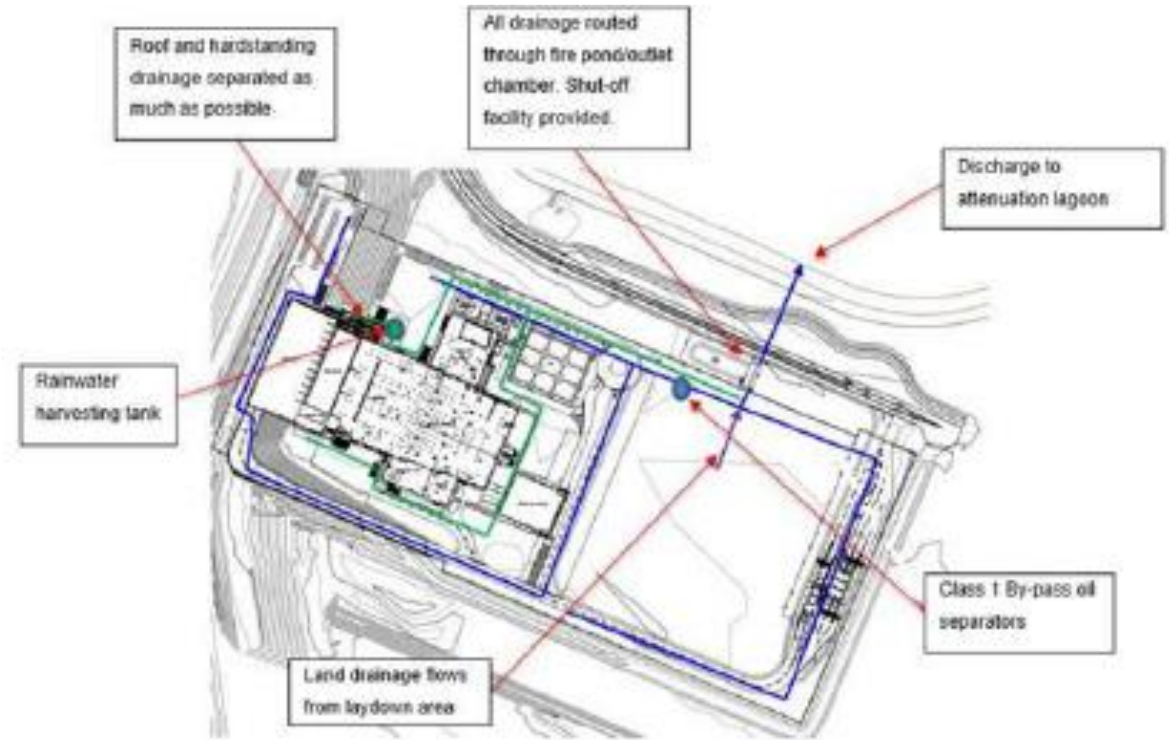
- Road drainage + hard standings → drainage gullies
- Rainwater harvesting from roof → irrigation of Green wall/roof
- Drainage → fire water pond via oil separator

Domestic Foul sewage

- 3 micro wastewater treatment plants (Offices, workshop, weighbridge)
- Treated effluent → storm drainage → firewater pond

Fire Water Storage Pond

- Accommodates spent firefighting water from turbine hall. 350m³ capacity.
- Penstock valve drains to Rookery South pond.



Firewater Tank

Rookery South CLP Meeting 24 Notes

Monday 16th January 2023 – 6.00 pm, Rookery South Visitors' Centre

Present:

CLP Members – Representatives from: Brogborough PC; Marston Moretaine PC; Millbrook PC; Stewartby PC; Wootton PC; Lidlington PC; Cranfield PC; Lidlington Resident; Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership; Marston Vale Forest Centre; CBC - Cllr Sue Clark (SC)

Observers/Presenters – Rookery South Ltd: Judith Harper (JH), Neil Grimstone (NG); Covanta: Paddy Kelly (PK); Environment Agency – Neil Goudie (NGoud); Facilitator: Bob Fisher (rmpfisher77@gmail.com)

Apologies: Emma D'Avila (EA); Roy Romans; Cllr Tim Hill; Houghton Conquest PC.

1. Matters Arising from Meeting 23

- i) SC noted that her comments as recorded in the meeting notes regarding the special meeting had not been accurately represented. NG considered that they were not pertinent to the purpose of publishing the CLP meeting notes, it being to inform the public of what is happening at the plant, both good and bad, not about reflecting internal discussions regarding the composition of the CLP. SC agreed to her comments being amended rather than a full transcript being appended. The amended version is available in the final notes of the October 2022 meeting no. 23 as published in the public domain, although it is acknowledged that CLP members may make their own notes of the meeting for their own use. This matter is now closed.
- ii) PK should be recorded as Paddy, not Patrick, Kelly.
- iii) Noted that comments about a breach analysis were based on an RSL report to the EA, which had not been published at the time of the meeting. The EA stated that there will always be a lag in publishing assessments; a report re the quarter Oct/Nov/Dec will be submitted in January and this will be assessed by the EA in February or March. Hence, the breach reported in the quarter July-Sept will be assessed soon if this has not yet been done. The operator chooses to put this data live on the website, although this data is not validated until later. The EA can only assess what it receives, not what is on the website.

Approval of Notes from Meeting 23 – the notes were approved with the agreed changes.

2. Facility Manager's Update (PK)

- i) Plant Performance – the plant was operating efficiently during Q4, processing c.50,000 tonnes per month of waste [see slide]. Electrical export was around 42,000 MWh per month.

There was no downtime in October; in November a couple of days were lost when the control system for the export tripped the breaker; in December mechanical problems with the waste bunker cranes were causing some issues, but the plant is performing well for a new site.

Recruitment – RSL is very near to achieving full recruitment and has employed some very high calibre people from well-respected companies. All posts should be filled by the end of Q1. Recruitment has been made at all levels of the hierarchy; e.g. Day Operators, Day Operator Supervisor, Mechanical ECMI, Technicians, Maintenance and Health & Safety Managers and Day Shift Team Leaders.

There have been a number of succession posts, such as the Maintenance Manager and H&S Manager, who both moved to new Covanta sites elsewhere (Protos and Newhurst respectively). There has been some staff turnover resulting in some unfilled posts in Day Operations.

Also, the plant has employed more local contractors; e.g. replacing a national cleaning company with a local one (JLS), who performed much better than the big company.

ii) Water Management – PK gave an overview of the function of the Penstock Valve:

There is process water, plus run-off from the roofs and hard standing areas, and also sewage.

Process water is essentially water which has been bled out of the steam system. There is no process water discharge allowed from the site so this water is collected in a tank and then sent to the ash extractors, where it is reused to quench the ash. The ash comes out damp and it will probably have c.20% water content – so some of the water actually leaves the site in the bottom ash. In addition some water is injected into the furnace.

Rainwater run-off - rainwater harvesting on site is used for keeping the green roof and wall watered. Run-off from the rest of the building envelope, which doesn't come from a 'dirty'/chemical loading area, will flow directly to the fire water tank, which is on the boundary and will then flow out through the Penstock Valve.

Any **drainage** that comes through a working area, e.g. drains from inside the Boiler House, goes to a settlement tank on site, and from there it will flow via a boiler interceptor into the fire water tank, and that will go through the Penstock Valve.

The Penstock Valve is automated and is tied into the firefighting system. If the system is triggered, before the sprays are initiated an automatic signal is sent to the Penstock Valve to shut it. The valve shuts, the firefighting system is activated and the water from that will drain away into gullies and into the firewater holding tank, where it is contained. At that point the water is tested and it can be either discharged or tankered off-site if it does not meet the discharge standards.

There are three micro sewage treatment plants on-site from which the clean output will go up to the firewater tank and then through the Penstock Valve.

During firefighting, foam can be used and sprayed onto potentially oily parts of the plant. In case of contaminants, contaminated water is contained on site by the Penstock valve which will shut automatically in the event of a fire.

PK clarified that process water is from a completely separate system and does not go into the firewater tank. Only clean water from the firewater tank is discharged via the Penstock Valve and into the Rookery South Pond. If there were to be a big fire or an oil spill on site, for example, the Penstock Valve would be shut; there are a series of holding points before the firewater tanks.

PK agreed to produce a simplified diagram of the water management for the next meeting. [PMN Sent out following the meeting with the slides].

In response to the EA, PK noted that (liquid) fuel is delivered to separate contained points on site not linked to the penstock valve. Water sampling is also conducted twice a year. The Penstock Valve discharge is also checked every 12-hour shift. There are also two emergency response contracts set up, in case anything goes wrong (with a 1-hour response time). The plant is well-covered by design but also well-covered by support.

- iii) Incinerator Bottom Ash Recycling: Currently there is an arrangement with Johnson's Aggregates. This arrangement will shortly move to Day Aggregates, who will initially be transporting IBA to Brentford. This is the first step in a partnership with Days, which will involve taking IBA from RSL to be recycled at a new facility in Wellingborough, which is currently under construction.

EA asked whether emissions would be discussed later. Have there been any emissions failures in the quarter from October to December?

- i) Emissions/emissions failures

Responding to the EA question, there have been no verified breaches – no official reports of failures from the EA. A few concerns have been reported to the EA - primarily CO (carbon monoxide) and dust (from a burst filter bag) which are awaiting EA assessment. There have not been any breaches of the HCl (hydrogen chloride) limit.

There was some discussion on verified vs unverified breaches.

A verified breach is one that has been assessed and recorded by the EA. A non-verified breach is one that shows up on data and is reported to the EA e.g. if there is a process disruption, a lot of alarms could go off, so the operator goes through the data to find what could be a breach of the permit. It is then reported to the EA within 24 hours, who analyses it and responds. It could be e.g. a data error e.g. instrument inaccuracy or a spike that is not actually a breach. It has not been subjected to the EA analysis and quality control.

As RSL publishes monthly emissions data on the website, which is in the public domain, CLP Members thought that it would be helpful to highlight and discuss these potential breaches for the sake of transparency, but to state that they are provisional and have not been verified.

It was agreed that at the next meeting monthly data from the website would be summarised and RSL would report on it with this becoming a standing item.

3. General Manager's Update (NG)

There have been no changes in terms of waste mix, with 80-85% of the waste coming from Veolia and smaller amounts of waste from contracts with Geminor (mainly from Wales and London), and Cawleys, based in Luton. The company also takes "spot waste" – small quantities of municipal and commercial waste at short notice from other areas (e.g. Milton Keynes, Northants).

RSL carries out compositional analysis of the waste to determine plastic and other content, also to know how much energy is contained in it; this is also measured by the boiler. Compositional analysis is driven by an environmental agenda e.g. to see if less plastic could be burned. Also, bio-based content (e.g. food, textiles) which produces 40-50% of the energy generated by the plant is determined. RSL plans to obtain Renewable Energy Certificates covering the amount of electricity produced from the incineration of biodegradable material by calculating the aforesaid.

Electricity sales revenues were strong in 2022, although going forward these will be subject to a Generator Levy, coming in at the start of January and the company is taxed at 45% for all electricity revenues of more than 7.5 pence per KW hour, in addition to Corporation Tax on profits.

RSL also receives capacity market payments for baseload – a reward essentially for 'being available' – which are c£50,000 per month, but conversely, the plant must be online when other generators come under pressure or RSL would suffer penalties. Over the next few days with anticyclonic conditions and very cold weather predicted, the energy demand is expected to be high and the national grid

could be under pressure, so the operator needs to make sure the plant is available. Community Benefits

It is now time for the third round of applications to the Community Trust Fund for funds of around £70-80,000 (up c10% from last year).

The electricity subsidy – the Rookery Community Energy Initiative – was originally £70 per year but has been set at £100 per household for the year 2023; before it was for 18 months (half of 2021 plus all of 2022).

Grantscape does have to go through the process of getting people to reconfirm eligibility every year. This is necessary due to changes in the registrants and isn't that expensive.

Charitable donations: over Christmas, RSL donated £10,000 to four local charities and also agreed to sponsor a project at Wootton Academy - an enrichment project, reinstating a garden, composting and so on.

A major project – the Rookery Circular Path - has been completed and is now waiting for Council approval. It's already cyclable and this will have signage around the paths and four information boards, including a graphic of the plant (which had been requested at a previous CLP meeting).

Visitor Centre

The Visitor Centre is now essentially complete and RSL is very keen to welcome visits from local Parish Councils. To arrange this, please contact NG or Anita Taylor.

Covanta

The company is in the process of re-branding, which will include (eventually!) the new website. Covanta will be known as Encyclis from 23rd January which will be the end of the Covanta name in Europe – but will be retained in the US. Rookery South Ltd will remain the same. BF to provide a link to the press release.

NG confirmed that the new website will report how many hits it receives, e.g. for the Community engagement schemes and access to the CLP notes

In addition, RSL is about to let a contract for grounds maintenance, which involves weeding and replanting of trees next to the Green Lane entrance and the access road. RSL has also created an 'eco barrier' (i.e. a hedge) as screen between the road and the railway [to replace the wooden fence], as agreed with Network Rail, to prevent the train drivers getting dazzled by the glare from the truck lights.

RSL is quite close to a contract to install 1,000 solar panels on the roof of the plant – which won't be seen from the ground – generating up to ½ megawatt, which will be useful addition to the 60 megawatts generated RSL by the plant. This is not expected to require planning permission as it is below the critical threshold. SC queried concerns by Cranfield Airport about potential glare.

District Heating Project

The District Heating Project is moving ahead. RSL has engaged with Vital Energi, who is getting close to reaching commercial agreements with partners/off-takers to provide hot water locally. The Rookery South plant creates steam and the plan is to use this to generate hot water at 100 degrees, which will be pumped to the off-taker and then on to local households. VE secured £17m Government funding for this local initiative and is therefore a very exciting development. Obtaining an initial commercial off-taker will establish a critical mass and the project will take off from there.

4. EA Update (NGoud representing EdA)

The EA has a lot of resourcing issues due to Covid-19, plus it is losing people to private companies as these are more attractive and offer more flexibility. Therefore, report validations are generally taking longer than the EA would like.

The EA chair has retired and been replaced by Alan Lovell. The CEO is also leaving next month.

EdA notes that RSL is operating as well as hoped. As required, RSL has been providing schedule notifications and there have been some minor breaches of CO and HCl and dust over the last 3-6 months. However, non-compliance does not necessarily mean that there is an enforcement issue. There is a range of assessment categories, 1 (very serious) to 4 (administrative) compliance banding, which are given at the end of the year. The EA has not finalised RSL's scores, but these are likely to be average/above average, which is typical for a new plant. EdA will elaborate on how the scoring works.

There have been no breaches of discharge to water or formal complaints re odour. There was one off-site community complaint regarding odour, but this was not substantiated.

5. **LA Update** – DW is on sick leave till the end of Jan & sent apologies.

6. AOB

Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership: Vivarail, which maintains the trains on this line, went into administration and there has been no train service since then. Every effort is being made to reintroduce the service asap. In the meantime, there is a full rail replacement bus service. SS is happy to receive any comments about this service and will post information about when the service is being reinstated.

SC will forward to MVCRP a letter from the local authority to lobby London/NW Railway for the train service to be reintroduced, but also to complain about the [inappropriate] bus route.

All three local MPs are also aware of the situation and are lobbying the Dept – and Minister - of Transport.

This has no impact on E-W Rail which is a separate issue.

7. **Next meeting date:** Monday 17th April (6pm)