

Rookery South CLP Meeting 27 Notes

Monday 16th October 2023 – 6.00 pm, Stewartby Room, Rookery South ERF

Present:

CLP Members – Representatives from: Millbrook PM; Wootton resident on behalf of Wootton PC; Lidlington PC; Lidlington Resident; Marston Moreteyne PC, Cranfield and Marston Morteyne Ward Cllr Sue Clark (SC); Brogborough PC, Stewartby PC. Grant Sorrell, Stephen Sleight, Hugh Roberts (HR)

Observers/Presenters – Rookery South Ltd: Judith Harper (JH), Patrick Murray (PM); Nick Henderson (NH), Paddy Kelly (PK); Facilitator: Bob Fisher

Apologies: Dee Walker Central Bedfordshire; Neil Goudie, Emma d'Avilar, Environment Agency; Chris Martin.

1. Introductions

Patrick Murray introduced himself as the new General Manager of Rookery South.

Noted that there were no representatives from Bedford Borough Council. SC queried the invitation to Cllr Hayley Whittaker as CBC representative as her ward is Biggleswade. It was noted that Cllr Whitaker was invited as the new deputy Leader of CBC. SC continues to attend as a representative of CBC and Cranfield Parish.

2. Approval of Notes from Meeting 27 and matters arising

Concerns were stated about the number of acronyms in the previous notes. RSL noted that a revised set of notes was issued with the acronyms in full. PMN means “post meeting note”.

The notes were approved, subject to explanation of the acronyms.

- (i) Members were still concerned about the non-attendance of the EA, who had given a categorical assurance that they would attend twice per year.
- (ii) A member was still concerned about the Environment Agency (EA) statement in meeting 25 (April 2023) regarding “emissions levels during start up and shut down need to be reported to the EA but emission limits do not apply, except for mass releases.” This query is to be addressed to the EA. **[ACTION – BF]**
- (iii) **Matters Arising from Meeting 26** – A member was concerned that the EA only carry out water sampling when there is reason. PK agreed to get an update from the Encyclis Environmental manager. **[ACTION - PK]**

3. Facility Manager's Update (PK) – see slides 3-4

- Noted that the Environment Agency carried out an operator monitoring assessment in August, which was very intense. Encyclis achieved a score of 84%. Both parties were very pleased.

- A NOx reduction trial was carried out in accordance with the permit Improvement Condition IC9. This is reflected in the emissions monitoring.
- There were 2 Schedule 5 notifications in September that Encyclis reported to the EA. The first incident does not count as it occurred when the plant was shut down. The second incident was a carbon monoxide (CO) spike due to the explosion of a gas bottle on the grate.
- PK noted that the UK is seeing regional hotspots of NOx (laughing gas) canisters in waste delivered to EfW facilities. They have been causing explosions which damage the grate. PK had noticed some on the Rookery circular footpath and considers it only a matter of time before this affects Rookery South ERF. They are very hard to detect due to their size in a truck load of waste.
- PK explained the latest emissions that are published on the website [here](#). There is continuous monitoring of emissions which are displayed as a percentage of the permitted limit. NOx is the highest. There is a balance to be achieved between compliance with the permit and adding more ammonia (NH₄) to neutralise the emissions, as the surplus NH₄ comes out of the stack. Likewise HCl and Sox are acid gases; they inject lime to neutralise these, which creates dust particles, which are filtered out.
- The NOx trial in August was to see what benefit could be achieved by adding more NH₄. Levels of NOx could be reduced but this would result in 5-6 more times NH₄ emissions produced from the stack, as the process does not use all the ammonia injected for gas cleaning. This would have an environmental impact. The EA is looking at this nationally. PM noted that this is exactly the same as for diesel car/truck engines where 'Ad Blue' is used to control NOx emissions.
- Encyclis was very pleased with the plant's performance (slide 4).

4. General Manager's Update (PM) – see slides 5-9

PM provided slides in response to a member's query regarding renewable energy status of Rookery South.

PM noted that Energy from waste produces heat/power from anthropogenic carbon (derived from plastics and oil-based products) and biogenic carbon (from food waste and other organics), and the latter is classed as renewable. Proportions are calculated either by

- (i) Specialist compositional analysis. 4 tonnes of waste is tested according to British standards or
- (ii) The amount of carbon ¹⁴C emitted from the stack is measured. Rookery does not have the ability to monitor this currently, and it is not an Environment Agency requirement.

There was a further discussion about recycling and compost and the part members can play in reducing those materials in residual waste. Rookery South is not permitted to accept compost or recyclables.

Slide 8 – R1 status is about efficiency, and recovery vs disposal. Rookery south has to submit a calculation to the Environment Agency to demonstrate R1 is more than 0.65. For Rookery R1 is 0.80.

Most CO₂ can be captured if you invest enough. Rookery South produces 380,000 tonnes of carbon of which approximately 50% is biogenic. The CLP will be kept informed of progress towards 2028 targets.

Members had some questions for the EA that BF agreed to pass on. PK answered some questions.

- When CO₂ is removed there will still be other emissions, but they are within the limits on the permit.
- Noted that legislation can be brought in to improve other emissions. Rookery South is now on its second Permit as a result. The waste industry is a moving target.

Slide 10 – the circular footpath now has all signs in place and is looking good.

PM referred to the letter sent to CLP members regarding the intention to submit an application to increase the tonnage limit on the Environmental Permit. He explained that this is due to improved efficiency from 89% to more than 93%. The difference is unlikely to be discernible. They will just be taking waste for more days per year with fewer/shorter shut downs.

It was noted that this is considered by the Environment Agency to be a 'normal' permit variation, by definition, so there would not be a public consultation. A copy would not be sent to the local authority, CBC.

SC requested a copy of the application when submitted.

Members would like an explanation from the EA at the next meeting.

There was some discussion about power generation – 142 kW hours is generated; 137 kW hours is exported. The remainder is used by the plant. Carbon capture and storage is energy intensive and would use most of the power generated.

District heating proposals have not progressed sufficiently to discuss at this meeting.

5. Environment Agency Update

Emma D'Avilar sent the following apology and update:

"I am sorry to cancel last minute, but I have been called out today on a major incident and am unable to attend tonight's liaison meeting.

I would like to just pass on that the recently completed OMA was good. The company scores a high score of 84% which gives high confidence in the operator's performance and systems in place.

Since the last meeting there has been one site inspection, which was in August and part of the OMA audit.

The last quarter monitoring has not been assessed as yet, no further updates."

BF asked members to send him any questions for the EA. **[ACTION]**

6. Local Authority Update (Central Bedfordshire)

Dee Walker sent apologies as she had suffered a flat tyre on the way to the meeting. BF agreed to ask for a written update (see below)

Minerals & Waste Planning Team

Since the last CLP, Roy Romans has stepped away from the role of Minerals & Waste Team Manager now Bryn Walters has joined as the new team manager from Derbyshire Council where he has been a Principal Minerals & Waste Planning Officer for 13 years. Bryn & I have met with Anita and as a team we are visiting at the start of December for a site tour.

Planning Complaints

Nothing received through Planning.

Future CLP Meetings

Following discussions with Anita Taylor & Roy Romans, given the strategic projects on the horizon we consider retaining the quarterly meetings so that the CLP can be fully up to date with developments of the site.

7. **AOB**

- (i) Marston Vale train service will resume (partial) in November with a full service in January.
- (ii) The review of potential to use rail freight at the site is due in 2025.
- (iii) Regarding the potential to use gas from the Millbrook Power station for Rookery south startup instead of diesel, PK has carbon neutral fuels as one of his live projects.

8. **Next Meeting** Proposed date **15th January 2024**