

## **TOCKWITH WITH WILSTROP PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of an extra-ordinary meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 29th January 2008 in Tockwith Church at 7.30pm**

**Chairman:** Councillor C Saunders

**Present:** Cllrs R Ward-Campbell, N Waller, P Kirby, I Robinson, P Pick, Mrs J Wardman, Mrs K Scholey, M Kennett

**In attendance:** District/County Cllr Savage, Mrs G Firth (Clerk to the Council)  
120 members of the public

**Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr C Billenness and Mrs Bygate, the Internal Auditor.

**Planning application accompanied by an Environmental Statement for the change of use of warehouse and adjoining land to an Energy from Waste Facility, with storage of waste and Gasification ovens within the building and a combined heat and power plant, including an 18m high chimney stack erected on land at Unit 86, Marston Moor Business Park, Tockwith**

Cllrs spoke individually, citing their opinions on the application.

*Standing Orders were suspended.*

The Chairman of Bickerton and Bilton Parish Council was invited to speak. He stated that the impact of the proposals would affect a wider area than just Tockwith village and he intended to ask NYCC Planning for more time to discuss the proposals and make a response. The amended date for public comments is now 15th February. He spoke of the new technology to be used which would be a prototype for this country and concern that the proposed site was so near to residential dwellings. The EU has no position on safe levels of dioxins.

A member of the Residents' Association (TRA) spoke of the attempt to get donations from the public to fight the application. The grounds for objection could include the principle of *no need*. The Waste strategy of NYCC should not be fractionalised between BCB and other operators. BCB has no experience of operating such a business. If the heat produced by the plant cannot be used very close to the site the power plant would be inefficient and therefore not carbon neutral.

A resident was concerned about Emergency procedures being in place in case of accidents/emergencies as the site is not close to the Emergency Services' bases.

Another resident was concerned that the Government subsidies being made available to these new technologies might mean the decision has already been made on this application.

A resident spoke of the prevailing winds, from the west, which would blow emissions from the plant across Prince Rupert Drive, the School and the village. Chimney pots in the village are all fluted because of the downdraughts. When Prince Rupert Drive was built it was designated a smoke control zone in order to prevent smoke affecting the wider village. Burning by gas would be oxygen deficient thus if dangerous chemicals are all able to be removed there would still be exhaust fumes over the village.

A member of TRA told those present what could be done to help fight the application:

- Every member of the household to be encouraged to write a letter of objection to NYCC;
- Donate money to the TRA as the case would be dependent on the amount of money available

to pay the consultant; help the TRA by delivering newsletters; help in research or with professional expertise to assist the consultant; turn up at the planning committee meeting when the application will be decided.

- Residents were asked to let the TRA know if they intended to attend the committee meeting, so that coach travel could be arranged.

A resident spoke of the affect of the proposals on other businesses in the Business Park, which is not an Industrial Estate, especially those which are site sensitive.

A resident said that at the Public Meeting it had been stated that Harrogate Borough Council and York City Council were stakeholders in the operation and therefore could not judge the application fairly.

*Standing Orders were resumed.*

It was resolved that the Parish Council objected strongly to the application on the following grounds:

**LOSS OF AMENITY** to adjacent businesses, with potential loss of economic viability and ensuing loss of jobs in the rural economy.

#### **LOSS OF AMENITY TO TOCKWITH VILLAGE:**

**VISUAL** – the 18m high chimney stack with a plume of waste gases to the air would be highly visible from the village and neighbouring residential estate and the village Conservation Area. At present there is no screening to prevent open sight of the operations on the Business Park and landscaping would take many years to become mature.

**EMISSIONS** – would have a severe impact on the lives of village residents and the local Primary School because the prevailing winds are from the west and blow over the Business Park and then the village. The village has a lot of inversions, local chimneys are fluted to prevent downdraughts

**NOISE** – 24 hour operations would be clearly visible and audible to local residents

**SMELLS** – stockpiling of waste to allow the proposed plant to operate would produce unacceptable smells in the locality.

**THE SCALE OF THE OPERATION** is inappropriate in this location, in a rural area adjacent to a residential area. There would be an unacceptable environmental impact.

**TRAFFIC IMPACT** – North Yorkshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Development Framework discounts a site in the vicinity due to high adverse visual impact and site inaccessibility from the major road network. Rudgate is a poorly maintained, unclassified road.

**PLANNING REASONS** for such development are given in the Framework document and this proposal is against every one from a) to h). Other sites have already been preferred by NYCC to cope with the amount of waste produced in North Yorkshire.

**UNPROVEN TECHNOLOGY** – this proposed operation would be a prototype in this country and much more research and debate should take place before such operations are permitted. There is concern that the only known such plant in Iceland is operating at reduced capacity and is believed to be inefficient. There is concern that if such operations are allowed the onus will be removed from recycling as people will not be in favour of recycling if all waste is going to be disposed of other than to landfill. There is further concern that NYCC does not have the necessary authority or expertise to determine an application of this nature.

There is an additional concern that a remote rural locality is unsuitable for such an operation due to the site being far away from the Emergency Services in case of accidents or emergencies arising.

The Parish Council earnestly requests that these objections are made known to the councillors who will ultimately determine the application.

Copies of the Parish Council's response to be forwarded to Anne McIntosh MP, Phil Willis MP, Nigel Adams PPC, the Environment Agency, Harrogate Borough Council, local Parish Councils, and WARDEN. The Chairman agreed to write to the MP's stating that this application should be "called in" and a Public Inquiry held, due to the unproven technology of this proposal which requires further discussion. Cllr Savage was asked to convey the feelings of the Parish Council to Harrogate Borough Council and North Yorkshire County Council. Members of the public were encouraged to write their own letters of objection to NYCC, and subsequently to individual members of the planning committee when the date of the committee meeting is known.

### **Any urgent items of business since the last meeting**

These two items were discussed due to time constraints on responses required.

#### **Planning application:**

##### Works to tree on land at east of East House, Marston Road, Tockwith

The proposal was for work to trim branches of a tree which has a Tree Preservation Order on it.

As this Weeping Ash is a historic tree it was believed that it is not necessary to trim the tree back as far as proposed but rather to trim above the roof level of the adjacent building would be acceptable.

In light of the fact that the owner of the tree objects to this application it was resolved that the Parish Council object on the grounds that such work would be detrimental to a tree of historic significance, which was considered important enough to have a TPO on it.

Concern was expressed that in developing the site the hedge has not been replanted as required, the front wall has not been joined to the side wall in an acceptable manner and the side fencing used is not appropriate in a Conservation Area.

#### **Department for Communities and Local Government**

##### Consultation on Orders and Regulations relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England.

Resolved that the Clerk reply stating that this Parish Council, being of some quality and longevity believes such orders should not apply to Parish Councils, which are made up of local residents acting as volunteers who act in the best interests of their communities.

There being no further business to discuss the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9pm.