

MWDF _ Bedfordshire

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Team Leader, Minerals & Waste
County Hall
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26TH November 07

Bedfordshire MWDF Issues & Options consultation site WSD 33 Chelveston

Dear Mr Romans,

Preserve has reviewed the Preferred Options Policies consultation document and the accompanying evidence for the site WSD33 Chelveston in particular. We object to the addition of this site to your short list for the following reasons.

Policy

It is contrary to government policy in relation to siting waste treatment facilities close to where the waste is generated. Specifically,

“In general, waste treatment and disposable operations are characterised to a large extent by the high volume of materials entering and exiting the site. In order to minimise the adverse environmental effects of transporting waste, they should, wherever possible, be located close to the waste source. The optimum locations for most MSW and business waste plants are therefore likely to be in or very close to urban areas”

[Companion Guide to PPS22,p106, para 26]

The site is at the most northern part of cluster 1 and far from the urban centres of Bedford, Luton and Dunstable. There would appear to be far more suitable sites available.

Transport The road access to the site is poor. It is via B,C, or unclassified roads which are unable to cope with any significant increase in HGV traffic. A potential output of 150,000 tonnes per annum equates to at least 10,000 HGV movements to and from the site and that does not include all the ancillary service traffic. It seems to us quite inappropriate to service the site (on the Bedfordshire side) with Bedfordshire waste through minor roads in Northamptonshire. The other route identified in your assessment quite rightly states “the only possibly acceptable to this site would be from the A45.”

Environment Impact

Visual The former airfield is situated on a plateau some 75 feet above Yelden. It is visible for many miles around and any industrial development would be prominent on the skyline and furthermore any emissions highlighted.

Amenity A complex network of footpaths and bridleways run across the site – many recently reopened after the sale of the land by the MOD.

Landscape The site is on the watershed between the River Ouse and River Nene with the potential for contamination. Anaerobic digestion (AD) is a liquid phase operation and the effect of spreading the waste /foul water on the land may well contaminate this water source. The site is also only 600m from the Yelden Meadows SSSI (wetland site)

Nuisance: Odour: AD plants emit obnoxious sulphide related fumes which are particularly nauseous and, as they are heavier than air, they can travel some distance causing excessive discomfort to neighbouring communities.. This is particularly true of plants treating animal waste.

Noise; The noise level will certainly increase and be particularly noticeable at night when the background noise levels are close to zero. As the operation is a 24 hour one, the effect of FLT, compressors generators as well as HGV movements will be very noticeable and stressful to a wide range of local communities.

Light; Because of its position on a high plateau, the effect of widespread neon lighting will be very evident and visible for many miles around.

Proximity to sensitive receptors (e.g. smell, noise).

The site is located close to the surrounding rural villages of

Yelden - 550m (to nearest dwelling)

Shelton -1,500m (to nearest dwelling)

Hargrave -1,400m (to nearest dwelling)

Chelveston - 1,700m (to nearest dwelling)

Caldecott -1,325m (to nearest dwelling)

USAF Housing Annex at Chelveston Base Crescent - 575m (to nearest dwelling)

Newton Bromswold -1,000m (to nearest dwelling).

Plus the isolated dwellings and farms such as High Barn (100m), Manor Farm (100m), Lodge Farm (250m) and Airfield Farm (250m).

Heritage

The site is on a plateau and hence it is likely to impact negatively on the following recognised heritage (built environment) sites:

- a. Yelden Church (Grade 1 listed) – only 725m away.
- b. Yelden motte & bailey castle (C12 scheduled ancient monument) - only 800m away.
- c. Shelton Church (Grade 1 listed) – only 1,625m away.
- d. Hargrave Church (Grade 2* listed) – only 1,700m away.
- e. Chelveston Church (Grade 2* listed) - only 1,825m away.
- f. Newton Bromswold Church (Grade 1 listed) – only 1,125m away.

This is contrary to PPS10 Annex E (location criteria) parts c & e.

Cumulative effect

The site is directly adjacent to site WA8 in the NCC's MWDF Preferred Options list. As the developer has provided the same information to both County Council, there is also a potential for 150,000 tpa on this site too.

In addition, there is a proposed site at Westwood for a 45,000 tpa AD complex only 3 miles from the Chelveston site. It is near the A6 on the county border (Grid reference SP E9889N6323). Whilst the application has been withdrawn currently, it is expected to be resubmitted.

You will also be aware of waste treatment plants currently operating (with environmental hazards and nuisance) at Goosey Lodge, Wymington and Twinwoods at Clapham.

This is an excessive concentration of waste treatment plants within such a small area.

Conclusion

The proposal to site this industrial complex at Chelveston is contrary to policy, specifically its location being far from the sources of the waste to be treated. The transport infrastructure is totally inadequate. This industrial complex will impact negatively on the natural habitat, a greenfield site, as well as generating an intolerable level of emission and nuisance.

We urge the planning authority not to take this site forward to the Preferred Options stage.