Proposals for a new energy-from-waste facility at Great Blakenham are progressing well following a public exhibition in July 2010, with further consultation due to take place in September and October 2010 (see back page for details).

Over 130 people attended the exhibition at Great Blakenham Village Hall and took the opportunity to discuss the project directly with members of SITA UK’s team. Feedback was constructive, with a number of people expressing support for the scheme as a whole and for the use of energy-from-waste technology.

We are aware that there are a number of aspects of particular interest to local residents. The main issues raised by visitors to the exhibition regarded traffic, air quality and the visual appearance of the facility.

All the feedback received is being reviewed and, where possible, will be used to help shape the final proposal.

Proposals at a glance

The proposed energy-from-waste facility at the Council’s Highways Depot site on Lodge Lane, Great Blakenham would:

- Use modern, highly regulated, proven technology, to generate electricity and heat from 269,000 tonnes of domestic and some business waste each year.
- Generate 20 megawatts of electricity – enough to power 30,000 homes – equivalent to a town the size of Lowestoft.
- Recover energy from waste and reduce dependence on fossil fuels, contributing towards Suffolk’s aspiration to be the greenest county.
- Represent an investment of £180 million in Suffolk and create around 43 permanent jobs and up to 250 temporary construction jobs.
- Potentially export heat to provide hot water and heating for local businesses.
- Provide a cost-effective way to deal with waste which would avoid considerable landfill costs, to the benefit of council tax payers.

Information line: 0800 072 1179
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Your questions answered

James Dowell, Project Manager at SITA UK, responds to some of the questions from the consultation event in July 2010.

WILL THE FACILITY LEAD TO AN INCREASE IN TRAFFIC?

We know that there is some concern about the potential increase in traffic that the facility could create. A Transport Assessment is being conducted to measure the impact of traffic associated with the proposed facility on the local area. The assessment will also take into account the impact of traffic from other proposed developments, including SnOasis.

The assessment is expected to be largely complete by the time the next round of exhibitions take place, and we will be able to respond to the issues raised about traffic numbers, access arrangements, HGV access and public transport issues.

The Transport Assessment will also identify any changes that need to be made to manage the effects of traffic from the site on the road network.

WHAT ABOUT THE EFFECTS ON AIR QUALITY?

WILL THE GREAT BLAKENHAM ENERGY-FROM-WASTE FACILITY BE SAFE?

All energy-from-waste facilities are required to operate under an environmental permit from the Environment Agency. The permit requires the facility to meet strict emissions limits set by the European Union under the Waste Incineration Directive.

Controls and limits on emissions from energy-from-waste facilities are actually stricter than those for other large facilities, such as coal fired power stations. Failure to meet these targets can mean the facility has to be shut down.

To determine any potential impact, an Air Quality Assessment is currently being conducted as part of the planning application. It will outline any potential impacts on local air quality and identify any mitigation measures that will need to be put in place. This process is coming to a close and the data will be available at the next public exhibitions due to be held in September and October 2010 (see back page for details).

In September 2009, the Health Protection Agency - an independent body that exists to protect the health of people in the UK - said the following about energy-from-waste facilities: “While it is not possible to rule out adverse health effects from modern, well regulated municipal waste incinerators with complete certainty, any potential damage to those living close by is likely to be very small, if detectable.”

In keeping with best practice, a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) has been commissioned to further inform the decision making process, to aid in addressing local community concerns and to support the development of an effective Health Action Plan.
The community liaison group for the Suffolk energy-from-waste facility is currently being formed and is due to meet for the first time shortly. The group will provide a forum for community representatives to find out more about the proposals and raise any issues of interest.

Members of the group include: local community representatives, a Great Blakenham parish council representative, ward councillors, SITA UK and a representative of Suffolk County Council in attendance as an observer. During the planning phase, the group will meet on a monthly basis. Once formed, we hope the group will continue until the end of the 25-year contract.

Membership of the group is currently full, but SITA UK is accepting names for a waiting list from those interested in taking part in the future. If you would like to be added to this list, we would like to hear from you. Please contact us via any of the methods indicated on the back page of this newsletter.

All minutes and agendas from the meetings will be available to view and download from our website.

WHAT IS SITA UK DOING TO MAKE SURE THE FACILITY IS IN KEEPING WITH THE LOCAL AREA?

We have taken great care in the design of the facility, working with leading architects Grimshaws, who are responsible for the design of iconic developments such as the Eden Project. An innovative design has been produced for the Great Blakenham facility, taking into account the surrounding countryside and ensuring that it will fit well within the proposed setting.

The design deliberately blends the building against the sky and natural lighting has been used to enhance the building’s appearance, using partial screening to retain views through parts of the building to the sky. The site will also be carefully landscaped to accommodate native species and a wetland area, as well as providing a visitor centre with views across the Gipping Valley which would be available for community use.

Further information about the design of the facility can be gained by contacting us through any of the methods listed on the back page of this newsletter or by dropping into one of the forthcoming second round of public exhibitions.

SITA UK public exhibition in July 2010 at Great Blakenham Village Hall – see overleaf for the next public exhibitions
Public consultation next steps

To give you the opportunity to find out more and to provide you with an update, we are holding a second round of public exhibition days. Local residents and members of the wider community are invited to attend and discuss their views with members of our planning team on the emerging proposals and our responses so far.

A PUBLIC EXHIBITION IS TAKING PLACE IN GREAT BLAKENHAM ON:

Sunday 26 September 2010 (10am-3pm)
Great Blakenham Village Hall, Mill Lane

Monday 27 September 2010 (12pm-6.30pm)
Great Blakenham Village Hall, Mill Lane

FURTHER PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS WILL BE HELD ON:

Tuesday 5 October 2010 (11am-4.30pm)
Rutland Arms Hotel, 33 High Street,
Newmarket CB8 8NB

Thursday 7 October 2010 (11am-5pm)
Unit 10, Cornhill Walk Shopping Centre,
Brentgovel Street, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1EJ

Friday 8 October 2010 (10am-4pm)
Tower Ramparts Shopping Centre, Tavern Street,
Ipswich IP1 3BB

Tuesday 12 October 2010 (2pm-8pm)
St Peter’s Church, Market Hill,
Sudbury CO10 2EA

Thursday 14 October 2010 (1:30pm-4:30pm)
Felixstowe Library, Crescent Road, Felixstowe,
Suffolk IP11 7BY

Tuesday 26 October 2010 (12pm-6pm)
Lowestoft Library, Clapham Road South,
Lowestoft NR32 1DR

CONTACT US

If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please contact us:

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