



PROPOSED BIOMASS FUELLED POWER PLANT

**LAND OFF BALLYVANNON ROAD, NEAR GLENAVY,
COUNTY ANTRIM**

CONSULTATION STATEMENT

MAY 2008

the
GRAHAM BOLTON PLANNING
partnership limited

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PREFACE

The Graham Bolton Planning Partnership Ltd, is a Town Planning and Environmental Consultancy based in Manchester, England, established in 1986. The Practice primarily handles commercial projects including hospital and mental health developments, waste recovery and handling proposals, industrial and residential schemes. The Practice has expertise in projects which require separate Licensing or Permitting under Environmental Legislation and specialises in dealing with development proposals where both planning and environmental licensing is required.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Following appointment to initially advise and then oversee the project for the proposed power plant at Glenavy, Graham Bolton Planning Partnership Ltd (GBPP) undertook a series of consultations to establish the background for the project, the policy support for such a proposal, initial soundings with The Planning Service and other Government Agencies and to investigate the approach of other organisations or groups dealing with waste streams.
- 1.2 There has been intermittent contact with officers of The Planning Service as referred to below and also with the Environment and Heritage Service, the competent authority for regulating a power plant as proposed under the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control regime. Formal consultation on the proposed planning application and Environmental Statement via The Planning Service was initiated in December, 2007, with a formal request for a Scoping Direction. In the production of commissioned reports, other consultants than GBPP have contacted various government departments, agencies and stakeholders.
- 1.3 At the time of the announcement of the proposed development, on 7 January 2008, a widespread information exercise and initiation of consultation was undertaken by Rose Energy, and a more focussed information exercise and invitation to consult to various stakeholder organisations and individuals. GBPP also renewed consultation of government departments and others who had previously been consulted and also undertook a wider consultation exercise of relevant bodies.

2. BACKGROUND AND INITIAL CONSULTATION STEPS

- 2.1 As noted in the Chapter in the Environmental Statement on Need and Alternatives Considered, a consortium of poultry producers initially undertook a study into the alternative uses or routes of disposal for poultry bedding. The recommendation of that review for a biomass power plant using chicken litter as fuel led to initial contact with Civil Servants of DARD and DETI and the subsequent inclusion of the recommended proposal by the Expert Group for Alternative Uses of Manure (EGAUM) which reported to the Minister in 2006.
- 2.2 EGAUM endorsed the recommendation that a single poultry litter burning power plant should form the appropriate solution for dealing with the material and which would accord with the UK's response to the need for urgent action on climate change and in particular be a major contribution to meeting the Renewable Obligation target for Northern Ireland.
- 2.3 GBPP consulted DARD in February 2007 to establish what policy support there is at national level for the form of development proposed. The Director of Policy and Economics of DARD and also the Chief Executive of the Agri-Food and Bio-Sciences Institute (formerly the Global Research Unit of DARD and The Agricultural Research Institute of Northern Ireland, amalgamated on 1 April, 2006) responded. Copies of the initial correspondence and letters of response are appended as A. The reply from the Chief Executive of AFBI confirms the recommendation made by EGAUM and that having identified proven technologies it endorsed the single approach adopted by the consortium to develop a single poultry litter fired generator, capable of handling 300,000Te of input per annum and producing up to 25MWe of power.

- 2.4 The response from the Director of Policy and Economics, DARD, refers to the “strategic approach to the development of sustainable energy systems at rural community level” contained within the 2002 report, “Vision for the Future of the Agri-Food Industry” and the subsequent DARD Renewable Energy Action Plan of January 2007. The overall theme of this latter document is promoting the opportunities afforded by sustainable development of renewable energy in Agri-Food and Forestry sectors and wider rural economy.
- 2.5 Both the above consultation responses are referred in fuller detail in the Planning Statement and in the chapter in the ES on Need and Alternatives Considered.

3. CONSULTATION WITH THE PLANNING SERVICE

- 3.1 The establishment of the nature of the project was the initial step required. All consultation processes that followed were dependent upon this first step and the parallel investigation by the consortium of poultry producers and later the constituent companies of Rose Energy of the viability of the project.
- 3.2 It was necessary to establish the requirements for a valid planning application and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This required initial informal contact with The Planning Service, and subsequent agreement on the matters to be included within an Environmental Statement and Planning Statement to accompany what would be an EIA Application.
- 3.3 A formal pre-application consultation was submitted to The Planning Service in December, 2007, along with a formal request under the EIA Regulations to confirm whether the matters referred to in the submitted Scoping Checklist appropriately and sufficiently reflect what is required to be included within the Environmental Statement to accompany a planning application. The Scoping Checklist and accompanying letter of 21 December 2007 are appended at B.
- 3.4 The Pre-Application Consultation Note, appended at C with the Consultation Plan and covering letter of 21 December 2007, provides an indication of the general matters to be reviewed and background to the project together with a plan illustrating the position of the site and then proposed layout. The Pre-Application Consultation Note was provided to assist The Planning Service in their initial consultation exercise of Government Departments and appropriate statutory and non-statutory consultees.
- 3.5 The consultations undertaken by The Planning Services have been fed back into the project and regard had to the requirements and views expressed within those consultee responses.

Consultees

3.6 As part of the pre-application consultation exercise, the following Government Departments, statutory and non-statutory consultees have been contacted and initial comments invited upon the proposed development. Discussions have been held with various sections of the Environment and Heritage Service and with the representatives of Arc21, the consortium of local authorities established to resolve waste management issues.

- Chief Executive, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute
- Director of Policy and Economics, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Policy Development Branch, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Environmental Policy, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Energy Division, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
- Sustainable Energy Division, DETI
- Water Management Unit, Environment and Heritage Service, DOE
- Industrial Pollution, EHS
- Natural Heritage, EHS
- Roads Service
- Arc21
- Lough Neagh Partnership Limited
- Lough Neagh Fisherman's Cooperative Society Limited
- Ulster Angling Federation
- RSPB
- National Trust
- Ulster Course Fishing Federation
- Lough Neagh Sand Traders Association
- Council for Nature Conservation and Countryside
- CEDaR
- Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
- Countryside and Coast Environment and Heritage Service

- Butterfly Conservation
- Northern Ireland Bat Group
- Ulster Wildlife Trust
- Loughs Agency
- Fisheries Conservancy Board
- Bio Diversity Officer, Lough Neagh and Lower Bann Advisory Committees
- Rivers Agency Headquarters
- Bio Diversity Officer, Lisburn City Council
- Bio Diversity Officer, Antrim Borough Council
- Chief Executive of Lisburn City Council
- Chief Executive of Antrim Borough Council
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Belfast International Airport
- Defence Communications Services Agency
- Defence Estates Organisations – safeguarding by-laws
- Offcom
- Spectrum Planning National Grid Wireless
- Virgin Media
- National Air Traffic Service Navigation, Spectrum and Surveillance

4. ROSE ENERGY – INFORMATION AND CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 A public announcement of the proposed development was made on 7 January, 2008. A copy of the Press Release is appended at D. Coinciding with the public announcement, Rose Energy widely disseminated information about the proposed development and initiated a public consultation exercise. This included producing a brochure outlining the proposals for the biomass power plant and its location which was distributed to approximately 4000 households in the Glenavy and Crumlin areas; a copy of the brochure and covering letter are appended at E.
- 4.2 A public meeting was held on 23 January, 2008, to explain and present the draft proposals for the power plant. A copy of the letter of invitation dated 7 January 2008 directed to more immediate neighbours and visual presentation is appended at F.
- 4.3 Subsequent meetings have been held with other groups of residents at their request; a local residents' committee – Communities Against Lough Neagh Incinerator – of four local residents met with members of Rose Energy on 18 March 2008 and again on the 17 April 2008 when the local resident committee made a visit to the application site.
- 4.4 A number of Presentations have been made to the Ulster Farmers' Union by Rose Energy. On 20 May, 2008, a presentation was given to Ballymena Borough Council at the request of the Council. Further presentations are scheduled to be given to the Northern Ireland Environment Committee and Agriculture Committee.
- 4.5 Rose Energy has offered to meet with organisations and individuals to explain the proposals and hear representations and to attempt to incorporate concerns expressed in developing this project. Consultation meetings have been held with political groups to provide information. It is expected that further meetings and consultation will occur as the project progresses through planning.
- 4.6 Following submission of the planning application, formal consultation will be undertaken by The Planning Service and not Rose Energy.