

**South West Devon Waste Partnership**

**Report on Public  
Consultation**



**February 2010**

**GreenIssues**  
Communications

## **1. Introduction**

This report identifies and summarises initial public consultation that has taken place in relation to MVV Umwelt's proposals in response to South West Devon Waste Partnership's (SWDWP) tender for its waste disposal contract. MVV Umwelt is one of the two companies shortlisted for the contract. As part of the tender process, and in order to gain feedback on its proposals, MVV Umwelt held two preliminary public exhibitions. The exhibitions complemented roadshows previously held by SWDWP. These set out some background information on the company's initial plans for development of an Energy from Waste plant at sites in Ernesettle and North Yard, Devonport. If the company is selected as preferred bidder, it would only develop a facility at one of the sites.

The community consultation for the proposals has been facilitated by Green Issues Communications, a company specialising in community liaison and stakeholder engagement.

## **2. Principles of Community Engagement**

The aims of the preliminary consultation process were to:

- Inform local residents and key stakeholders about MVV Umwelt's proposals for the sites at Ernesettle and North Yard;
- Enable the local community to participate in the design process by giving residents and stakeholders the opportunity to express their views on the emerging proposals;
- Reach out to the wider community, identifying relevant issues and addressing these where possible;
- Explain the reasons for design decisions made and provide feedback to the community;
- Meet modern standards of public involvement and consultation.

MVV Umwelt is committed to effective community consultation and public engagement, in line with the Government's objectives for community involvement in planning.

### **3. Preliminary Consultation**

MVV Umwelt's interest in developing an Energy from Waste plant at sites in Ernesettle and North Yard in response to SWDWP's waste contract had been publicised in the local media. In order to keep local people informed about its intentions, and to explain why it was promoting two schemes, MVV Umwelt held two public exhibitions setting out its initial proposals.

#### **3.1 Informing the public**

In order to inform the public about the proposed schemes, exhibitions were arranged at Parkway Sports and Social Club, Ernesettle Lane, Plymouth on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February from 4.00 pm – 8.00 pm, and at Weston Mill Community Primary School, Ferndale Road, Plymouth on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> February, from 5.00 – 8.30 pm.

The exhibitions were advertised in the Plymouth Herald on Wednesday 3 February and Friday 5 February. Press releases announcing the public exhibitions were also sent to the Plymouth Herald, the Western Morning News, the Cornish Times, the Cornish Guardian, BBC TV Spotlight, BBC Radio Devon, Heart FM and ITV. Posters advertising the events were sent to Ernesettle Public Library, St Budeaux Public Library, Stifle, Saltash Town Clerk and Saltash Environmental Action.

Prior to each exhibition, Stakeholder Preview sessions were held at the same venues before the public exhibition opened, to enable stakeholders to view and comment on the proposals and ask any questions they might have of the project team.

Letters of invitation to the previews were mailed to all members of Plymouth City Council, Devon County Council and Torbay Council. Letters were also sent to Alison Seabeck MP, Gary Streeter MP and Linda Gilroy MP, and the prospective parliamentary candidates for those seats. Invitations were also emailed to all Plymouth City Councillors.

Representatives of MVV Umwelt from the UK and Germany were in attendance on both days, allowing members and residents to ask any questions they might have on the scheme.

## **4. Overview of Feedback from Public Consultation**

At the exhibitions, eight panels were displayed outlining key elements of the schemes. Exhibition attendees were given feedback forms and asked for their feedback regarding the proposals on display. Specifically, attendees were asked:

1. Do you have any comments on the proposal for Ernesettle?
2. Do you have any comments on the proposal for North Yard?
3. Community Benefits: if the scheme goes ahead, what benefits do you think would be important for the local community?
4. Do you have any other comments?

Around 135 people attended the exhibitions over two days (122 at Ernesettle and 23 at Weston Mill Community Primary School) and 100 response forms were completed during the events. A further 14 comments were received later via email and post. Copies of the original response forms were, without releasing any personal data, provided to the Partnership before this submission.

Responses were broken down into the categories detailed below.

### **1. Proposal for Ernesettle**

**1. Do you have any comments on the proposal for Ernesettle?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of total responses</b>
Supported	4	3.5
Supported with reservations	2	1.8
Do not support	93	81.6
No comment/no answer given	9	7.9
Neutral	6	5.3

## **1.2 Comments on the Ernesettle Proposal**

The main reasons given for opposing or supporting the proposal for Ernesettle are given below:

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Number</b>
Concerned about negative traffic implications	40
Concerned that the development would adversely affect the AONB or damage visual amenity	35
Worried about locating an incinerator in close proximity to an existing 'armaments depot'	22
Concerned that local atmospheric conditions will exacerbate emissions	22
Concerned that the proposal is too close to a residential area	21
Concerned about long term health implications as a result of emissions produced by the incinerator	10
Concerned about the effect on plants or wildlife	9
Opposed to incineration of waste in principle	4
Worried about noise produced by vehicles or machinery	1

Comments from those opposing the Ernesettle proposal included the following:

*'I am concerned about the impact on the community, through traffic movements, potential health issues, and visual impact to residents.'*

*'This is not a suitable site due to its proximity to the River Tamar and MOD facilities, also an "unknown" old dump.'*

*'An eyesore – terrible design, why does such an intrusive colour scheme have to be used – ever heard of camouflage?'*

*'Not an acceptable method of dealing with waste. In the present environmentally sensitive times we live in – an old technology that many countries are withdrawing. Inability to filter smaller particles (PM 2.5 and below).'*

*'Weather conditions – inversions – make putting any kind of chimney in the valley very foolish. Gas effluent will not disperse and dilute properly.'*

*'Poor and inadequate access to site (the logical location is adjacent to the new power station at Langage Plympton).'*

*'There has always been a problem with fog in the valley. Visibility poor for traffic – river and road. A large scale incinerator would make this worse making accidents more likely.'*

*'Yes, it is disgusting that you are thinking of putting this incinerator in an area with schools and a large housing estate.'*

Comments in support of the Ernesettle proposal included:

*'I think it would be a good idea due to the fact that we have to change our way of disposing of waste. This would create electricity, be good for the environment and get rid of waste.'*

*'Should be built here. Not so populated area.'*

*'Better there than North Yard. Prevailing SW winds would take emissions North of the city and access could easily be made easier by a new road off the expressway and bypassing Ernesettle itself.'*

**2. Proposal for North Yard**

<b>2. Do you have any comments on the proposal for North Yard?</b>		
<b>Response</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of total responses</b>
Support	29	25.4
Support with reservations	1	0.9
Do not support	33	28.9
No comment/no answer given	41	35.9
Neutral	10	8.8

**2.1 Comments on North Yard Proposal**

The main reasons given for supporting the proposal for North Yard are given below:

<b>Comments</b>	<b>Number</b>
Preferred North Yard as an alternative to Ernesettle	27

<b>Comments</b>	<b>Number</b>
Thought that the proposals were in keeping with the existing industrial area in North Yard	14
Thought that North Yard would make better use of reclaimed heat than Ernesettle	7
Thought that the power generated would benefit the area	6
Considered North Yard's road network to be more suitable	5
Thought that the incinerator would increase local employment	5
Approved of incineration as a method of disposing of waste	2

The main reasons given for opposing the proposal for North Yard are given below:

<b>Comments</b>	<b>Number</b>
Incinerator would be positioned too close to domestic areas	16
Concerned about emissions from the incinerator	9
Concerned that the development will lead to traffic congestion	9
Opposed to the principle of incineration in general	3
Think local recycling levels should be improved before an incinerator is built	2

Comments from those who supported the development at North Yard included the following:

*'The North Yard proposal looks tailor made as it is already a heavily industrialised area.'*

*'North Yard would seem the better option of the two sites. There is more infrastructure in North Yard to use the heat and power produced.'*



*'Although I live very close to the proposed site I would prefer to have it here.'*

*'I believe this location would offer better opportunities for the energy generated to be utilised and access is vastly better.'*

*'This site would have better access and the energy produced would be beneficial to the dockyard.'*

*'It seems more sensible to place the site in a more industrial area than a residential one.'*

*'North Yard area is already vastly industrialised – it makes sense to build the incinerator here.'*

*'This would be in order as it is already industrial usage.'*

*'Already an industrial area. Visual impact minimal due to existing buildings and cranes. Better road access. Waste heat could be utilised to reduce dockyard costs and all surrounding homes.'*

Comments from those who opposed the development at North Yard included the following:

*'I am not sure an incinerator is a good idea anywhere. Has Germany got one?'*

*'Too close to housing.'*

*'The roads would not cope, the site is right next to residential estates...'*

*'Concern is over the size of the chimney pot and the area it is going to affect – Weston Mill etc – residential areas.'*

*'The Yard has been a non-access area for many years. Is it really wise to open it up in this way?'*

### **3. Community benefits**

Respondents were asked what benefits would be important to the community if the scheme went ahead.

The most common answers are tabled below.

<b>Answers</b>	<b>Number</b>
None at all	54
No comment	19
Extra jobs or employment opportunities	8
Power supply revenue used to offset local costs	4
Local road improvements	4
A new community centre, community group contributions or local sports/youth facilities	4
An alternative to landfill	3

The following suggestions were made for potential community benefits if either scheme were to go ahead:

*'The southern end of Ernesettle Lane should be made into a cul-de-sac purely for access for the residents of Ernesettle Crescent and Lane. A new road should be constructed to the east to curve into the proposed site further north.'*

*'If the scheme were to go ahead, what plans has MVV to offset the problems it will cause?'*

*'Whatever scheme goes ahead, it will undoubtedly provide employment – need to make sure it is local jobs.'*

*'Both sites are in deprived areas, high unemployment and drug abuse. An on-going financial contribution should be made to the local community to assist with the major issues which exist – e.g. the Budshed Community Group.'*

*'Build a community centre – we haven't got one at present.'*

*'The planting of large trees in front and around the site to disguise the eyesore. If this could also be done around the sewerage plant scar on the landscape that would be great!'*

#### **4. Other comments**

Respondents were asked if they had any other comments. Many respondents reiterated comments they had made in other sections.

A selection of other comments is given below.

*'We will employ any means to safeguard our health. We do approve of energy from waste.'*

*'I am against location of waste incinerators in large urban communities. There are too many people at risk if something goes wrong.'*

*'The plant is not the problem, the site is.'*

*'The choice of colour scheme is horrendous – it must be made to blend into the surrounding area by the use of greens and browns.'*

*'Yes. The Lee Mill site is most suitable as it would be adjacent to an industrial estate and could be approached directly from the A38 without any route through a residential area.'*

*'Against incineration, future generations may need to mine landfill sites, as certain resources will become unavailable.'*

*'That there has to be a solution to this "waste problem" is not in question but with the cost of PFI around the necks of the local community, a site away from the conurbations.'*

*'I do not understand how Ernesettle has been designated/put forward as a waste site by PCC.'*

*'I'm glad it's a German company doing it, it makes me feel safer.'*

*'I have been outraged by PCC's recycling (or lack of) in the city recently, and think that any proposal which keeps waste out of landfill sites can only be a good thing for the city.'*

## **5. Appendix**

1. Newspaper advertisement
2. Press Release
3. Exhibition display boards
4. Feedback form