

Response to planned application : WP/20/00692/DCC

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing this in my capacity as Clinical Director of the Weymouth and Portland Primary Care Network. The Weymouth and Portland PCN represents all 6 GP surgeries within Weymouth and Portland. As GPs we are aware that this area is one of increased social deprivation. The proposed development is sited close to areas known to be among the 10% most deprived in England. Research demonstrates ongoing inequalities in exposure to air pollution, with deprived areas worst affected by high concentrations of particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide. We are concerned that the development will have a negative impact both to the physical and mental health of our local population, exacerbating already known health inequalities. We seek further reassurance and detail on what these impacts may have to our patients.

My colleagues have raised a number of concerns. The first relates to the emissions that would be produced by ERF operations including emissions related to the increased traffic and transport by vehicles used to transport waste to the site. I note the Health Impact Assessment states that the emissions from the ERF would be "very small". We are aware that in 2013 the World Health Organisation concluded "there is no evidence of a safe level of exposure to PM (particulate matter) or a threshold below which no adverse health effects occur". We are deeply concerned about the impact such exposure may have to the local population even if they are deemed "very small". We are concerned about the significant increase in traffic related to transportation of waste to the site as well as staff needing to access the plant. I note that it is expected that the proposed development would generate an additional 72 two-way HGV movements and 46 two-way car movements (staff) per day during operation. This traffic would pass close to 3 primary schools, 3 nursery units and 1 secondary school. We are concerned about the affects of air quality from this increased traffic particularly in Wyke. GPs are becoming increasingly aware of the impact air pollution has on our patients, in particular those with asthma and COPD. Long-term effects can also include stroke, lung cancer, respiratory conditions and cardiovascular disease. The report mentions "The risk of adverse health effects from increased emissions is higher for vulnerable groups of the population, such as those with chronic respiratory diseases and asthma. Due to the percentage of the population with asthma being above the national average and the prevalence of smoking being significantly higher in Weymouth than national trends, the worsening air quality during construction could pose potential negative health risks on nearby residential receptors". We are aware that existing levels of traffic-related pollutants in the Boot Hill area of Weymouth are elevated. We would ask that further detailed analysis be completed, to assess the affect on air quality related to this increase in traffic both in construction and during the operation of the site.

We are also concerned about the position of the site, with the proposed stack terminating below the height of nearby residential areas. We remain concerned about the potential exposure of residents during periods when the wind direction is such that emissions could be carried in the direction of housing. We would also seek greater detail on the potential impact of emissions on the resident population of HMP Verne. We request that more work is undertaken to determine the impact exposure to emissions may have from both construction and operation of the development to this "static" prison population.

We are aware that the proposed development suggest the possible provision of shore to ship power for vessels in Portland harbour and the suggestion that this would lead to a reduction in emission levels. A detail of the current impact on air quality of this souce is not provided and therefore it is difficult to understand the potential benefit that this would bring. We would be keen to see some baseline information on emission levels of vessels in Portland Harbour and data on how the proposed development would reduce overall emission levels.

As GPs we continue to have significant concerns about the site and cannot support the statement “there is no potential for significant cumulative community and health effects with the proposed development”. We seek further details and clarification on the questions raised above.



Dr Tanya Stead
Clinical Director for Weymouth and Portland PCN

