

Outline Communications and Engagement Strategy Bayer CropScience Site Hauxton – Waste Water Treatment Works

Introduction and Background

The Former Bayer CropScience site is located along the A10 on the outskirts of Hauxton. Since the 1940s the site was used for the production of agrochemicals including pesticides and herbicides, which over time have contaminated the soil and ground water. Due to the risk posed to the groundwater and nearby watercourses, the site was determined as Contaminated Land in 2003 by SCDC under Part IIa of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and designated a Special Site for regulation by the Environment Agency. The site therefore had to be remediated and could not be left in its current form due to it posing a potential threat to the Riddy Brook and River Cam.

The site is split over two sides of the A10: the Main Site to the east was remediated during 2010-2011 prior to its redevelopment, whilst the Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) to the west remained to facilitate the processing of water generated during the remediation of the main site.

Given the long history of the former factory site within the village of Hauxton, and the contaminated nature of the site, the redevelopment and remediation of the main site sparked a great deal of public interest within Hauxton and the neighbouring villages such as Harston and Great Shelford.

Communications during Works at the Main Site

Multiple parties were involved in the remediation works including regulators and their consultees (SCDC Health and Environmental Services (H&ES), the Environment Agency (EA) and Public Health England (PHE) including the PCT Local Health Protection Unit (HPU)); the developer; the developer's consultants and the developer's remediation contractors.

As with such a large and technically complex site, extensive communication was required between all the above parties. Due to the ex-situ nature of the works, some odour was generated giving rise to extensive communication and engagement with the community in order to address concerns, allay fears and explain the remediation process

Objectives of the Communications Strategy

The WWTW site has now come forward for remediation and a planning application has been submitted to SCDC for the redevelopment and remediation of the site.

Therefore the Communications Strategy will aim to:

- ***Set out the various mechanisms for communication and collaboration between all parties during the works.***

Forms of communication and engagement used during the works at the main site included meetings, teleconferences, web based information and drop in events.

A Multi-Agency approach was utilised to keep all parties updated of site progress and issues. This also allowed technical specialists to engage and collaborate when organising the delivery of public information such as websites and public events.

- ***Utilise and build upon the forms of communication that proved successful during the previous phase of remediation so that they may be put in place at the start of this phase of work.***

Some methods of communication and engagement proved more successful than others during the previous phase of works. The use of teleconferences proved an efficient use of officer time to engage with other agencies and technical specialists, whilst the public drop in event appeared an effective way to communicate technical information to the public in the form of poster displays and face to face discussion.

- ***Ensure that the best approach is taken to communicate with the public, ensuring efficient use of officer time whilst effectively informing the community of site related information at an appropriate time.***

Communicating highly technical information in a non technical way takes time and resources and a great deal of collaboration between technical specialists. Planning ahead to prepare this information so it may be available when the need arises, would allow the Multi Agency parties opportunity to feed in and plan resources accordingly.

SCDC would seek to engage with the Developer to explore setting up another drop in event in the local area.

- ***Provide a single document to refer to in relation to mechanisms for communication for the duration of the works***