

Briefing Showing the Site Assessment for the Optional Site for Prosiect Gwyrdd

Prosiect Gwyrdd has appointed a technical consultancy, Parsons Brinckerhoff, to consider potential sites in the Prosiect Gwyrdd area that could be suitable for the development of a residual waste treatment facility, to provide an alternative option to disposing residual municipal waste in landfill. The project is technology neutral, so the assessment was carried out looking at the development of land for any of the technology options, explained in www.prosiectgwyrdd.co.uk

Sixty-six potential sites were identified in the South East Wales Regional Waste Plan within the Prosiect Gwyrdd area. Following discussions with the planning and economic development sections at each of the authorities, this was reduced to fifty-nine sites. These sites were then subject to a high level assessment, in order to determine a short-list of the options considered to have the greatest potential for the development of a residual waste treatment facility.

A set of criteria was established to undertake this assessment, based on criteria used in the Regional Waste Plan. These were detailed and complex but are summarised below.

- **Planning status of the land/site**
- **Site area, proximity to centres of population**
- **Access potential, proximity to housing, consideration of local setting and land use**
- **Proximity to national /local landscape, heritage and ecological designations**
- **Compliance with planning policy.**

Consideration was also given to the following additional criteria

- **Proximity to electrical grid connection**
- **Potential for offsetting heat and power to nearby properties or businesses**
- **Potential for site expansion**
- **Potential for a rail link**
- **Site ownership.**

Through this process, national policy and guidance on planning for Waste Management and resource recovery facilities were used and referenced.

- *The National Waste Strategy for Wales-Wise about Waste 2002*

- *South East Wales Regional Waste Plan*
- *South East Wales Economic Forum Land Survey 07*
- *South East Wales Regional Waste Plan- Health Impact Assessment*
- *Defra's Industrial Heat Maps, Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note-TAN (Wales) 21: Waste, 2001*
- *Environment Agency's Waste Arisings Data*
- *Welsh Assembly Government's Objectives for the Regional Waste Plan Review*
- *Relevant Unitary Development Plans maps and policies*
- *Welsh Assembly Government Department for the Environment, Sustainability and Housing, Planning Health Check Framework, Version 2 September 2008.*

A key policy of the National Waste Strategy for Wales is that all necessary measures must be taken to protect human health and the environment against the harmful effects caused by the production, collection, transport, treatment, storage, recovery and disposal of Waste.

Through this assessment eighteen sites successfully satisfied the criteria and were deemed as being potentially suitable for the proposed development, six of these are owned by a Council or the Welsh Assembly Government. Two were in Caerphilly, seven in Cardiff, one in Monmouthshire, five in Newport and three in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Technical Officers from the Officers' Steering Group then ranked each of these sites, using the criteria explained into 'high' 'medium' and 'low' depending on suitability and availability.

- **High:** Perceived as excellent potential to consider further on the basis that all criteria and added benefits were met
- **Medium:** Perceived as moderate potential for further consideration, but with some constraints due to the added benefits
- **Low:** Perceived to have low viability for Prosiect Gwyrdd due to few added benefits

The sites ranked as 'high' were:

- **Oakdale Business Park, Caerphilly**
- **Capital Business Park, Wentloog, Cardiff**
- **Land adjacent to former Acer building, Wentloog, Cardiff**
- **Queensway Meadows East, Newport**
- **Queensway Meadows, Tatton Road, Newport**

Oakdale Business Park and the land adjacent to the former Acer building were subsequently discounted from the selection, as they were no longer available and are being used for other development proposals.

Prosiect Gwyrdd wants to take forward a site in public ownership to procurement to increase competition in the market, to provide an alternative option for those bidders who may not have the benefit of a secured site.

For this reason, Parsons Brinckerhoff was instructed by Prosiect Gwyrdd to assess the three remaining sites, Capital Business Park in Cardiff, Queensway Meadows East and Queensway Meadows, Tatton Road in more detail to identify, if possible which of the three publicly owned sites was the most suitable for the proposed development and most likely to obtain planning permission.

All three sites have certain drawbacks. They are 'Greenfield' in nature, underlain by soft tidal deposits and fall within an area which is at risk of flooding so there may be potential technical, environmental and planning constraints associated with developing any of the three sites.

However all three sites are considered to be physically capable of accommodating the proposed waste treatment facility through the agreed criteria used above.

The potential benefits and negatives associated with each of these three sites are listed below:

Capital Business Park, Wentloog, Cardiff

Positive

- In public ownership
- Close to a primary road network
- Potential to engage with existing and potential emerging waste facilities
- Proximity to rail freight terminal
- Potential for combined heat and power to serve the adjacent business park

Negative

- 'Greenfield site'
- Potential for flood risk, though it is understood through advice from the EA that flood risks in the area can be managed through effective design
- Ground conditions would mean that design solutions such as piling would be needed. i.e drilling in concrete columns to ensure solid foundations
- This site is a site of special scientific interest (SSSI)
- Adjacent to a proposed food distribution warehouse (this would be a perceived problem rather than an actual problem)
- There is an existing dwelling within 250m of the site
- Open views across to site from Rumney residential area
- Site is constrained by existing developments. Little potential for expansion

Queensway Meadows, Tatton Road, Newport

Positive

- In public ownership
- Close to a primary road network
- Existing access road could be reopened
- Potential to offset heat and power to serve the nearby proposed Glan Llyn development at the former Llanwern steelworks
- Outside of the Gwent Levels - Nash and Goldcliff are areas of SSSI
- Low quality existing landscape
- Site is in an established business/industrial area
- Tatton Road is an existing access road and the site contains existing utility infrastructure
- No immediate surrounding residential area that could overlook the site.
- Potential low cost to connect to the electricity grid.

Negative

- 'Greenfield' site, though has some 'Brownfield' characteristics
- Potential for flood risk, though it is understood through advice from the EA that flood risks in the area can be managed through effective design
- Ground conditions would mean that design solutions such as piling would be needed. i.e. drilling in concrete columns to ensure solid foundations.
- Existing dwelling within 250M of site boundary -Tatton Farm (but under WAG control)
- Tatton Farm is a Grade 2 listed building
- Existing food manufacturing unit in the surrounding area. This is again a perception problem rather than an actual problem
- Presence of pylons and high voltage transmission lines which may constrict the footprint of the potential site

Queensway Meadows East, Newport

Positive

- In public ownership
- Close to a primary road network
- Potential to offset heat and power to the proposed Glan Llyn development at the former Llanwern steelworks
- No immediate surrounding residential development that could be effected by overlooking the site
- Site is not constrained by existing utility infrastructure

Negative

- 'Greenfield site'
- Potential for flood risk, though it is understood through advice from the EA that flood risks in the area can be managed through effective design
- Within the Gwent Levels: Nash and Goldcliff are areas of SSSI
- Ground conditions would mean that design solutions such as piling would be needed. I.e. drilling in concrete columns to ensure solid foundations
- Existing dwelling within 250m of site boundary (Tatton Farm) but under WAG control
- Tatton Farm is a Grade 2 listed building
- Would require a new access road

By comparing these three sites, on balance it was considered that the Queensway Meadows sites are more appropriate than the Capital Business Park site in Cardiff.

Why?

- Less visual impact to surrounding residents
- Potential to offset heat and power to the proposed Glan Llyn development at the former steel works
- It is outside the areas of SSSI

Comparing the two sites in Queensway Meadows, the Tatton Road site was deemed as the likely better location because of planning constraints. It is located outside of the area of special scientific interest, has existing road infrastructure and was deemed as having less potential impact on the local environment than the Queensway Meadows East site.

A technical assessment of Tatton Road showed that it was possible to build the facility on the north or south easterly parts of the site but further consideration should be given to the potential constraints with businesses and Tatton Farm being close to the site.

The Tatton Road site will need further investigation before it could be brought forward to the market.

The following surveys would support any future planning application and Environmental Impact Assessment for this site and include:

- **Investigating ground conditions, through 'borehole' investigations**
- **Ecological survey**
- **Grid connection survey**
- **Heat study**
- **Consultation with the water company, Drainage Board, Countryside Council for Wales and Environment Agency Wales.**

Prosiect Gwyrdd was advised that the flooding risk may be a significant restraint, but through further discussions between Prosiect Gwyrdd and the Environment Agency it was decided that flood risks in this area can be managed effectively through 'considered design'.

The site put forward to market will not be a reference site, so bidders will not have to make a bid on this site. Private sites will be brought forward from interested parties and the Partnership is aware of a number of private companies putting in planning applications offering different technical solutions.

For up to date information on the project, please visit www.prosiectgwyrdd.co.uk .Any questions can be addressed to the Project Board at info@prosiectgwyrdd.co.uk .