



**ERECTION OF A BIOMASS POWER PLANT
AND ALTERATIONS TO
EXISTING VEHICULAR ACCESS**

**PLANNING EVIDENCE ON BEHALF OF
THE APPELLANTS**

BY

TONY KERNON BSc(Hons), MRICS, FBIAC

APP/K3225/A/08/2086011/NWF

VOLUME 3: SUMMARY

February 2009

COPYRIGHT

The contents of this document must not be copied in whole or in part without the written consent of Kernon Countryside Consultants.

Authorised By

*Brook Cottage, Purton Stoke, Swindon, Wiltshire SN5 4JE
Telephone 01793 771333 • Facsimile 01793 778384
Email: info@kernon.co.uk*

Tony Kernon BSc(Hons), MRAC MRICS, FBIAC Sarah Kernon



TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME 1: TEXT

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 The Proposals**
- 3 Policy**
- 4 The Council's Processing and Stance**
- 5 Analysis of the Proposal, Benefits and Issues**
- 6 Conclusions**
- 7 Declaration**

VOLUME 2: APPENDICES

- KCC1 Technical description**
- KCC2 Letters from Woodchip Sources**
- KCC3 DTi "Renewable Energy" Booklet (2004) Extracts**
- KCC4 Biomass Strategy (2007)**
- KCC5 Woodfuels Strategy (2007)**
- KCC6 Report to Committee of 20th May 2008**
- KCC7 Extracts from West Midlands Economic Strategy**
- KCC8 Extracts from Local Plan**

VOLUME 3: SUMMARY

Summary of Proof

SUMMARY OF PROOF

Witness

- 1 My name is Tony Kernon. I am a Chartered Surveyor and a Fellow of the British Institute of Agricultural Consultants. My qualifications are set out in my main Proof Volume 1.

The Proposals

- 2 The appeal proposal is the development of a biomass power plant on an allocated commercial estate on the edge of Bishop's Castle, Shropshire.
- 3 The plant would burn biofuels from a variety of local sources, comprising a mixture of woodchip from existing forestry and woodland management practices in the area, and biomass grown locally.

The Site

- 4 The site lies within the employment site reserved since 1990 for industrial and business development on the edge of Bishop's Castle. Only part of the business park has been developed to date. Neighbouring land uses are business uses.

The Council's Position

- 5 This appeal results from the Council's failure to determine the application.
- 6 The Council is not proposing to make representations to the Public Inquiry except to the very limited extent that they will ask for conditions to be imposed.

Policy

- 7 Policy in PPS22 (and a raft of other initiatives) supports renewable energy power production from biomass plants. Such power production is important to help reduce greenhouse gases, and meet our obligations to generate power and heat from renewable sources.

- 8 Policy in the Regional Spatial Strategy encourages renewable energy generation (ENI), noting that biomass has an important role to play (para 8.51). Policy CCI encourages the exploitation of renewable energy.
- 9 Policy in the Local Plan allows commercial development on allocated commercial development sites (SDS5, S2), and identifies the Appeal site as one such site.
- 10 The development should be decided in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Considerations

- 11 The scheme will bring about environmental benefits as follows:
- reduced carbon emissions from electricity production relative to the fossil fuel alternative;
 - reduced emissions from haulage of the woodchip to similar plants further away;
 - creating new incentives for new woodland and biomass environments;
 - creating incentives for better management of existing woodlands;
 - and improvements to air quality nationally.
- 12 The scheme will bring about economic benefits as follows:
- direct job creation of 6 employees and a number of additional periodic or part time work;
 - indirect employment, using the Government's multiplier, of about 25 jobs;
 - improvements to UK research and expertise in new technology. The UK is far behind Germany and Scandinavia which have embraced similar power generation schemes;
 - increased reliability of local power supply to the Grid;
 - the potential for cheaper heating bills (subject to their uptake) by local businesses and educational establishments;
 - increased income for landowners and revitalisation of the rural economy by way of an economic incentive for woodland management and energy crops.

- 13 The scheme will bring about social benefits as follows:
- retention of population through direct and indirect employment;
 - over time there may be community pride in being a leading example of a renewable power town;
 - and in time there may be educational opportunities arising;
 - and subject to there being no particular local health issues, the health of the nation will benefit from reduced climate change impacts.
- 14 These benefits must be balanced against any disbenefits. The particular concern of some local residents has been potential for poor local air quality and harmful dioxin releases from the discharge flume. There is no evidence that there will be any such impacts. Expert evidence on these matters is presented to the Inquiry. Council Officers also carried out detailed research into this matter. They concluded that planning permission should be granted, with suitable conditions imposed.
- 15 Local concerns relate to the impact on amenity. These concerns, whilst heartfelt, are not valid:
- there is no evidence that this biomass power plant will produce toxic dioxins or particulates;
 - noise will not be harmful to residents;
 - there is no significant visual harm resulting from the creation of this industrial building on this industrial estate.
- 16 Traffic generation will be minimal and acceptable on an industrial estate. There will be a considerable overall reduction in haulage through local use of locally-produced woodchip.

Conclusions

- 17 Development should be decided in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 18 I have considered all the relevant policies from national policy statements and guidance, the Regional Spatial Strategy, the Structure Plan and the Local Plan. The proposals accord with, and do not conflict with, any of the policies in these documents.

- 19 There are no material considerations in this case to indicate that development should not be decided in accordance with the development plan.