

From: Neil.Richardson

Sent: 16 October 2017 10:13

To:

Cc:

Subject: Radley Neighbourhood Plan and the Strategy for the Radley Lakes area

Richard,

Thank you for coming to Swindon to meet John Norton and myself on 3rd October. We are very impressed with the quality of the current (September 2017) Radley Neighbourhood Plan consultation draft and the work that has obviously gone into its preparation. It compares very favourably with many adopted District Plans.

John Norton and I found the discussion very useful and it is encouraging that our own and Radley Parish Council's objectives for the Radley Lakes area are so compatible and closely aligned. At RWE Generation we have as you know put considerable effort into obtaining the amended planning permission to allow filled ash lagoons G and H/I west of the railway to be restored primarily for nature conservation, and implementing the habitat management plan arising from this. We are hoping that there will be continuity of management of these areas beyond the end of 2020 when our aftercare responsibilities cease. As Project Manager for the implementation of the restoration and aftercare of Radley ash disposal site, I have sought to keep the aftercare management arrangements as simple as possible and (except for residual civil engineering tasks) to reduce the number of contractors involved and use Earth Trust to co-ordinate aftercare activities where possible. Any ecological monitoring which local groups (e.g. Abingdon Naturalists' Society) want to undertake on the areas under our control is similarly done under Earth Trust's day to day control with Earth Trust managing access to fenced areas, security, safety, etc. The other condition we impose on any such monitoring activities is that RWE Generation must be provided with a copy of any survey results and reports.

We touched on the annual budget for aftercare covering the filled ash lagoons G, H/I and J(east)/P. For the 2017-18 aftercare year we have a provision of just over £16,000, but a substantial part of this is for either ragwort control (on which we have been having a big push this year), or for one-off or infrequently recurring tasks. I estimate that routine vegetation management in a steady state situation beyond the end of 2020 would require about £10,000 annually at 2017 prices. The ability to use mechanical methods of vegetation control in future will remain very restricted because of the need to avoid spreading *Crassula helmsii*.

We review the contract with Earth Trust annually and roll it forward another year subject to their satisfactory performance as a contractor. In practice their performance has been excellent, especially in the quality of the work carried out. The volunteers are dedicated people who understand what is required and have a vested interest in the success of what we are trying to do.

RWE Generation supports the strategy for the Radley Lakes area set out in the current consultation draft Neighbourhood Plan. The area as a whole is large enough to accommodate a combination of nature conservation and quiet recreation, and we recognise that the greatest benefits will be obtained if the Radley Lakes area is managed in a coordinated way in accordance with an agreed master plan. As we pointed out during our discussion, part of the success of the restoration and aftercare effort so far is down to the protection of the filled lagoon areas from disturbance and in particular keeping dogs out, which is important given the number of ground-nesting birds which use the restored ash lagoons.

As the draft Neighbourhood Plan correctly identifies, the key to successful implementation of the proposed strategy is the provision of alternative road access from Audlett Drive, to solve the Thrupp Lane traffic problem and facilitate regularising the existing industrial and commercial land uses for the longer term.

As we mentioned, one of the challenges going forward is to control and eliminate the antisocial activities which continues to occur in the area (principally motorbike scrambling, 4 wheel drive vehicle misuse and fly-tipping) which, if they continue uncontrolled, will hinder progress towards achieving the

strategy's objectives. While we agree that positive management of the area for quiet recreation in particular will help to discourage by increasing the presence of responsible members of the community, physical obstructions in strategic places can also help, particularly to control 4 wheel drive access and fly-tipping.

Please keep us informed of developments around the Radley Lakes strategy and please do not hesitate to get in touch with John or myself again if you think we may be able to help with any related matters in the common interest, whether as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process or otherwise.

This e-mail includes RWE Generation UK plc's response to the current consultation draft of the Radley Neighbourhood Plan, and may be circulated more widely as appropriate for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan and the strategy for the Radley Lakes area.

I hope this is of assistance.

Regards,

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