

EGRA OPEN MEETING: TUESDAY 17.02.2015

Star and Garter

Dan Hayes, Vice Chair EGRA welcomed everyone and introduced the team from TfL. They were

Matthew Webb, Senior Energy & Carbon Strategy Manager for TFL, Russell Fleetwood, Power Station Manager and Nicky Cafetzi, Communications Manager

MW told us that the underground is the largest user of electricity in London and that TfL are looking at ways to use and generate more efficiently and at the same time to decarbonise. The Power station has been operational for 109 years in various guises, originally coal fired; hence the jetty on the riverfront, the future of the power station is gas.

The new plans leave the external view building unchanged although it will be painted, and the jetty will remain intact. The plant can take a maximum of six new gas engines, (there are currently seven steam turbines). Residents questioned whether the gas turbines would then be decommissioned, no definitive answer on that but an assurance that they would not be operational at Greenwich.

The plant will operate 17 hours a day.

TfL plans to install just two gas engines to start with. They plan to stagger the installation of the next four engines and could take up to twenty years. TfL are looking at concept design and emissions modelling at the moment and in reply to a question from the floor from Ray Smith, they could not be more specific about carbon output at present.

HW assured us that the new engines would be considerably more efficient than the forty-year-old turbines currently installed. MW maintained that the two engines would operate at well below allowable emission levels but after many questions from the floor and some rather cross exchanges, Matthew conceded that because of increased operating hours that total emissions levels may be

higher but he doubted it although could not give a clear answer until the modelling was completed.

The current turbines are encased in acoustic enclosures. These are also old. The new engines will be acoustically enclosed and this noise abatement kit will be much more effective. There was some discussion about decibel levels, when the plant operates it creates noise 4.9 decibels above ambient levels. This will increase but is likely to be minimal.

Residents pointed out whether that noise was intrusive depended on when it was heard. MW was clear that the plant would not operate at night. He reinforced the point that EU targets were more stringent than UK targets so tried to reassure residents that noise would not be an issue. Many residents seemed doubtful that this curfew would be enforced and maintained.

MW tried to give us context by pointing out that Greenwich would only supply 4% of the London Underground electricity supply.

A resident asked why no planning permission has been sought. MW responded as there was no actual change of use it was unnecessary. There was some surprise at this, as continuous operation as opposed to occasional operation seemed to many a difference that would warrant a change of use permission. One resident noted that if no planning permission were needed the community would not benefit from any section 106 agreements.

Cllr Lloyd asked about traffic planning for the construction and installation of plant, apart from saying that there would not be much disruption as no further details were forthcoming at this stage.

TfL has been in discussion with RBG about developing a heat network. The surplus power generated should be enough to heat twenty thousand homes MW told us that LB Southwark is developing a heat network and other London councils have already done it; it was an established system with considerable public benefit. Heat networks are used by local authorities to heat public buildings such as schools and libraries There were several questions from the floor about how far the hot water could be piped to provide heating and who may be eligible to apply. Apparently heat networks are most easily installed when building new homes as well as in council

owned properties, as it is a considerable infrastructure project. There were no further details available as yet as work on viability has only just begun.

Some residents questioned whether a heat network would actually be delivered not questioning the intention but the reality of such disruptive infrastructure in a congested residential area.

Nicky Communication manager for TfL told us that there would be a full public consultation in March. Just one session is planned for

MARCH 4th at the FORUM.

TfL tried to reassure residents that everything possible will be done to ensure that the work will be carried out with minimal disruption to the neighbourhood. One resident queried how good a neighbour the power station was now, and suggested that relations could be improved, noting that there were building and maintenance improvements to be made now.

The power Station will not have an increased workforce.

IKEA UPDATE

Dan Brown an EGRA member and co-founder of the No IKEA pressure group explained why they had dropped their plan to pursue a judicial review on traffic flow ; on advice from their barrister. Apparently even if NO IKEA hired their own expert, TfL/ IKEA would likely produce their own, it would be one expert against another with no happy result.

NO IKEA and EGRA are engaged with the IKEA through meetings and workshops as we know the store is now unfortunately a certainty. We we have formed a group with Greenwich, Blackheath, Westcombe and the Charlton societies to agree a common position on what we want from IKEA, feeding back to the IKEA store project manager

Cllr Scott McDonald told us that IKEA were surprised at (and unused to) the level of hostility from the community.

Laura Eyres Chair of EGRA told us that that IKEA had a stated commitment to bringing net benefit to the community as well as a corporate commitment to make each new store more sustainable than the last. EGRA have asked them for and will monitoring the bench marks for evaluating sustainability.

EGRA want to maintain pressure on the traffic issues and the removal of the ecology park, pushing for a traffic free store akin to the one in Hamburg and stressed that we wanted nothing less than Hamburg and preferably more. The UK model is not for traffic free stores. We definitely do not want an IKEA shed.

IKEA seem to be listening now lets make sure it is not just a PR exercise.

KNIGHT DRAGON AND RBG PLANNING

Laura Eyres brought us up to date with the news that RBG has lost an appeal to keep secret the viability study in connection to the provision of social housing on the KD site.

It is common place amongst developers at the moment to provide viability studies which cover s106 commitments; they use this method to reduce affordable house numbers. Figures forward under these reports attempt to show that the delivery of affordable housing above a certain level makes the whole project economically unviable.

The percentage of social housing has been dropping across East Greenwich but it is difficult to challenge the developer's arithmetic on this as to date only the council reviews this information.

In this instance peninsula residents groups unhappy with the proposed levels of affordable housing and outraged that KD had also planned to locate social housing to the south of their site (to allow the riverside properties to be free of such commitments) successfully campaigned to see the detail of the viability report.

The victory by the two residents groups on the peninsula came after 18 months of campaigning, we consider this to be a game changer as it will strengthen and inform how we challenge the usual opaque commercial arrangements made between RBG and developers.

LE questioned whether the planning board had access to the viability report, it is apparently quite common that the leadership at the council has the viability report and knows the content, but there is no routine scrutiny by the planning board, these seems

ridiculous as it is they who grant planning permission yet don't have the financial detail.

LE explained that The Planning Board had had the same chairman in place for the past five years LE was surprised that this did not change at the last council election. LE went on to say that Cllr Walker also chairs three planning sub committees for Eltham & Kidbrooke, Woolwich and, and Greenwich. This was surely too much power concentrated in one place. Here is the link to RBG committee info.

<http://committees.greenwich.gov.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>

It was highlighted that out of the thirteen members of the planning board none were from the peninsula ward, in fact the majority were councillors representing wards in the east of the borough i.e. Abbey Wood, Eltham and Woolwich. It was noted that East Greenwich and the Peninsula is the largest development site in Europe, so not to have local representation was disappointing and incredible.

LE asked the councillors present to report back that things must change. Kate Joeques asked what the process was to effect such a change. Cllr Lloyd believed it to be the AGM in May (17.05.2015) but promised to feed back our concerns immediately.

COUNCILLOR UPDATE

Cllr Lloyd told us about an open meeting to be held at the **TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 19TH FEBRUARY**. Present will be South West Trains, TfL and Network rail. The works at London Bridge is to be the topic all welcome.

Cllr Lloyd also told us about traffic calming measures at the corner of Annadale Road.

Anthony Batten a resident of Combedale Road asked why there was no dedicated town centre manger or officer responsible for East Greenwich. AB went on to point out that Woolwich Road was a disgrace, poorly maintained and choked with rubbish and worse. It was noted that with the amount of development in this part of the borough this is not acceptable. There was a great deal of agreement from the floor and other examples of poorly maintained public

space in the neighbourhood. Cllrs said that they would report back on this but could no give immediate answers.

Dan Hayes closed the meeting by urging those gathered to sign up to EGRA and to tell friends and neighbours.

Charlotte Baker Feb 19.02.15