



**Rookery South Energy Recovery Facility:  
Plant commissioning update and a response to  
recent odour reports**

26<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Dear Sir / Madam / Householder.

Further to the letter we sent last month, we wanted to provide you with an update on the construction of the Rookery South Energy Recovery Facility, which is now at an advanced stage. As Principal Contractor, Hitachi Zosen Inova (HZI) have commenced the process of commissioning and testing the new facility, which is the final step before the plant becomes fully operational early next year. A team of experienced commissioning engineers are engaged in this important phase, which is also required by the Environment Agency (EA) under the terms of the project's Environmental Permit.

To reiterate the points in our March letter, some of the steps involved in the commissioning process are likely to result in activities which could be seen or heard by near neighbours and the local community outside the site boundary during April and May 2021. The nature of commissioning is that it is a one-off phase of the project, so it is important to note that many of the activities that may be seen or heard during commissioning are not typical of the normal operating conditions of the facility.

As referenced in the March letter, one of the early steps in the commissioning phase will be to warm-up the facility's three boilers using fuel oil. However, we overlooked to mention that as the boilers warm up, the binding agent in the insulation, which wraps around the boilers to improve efficiency, evaporates in high temperatures. This binder is made from a non-hazardous substance of organic plant material (*a key component of which is glucose, a sugar*) that produces a distinct odour which is normally released from the plant by opening up vents in the roof.

During the heating up of the second boiler on the 15<sup>th</sup> April, the wind direction blew an odour towards areas where it could clearly be smelt by some local residents. We sincerely apologise for this nuisance odour and for not warning our neighbours of the potential for this. Since the issue occurred we have been working with the Environment Agency to provide information on the non-hazardous nature of the odour and to mitigate this happening again when the third and final boiler is heat tested on 28<sup>th</sup> of April.

It is possible that the odour could be detected for a final time when the three boilers reach their maximum internal temperatures. If this occurs, this is likely to be when the facility first processes waste at full capacity and will be limited to a short duration. Once these maximum temperatures are reached, the evaporation process of the binder (organic plant material) is complete and the odour does not reoccur.

Measures being taken to mitigate this include:

- Closing of all roof vents to contain any odours within the building.
- Installation of temporary activated carbon filters through which the air will be drawn in order to further reduce any odours.
- Slowing down the heating up process to reduce the intensity of any odours.



If you have any comments or questions in relation to these forthcoming activities please do so via the project website at [www.rookerysouth.co.uk/contact](http://www.rookerysouth.co.uk/contact) us, or by calling HZI's Site Manager (Chris Barbour) on 07950 387 124.

Lastly, can we once again offer our sincere apologies for any disturbance, odours or nuisance caused. Please be assured that any odours are non-hazardous and will be of short duration.

Yours sincerely,

**Jack Stitt**  
Project Manager  
Covanta Energy Limited  
(for Rookery South Limited)

**Chris Barbour**  
Site Manager  
Hitachi Zosen Inova