

**Advanced Proteins Liaison Group Meeting
4.00pm Friday 13th May 2022**

Location: Ashcombe Park Cricket Club

The following members were present:

Chair Karen Bradley - Member of Parliament – Staffordshire Moorlands

Environment Agency Richard Lockley – EPR Installations Regulatory Officer

Councillors / MP: Cllr Mike Bowen- SMDC District Council
Cllr Harold Jennings – Cheddleton Parish Council
Cllr John Tunna – Cheddleton Parish Council

Advanced Proteins: Barney Williams - Technical Director

Animal Health: See apologies

Representing Residents: Ian Dakin – Also Cllr for Cheddleton Parish Council
Joe Smith
Patricia Duffy

Apologies: Gerry McLoughlin – Advanced Protein’s Managing Director
Steve Thomason – Environment Agency
Stephanie Young (Trading Standards)
Jack Brereton – Member of Parliament – Stoke on Trent South
Animal and Plant Health Agency
Dena Corden Le Petit

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Karen Bradley (KB) welcomed everyone to the meeting and the new venue, the members of the group reciprocated.

2. Updates from: Environment Agency

Richard Lockley (RL) explained that since the last liaison meeting on 24th September 2021, 41 reports had been made to the Environment Agency, 40 of which related to odour and one relating to noise. There was a spike in reports in April when there were 13 reports received during the month.

RL explained there had been 10 Schedule 5’s reported to the Environment Agency by Advanced Proteins. Such notifications are a requirement of the site permit if there is a factor that may have the potential to cause an odour/noise.

Three of the 10 notifications related to a site and local power outage of the National Grid including one during Storm Arwen in November. The oxidizers and biobeds abatement systems were reset immediately and there were no odour reports when the power blip occurred. Therefore, the situation was managed appropriately. There were no complaints received through the period of the outages.

Six of the Schedule 5's related to issues with the raw material vehicle access doors. Three of which were electrical issues, two incidents of damage by high winds during storm conditions at the end of February and more recently (end of April) one door suffered impact damage by a vehicle. (Cat 3 plant raw materials access door).

One further Schedule 5 related to storm damage of a small section of the cookhouse (Cat 3 plant) roof in February – no odour reports received during this period.

All damage to the doors and roof were repaired as soon as possible and the Company engaged with the EA and provided regular updates. Approximately one third of the complaints received since the previous meeting were received during the last week of April following damage to the raw materials access doors.

In addition, reports had been received, and evidence noted, in relation to agricultural spreading, which may have contributed to some of the complaints received.

RL stated that there were no failures of the permit or the site-specific odour management plan (OMP).

RL added that the Company continues to proactively progress the action tracker for positive improvement projects on site.

3. Advanced Proteins Update

- An Advanced Proteins factory visit took place in February 2022 which included nearly all of the Liaison Committee and the Environment Agency. BW gave a Company presentation and there was then a factory tour. Positive feedback received and factory tours will be arranged in the future.
- The Category 3 cooking process was due for a full roof replacement in 2021 but the project was delayed due to the availability of contractor and roof sheets. The project is now scheduled for the Summer of 2022.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be undertaken by the Company for approval by the Environment Agency, to ensure all risks are assessed which could result in potential odour releases and that all control measures are in place to prevent any impact on the local community.

At this point, it was suggested that the programme of works could be delayed ensuring that the risk of odours is mitigated through the summer months and holiday periods.

The Group unanimously agreed that the work should take place during Autumn 2022. BW agreed to delay the project and to communicate the plans, as previously agreed.

- BW explained that Advanced Proteins are working through the site action tracker which is the proactive projects which ensure that the potential for odour releases to be mitigated.
- The Company have recently refurbished the biobed air filtration systems again to ensure optimum efficiency. This means the removal and regrading the media to ensure blockages are prevented and that the air flow is maintained.
- Smoke testing of process buildings is also undertaken on a monthly basis to identify any weaknesses in the building extraction systems. When non toxic smoke is pumped into the evacuated buildings, the extraction systems are tested to ensure that all of the smoke is removed to the beds. Therefore, proving that air flow (incl. odorous air) is also removed during normal operations.
- The Company will shortly be instructing a specialist odour /olfactometry company to undertake odour sampling from the processes and abatement systems to ensure that they are working efficiently. BW will update the group on the findings at the next Liaison meeting.

4. Food Ingredients Project Update

At this point of the meeting, BW updated the group in relation to the planning application for Food Ingredient (FI) England project that Advanced Proteins are hoping to progress at the Cheddleton site.

A Community Open Day was held on 14th March 2022 at the Community Centre on Hollow Lane. The day was advertised in the Leek Post and Times, as well as on Moorlands Radio. The event involved key members of Advanced Proteins team to answer any questions that residents wished to ask. Detailed plans were presented, along with a 3D video of the entire process.

The event was attended by residents and local councillors. Whilst there was positive feedback from many visitors, there was also concern for the visual impact of the factory. BW stressed that a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment had been undertaken to ensure the buildings were screened effectively. This includes a mature tree planting scheme, designed by a specialist so that the scheme was mature from the outset, not in many years to come.

Joe Smith detailed the type of trees and planting that should be included in the scheme and the ongoing maintenance that would be required. BW agreed to feedback to the specialists to ensure that his advice was taken on board.

Other concerns were potential odours and noise from the processes. BW stressed that the process is not rendering and does not create the potential levels of odour to be a concern. However, as a belt and braces approach, the Company have integrated a high efficiency odour abatement biofiltration system.

The FIE project is cutting edge technology which has been developed by Advanced Protein's parent company ABP in Ireland, it remains the only facility of its kind in the United Kingdom or Ireland. Furthermore, there are very few similar processes in the whole of the European Union. The project represents a substantial investment in the region of £25 million, and it would also ensure the enhancement of the existing factory in Cheddleton.

The full planning application was submitted to Staffs Moorlands District Council Planning department and a determination date was set by the planning officer for 17th May 2022. At

the time of the Liaison Meeting (13/5) it is not likely that the date will be met as there are several statutory consultees who have not provided comments to the application e.g. highways department at Staffordshire County Council and the Ecology department.

There will be a further update at the next Liaison Meeting.

5. Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

BW explained that the Company had been involved in several Avian Influenza (AI) government contingency operations since November 2021. Activities include the safe collection and bio-secure rendering destruction (Category 1). It has been the worst season for outbreaks for many years and is still ongoing as of May 2022.

The regular site APHA audits conducted since the last meeting were all positive, with zero non conformances reported.

6. Trading Standards

BW confirmed that there had been a minor spillage reported since the last meeting in the Weston Coyney area in March 2022. The source of the material was not confirmed but Advanced Protein's team reacted within minutes when reported to the site. There were no other engagement or activities with Trading Standards since the last meeting.

7. Any other business

- Ian Dakin acknowledged earlier in the meeting that the Company were compliant with their permit, but he asked Richard Lockley if he would provide a layman's description to explain what constituted a permit breach to understand the process. RL agreed to provide this.
- Joe Smith asked the Company if they would leaflet/postcard an information bulletin to the applicable areas of the village ahead of any major works, such as the forthcoming Category 3 roof replacement works. Likewise, Cllr Bowen suggested contacting the Parish Clerks at the applicable Parish Councils so that the councillors can be made aware and potentially the information could be posted on the council websites. BW agreed to both actions.

8. Date of next meeting

14th October 2022 at 4pm Location: Wetley Rocks Village Hall