

Dear All,

I attended the meeting at H+H today, along with members from Platt, Wrotham, Ightham and Plaxtol.

Ed Surman in his preamble had shown us how silica sand can be milled and used as a replacement for PFA, in a finer form it will have a similar chemical reaction with the Aluminium and PFA to foam the mix just as at present. It is the foaming that gives a Celcon block its light weight and insulative properties. There would be investment in some new machinery because of differences in the process, and to allow for the fact the sand based aircrete is slower to set. This was all told to us before we spoke about H+H's previous evidence during the Bypass Inquiry that sand couldn't be used in their blocks.

H+H played some cards close to their chest, but admitted they were making all sorts of investigations into other sources of PFA, but the fact remained that coal fired power stations are being steadily closed,

There are of course all sorts of devious scenarios that could happen, but I and most others were happy to accept what was said at face value, but to be vigilant to ensure H+H stick to the straight and narrow.

Extracting this sand for factory use will keep the factory going for some considerable time, protecting jobs, and will mean a drastic reduction in road trips through BG & Platt of imported material.

However, if we are minded to support the application we must ensure the approval has the strongest possible planning conditions limiting the use of the material to the H+H Factory, that outside sales are not allowed, and that H+H maintain direct control over the extraction and subsequent restoration. And such conditions must pass on to subsequent owners, and the operation of the pit must remain tied to the factory, and no other purpose. When we get closer to an application, H+H will supply us with updated borehole investigations, that will quantify the ratio of silica sand, building sand, and overburden.

We have already experienced first-hand what happens when the extraction job is passed to a sub-contractor - the bulk of the sand is exported, and the restoration is done, shall we say euphemistically, with material from dubious sources. That cannot happen again.

Regards

Mike