



**S.T.I.G.**

**St.Dennis Incinerator Group**

**June 2008**

## **Background, Consultation & Liaison**

### **Consultee Response to CERC Planning Application**

**Consultee**  
St.Dennis Incinerator Group (S.T.I.G.)

**Applicant**  
Sita Cornwall Ltd.

**Application Reference**  
08/00203/WAS

**Address of Proposal**  
Land at  
Rostowrack Farm  
St.Dennis  
St.Austell  
Cornwall  
PL26 8DX

**Proposal**  
Construct and Manage a  
240,000 TPA Energy Recovery Centre  
( Mass Burn Incinerator )

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## Background, Consultation & Liaison

### Background

St Dennis Incinerator Group (STIG) is a fully constituted organisation with many supporters that runs as a non-profit organisation. STIG was formed in November 2005 by a group of concerned residents after three meetings were held in the Mid Cornwall areas of Roche, Fraddon and St Dennis. Members of the public were invited to hear the proposed plans of Cornwall County Council's Waste Development Plan. At the centre of this WDP was an EfW (energy from waste incinerator). At these meetings it was clear that members of the public were not in favour of the proposals and felt that there had not been a full and open consultation process.

STIG regrets Cornwall County Councils decision to grant the 30-year waste contract to SITA, a company that has incineration at the heart of its preferred method of waste disposal. STIG also regrets the decision not to engage with the community or to rethink their plans before submitting this application now under consideration, particularly as Cornwall County Council does not currently have a Waste Development Framework Policy.

Much information has been withheld from STIG and the people of Cornwall as many of the details contained within the PFI contract have not entered the public domain because of so called 'commercial sensitivity'- despite repeated requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

STIG recognise that when CCC embarked on its procurement process the desire to invest in a quick fix to Cornwall's mounting waste problem to avoid Landfill Taxes was at the forefront of disposal choice. Since that time however, household recycling in Cornwall has risen, and looks likely to continue to escalate as the result of the growing public commitment to waste reduction and increased reuse, recycling and composting. Moreover, with the introduction of waste packaging legislation, super-market waste reduction agreements, the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment regulations, and the phasing out of plastic carrier bags; household waste requiring disposal is decreasing.

The reasons for STIG's objections to planning application 08/00203/WAS are outlined in this document.

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### Consultation

#### Cornwall County Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Cornwall County Council claim to have provided information about how they have involved the community and indeed they did hold a series of public exhibitions from May to June 2006. The consultation period was for 8 weeks but the exhibition did not come to St Dennis until the 22<sup>nd</sup> June. This left only 4.5 days for people to submit their comments, in writing, to C.C.C.

The level of consultation by County on this project has been poor. The Worried About Waste consultation over one day gave individual members of the public 10 minutes to discuss their concerns. People were also told that a leaflet would be published and distributed throughout the county giving information on the project but no one in St Dennis received such a publication. In fact the meeting in the village of St Stephen was cancelled with very short notice and was not re-arranged.

On at least two occasions requests have been made to hold a public meeting for people to meet with representatives of SITA to discuss their concerns regarding the proposals. In a letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007 from David Buckle the following statement was made.

“Regrettably we don’t feel able to agree to the request for an open meeting in the village. Experience tells us such meetings are not productive”

SITA Cornwall states that they commissioned a Health Impact Assessment. This is not strictly true. This action stems from the letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> July 2007 to Mr Chris Daly, principal planner from Felicity Owen, Director of Public Health, of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust. In her response to the opportunity to participate in the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping exercise she states:

“While the scoping report clearly covers many of the potential impacts on the natural environment we do not feel that this report sufficiently covers the potential impacts on the human and socio-economic environment. The close-knit communities of the Clay Villages such as St Dennis have their own unique characteristics and it is essential that these communities should not be unnecessarily disadvantaged, nor experience greater health inequalities through the construction and operation of a RTWP in the area. Some of the impacts that must be considered include:

- Short and long term impacts on human health and well being, including levels of anxiety.
- Food supplies from local producers.

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- House prices.
- Service infrastructure, possible withdrawal of services from the area or relocation of new services.
- Employment opportunities in the area.

In Summary, the view of the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust is that nothing short of a full, independent Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is required for this proposal”.

Ben Cave Associates were asked to consult with local residents and people with ‘expert’ knowledge of health, such as local GPs and Health Visitors. The consultation period started in September and carried a deadline of 8<sup>th</sup> October 2007.

Consultation occurred via a total of 62 people out of a village of over 2,000 people. Parish Councillors weren’t invited to take part until 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008 after requests from the Parish Councillors who attend the Site Liaison Group. It must also be noted that many individuals and groups such as STIG did in fact make comments that were submitted well within the original consultation period but have not been included in the list given in the published Health Impact Assessment.

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### The Liaison Group

There have been two Liaison Groups. The first was known as the CCLG (Cornwall County's Liaison Group) and was made up of invited people. Cornwall County Council wrote to the People's Panel to find out if any one was interested in taking part in a Liaison Group. It should be noted that anyone wishing to become involved in the People's Panel needed to submit an application to join, with the final decision being made by Cornwall County Council. In total 3 CCLG groups were formed with the largest being in the Mid Cornwall area. The meetings were held on a monthly basis in the Working Man's Club sited in the village of St Dennis. Nikki Hinds an employee of AEA Technologies facilitated all 3 groups and the minutes were written by Maggie Thurgood, a County Council employee and ex employee of AEA Technologies. These meetings were viewed with mistrust and people in the community felt that they took place 'behind' closed doors as no members of the public were able to attend, not even as observers. The forum was financed by C.C.C. and because of this many of the people who opposed the incinerator did not feel that it was independent. It should be noted that although the 3 groups were set up in February 2006 only 3 sets of minutes, May, June and July 2006 were available for the public viewing. According to Cornwall County Council these groups then became 'virtual' groups in November 2006.

SITA wrote to members asking if they were interested in forming a new group called the Site Liaison Group (CLG) which have met regularly since July 2007. This group meets once per month, normally at Kingsley Village and is funded by SITA. Information about these groups posted on C.C.C's website clearly states that :-

'While members of the groups are intended to represent their community, they are not 'representatives' in an official sense. Membership of the group is not based on people's views for or against the Integrated Waste Management proposals'

Therefore this statement puts the Site Liaison Group outside the planning application process and should not be viewed as part of the Consultation Process. In fact, SITA Cornwall's reference to the Group in their planning application violates those Terms of Reference.