



Students celebrate their exam success

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‘Nothing to fear’ from new plant

Energy company reassures residents over health concerns

By Robert Downes

What do you think? Email robert.downes@messengergrp.co.uk or go to messengernewspapers.co.uk

An artist's impression of the new biomass-fuelled station



THE company planning to build a biomass-fuelled powerstation in Trafford this week assured residents that it would not pose any health risks.

Peel Energy moved to lay fears after a leaflet was distributed at a public meeting claiming harmful toxins could be released into the atmosphere from the plant.

At the inaugural meeting of the Breathe Clean Air Group at the Moss Vale pub last week, 70 people turned up to express their concerns about the multi-million pound plant.

The meeting was set up to discuss ways to stop Peel Energy moving forward with plans for the biomass-fuelled station on land next to United Utilities' water treatment works in Davyhulme, which would burn waste matter to produce electricity.

"Although incinerator filters have got better over the years, they still cannot stop dangerous things getting out," said BCAG spokesman, Jo Burgess.

"If it goes ahead, this plant could be belching out all sorts of

toxins. We've not met one person yet who's for this, and people are saying, 'we've got to stop this happening'."

But Peel Energy, which ran a series of consultation events last month where it reported seeing strong support for the project, dismissed the BCAG's claims, and said there was masses of evidence proving otherwise.

The group's project director, Jon England, said: "The Barton

Renewable Energy Plant would not be harmful to human health and to suggest otherwise is irresponsible.

"The plant would meet air quality standards set by Trafford and Salford Councils, and by European and national legislation.

"Monitoring data from similar renewable energy plants has demonstrated repeatedly that biomass-fuelled energy plants

are not harmful to public health."

He added: "The Environment Agency would continuously monitor emissions to ensure they remain within permitted levels.

"The Government's Health Protection Agency has also stated that the impacts on health from renewable energy schemes such as the Barton proposal are minimal."

Hunt for fugitive rapist turns to the Philippines

EXCLUSIVE
by Jessica Bell



A CONVICTED rapist from Urmston who went on the run in 2006 is in the Philippines, it was claimed this week.

Gary Lee Johnson, 38, pictured, was jailed for seven years in his absence, after he failed to attend his trial at Manchester Minshull Street Crown Court where he was found guilty of raping a woman.

In March 2004, he met his victim at a club and then raped her at a house in Urmston.

Johnson had been remanded in custody during the first rape trial, but was granted bail after the jury failed to reach a verdict. He then failed to appear in court and was jailed in his absence.

Police have been searching for Johnson since he disappeared and in February this year released a photo of him, and named him as one of Trafford's most wanted fugitives.

Messenger can reveal that police in the Philippines have been tracking Johnson, who is believed to

be using a false passport and different surname, and provided a photograph and video of the man they believe is the Urmston fugitive.

This week Greater Manchester Police confirmed that they had established that Johnson was in the Philippines and said inquiries were ongoing to locate him.

A British ex-pat, who asked not to be named, contacted Messenger and said he believes Johnson is living near to him on Leyte Island.

He said the man he believes is Johnson is 'infamous' in Leyte and is living with a Filipino woman and her two children.

The UK has a treaty with the Philippines which allows extradition to be requested for any offence which attracts a maximum penalty of at least 12 months in prison.

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