

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Waste Infrastructure Delivery Programme (WIDP)
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19th August 2011

Dear Ms Stephenson,

Incinerator at King's Lynn

Thank you for your letter last month to Lord Henley and myself regarding the proposed new Energy from Waste (EfW) facility in King's Lynn.

We have always made it clear that local authorities are best placed to make decisions on the waste management strategy for their area. Defra does not seek to influence, in any way, these decisions or choice of local waste management solution. Through the Waste Infrastructure Delivery Programme, Defra's role is limited to providing support and the tools necessary for authorities to make informed choices and maximise value for money from their procurement projects. Central Government funding, through the award of Waste Infrastructure Credits (formerly Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits) is not, therefore, predicated on any technology preference, and the waste procurement projects supported by the Programme are, by default, technology neutral. It is through the procurement that local authorities are able to identify the correct residual waste management solution for their area. However, in order for a project to be eligible for WI Credits support, Defra requires that the proposed solution be consistent with the provisions of the authority's wider waste management strategy.

Defra's support criteria also require that authorities demonstrate how their project supports the whole waste hierarchy, especially how they intend to maximise incentivisation of activities higher up the hierarchy, which include waste prevention, re-use, recycling/composting and energy recovery – through various technologies including, but not limited to, anaerobic digestion and other energy from waste technologies.

Local Consultation

I would like to point out that Defra's WI Credits Criteria include a requirement to demonstrate that other relevant authorities, the public and interested parties have been consulted and that there is a broad consensus around a wider, long term waste management strategy for the county. We are in regular contact with NCC to ensure that



the project continues to meet all of our criteria including this one on consultation and consensus. Our Secretary of State has recently written to NCC seeking assurance that this is still the case.

We are aware of the level of opposition to the current proposal to build an energy from waste facility in the borough of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk, and the borough's recent poll was a consideration in prompting Defra's Secretary of State's letter. However, now that the planning and permitting processes have commenced, I would advise that it is through these processes that your detailed concerns about environmental and site issues can, and ought to, be raised. As the strategic authority, NCC should continue to encourage all residents to engage in these processes. We understand that the public consultation on planning issues ended on 17 August and a further public consultation relating to permitting and environmental issues will be held this autumn.

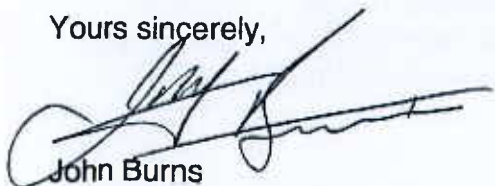
Health Impacts

It is crucial that waste plants are managed to protect human health, as well as the environment. With this objective in mind, the amount of potentially harmful substances released to air, water and land from waste management facilities is tightly controlled under European and domestic law.

Projects of this sort are regulated by the Environment Agency (EA) in England and Wales via environmental permits. As part of the permit application process, the EA will carry out a further public consultation exercise. Before reaching a decision to grant a permit, the EA will satisfy itself that the applicant has demonstrated that the proposed facility:

- meets the requirements of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010 and uses Best Available Techniques in its design and operation;
- will fully comply with the requirement of the Waste Incineration Directive;
- emissions will not give rise to a significant risk of pollution or harm to human health;
- will, as far as practicable, have energy generated by the Energy from Waste (EfW) plant recovered for use;
- will ensure the amount of residues and harmfulness will be minimised and recycled where appropriate; and
- will have appropriate measurement techniques for emissions that are in line with those specified in domestic legislation and relevant EU Directives.

Yours sincerely,



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