

CHAIN

Cheshire Anti Incinerator Network



News Release

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The Environment Agency cannot wait to smooth the way for the Northwich Waste Incinerator

The EA is apparently not for turning in its determination to issue an environmental permit to E.ON to operate a waste burning incinerator in Northwich. This is despite the fact that there have been many significant changes to the proposal since it was given planning consent by Ed Davey, Secretary of State for the Dept of Energy and Climate Change. In fact, these are the actual words used by the EA in emails they have sent to the many people who have written to them demanding that they do not go ahead until the changes made by TATA/E.ON have been fully considered by the Secretary of State:

‘ We have a duty to determine the application made to us, regardless of the planning permission granted. It is the operator’s responsibility to ensure that they comply with all necessary authorisations’

This is sheer pigheaded and dangerous madness. It means that the EA is ignoring the changes recently announced by TATA which include the incinerator will not be required to provide power and steam to the Lostock plant; the very reason that persuaded the Planning Inspector at the Public Inquiry to grant planning permission. The planned electricity output is now at a lower level justifying the planning application going back to Cheshire West and Chester Council for a decision based on local circumstances rather than national considerations. Another crucial change is that E.ON is now planning to construct the plant in two separate stages which would be over a much longer period of time with far more stress and disruption for the residents of nearby areas like Lostock, Rudheath and Wincham.

The EA cannot justify their haste by claiming that the developers need to get on with building the plant because in TATA’s recent announcement about the cutbacks in Winnington, they stated that the incinerator would not be operational until 2019 at the earliest.

The proposed incinerator is in the constituency of George Osborne MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer. CHAIN has been in touch with him on the issue over recent weeks and we hope that he will persuade his cabinet colleague Owen Patterson, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who is in charge of the EA to order his senior civil servants to take account of the interests of people of Northwich and not be stampeded by E.ON into granting a permit at this time. We are also requesting that Cheshire West and Chester Council, which has always opposed the incinerator planning application, do its duty to protect the local community