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'WE'LL FIGHT ON TO BLOCK INCINERATOR'

Campaigners dismayed at decision to allow energy-from-waste scheme

by Frances Barrett

OUTRAGE: Members of Northwich community have protested against the waste-burning incinerator.



CAMPAIGNERS have vowed not to give up their fight following the Environment Agency's decision to grant a permit to incinerate waste at a controversial sustainable energy plant in Northwich.

Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change Ed Davey gave planning consent to E.ON Energy from Waste and Tata Chemicals Europe for the construction of the site off Griffiths Road in Lostock Gralam in October 2012, following a five-week public inquiry.

The Cheshire Anti-Incinerator Network (Chain) has led the charge against the yet-to-be-built energy from waste plant, which will have the capacity to handle up to 600,000 tonnes of waste per year; on the grounds that it poses health risks.

A spokesperson for Chain said: "The Environment Agency has a reputation of being the Government branch of the waste incineration industry and so its decision to grant a permit to E.ON did not come as a surprise."

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"Local residents, however, should be concerned because despite what it claims, the Agency cannot prove an incinerator of the huge scale that E.ON intends to build would be safe over the 30 years that it would operate."

"Don't forget it would be as large as Wembley Stadium emitting dioxins 24 hours a day just a few hundred yards away from homes and schools."

"Northwich people should not have to live with this risk. This is our town and it is our children's health that we are seeking to protect and we have no intention of giving up."

Tracey Rimmer, environment manager at the Environment Agency, said: "This decision is the outcome of our careful consideration and thorough assessment of the application, and we are satisfied that the facility will meet the high standards set by the UK Government and Europe."

"In reaching our decision we consulted with, and received expert advice from, Public Health England."

"We would like to thank people for the comments they submitted during the consultation."

"We are imposing conditions in the permit to ensure that local people and the environment are protected."

"We will be regulating the operation to ensure it meets the rigorous standards and conditions of the permit."