

# CHAIN Cheshire Anti Incinerator Network



**18 September 2008**

## **Planning consent granted for incinerator at Weston Point**

The residents of Halton and Runcorn awoke today to the news they had been dreading - Secretary of State Malcolm Wicks has granted planning permission to Ineos Chlor to build a 100Mw EfW (Energy from Waste) plant at Picow Farm Road, Weston Point, Runcorn. In a letter issued by Richard Mellish, Director of Development Consents and Planning Reform, he outlines the reasons why they have seen fit to agree to this proposal.

He notes that one of the reasons was that Halton Borough Council **did not oppose** the application, choosing instead to issue ambiguous statements. DBERR (the Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform) states that despite trying to clarify the Council's position it had to conclude '...that the Council's response did not constitute an objection and a public inquiry was therefore not mandatory...' This effectively meant that the local opposition could be ignored and as long as the application 'ticked the right boxes' it would be granted. Noting the unhappiness of local residents to the Council's handling of this application he goes on to say that '...any concerns relating to the conduct of the Council are a matter for the Local Government Ombudsman.'

The decision paper covers off all areas of objection sent to the Secretary of State including health, flora and fauna, local amenity, waste strategy and waste handling, alternative sites and Local Development Plan. Each of these are dismissed as reasons for objection, mostly by reference to other Government Agencies who are there to monitor these things, such as the Environment Agency. In a superb and probably unintended piece of irony he dismisses objections to the location and height of the chimney as being a danger to air traffic using Liverpool Airport by noting that '...no objection has been received from the airport'. Hardly surprising when you learn that the airport is owned by Peel Holdings who themselves are looking to build an incinerator at Ince Marshes.

The next stage for protestors will be to appeal to the High Court for leave to seek a judicial review.

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