

Northacre Renewable Energy Address Concerns from Residents – 08/03/21

Representatives from Northacre Renewable Energy Limited (NREL), who are seeking to change the technology for its Northacre facility from gasification to moving grate combustion, were interviewed on BBC Radio Wiltshire recently about the proposed facility.

Alex Young, Project Director at Bioenergy Infrastructure Group and Ed Dodd, Group Director at The Hills Group, answered questions posed by the BBC, on behalf of the community; including those relating to the change in technology, the location of the facility, emissions and traffic impact.

The full interview with Northacre Renewable Energy can be found here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p097twmm>

Commenting on the BBC Radio Wiltshire Interview, Alex Young said “The opportunity to be interviewed on the show and engage with the community to address their concerns is incredibly important to us.”

As a complement to the BBC Radio Wiltshire appearance, NREL has updated and expanded the FAQ's that feature on the website, to incorporate not only the questions posed in the interview, but also questions that have been raised in recent weeks, through the planning and permitting processes.

The full FAQ's are available on the NREL Website: <https://northacre-energy.co.uk/faqs/> but key questions are outlined below.

Why is the waste not being recycled & how will the facility impact recycling efforts in Wiltshire?

The Northacre Facility will turn thousands of tonnes of the region's commercial and industrial residual waste into low carbon energy that would otherwise be buried in landfill sites or needlessly exported to Europe as fuel for similar EfW facilities.

Residual waste is waste material which is left over after economically recyclable material has been removed from the waste stream.

It is right that society aims to achieve very high levels of recycling. The Northacre facility does not hinder or compete with recycling efforts, but instead goes hand in hand by providing a solution to **non-recyclable** commercial and industrial residual waste. However, even with policy intervention and increased recycling in Wiltshire and the surrounding regions, over 200,000 tonnes of commercial and industrial residual waste will still require a disposal solution by 2035, which should not include landfill.

Will the Northacre Facility be incinerating plastic or any other materials that could have been recycled?

The input waste for Northacre will be non-recyclable, residual waste from commercial and industrial outlets. This mix may include some plastics and that's because not all plastic can be recycled and unfortunately, not everybody recycles responsibly. We wholeheartedly support the waste hierarchy and support a move for legislation which sees manufacturers move away from products such as plastic, instead using responsible products and packaging. We also support better recycling labelling to encourage both businesses and individuals, to refrain from putting recyclable material in their waste bins, which then becomes too contaminated to recycle. As a society we must all recognise the part we play in helping England reach the Government targets of 65% recycling, by 2035.

How can this be described as renewable energy when waste is being incinerated?

Energy from residual waste is a partially renewable energy source, sometimes referred to as a low carbon energy source. The energy it generates is significantly cleaner and less carbon producing than traditional sources and provides a responsible solution to the ever-growing problem of how UK business and wider society manages its waste. Landfill is the worst option for disposing of non-

Northacre

RENEWABLE ENERGY

recyclable waste at scale. The energy produced by facilities such as Northacre is simply a useful by-product of this process.

Is it better for the environment to put the waste in to landfill rather than incinerating it?

The Committee on Climate Change (“CCC”) Technical Report (May 2019) states: *“Additional private sector investment is required in alternative waste disposal facilities – AD [anaerobic digestion], MBT [mechanical biological treatment] and incineration to deal with waste diverted from landfill. There are risks of offshoring waste if this doesn’t happen.”*

The Committee on Climate Change’s Sixth Carbon Budget Report published in December 2020 evidences the waste industry’s current contribution to overall greenhouse gas emissions is 6% - of which 60% of those emissions are from landfill.

Our mission is simple, we need to do more to prevent non-recyclable commercial and industrial residual waste going to landfill and the Northacre facility is part of the solution available now which will help to achieve this, by **reducing greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 58,000 tonnes per annum.**

What is the expected impact on air quality and will any emissions be detrimental to our health?

The core technology has been successfully and safely deployed across Europe for many decades. Public Health England’s risk assessment remains that modern, well run and regulated municipal waste incinerators are not a significant risk to public health, which is supported by our detailed assessment on the impact on local air quality. Emissions from the facility would be tightly regulated by an Environmental Permit (EP) for the facility and will include limits on emissions. These limits, which were already extremely stringent, have been recently tightened further. Emissions will be monitored 24 hours a day and the data will be submitted to the Environment Agency (EA) and made publicly available.

Is Northacre under a PFI contract and are we, the public, paying more for this incinerator?

The Northacre facility is backed by private investment and the input commercial and industrial residual waste for the facility will be secured through a series of contracts with a number of waste management companies to serve the wider market, and not through a direct public service waste contract. PFI was used to finance important infrastructure projects, which, in the past, has included some EfW facilities.

What are the benefits of the facility to Westbury?

The project represents a £200 million investment in the local economy and a major new source of employment including many highly-skilled permanent roles. The project will turn 243,000 tonnes of the region’s commercial and industrial residual waste into low carbon energy; enough to power 48,000 homes. We believe this to be very much part of the Green Recovery, which will contribute to the UK achieving its ambitious net zero-carbon policy.

It is our responsibility to develop the best possible project and, if granted permission, we would have an opportunity to build a state-of-the-art facility which addresses the pressing need for a sustainable long-term solution, to non-recyclable waste in Wiltshire by reducing landfill’s contribution to climate change. **Northacre Renewable Energy is ready and committed to play its part in the transition to a low carbon economy.**

ENDS