

Press Release

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Bernwood Forest, Buckinghamshire

SAVI warns WRG Ltd already in talks with HS2 to provide energy for High Speed Rail link: 'double jeopardy' threats to Aylesbury and the Vale

Campaign group SAVI (STOP Aylesbury Vale Incineration) today warns of the close ties between the 'terrible twin' threats of MBI (Mass Burn Incineration) and the proposed high speed rail route.

Spanish-owned WRG Ltd has now confirmed it will be applying for planning permission to build a 300,000 waste incinerator at Lower Greatmoor farm, Edgcott in July 2010, despite losing out in the procurement bidding race for Bucks County Council last year. In a twist of the knife to the local community, WRG also admitted at a community liaison meeting called by its spin doctors, Green Issues, on 22nd June that it has already opened talks with HS2 to supply power to them from the so called 'energy from waste' generated by the incinerator (22MW per year). Alison Munro CEO of HS2 has also now admitted in an interview with the BBC that there are plans for a 1 kilometre long depot in the area.

Suspicious have been raised about the disappearance of official plans for the HS2 route around Calvert and the so called Claydons 'depot' followed by the sudden hurry up of the WRG planning application announcement. The admission by WRG on Tuesday has revealed more about how closely linked these threats to the environment and the Vale are.

Bucks County Council (BCC) has said it will campaign hard against the new High Speed Rail link and yet the decision made by Cllr Martin Tett in

March 2010 to let WRG Ltd back in to the running makes the Vale potentially so much more vulnerable. SAVI imagines the anti-HS2 campaigners may well be shocked and then livid when they realise the potentially destructive impact and consequences of Cllr Tett's decision.

WRG Ltd is a commercial operation and it will make as much money out of this as it possibly can. Hundreds of thousands of tonnes of waste will have to be imported from outside the county as Bucks just doesn't produce enough – in fact the amount of household waste being produced is dropping. WRG admitted that it is planning to incinerate 130,000 tonnes per year household waste it expects Bucks to commit to – if BCC fails to deliver the contracted tonnage then the county will also be penalised financially. This in effect will shoot to pieces Bucks' recycling rates as the county would have to make up the contracted tonnage from recycled paper for example. That still means 170,000 tonnes would be imported meaning endless lorries carrying rubbish from across the counties, blocking the M40 junction 9 joining up with the already treacherous A41 between Bicester and Aylesbury. WRG plans to build a new link road from the A41 to the incinerator over a former railway track which is an outstanding haven for wildlife, including the grizzled skipper and other rare butterflies, great crested newts and turtle doves.

WRG has also confirmed it will apply for a toxic waste licence to store the toxic bottom ash – so the Vale can fully expect extra toxic waste being trucked in to Aylesbury Vale to maximise profits. Added to the income it would get from the power sold, WRG stand to make billions. On the other hand the Vale will be cursed with a 250k tonne toxic waste legacy in perpetuity.

Are we prepared to let this happen? Never!

Over twenty parish and town councils passed resolutions and local policies opposing mass burn waste incineration in 2009. At the time BCC took the decision to award the procurement bid for an incinerator to WRG's rival, Covanta Ltd last year, SAVI's e-petition to 10 Downing Street was the

number two UK environmental e-petition (just behind the anti-third Heathrow runway) and in the top 2% of all e-petitions. Added to our paper petitions for adults and children, 26,000 represented people have already said No! to MBI in the ancient Bernwood Forest and we and they together will continue to resist this lunatic scheme in 2010.

Mass Burn Incineration is the wrong solution to the waste issue in the wrong location – it would devastate the environment, inflict hundreds of waste lorries daily into a precious natural habitat, let alone the real health concerns that incinerators bring in their noxious wake. The Scottish Parliament branded Energy from Waste more accurately as 'Landfill in the Sky' when it banned them in June last year. There is nothing green about this MBI proposal.

'This is just the beginning of what will be a very determined and hard fought battle. We and the local communities will never give in'.

Editors' Notes

Bucks County Council made a preferred bidder procurement selection on 14th September 2009 at County Hall, Aylesbury in favour of Covanta for a separate site at Rookery Pit, Bedfordshire. BCC refused to release financial information on the basis that it was 'commercially sensitive'. In March 2010, BCC backtracked on that decision for yet again undisclosed reasons to re-open the bidding to WRG Ltd and Covanta. In June 2010 WRG announced it would be applying for planning permission to build the incinerator in July 2010.

WRG, a Spanish owned company, has a poor record of environmental breaches and has been prosecuted on many occasions by the Environmental Agency including a case at Aylesbury Magistrates Court listed for a 4 day Hearing in November 2009, at which WRG eventually admitted liability and was fined. A full list of prosecutions can be supplied. Its incinerator plant at Allington Kent has been dogged by ongoing problems meaning that its claims to be able reliably to provide energy from this plant must strongly be in doubt.

SAVI is an acronym of STOP Aylesbury Vale Incineration Limited
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