

**SAVI**  
**Stop Aylesbury Vale Incineration**

**Updated press follow-up to press conference on 11.07.09**

**'Do we want any more Landfill in the Sky? Don't be stupid – be savvy'**

**Press Conference with John Bercow MP 11<sup>th</sup> July**

Doddershall, Bucks – On 11<sup>th</sup> July, speaker John Bercow in his role as local constituency MP for Buckingham and Winslow, confirmed his full support and backing to Aylesbury Vale campaign group SAVI (Stop Aylesbury Vale Incineration) who are calling on Bucks County Council to put a halt to plans for mass burn waste incineration (MBI) in the Vale of Aylesbury.

John Bercow MP addressed the audience (standing room only) at the rural venue and gave the campaign full backing as constituency MP.

'I have noted with great interest the intelligent approach SAVI is taking on this hugely important issue to my constituents. Many constituents have written to me and contacted me about their concerns over their families' future health, the environment and the overall potential destructive nature of these mass burn incineration proposals in the Vale. As your local MP for Buckingham and Winslow, I wish to confirm my full support to SAVI and will be at any meeting or take any appropriate steps to back their campaign.'

On 11<sup>th</sup> June 2009 the Scottish Parliament voted to stop any further MBI in Scotland, rejecting the 'energy from waste' portrayal and instead describing MBI as '**Landfill in the Sky**'. SAVI calls on Bucks County Council to follow Scotland's lead and avoid making a costly long-term MBI commitment like Kent County Council – a decision Kent CC Environment Officer later admitted was 'stupid'.

SAVI spokesperson Helen Howard explained why Bucks County Council (BCC) needed now to rethink its waste strategy and make wise decisions instead of a 'stupid' one, which would adversely affect the county and its residents' on health, transport, environment and financial grounds.

## *The proposal*

Spanish-owned company, WRG, are proposing to burn 300,000 tonnes every year – all of the estimated 45 tonnes household waste that the Vale produces and much more imported from the rest of Bucks and other counties – at a site known as Lower Greatmoor Farm set in the heart of the ancient Bernwood hunting forest. Much of this will be trucked long distances from where it's produced. SAVI believes this is the wrong proposal built in the wrong location, using flawed and outdated technology and would be a disastrous solution to Bucks Waste problems. WRG and another bid from Covanta for a site at Rookery Pit in Bedfordshire are vying to become BCC's preferred bidder for an MBI contract. BCC put off its preferred bidder decision due to take place on 13<sup>th</sup> July until 28<sup>th</sup> September. No planning permission has yet been sought.

## **Notes for Editors**

SAVI (Stop Aylesbury Vale Incineration) is committed to opposing any future mass burn incinerator (MBI) development in the Aylesbury Vale. A non political group formed by concerned local residents in March 09, SAVI has arranged a series of public awareness meetings to inform about plans by Spanish-owned company WRG to build an MBI Plant on greenfield land at Lower Greatmoor Farm in the heart of the ancient Bernwood royal hunting forest. For more information about this area and its history, go to:

[http://apps.buckscc.gov.uk/eforms/medieval\\_life/](http://apps.buckscc.gov.uk/eforms/medieval_life/)

## **Further explanatory notes:**

### **1. HEALTH**

- MBI produces large amounts of harmful tiny particulates which would primarily fall and be inhaled downwind of the plant. Over half of the UK's dioxins were produced by waste incineration from a variety of sources in 2007 (BCC state that the dioxins produced in 2006 from EfW were around 0%). SAVI is very concerned about the difficulties of gaining proper reliable information and wrote to Justin McCracken head of Health Protection Agency on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009 raising their concerns. No reply or even acknowledgment has been received.

- The filters/scrubbing process in the plant will not stop these emissions
- The particulates can travel up to 22 miles from the MBI from the 315 ft (95m) chimney proposed
- The Environment Agency (EA) relies on the operator or an EA subcontractor reporting information rather than carrying independent checks. In spring 09, the EA issued a letter expressing its concern over poor monitoring and determined to carry out once yearly unannounced spot checks. The fact remains that there is wholly inadequate independent checking and measuring of the emissions.
- There is no large scientific survey which concludes that incinerators are safe

## **2. TRANSPORT / PROXIMITY**

- The law requires the MBI to be sited near areas where waste is produced; this proposal will break that law. The waste will have to be transported from all around the county and beyond.
- On WRG's admission, there will be over 160 articulated lorry movements entering and leaving the site every working day of the year: SAVI estimates this estimate could easily be doubled if WRG wants to achieve its ambition of burning 300,000 tonnes of waste at Lower Greatmoor Farm. Further lorries will also be brought to the site bringing extra hazardous waste if WRG gets its way and has hazardous waste permitted.
- SAVI estimates that these lorry movements will be the equivalent of a million extra miles a year at minimum and will produce significant amounts of carbon dioxide, fumes and noise pollution at and around a haven of peace

## **3. ENVIRONMENT**

- There are ancient woodlands SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and endangered species both at nearby Finemere Wood near the Lower Greatmoor Site and at the route along the proposed road
- This precious habitat will be devastated threatening vulnerable species and habitat
- The tiny particulates and any dioxins which don't get scrubbed out through the process will find their way into the local food chain and farm animals
- The incinerator will be a significant eyesore affecting the local rural view. The building will be 150ft high with a 315ft chimney

#### **4. INEFFICIENT/OUTDATED TECHNOLOGY**

- MBIs only have poor levels of efficiency in producing electricity (estimated 15%). Scotland says it will only look at Energy from Waste plants with 60% efficiency.
- The vast bulk of the energy escapes as heat and because of its rural location the heat cannot be reused – for instance to heat local housing
- Recently more efficient technology has been proven commercially such as Plasma Gasification
- Anaerobic digestion (AD) is another properly ‘tried and tested’ means of dealing with organic waste. Has BCC been so mesmerized by EfW that it has failed to look at safer alternatives?
- MBIs are often unreliable and break down. The flagship WRG plant at Allington, Kent closed on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2009 after only 6 months in operation for ‘maintenance’ and will not re-open until August (date unspecified.)

#### **5. LEGAL/PLANNING**

- WRG and BCC demonstrate a number of signs of a worryingly close relationship
- Even though WRG owns MBIs in England, BCC Councillors went to Spain to view one of their plants. SAVI found this out from a Freedom of Information request.
- The so-called “consultation” by BCC was wholly inadequate and flawed. None of the residents living near the proposed sites were properly consulted and were unaware of the plan until early this year
- BCC are trying to rush through the decision to build the MBI in advance of deciding their updated waste strategy in 2010. SAVI have been advised by top barrister Peter Village QC that BCC’s approach would be unlawful and open to legal challenge

SAVI can only make its full **FINANCIAL case** when it has had the opportunity of seeing the financial proposals put forward by WRG. At present these have been ‘pink papered’ by BCC due to their ‘commercial sensitivity’ – ie they are being kept secret. SAVI will again be seeking this information under the Freedom of Information Act.