

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Let's talk less rubbish

### Why do we need the Waste PFI?

In York and North Yorkshire we're doing very well reducing the amount we waste and recycling what is left. However, there's still a lot of household waste to be disposed of which currently goes to landfill.

We can't continue to do this– landfill space is running out and we will be liable for large landfill taxes and fines in the future: a bill which will

have to be met by residents and will mean rises in Council Tax.

And landfilling waste is a poor environmental option – landfill gas is a major contributor to climate change. Compared to carrying on using landfill, the proposed Waste PFI solution will provide a CO<sub>2</sub> saving equivalent to the emissions associated with 12,000 average cars per year.

### How much will it save on our waste management bill?

We estimate our waste management bill will be £1.8 billion over 25 years if we continue as we are doing now. However, the Waste PFI will give York and North Yorkshire residents a massive saving - we can cut our waste management bill by over £320 million over 25 years. Without the Waste PFI we will have to find other ways to make savings to make up that £320 million – and that will mean cuts in other services we provide.

# What is being proposed?

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A resource recovery facility at the current Allerton landfill and quarry site which could treat up to 320,000 tonnes of household waste per year and recover recyclable materials and energy from it.

Together with the waste reduction campaigns that the York and North Yorkshire Waste Partnership runs – like Love Food, Hate Waste and Choose2Reuse - it will help us achieve our waste management targets to:

- Reduce the amount of waste we generate
- Divert 75% of household waste from landfill by 2013
- Recycle or compost 50% of household waste by 2020



The existing quarry and landfill at Allerton close to the A1M and A168.

The combined technologies for the proposed treatment plant are designed to treat up to 320,000 tonnes of waste per year from York and North Yorkshire, and recover energy from it for supply to the National Grid.

The technologies that AmeyCespa has put forward are:

- A Mechanical Treatment (MT) plant designed to receive and treat residual municipal waste from York and North Yorkshire. The plant will automatically screen out organic matter and recover metal, paper and plastic for recycling
- An Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plant to treat the separated organic waste. The plant will produce a biogas which will generate around 1.1 MW of renewable 'green' electrical power.
- An Energy from Waste (EfW) plant to treat the waste which remains after separation of the recyclables and treatment of organic waste. The EfW plant will produce steam to feed an electricity generating turbine that will generate around 24MW of power. Spare heat which the EfW generates could be supplied to local external customers if a market can be established.
- An Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) plant to process residual ash into an aggregate which can be used in construction.

The combination of solutions will enable value to be recovered from almost every aspect of our waste.



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## How and why did you choose this solution?

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North Yorkshire County Council and City of York Council received initial tenders for the PFI long term waste management contract in December 2007. The companies who tendered could propose whatever technology and site they considered matched the Councils' waste management needs.

Four consortia were then selected to develop detailed tenders. The criteria used to select them were set in advance and balanced cost with environmental considerations. Two consortia were then selected to go through to the final tender stage, and the Councils have identified AmeyCespa as offering the best solution to meet our needs.

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## What are the benefits?

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AmeyCespa's proposal gives us a green solution for dealing with our household waste – it becomes a resource. It will recover value from waste in four ways – it separates it to sort out any remaining recyclable materials and treats organic material to produce green electricity through the Anaerobic Digestion (AD) part of the plant. Only the waste that remains is treated in the Energy from Waste plant – and it produces

electricity. Even ash that remains from that process has a use – for example as a product for road construction.

The proposed facility will turn waste into energy producing enough electricity to supply 40,000 homes\*. That's more than all of the homes in Harrogate.

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\*Based on Office of National Statistics data for the region.

# What will the Energy from Waste plant treat?

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Household waste which remains after recycling and sorting has taken place, plus a small amount of local commercial and industrial waste.

# Is Energy from Waste harmful?

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No, but some people are worried about the health effects of EfW facilities. In the Waste Strategy for England 2007 Defra states - “all the research carried out to date shows no credible evidence of adverse health impacts for people living near incinerators”. And in its most recent report, The Health Protection Agency said that it did not recommend doing any more studies of public health around modern, well managed municipal waste incinerators as the effects are probably not measurable.

This is because modern waste incinerators are so much cleaner than the older generation which gave rise to many of the concerns. Emissions of chemicals like dioxins and furans, and nanoparticles from incinerators are now only a small fraction of their previous levels. Activities like agriculture, bonfires, road traffic and electricity generation are now much more significant sources of air pollutants. For example, road transport produces 300 times more fine particulates in the UK than EfW and the dioxins emissions limit for an Energy from Waste plant is an equivalent concentration to one third of a lump of sugar dissolved in Loch Ness.

In the UK alone today there are 24 Energy from Waste plants and many of them are in major centres of population – for example, London, Birmingham, Sheffield, and on Teesside.

That means over 16.5 million people in Britain today live within a ten mile radius of an EfW plant – and that’s around 28% of the population.

In Europe there are over 400 plants, including those in major cities like Amsterdam, Barcelona, Hamburg, Paris, Vienna and Zurich. Many large conurbations in Western Europe have an EfW , and they are also commonplace in many more rural areas such as Jersey, the Isle of Man, Shetland and the Isles of Scilly.

It is important to remember that the emissions from EFW plants are strictly controlled and monitored by the Environment Agency. The proposed facility will only get a permit to operate if the EA is satisfied with the safety of the technology proposed.

Nevertheless, we take all concerns extremely seriously and would encourage anyone with any issues to find out more about Energy from Waste visiting websites such as:

The Environment Agency:  
[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

The Health Protection Agency:  
[www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

Defra:  
[www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

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## Is Energy from Waste a danger to farming?

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No. If any potential danger to farming was detected the plant would not be granted a permit to operate or would have the permit withdrawn. And there is no requirement for organic farms or processors to be a specific distance from specified industrial activities - so a waste management process would not affect a farm's status as an organic farm.

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## Will recycling go down once the plant is working?

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No. The facility will improve our recycling performance even further - every year the plant will recover around an additional 20,000 tonnes of recyclable material including plastics, paper, card and metals. It will also create around 50,000 tonnes of construction aggregates every year from the bottom ash produced at the end of the EfW process – reducing the need for quarried construction materials.

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## Will an Energy from Waste plant damage tourism in the area?

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No. Major tourist destinations like the Isle of Man as well as cities like Barcelona and Vienna have chosen to make energy from waste part of their strategy.

The proposed facility will be on an existing landfill and quarry site next to a major motorway. It will be a modern, well managed, high quality facility, designed to high architectural standards.

And we have to remember that tourism in North Yorkshire is big business, attracting millions of visitors a year – so we have to find a sustainable and economic long term solution to deal with the additional waste this generates. Investing in alternative forms of waste treatment now will mean fewer new landfill sites are needed in the future – reducing the impact of waste management across the county.

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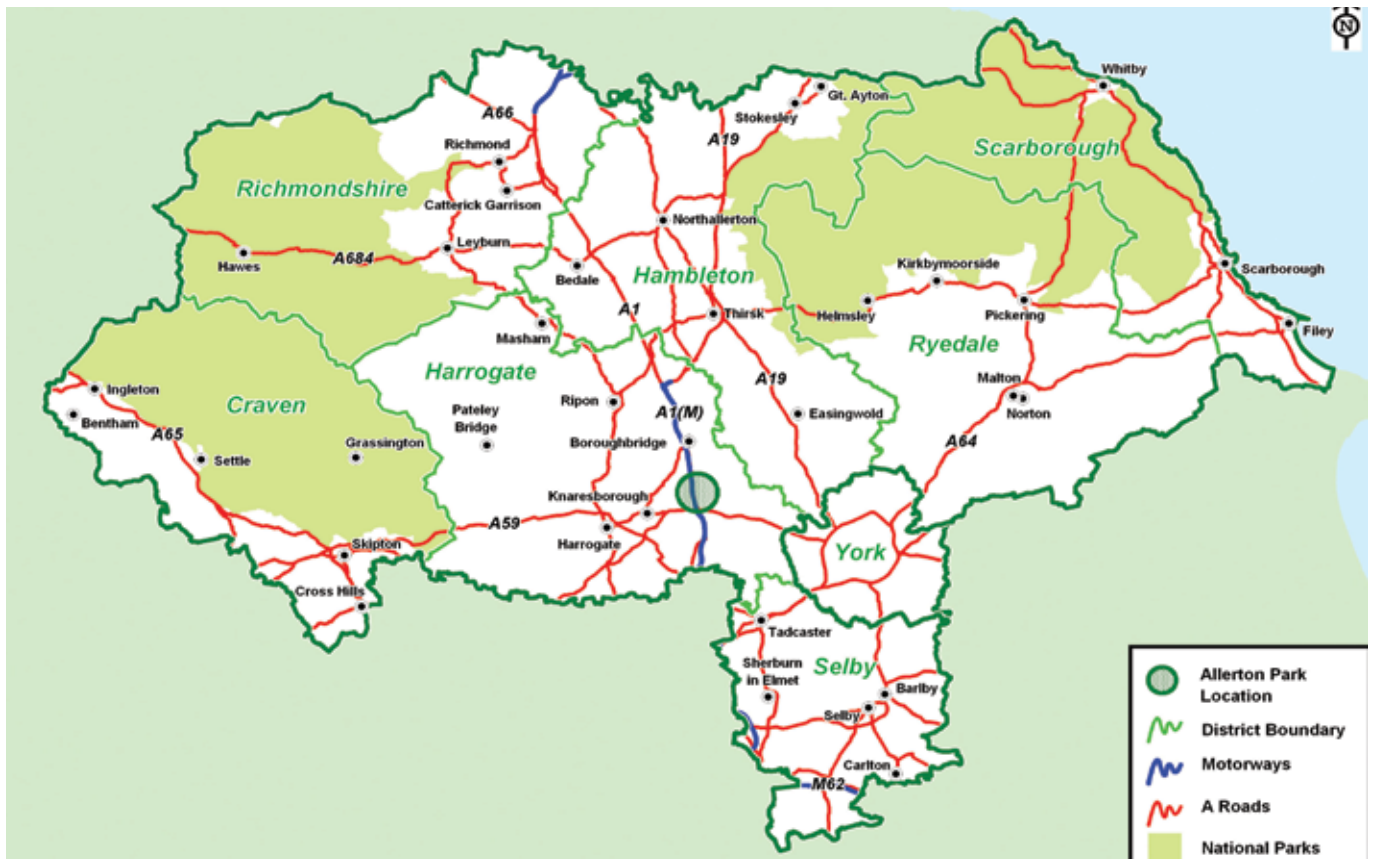
## Why was the Allerton site chosen?

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The Allerton site has been chosen by AmeyCespa because it is close to the main centres where the waste comes from and the key road networks. It is also an established waste management site.

## Where will the waste come from?

Households across North Yorkshire and York, and a small amount of locally generated waste from shops, offices, restaurants and businesses.



## What about traffic on the A1M and access roads?

The proposed site is already used as a quarry and landfill and we expect traffic to and from the site to be the same as now.

Traffic movements into and out of the site will be the subject of a full assessment and scrutiny as part of the planning application process. A comprehensive traffic management plan will be required to the satisfaction of the planning and highway authorities.

Whilst some of the existing movements associated with the landfill will remain, the quarry operation is planned to stop in 2010. Transport impacts will be minimised by the use of local delivery points across the county in each district and borough council area which will bulk up the waste to provide the most cost effective and efficient transport arrangements.

Road safety will also be a key consideration to be addressed in the planning application.

## Why aren't you going to use an existing treatment plant?

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We considered this option carefully in our tender evaluation process. Before we award a major contract, the law requires that a publicly advertised competition is undertaken. As part of that competition, tenders are invited from suitable candidates.

Those tenders are assessed against objective criteria and the Council may only award the contract to the candidate whose offering is the most economically advantageous.

The companies who bid for our waste contract were able to put forward any treatment solution they chose. The company who operates the Teesside incinerator were part of the procurement process but were discounted at an early stage.

Their proposal did not offer the councils the best combination of costs savings and environmental benefits (like increased recycling and green energy production) compared to the other bids received.

The proposed facility at DRAX will process biomass and it is not proposed to be sourced from municipal waste. If biomass was sourced from MSW the plant would have to be compliant with the higher operating regulations that apply to waste plants. The proposed biomass plant at Ferrybridge power station could accept biomass derived from waste and would be WID (Waste Incineration Directive) compliant but at a cost – a cost which is as yet unknown.

## Why are you only using one waste treatment site?

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One main treatment facility gives us the best economic and environmental solution. Other facilities will still be used for the management and local landfill of waste not suitable for treatment.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

# What happens next?

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We will take a report to North Yorkshire County Council and City of York Council asking Councillors to agree to award the long term waste management contract to AmeyCespa.

All the councillors will have the opportunity to consider all of the issues before making

their decision. If Councillors then agree to the proposals the Councils will make the contract award to AmeyCespa, who will then submit a planning application for the facility. If the planning application is successful the plant will be operational in 2014.

# How can I find out more?

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If you have any questions about the Waste PFI project and the environmental and cost benefits the proposed solution offers you can visit our website at [www.northyorks.gov.uk](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk) or email: [wasteenquiries@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:wasteenquiries@northyorks.gov.uk)

AmeyCespa will be holding public exhibitions before the planning application is submitted. You can find out more from AmeyCespa's website at [www.allerton-waste-recovery-park.co.uk](http://www.allerton-waste-recovery-park.co.uk) or by ringing **01609 751 676**.

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