

# Why the Allerton Park Incinerator should be stopped

Marton cum Grafton Parish Council  
[www.marton-cum-grafton.org/parish\\_council.htm](http://www.marton-cum-grafton.org/parish_council.htm)

North Yorkshire Waste Action Group (NYWAG)  
<http://www.nywag.org>



AllertonWaste  
RecoveryPark

ameyCESPA



North  
Yorkshire County Council



CITY OF  
**YORK**  
COUNCIL



**Target = 80% diversion of waste from landfill by 2020**

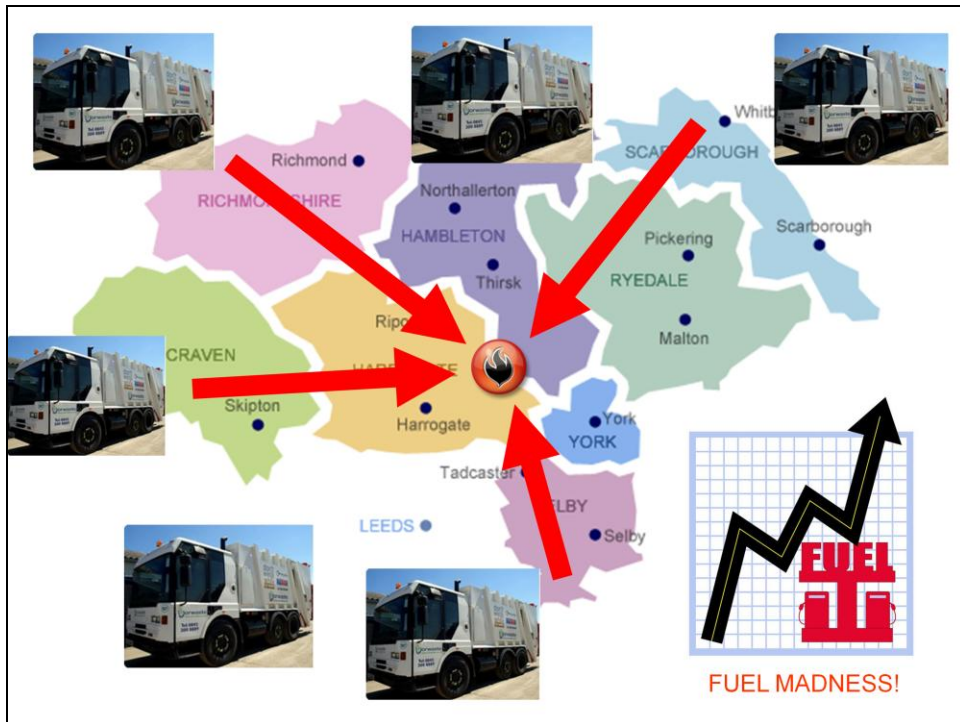
North Yorkshire County Council and City of York Council have a problem – how to divert 80% of their municipal waste (largely household waste) from landfill by 2020, so as to avoid Government fines and reduce landfill tax payments.

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o do this, they have contracted AmeyCespa, a subsidiary to a Spanish-owned multi-national company, to build what they call a “Waste Recovery Park” at Allerton, located between Harrogate and York close to the A1.

We are opposed to this scheme on the basis that the planned huge incinerator is too large, will reduce recycling, will generate excessive CO<sub>2</sub> – a harmful greenhouse gas, and is unnecessarily expensive, costing £1.4bn over the next 25 years.

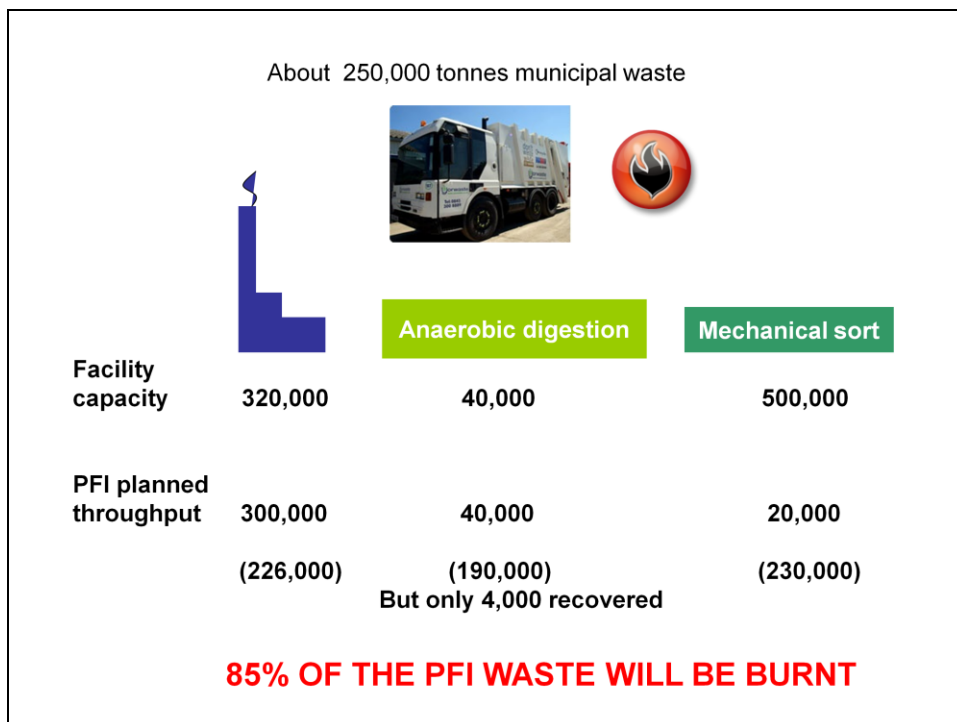
In this brief presentation I outline the case against this proposal and suggest an alternative that is cheaper, better for the environment, and which can easily meet the 80% diversion target.



So what is the AmeyCespa solution?

Well their plan is to truck every bit of residual municipal waste (that is the stuff left after household recycling, about 250,000 tonnes of waste each year) from every corner of North Yorkshire to a single waste plant at Allerton for disposal.

This centralised scheme is madness for a large rural economy like North Yorkshire, since the travel and associated fuel costs associated are eye-wateringly expensive.



Once the waste trucks get to Allerton, Amey plan to process the waste in three stages.

First, waste is sorted mechanically by a facility with an capacity of 500,000 tonnes of waste per year. This is about double the total waste generated by the County – demonstrating immediately how over-sized the facility it.

Next, a small amount of the waste goes into an Anaerobic Digester, a kind of cow's stomach that digests organic matter and produces gas for burning. The rest of the waste is burnt in a huge incinerator. Note again that the incinerator is far larger than the waste generated by the County.

The picture is even worse if you look at the planned waste throughput from the PFI.

The huge mechanical sort plant will only recover 20,000 tonnes of waste.

Next, 40,000 tonnes of waste goes into the anaerobic digester that will generate 4000 tonnes of gas that will be burnt.

The remaining material (36,000 tonnes) will then go into the incinerator.

AmeyCespa will sell electricity generated by burning the waste to the national grid.



“We are fully supportive of increased recycling”

**WRONG**

**85% of the waste will be burnt!**



“The equipment is flexible and can be adapted to meet changes arising in the waste market”

**WRONG**

**85% of the waste will be burnt in a hugely expensive incinerator that needs continual feeding with waste!**



“Allerton is designed with recycling firmly at the fore front”

**WRONG**

**85% of the waste will be burnt**

**Where is the incentive to recycle more once this monster is built?**

**BURNING waste is NOT the same as RECYCLING**

Amey are trying to persuade us that their scheme is somehow “green” – it is NOT.

Here are some of the things they say and our replies.

# Burning waste is wasteful



Waste is a resource – it should not be burnt but recycled

If it is to be burnt, then heat generated should be recovered and not lost to the atmosphere

Incinerators are very inefficient compared to “Combined Heat and Power” plants that recover their heat for domestic and industrial uses

The Allerton incinerator is the **WRONG** technology in the **WRONG** location

What’s more, burning waste is inefficient. Waste is a resource – something to be recycled, not burnt.

Amey don’t see it that way.

Their incinerator scheme is hugely wasteful too, because it doesn’t recover the heat generated by the burning of waste, which is simply released into the atmosphere.

Modern incinerators, with much higher energy efficiencies, recover this heat – they are called Combined Heat and Power (of CHP) plants. This heat is used to directly heat housing, commercial outlets, public buildings like hospitals or schools, or for industry.

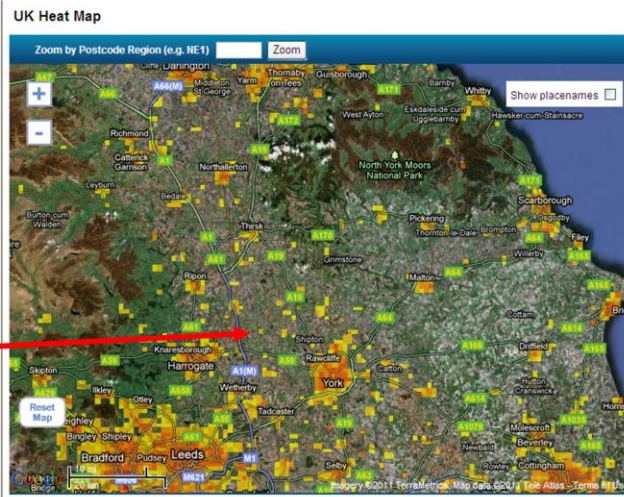
The Allerton incinerator can’t do this because it is planned to be built in the open countryside. There is no demand for heat within reach.

The Allerton incinerator is therefore the wrong technology in the wrong location.

## The WRONG technology in the WRONG place

**Heat demand in North Yorkshire**  
(the orange boxes are high demand, green boxes are low demand, no shaded boxes have no demand)

Allerton incinerator



**There is no heat demand at Allerton**

Here is a map of North Yorkshire that shows **the demand** for heat.

In orange you see areas of high demand, in yellow intermediate demand and in green areas of low demand. Areas with no colour shading have no heat demand.

The orange areas are the cities – Leeds/Bradford, York, Middlesbrough – these are areas where an incinerator can generate combined heat and power.

Allerton is in the open countryside where there is no heat demand – this means the incinerator will be hugely inefficient against state-of-the-art energy recovery facilities.



## The Darlington alternative

- Thermal Mechanical Biological Treatment

Step 1: Dry the waste and drive water off

Step 2: Mechanically sort the waste for recovery, recycling and resale

Step 3: Residue can be used as a fuel or for landfill / land restoration

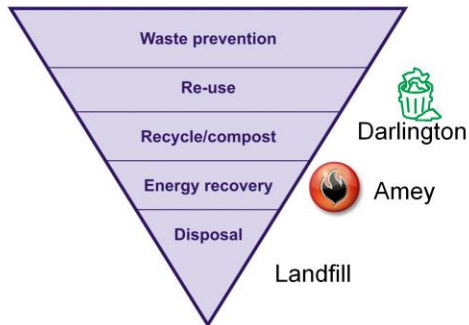
I said at the outset that there are better alternatives.

One example is provided at Darlington, just over the border from North Yorkshire, where a waste treatment plant processes all of Darlington's municipal waste using a process called Thermal Mechanical Biological Treatment.

There are three steps to the process.

# Advantages

- £60 per tonne cheaper than Allerton Park – a staggering £13m per year
- This is on top of the savings made by avoiding landfill.
- Less capital investment - only £10m for 100,000 tonnes per year compared to £60m for the incinerator
- Can be built quickly and easily
- Could be located closer to source of waste
- Can meet 80% diversion target



The Darlington scheme has several major advantages over incineration.

It is much cheaper, saving £13 million a year. This is on top of the £320 m saving made by diverting waste from landfill.

It requires much less capital investment compared to the hugely expensive incinerator.

It can be built easily and quickly – the technology is simple.

It can be “modular” – several plants can be located close to where the waste is generated.

It is much better for the environment – several steps higher up the “Waste Hierachy” than incineration – a scheme that ranks processes according to the environmental benefit.

# Why won't NYCC consider it?



They refuse to listen. They can't accept that there may be a better solution, regardless of the financial or environmental benefits.



They won't visit the site even though it's on their doorstep. The one NYCC Cabinet member who did visit voted against awarding the contract to Amey.



They won't talk about alternatives. It's much easier for someone else to deal with the problem and they aren't paying for it – we are!

So why won't NYCC consider this alternative?

Well, they simply won't listen. We've put this alternative in person to the Chief Executive, Richard Flinton, and to the Leader of the Council, John Wieghell. They refused to consider it in any detail, despite the huge benefits the scheme could provide.

They promised us they would look at the value for money the Darlington scheme offered, but have failed to do so.

They won't even visit the site to see the scheme, despite it being on their doorstep. When one Cabinet member did visit the site, he was so persuaded by it that he voted against the contract being awarded to AmeyCespa.

And they refuse to talk about alternatives. NYCC officers have spent years pulling this deal together, getting entangled in deals to the extent that they now simply can't face any alternative. After all, it is much easier to get someone else to deal with the waste problem – especially if the rate-payers are paying.



## This is a vast PFI contract.....

- Claims to save £320m
- Only against “do nothing” option
- Huge uncertainties in the budget
- 25 year contract requires guess-work
- Meanwhile, our services are being slashed



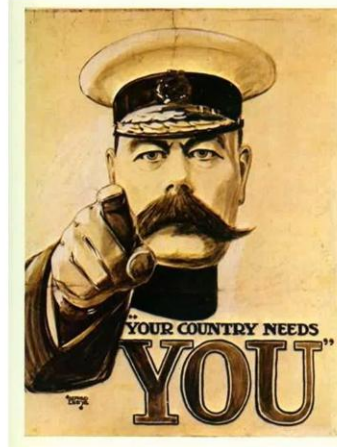
And don't forget the eye-watering costs involved in this Private Finance Initiative - £1.4 BILLION over the next 25 years.

This is the biggest contract NYCC and City of York Councils have ever awarded, at a time when cuts are devastating public services across the County.

They claim the scheme will save £320 million over the next 25 years – but the claimed saving are based on guess work looking so far into the future that they are almost meaningless.

The one thing that experience elsewhere in the country teaches is that PFI schemes are BAD NEWS – they are hugely expensive, put risk onto the Councils, and ultimately benefit the private companies and banks – not the rate-payers.

- Object to NYCC
- Object to County and District Councillors
- Support and encourage your Parish Council
- Give technical expertise
- Raise funds to support legal fees



**NYWAG**

North Yorkshire Waste Action Group

<http://www.nywag.org/>



So, what can you do to help stop this scheme?

You can write to NYCC and object – to the Chief Executive Richard Flinton at County Hall, Northallerton.

You can write to your MP and also to your County and District Councillors – challenging them about the environmental and financial aspects of the incinerator and asking why they won't consider better alternatives.

You can support your Parish Council or contact us via the Marton cum Grafton web site or NYWAG – North Yorkshire Waste Action Group.

And you can help directly with either technical skills that we need to fight the planning application or can you give us cash to help support legal costs?

Together we can stop this scheme and develop an alternative solution to North Yorkshire's waste problem.