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## Plans for Hertfordshire energy recovery facility

Plans to develop a state-of-the-art energy recovery facility near Ware have been announced by Biffa.

The new plant will utilise waste left over after recycling and composting, which would otherwise be landfilled, to produce 34 megawatts of electricity; enough to power 68,000 homes.

The company plans to build this facility at its Westmill landfill site, adjacent to the A10/A602 junction near Ware, on land already consented for future landfill. It will be capable of dealing with 400,000 tonnes per annum of non-hazardous waste.

Principally it will handle industrial and commercial waste – Hertfordshire generates around one million tonnes of this a year - although it could also deal with household waste if required.

According to Biffa Development Director Simon Allin, 'Around 350,000 tonnes per annum of this type of waste now comes to our Westmill landfill. If we are successful with our energy recovery facility which could become operational by 2014 – this will mean much less waste going to landfill and, instead of being buried, being used to produce electricity'.

'Our landfill operation has consent until 2017 and there are no proposals to extend this timescale.'

'Our proposal is not directed at the Hertfordshire domestic refuse contract for which other organisations are currently tendering. Our plans are to deal with the non-hazardous waste produced by the thousands of businesses, shops and organisations in the area.'

The plant will incorporate all the required environmental treatment and air pollution control systems. It will comply with the strict requirements of the European Waste Incineration Directive and its operation will be regulated by the Environment Agency.

Information issued on September 3rd this year by the Health Protection Agency states that, "Incinerators that are well run and regulated do not pose a significant threat to public health" and that potential damage to health is "likely to be so small that it would be undetectable". According to the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, 'It would take a modern day incinerator 120 years to emit as much dioxin as the millennium firework display in London'.

The new facility would be built on an area that is already excavated and currently consented for future landfill, North and adjacent to the A10/A602 junction. Positioning it here allows the building to be partially located below ground level thus reducing its visual impact. The base of the structure would be some 22 metres below the level of the surrounding land.

# Biffa Press Release

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Access would be by a new entrance off the A602, approximately half way between the A10 and the existing landfill entrance. Delivery of waste will be as the current working hours of the landfill – 0700 hours to 1800 hours Monday to Friday and 0700 hours to 1300 hours Saturday. There will be no waste deliveries on Sundays

Landfill delivery, which would cease by 2017, averages 154 vehicles a day. Predicted average deliveries to the new energy facility are 177 vehicles a day, only slightly more than the current landfill.

An enclosed and environmentally controlled building will house all the energy production processes. Waste will be delivered to a reception area within the building. Automated conveyors will transfer it to the combustion chamber where the heat will produce steam to power the electricity generators.

Construction of the facility, which could be operational by 2014, is likely to take three years and the facility will have a design life of at least 25 years. It will operate to produce electricity continuously.

200 to 300 jobs are expected to be created during the construction phase, which will take approximately three years, and around 40 operational staff employed full time after the plant becomes operational.

Landfill at Biffa's Westmill site started in 1982 and follows the excavation activities of quarry operators CEMEX.

The company are undertaking a full community consultation exercise and have distributed over 6,000 brochures to local homes. Information can be found on the website [www.biffa.co.uk/westmill](http://www.biffa.co.uk/westmill) where there is also the opportunity of posting comment. The Biffa Westmill information office can be contacted on 08451 800 490 or by emailing [westmill@biffa.co.uk](mailto:westmill@biffa.co.uk).

In addition to presenting details of the proposal to local organisations, Biffa will be holding two public exhibitions at The Roebuck Hotel in Ware on Friday 9th October between 2pm and 8pm, and Saturday 10th October between 10am and 4pm.

The company intends to apply to Hertfordshire County Council for planning consent this November.

Further information contact

**John Dresser or Barry Walton on 08451 800 490.**