

10 February 2022

The Rt Hon Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP  
House of Commons  
London, SW1A 0AA

Dear Sir Iain,

I am compelled to write to you today following your Westminster Hall debate to correct the many inaccuracies about the Edmonton EcoPark that were presented as fact. I have written to you previously setting out how North London Waste Authority (NLWA) takes very seriously our obligation to protect the health of the residents we serve whilst managing north London's waste. It is simply wrong to suggest otherwise.

We have been working with global industry leading technical specialists from many organisations including Ramboll, Arup and Wood since 2014, to ensure the new Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) is specified to the highest environmental standards. Years of research by these world-renowned companies enabled us to secure a Development Consent Order in 2017 and we are now on the ground building the new facilities. Your debate occurred after the formal contract for the ERF has been signed and 3 years of construction works have been completed to prepare the site for the facility. From the outset NLWA members have listened to the feedback from the community and responded to their concerns. The most recent of these covers in depth [our response to deputations](#) from the December Authority Meeting 2021 and which addressed and corrected many of the points you raised.

**Your suggestion the new ERF will be oversized is not correct.** NLWA has carried out extensive and detailed forecasts- as you would expect for an infrastructure project of this scale and importance-, accounting for higher recycling rates in the future, and our analysis was accepted by the independent Planning Inspectorate. Your suggestion we would need to import waste from outside of London (and abroad) is factually incorrect and hugely irresponsible. On the contrary, the ERF has been designed so that it can operate successfully without being full. It is a vital part of London's policy to achieve self-sufficiency in waste management by 2026.

**Your suggestion that the ERF will lead to serious health implications is categorically untrue and misleading.** We are following scientific evidence from bodies including Public Health England, the Air Quality Expert Group and the Institute of Occupational Medicine, all of whom are very clear that modern and well-run facilities like ours, do not pose a significant risk to public health. The ERF will operate under the Environment Agency's most stringent environmental permit, and our team of industry experts at Ramboll have designed the facility to be built with the world's most advanced technology for emissions cleaning. This means it will be one of the safest and cleanest in the world for protecting public health and the environment. None of the 20 energy from waste facilities in the UK that have been approved since

ours use the same advanced technologies to capture and control pollutants. At ground level where people breathe the concentrations of pollutants from our facility is effectively zero for most of the year. The WHO limit for PM2.5 is 5µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The highest concentrations of particulates at ground level from our facility are expected to be 0.006µg/m<sup>3</sup>, almost 1,000 times lower than the WHO limit. The real risk to public health in Waltham Forest is road transport which accounts for 70.6% of all NOx emissions and 32.4% of particulates.

**Your suggestion that other solutions would be more suitable is not correct.** NLWA carried out an extensive Alternative Assessment Report as part of the DCO which considered and rejected the same alternatives that you and opposition groups have put forward. The reason for rejecting these alternatives remains the same: they are small-scale and unproven at the scale we need in north London. Members took the decision to award the construction contract for the ERF having regard to analysis which showed alternatives were more expensive and would increase costs to council taxpayers.

**Your suggestion that project costs have spiralled is inaccurate.** An overall project budget was established in 2019 and we remain within this budget. To date £150 million of construction has been delivered and all construction contracts, including for the ERF, are now signed. We are committed to delivering the NLHPP at the lowest possible cost for north London taxpayers and the project represents the best value for money option compared to the alternatives.

The ERF procurement process was carried out in accordance with best practice. A value for money assessment was undertaken by officers to allow consideration of the value for money of the single tender, in the absence of competitive bids. This assessment was carried out in line with HM Treasury's Green Book. The value for money assessment reaffirmed that the ERF offers value for money and the price is representative of current pricing levels in the market.

As I mentioned in my letter of Monday, we have previously provided briefings on the project to you, [responded to your deputations in 2020](#), [your deputations in 2021](#) and invited you to site for face-to-face meetings to discuss your concerns. It is regrettable they have gone unanswered. We would be happy to meet you, please let us know if you would like to finally take up this offer.

This letter is being copied to all those who spoke in the debate and will be issued on the Authority's website.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Clyde Loakes,  
Chair, North London Waste Authority

