

Energy from Waste Incinerator (EFW) including Infrastructure plus that for Combined Heat and Power (CHP), Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) Processing Plant with Outside Storage Area, and Air Pollution Control Residue (APCR) Treatment and Disposal Facility , Visitor & Office Accommodation and Landscaping within the Sutton Courtenay Resource Recovery Park.

Sutton Courtenay Resource Recovery Park,
Oxfordshire

Waste Recycling Group Limited

Environmental Statement
Chapter 2
The Site and Its Setting

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Chapter 2 Drawings

No associated drawings

Chapter 2 Appendices

No associated appendices

2 The Site and Its Setting

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This chapter of the Statement describes the physical and environmental characteristics of the Scheme site and its surrounding environs. Other chapters of the Environmental Statement provide detailed descriptions of the application site in relation to particular environmental topics, providing “base line” surveys against which the effects of the proposals may be evaluated.

2.2 Location

- 2.2.1 The Scheme is located within the Sutton Courtenay Resource Recovery Park, situated approximately 13km to the south of Oxford. The site lies to the immediate north of Didcot power station and is equidistant between the villages of Sutton Courtenay and Appleford. Didcot lies approx 3.5km to the south of the site and Abingdon 4.5km to the north west.
- 2.2.2 The Resource Recovery Park as edged blue on Figure 1.2 extends to approximately 264 ha and comprises a former sand and gravel quarry which has been reclaimed and restored through waste disposal. The periphery of the site lies at levels between 50mAOD (at the northern edge) and 55mAOD (at the southern edge). To the north the land is fairly flat, forming the River Thames floodplain. Approximately 1.3 kilometres to the south of the Resource Recovery Park the land starts to rise, reaching levels of approximately 84mAOD near Didcot. Higher land levels are present generally to the southwest, south and southeast. A prominent hill with a viewpoint (121mAOD) (Wittenham Clumps). is located approximately 5 kilometres to the east of the centre of the Resource Recovery Park.
- 2.2.3 The Resource Recovery Park is bisected by two private roads, the first one being ‘Portway’ which runs in an east west direction and ‘Corridor Road’ which passes through the site north to south. The site offices are located to the north of Portway and north of this lies the railhead and virtual quarry. A coating plant is located adjacent to the railhead and Corridor Road. To the west of the Corridor Road and the coating plant is the pad upon which composting operations take place.
- 2.2.4 There are areas of ancillary land and road ways which serve the Scheme. To the north of the application site the B4016 forms the northern boundary, the Oxford to Reading railway lies to the east of the application site and to the south is Didcot Power Station.

2.3 Site Description

- 2.3.1 The Scheme lies within the Sutton Courtenay gravel pits and Resource Recovery Park site, which lies between the settlements of Didcot, Sutton Courtenay and Appleford. Didcot Power Station, consisting of numerous large buildings, cooling towers and an emissions stack, lies immediately south of the Resource Recovery Park site. Many sets of overhead power lines and pylons lead from the power station cross the landscape (and Resource Recovery Park) to the west, north and east.
- 2.3.2 The landform within the Resource Recovery Park has been heavily modified by minerals extraction and landfill. Minerals are imported and exported by the railhead which operates as a virtual quarry. A processing plant is located in the northern part of the site. Active landfill takes place within the south of the site, an area which also houses landfill gas

engines and open air composting. The location of the proposal site is edged in red and is the subject of this Environmental Statement.

2.4 Access and Rights of Way

- 2.4.1 The surrounding landscape is crossed by numerous public rights of way, including cycleways, bridleways, footpaths and Byways Open to All Traffic. The Thames Path National Trail follows the River Thames approximately 1.5 kilometers to the north of the centre of the Complex. There are no areas of Access Land near the Site. A Conservation Walk, funded under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme is currently active approximately 1.6 kilometers to the southwest of the Site.
- 2.4.2 Access to the landfill site is currently taken from the northern arm of a four-arm roundabout with the A4130. There is a secondary access to the waste management site which forms the minor arm of a simple priority junction with the B4016 Appleford Road. However, this secondary access is only used by some local waste vehicles and HGV access is primarily taken from the A4130.
- 2.4.3 The northern application site access forms the minor arm of a simple priority junction with the B4016 Appleford Road. Appleford Road routes east-west between Sutton Courtenay and Appleford and generally ranges in width between 5.8m and 6.0m wide and is derestricted. There are no footways, no street lighting and no parking restrictions. There is a 7.5 tonne weight restriction along Appleford Road to the east of the site access and through Appleford and thus HGVs are not permitted to access the site via Appleford. HGV access to the application site from the east is therefore only permitted via the A4130 Hadden Hill.
- 2.4.4 There are two Public bridleways (BW3 and BW10), together with one public footpath (PF3) that are routed along the access road and Portway within the application site. To the west of Corridor Road are a number of public rights of way predominantly orientated east to west, running towards the village of Sutton Courtenay as shown on Figure 6.2.

2.5 The Surrounding Area

Residential, Commercial and Industrial

- 2.5.1 The nearest dwellings are Hill Farm (Hartwright House), within the Resource Recovery Park, and those on the edge of Sutton Courtenay (approximately 1.4 kilometers west of the centre of the Resource Recovery Park), Appleford (approximately 1 kilometer to the northeast) and Appleford Crossing (approximately 900m to the east). To the south and southwest (in addition to the power station) are numerous industrial, commercial and office buildings.

Schools & Hospitals

- 2.5.2 In addition to the residential properties, there are a number of schools located with 2.4 km of the application site including:
- Milton Church of England Primary School (0.5 km south-west)
 - Sutton Courtenay All Saints Church of England (0.7 km west)
 - Stephen Freeman Community Primary School (1.7 km south)
- 2.5.3 The closest hospital to the application site is the Didcot Community Hospital which is located 2.4 km to the south of the site, the nearest hospital with an Accidents and Emergency facility is the John Radcliffe Hospital which is located 16 km north of the site.

Open Areas & Farms

- 2.5.4 The Ordnance Survey map of the area indicates the presence of farms approximately one mile west of the application site as well as one farm adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. There is an allotment adjacent to the application site boundary to the east, as well as number of open areas which surround the application site.

Ecological Designations

- 2.5.5 There are no sites designated for their nature conservation importance within two kilometres of the proposal site. Just outside this area is Culham Brake Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is located 2.09 km to the north of the site's northern site boundary. Culham Brake SSSI is a wetland habitat and supports and largest British population of summer snowflake (*Leucojum aestivum*), a Red Data Book species.

Landscape Character

- 2.5.6 The landscape in the vicinity of the site is included within the Local Character Area classification (Countryside Agency/Defra): WH/20. The key characteristics identified are:-
- A varied gently rolling and almost flat topography;
 - Landscape is dominated by an extensive area of mineral extraction and landfill sites, which are at varying stages of restoration;
 - Medium to large-sized arable and grass fields;
 - Thinly scattered hedgerow trees, which are mostly ash;
 - Ash, willow and poplars fringing ditches and streams; and
 - Prominent village settlements scattered throughout the area.