

**OPEN LETTER TO DAVID CAMERON MP  
– LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY**

c/o [breathecleanairgroup@gmail.com](mailto:breathecleanairgroup@gmail.com)

29 October 2010

Dear Mr Cameron,

I am writing on behalf of the Breathe Clean Air Group of Trafford, representing over three thousand people, who are concerned about Peel Energy's proposed plan to apply to build a Biomass Incinerator (Barton Renewable Energy Plant) on land close to the local community.

Having read the Conservative *Quality of Life* Manifesto 2010, we feel many of the aims of our campaign are in harmony with this document and that you, as the highest representative of these policies, are the best person to whom we should address our concerns. In addition, as a man of principle who is known to be committed to the green agenda and who has been an architect of the aforementioned document, we hope that having read the points we raise, you will help us. As Prime Minister, you are in the unique position of being able to shape decisions and policies which affect not only the present but also the future.

Our concerns and objections are based on environmental, economic, social, human rights and health and safety factors and we hope to prove that incineration is not only unsuitable in all these areas, but is also in direct conflict with much of your *Quality of Life* report.

A campaign like this is on the scale of "David and Goliath," with many people believing it to be a "Done Deal;" an unwinnable fight. It is therefore encouraging to read in the *Quality of Life* Agenda, Section 3: Real People Power, that it states, "*We need a different approach to governing, one that involves people in making decisions that affect them. This is what we call collaborative democracy.*" If, therefore, a substantial number of people demonstrate that an incinerator is unsuitable on environmental, economic, social, human rights and health grounds and is in direct conflict with your *Quality of Life* Agenda, we hope for the support of our leaders and representatives in this matter.

**Why the Breathe Clean Air Group opposes incineration**

Incineration is bad for the economy.

Due to the proven negative impact of incinerator emissions on human health, incinerating waste of any description will result in a massive strain on the NHS. This would therefore also lead to an increase in sickness within the workplace, which would put strain on local businesses, such as Proctor and Gamble, Unilever, Cerestar, Kellogg's and many more that are close to the proposed incinerator site. Other countries have adopted a precautionary approach to incineration, making Britain less attractive for businesses to set up, expand or stay as the health risks become more widely known. With this in mind, it would be an error to lock into the long term contracts which are currently proposed (e.g. 25 years). This is in agreement with what is stated in your "Quality of Life" document section 6.7.4 headed, *Planning for landfill alternatives* it states, "We recognise that there is a huge backlog in providing the necessary waste infrastructure to deliver a goal of zero waste. To deal with this backlog, the planning regime

should be adjusted to favour small, flexible and selective schemes rather than large, inflexible and mass-burn schemes”.

### Is it legal?

In allowing the Barton Renewable Energy Plant or any other incinerators to be built near us, you would be subjecting us to daily doses of bio-accumulative toxic substances against our will, which would seem to contravene the United Nations Commissions on human rights, the European Human Rights Convention (the right to life), the Stockholm convention and the Environmental Protection Act of 1990 (which states the UK must prevent emissions from harming human health). There is clear evidence that the monitoring of stack emissions is wholly inadequate as emissions testers are totally at the mercy of the incinerator company that employ them. It is common practice to test and re-test until emission level passes are achieved. It is also widely known that smaller amounts of cleaner fuel are put into the incinerator burners to bring down emission levels for testing.

### Incineration is the worst way of dealing with waste.

Both our government and European Union Waste Hierarchy say recycling of refuse and composting should take place before incineration. The process of incineration creates 30% to 50% toxic fly ash that must then be disposed of in landfill sites and because it is so toxic disposal is expensive and dangerous. It can contaminate the water table for many years to come. There are much safer methods of waste disposal such as recycling, mechanical biological treatment (MBT), anaerobic digestion and advanced thermal technologies that are non-toxic. In allowing this incinerator to be built you would be locking us into a 25 year contract that would allow no flexibility. As the world moves towards greener technology we would be lumbered with outdated dirty technology.

### Incineration is very bad for health.

Many large studies have proven links between incinerator emissions and many serious, to life threatening health conditions. The following of which are worse in children:

- Birth defects
- Cancer
- Autism
- Dyslexia
- ADHT
- Learning difficulties

Further complications can be found in adults and can include:

- Cancer
- Dementia
- Parkinson's disease
- Depression
- Effects on genetic material
- Effects on the immune system
- Heart disease

Incinerator emissions are a huge source of fine particulates. The process of burning reclaimed wood and household waste would result in large amounts of PM 2.5 – PM 1 sized particles passing through the filters into the surrounding area. This in turn would contaminate the soil

amplifying the risks to people and livestock. There would be a cocktail of toxic heavy metals, volatile organic chemicals including mutagens and hormone disrupters, dioxins and many other health-threatening substances which people for miles around would be forced to breathe. The World Health Organisation and the European Respiratory Society has said any increase in PM 2.5 to PM 1 sized airborne particles would result in reduced life expectancy.

### There is no place in our society for incinerators

We are a developed nation that has a moral obligation to take responsibility for our actions; we should be leading the way in reducing our waste at source and recycling. Incineration goes against everything we stand for and has no place in your green bank. It would simply burn many of our resources and in the process create airborne toxic substances and huge amounts of toxic fly ash. This will increase our carbon footprint and worsen climate change. Allowing any incinerators to be built you would be locking the country into 25 year contracts that will act as a disincentive to recycle. WHAT DOES BRITAIN STAND FOR?

### Davyhulme is the worst possible place for incineration of any kind.

Davyhulme and the surrounding area is a densely populated residential area with many sports facilities including: The Chill Factor<sup>e</sup>, Lancashire Cricket Club, JJB Sports Complex, Salford Reds' Rugby, Manchester United, Manchester City and many more. It is recommended that you should not exercise where the air is contaminated with toxic PM 2.5 – PM 1 particles. As knowledge about the acute danger increases, these facilities could become redundant.

In addition to this, Trafford Park, which is close by, is a site for many large food manufacturing companies who may become concerned about air contamination in relation to their products and workforce.

There are many schools in the local area and it is the responsibility of us all to protect the children. They are the most vulnerable members of our society and deserve the chance to grow and develop in an environment free from airborne toxins and carcinogens.

### The effect on the local amenities

Who would want to live or work near the Barton Renewable Energy Plant with the associated health risks that it would pose. Businesses could choose to open in a less polluted area, meaning that less investment could diminish the community. The public feeling is very strong about not allowing incinerators to operate in this densely populated area. People with skills and money could leave the area for a safer environment. This could create a vacuum that could in turn degrade the area further. These problems and many more would be compounded over the lifespan on the plant, if permission is given for this incinerator.

Whilst appreciating there is a need for alternative waste management and energy, we feel there are viable options which do not present the problems and health risks of this scheme. In conclusion we hope the information presented will help persuade you of the negative implications, not only of the plan for Barton Renewable Energy Plant, but all similar incinerators.

Yours faithfully

The Breathe Clean Air Group  
[www.BreatheCleanAirGroup.co.uk](http://www.BreatheCleanAirGroup.co.uk)

**References:**

- “The Health Effects of Waste Incinerators” by Dr Jeremy Thompson and Dr Honour Anthony. 4<sup>th</sup> Report of the British Society for Ecological Medicine. [www.ecomed.org.uk/content/IncineratorReport](http://www.ecomed.org.uk/content/IncineratorReport)
- [www.foe.co.uk/resource/...campaign.../htw\\_against\\_incinerators.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/...campaign.../htw_against_incinerators.pdf)
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