

# **R.A.G.E.**

**RESIDENTS AGAINST GASIFICATION EXPERIMENT**

## **OPENING STATEMENT**

**\*Appeal Reference APP/L3055/V/14/3007886  
LPA REFERENCE ES/2950**

**Proposed Development of an Energy from Waste Facility on  
land at Bilsthorpe Business Park, Bilsthorpe, Nottinghamshire**



## Opening Statement

1. Good morning/afternoon Inspector. My name is Tony Smith, Vice-Chairman of Residents Against Gasification Experiment known as RAGE.
2. RAGE is a non-party political alliance of the Parish Councils of Bilsthorpe, Eakring, Rufford and Kirklington and individuals residing within these villages. RAGE was formed in response to the proposal to build an Energy from Waste plant on the site of the old Bilsthorpe Colliery.
3. This application for this proposal was and still is, strongly opposed by the residents of all of the said surrounding villages plus the town of Southwell and the villages of Kersal, Kneesall, Ompton and Farnsfield which are located slightly further afield.
4. RAGE also receives support from our political representatives and all of our local councillors. Our District Council also voted unanimously to reject this application. This, along with a petition signed by more than 1280 objectors, an online petition with 402 signatures and a large

response to the questionnaire conducted by Mark Spencer MP, shows the level of opposition to this extremely unpopular development.

5. When the National Planning Policy Framework was launched the commitment was to “put unprecedented power into the hands of communities to shape the places where they live”<sup>1</sup> - if this incinerator was to be approved, this certainly conflicts with this statement.
6. RAGE have been forced to commit to this Inquiry due to the complete disappointment felt by everyone that our County Council chose to turn their backs on us and vote by a majority of one in favour of this unwanted proposal.
7. We are very aware that the applicant has employed Mr Kingston QC and an array of consultants who will, over the forthcoming Inquiry try to demonstrate why this proposal should be approved. RAGE’s case contrasts completely – our self-raised funds enabled us to work alongside Rob Hughes, a planning consultant who has helped us to form our submissions on why this proposal is in breach of planning policy but unfortunately, we do not have the same kind of resources available to the applicant and sadly, we were unable to afford to be a

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1. Launch of NPPF oral statement to Parliament

Rule 6 party and allow our consultant to speak for us and cross-examine the applicant. As we have no experience in attending an Inquiry such as this, our case will be one put forward by local people, who at present are proud of, and enjoy living within an area of rural beauty that is Sherwood Forest and where tourism and agriculture are our leading employers. We feel strongly that this proposal will have a major detrimental impact on our way of life and we will endeavour to state our case at this Inquiry and hope the Inspector will look kindly on our inexperience.

8. Put simply, RAGE, supported by the people of all the surrounding villages, feel that this proposed large-scale incinerator will stand as an anomalous feature against the open countryside and detract against the attractive landscape that makes thousands of visitors come to the numerous holiday villages and parkland set within this location.
9. We also feel, as this village is by no means an urban area, this proposal will be unable to deliver the full benefits the applicants claim.
10. RAGE also very much supports the objections made by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, that this proposal could have an

adverse impact on the protected Nightjar and Woodlark that breed within such close proximity of the proposal site and that the siting of this incinerator on Greenfield land that has regenerated into a Local Wildlife Site known for its importance for breeding waders, would further fragment this area for these rare and diminishing birds.

11. We will endeavour to avoid duplication by each covering the subjects agreed for discussion at the Pre-Inquiry and on the subjects of 'Whether Disposal or Recovery' along with the subject of "Emissions and Health," we feel Messrs Downen and Dr Chow respectively are by far, better qualified to discuss these issues and will add no further comments other than those within our written submissions previously sent to the Inspector.

12. RAGE's representations will concentrate on the issues of most concern of the residents. These are: The impacts of traffic, our landscape, the effect on the wildlife and the tourism of this area that plays a big part in local employment.