



The countryside charity  
Cambridgeshire  
and Peterborough

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **A VICTORY FOR COMMON SENSE**

Countryside campaigners have welcomed the decision by Cambridgeshire County Councillors to refuse permission to build a medical waste incinerator at Woodhurst near St Ives.

More than 4,000 people signed a petition against plans to burn clinical waste on the site. Councillors turned down the application on the grounds of the effect on the landscape and perceived health risks. The plans for an incinerator would have led to the construction of a 26 metre-high chimney stack and allowed for clinical waste, transported to the site from local hospitals, to be recycled. Despite being recommended by officers that planning permission be granted, five of the nine councillors voted to refuse the application.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CPRE opposed the proposal on a number of grounds, most importantly the significant negative impact on the local landscape. Their Chairman, Dr Alan James, told councillors this area is a key part of the planned Fens Biosphere for which UNESCO biosphere designation is being sought. He said CPRE considers this project could put that designation at risk. "Visibility would not have been confined to the height of the chimney but to the increased building mass on the site in an area of gentle, rolling countryside," said Dr James. "The high chimney would be clearly visible for miles across the surrounding low-level areas.

"What's more, there's no certainty about how high the chimney would be. The opening bid was 28 metres. This was reduced to 26 metres presumably because of objections – but it seems the chimney may have to have been higher to get an environmental permit. The proposed height of the chimney at the waste incinerator at Waterbeach was 80 metres. Happily this was also refused! Worryingly, there is an on-going application for a waste incinerator at Wisbech where the chimney height proposed is 95 metres. It doesn't bear thinking about. The Woodhurst decision is a victory for the countryside, for the environment – and for common sense."

***For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact: Dr Alan James***

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