

Frequently Asked Questions – Green Lane Eco Park

1. Who is proposing Green Lane Eco Park?

Sky Properties has had a presence in the North West for six years and has pioneered and specialised in numerous property developments from residential to power. It is the owner of the 10 acres of industrial land off Green Lane, Salford, earmarked for the Green Lane Eco Park.

2. Where is the proposed site?

The proposed site is located approximately 1.6 km North West of Eccles town centre in Salford, Greater Manchester. It is in a long-established industrial area, off Green Lane and immediately south of the M602. It covers an area of around 3.8 ha.

3. What is proposed?

The Green Lane Eco Park is aimed at contributing to sustainable waste management in the Greater Manchester area by treating and managing around 240,000 tonnes per year of local business waste through a combination of facilities – including a Materials Recovery Facility, an Anaerobic Digestion plant and a Gasification plant.

4. Who will be responsible for operating the Eco Park?

The operator of the Gasification facility will be ENERGOS. The operators for the MRF and Anaerobic Digestion facilities have yet to be finalised.

5. What is a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) and how does it work?

A MRF sorts and extracts dry recyclable materials such as paper, cardboard, glass and cans ready for reprocessing into new products. The MRF proposed at Green Lane Eco Park will have a capacity to sort around 100,000 tonnes per year. For further information on MRFs, please use the following link <http://www.wrap.org.uk>

6. What is Anaerobic Digestion (AD) technology and how does it work?

An Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plant processes organic waste, (food and other biodegradable materials) to generate renewable energy and a digestate that may be recycled to land or used as a biomass fuel. The AD plant proposed at Green Lane Eco Park will have a capacity to process around 60,000 tonnes per year. For further information on AD, please use the following link to Defra's web site <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/ad/about.htm> or www.biogas-info.co.uk

7. What is gasification and how does it work?

Gasification is a process that converts residual, non-recyclable waste into renewable energy in the form of heat and power, minimising the amount of waste sent to landfill. The Gasification plant proposed at Green Lane Eco Park will have the capacity to process around 80,000 tonnes per year. For further information on Gasification, please use the following link www.energus.com

8. Why do we need it?

There are numerous economic, financial and environmental reasons at national, regional and local level as to why this facility is essential. Landfill is becoming a very expensive option and tough EU and UK targets mean that as much waste as possible must be diverted from landfill for both financial and environmental reasons. Also, the UK must meet renewable energy targets, and energy generated from waste that can't be recycled can help the UK as well as the local area to become more self-sufficient in producing its own energy.

9. What are the economic and employment benefits for the local community?

Managing waste in this way will support local businesses and provide direct employment for around 50 people once operational and many more indirectly, and over £50million will be invested into the local economy. It will help local businesses to meet their environmental obligations relating to waste and recycling, using environmentally sound and cost-effective methods, contributing to the overall sustainability of the local economy.

10. What about emissions from the facilities?

Waste management facilities are tightly regulated by the Environment Agency, under Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR). The operator will require an Environmental Permit to operate, issued by the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency will routinely inspect the site and operation to ensure that the operator is complying with the regulations and the permit. Emissions from the gasification and AD facilities will be continuously monitored and the results submitted to the Environment Agency who will make them publicly available.

The gasification facility will also be required to comply with the EU Waste Incineration Directive (WID) which imposes strict emission limits. As well as being carbon neutral, the gasification process only produces normal combustion gases (e.g. carbon dioxide, nitrogen etc.) and low levels of other combustion by-products (e.g. NOx), the levels of which will be in line with the WID limits. The electricity produced by the gasification and AD processes will offset electricity produced by fossil fuels and hence will reduce the emissions from coal or oil fired power stations.

11. What about noise and odour?

The site is located in an industrial area and the M602 motorway separates the site from the nearest residential areas to the north. This reduces the potential for noise to cause a nuisance for neighbours. Furthermore many of the noisier site activities will occur within the proposed buildings which will be designed to minimise noise levels. Nevertheless a noise survey has been undertaken to establish existing noise levels around the site and targets have been agreed with the Salford Council to ensure that no nuisance is caused.

Odour is unlikely to be an issue for most of the proposed facilities on site; however where there is a potential to generate odorous air this will be captured and treated. For the gasification process the waste and fuel bunker hall will be enclosed with fast acting doors; the hall will also be operated slightly below atmospheric pressure to create a negative pressure that draws air into the building to contain odours. The air from the hall will be taken through the thermal conversion process to allow it to be cleaned before being released through the main stack. For the AD plant the biogas produced will be transported in sealed pipes prior to being burnt in spark ignition engines (large diesel engines) ensuring the combustion of the odorous constituents of the biogas. The combustion gases are then released via the engine stacks. For the buildings associated with the AD plant the air is extracted and treated by a bespoke odour treatment system prior to the air being discharged to atmosphere. No odour emissions are expected from the MRF because of the nature of the wastes being managed.

12. What will the visual impact be - will we see a chimney?

Yes - the tallest part of the facility will be the flue stack which will be up to 55m in height and around 3m in diameter. However, the new facilities will be developed on an existing industrial estate and will be carefully designed and landscaped to have the lowest visual impact possible. The site itself is very well enclosed by industrial areas and the motorway which will restrict view into the site.

13. How much increase in road traffic should we expect?

Waste will be delivered to the site from local businesses and transfer stations. In total, the site should generate no more than 160 movements of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) per day. This is less than the equivalent number estimated for more general employment or distribution uses.

It is also proposed to improve upon the existing traffic flows in the local area. Access to the industrial development located immediately to the east of the development site is currently gained from Monton Road, via Lansdowne Road. However, as part of the development proposals, the access road within the development site will act as a link between this existing industrial development and Green Lane removing the need to use Lansdowne Road.

With the exception of an 'emergency situation' (for example the unexpected closure of another facility) it is proposed that the facility would generally only accept the delivery of waste and the despatch of materials during normal daytime hours only: 0730 to 1800 hours during weekdays and 0800 to 1300 on Saturdays. No delivery, dispatch or on-site movement of waste would therefore take place on Sundays or bank holidays, again, except in the case of emergencies. Notwithstanding this, the facility will be designed to provide sufficient internal storage of waste and residues to enable continuous operation over the longer public holiday periods of Christmas and Easter.

14. Does the government support these types of facilities?

Yes, the UK Government wants to encourage the use of advanced waste treatment technologies in the UK and is supporting the emergence of new energy generation technologies through the Renewables Obligation Certificate (ROC) system. The Government's support for renewable energy includes special support for advanced conversion technologies such as gasification.

In addition, the Government has supported the demonstration of both AD and gasification as "advanced conversion technologies" through Defra's New Technologies Demonstrator Programme <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/residual/newtech/demo/index.htm>. The ENERGOS technology selected for the Green Lane Eco Park is the same technology selected by the Government for its demonstrator programme.

15. How does the site fit with Planning Policy?

The development of waste facilities at the site would be consistent with both prevailing and emerging planning policy. National waste planning policy encourages the development of recovery facilities and directs developers to industrial areas as possible locations for facilities.

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) states that facilities for commercial and industrial wastes should be located close to waste sources with a view to minimising transport distances and encourages the development of new waste technologies which would include both gasification and AD, as proposed for this site.

With regard to the local planning policy, the Salford UDP (2006) allocates part of the site for a variety of employment uses including general industry which is the use normally associated with waste development. The remainder of the site is 'white land' where it can be assumed that there was an expectation that employment uses would continue at the site. Waste policy in the UDP centres on the general concepts of sustainable waste management and does not provide allocations. However, the emerging Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document (JWDPD) is consulting on site allocations and the site has been identified for a variety of waste uses.

16. Where will the waste come from?

The proposed development will take both recyclable and non-recyclable waste from local businesses (commercial and industrial) mainly in the Greater Manchester area.

17. Why won't the plants take household waste?

Household waste in the Greater Manchester area is collected by the local councils with treatment and disposal the responsibility of Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority (GMWDA). GMWDA has recently (April 2009) awarded a 25 year PFI contract to Viridor Laing which is in the process of developing dedicated Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) transfer and treatment facilities elsewhere in the Greater Manchester area.

18. Does the gasification plant use resources that could otherwise be recycled?

No – dry recyclable materials will be recovered by the MRF and any food or organic waste will be processed by the AD facility. The gasification facility will process non-recyclable residual waste.

19. Will the site be taking in toxic and hazardous materials?

No – the site will not accept hazardous or clinical waste.