



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: notoxicsmoke@gmail.com

More information: stop-edmonton-incinerator.org and @StopTheRebuild

35 GROUPS DEMAND GOVERNMENT 'PULL THE PLUG' ON 'DESTRUCTIVE' INCINERATOR

- Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Black Lives Matter, Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah sign open letter
- DESNZ, DEFRA asked to withdraw permits, funding for Edmonton plant and its 'dirty' heat network
- Letter follows BBC takedown of incineration as 'climate disaster' and 'dirtiest form of power'
- Secretaries Miliband and Reed have 'duty to prevent further harm' and 'waste of taxpayer money'

London, 29 November 2024—In an open letter published today Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Black Lives Matter, Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah CBE, and more than 30 other civil society groups joined the Stop the Edmonton Incinerator Now coalition to demand the government withdraw permits and stop investing in the North London Waste Authority's beleaguered Edmonton incinerator and pipework connecting it to a local district heat network.

The open letter cites a recent [BBC](#) investigation showing that electricity produced by waste incinerators is the UK's 'dirtiest form of power'. The analysis quotes scientists who describe waste incineration as a 'disaster for the climate' and who advocate a ban on new incinerators in England, like the existing bans in Wales and Scotland. Further souring confidence in incineration are new reports that Aviva made '[calamitous](#)' investments in three UK plants that are expected to go bust.

Carina Millstone, founder of the Stop the Edmonton Incinerator Now coalition, said: 'The government may claim it is committed to clean energy, net zero, and the circular economy, but the new, publicly owned incinerator in Edmonton means environmental targets will never be met. We call on the government to show genuine resolve and leadership in tackling the climate, waste, and air pollution crises and to pull the plug on this destructive and toxic waste of taxpayer money.'

Addressed to energy secretary Ed Miliband and environment secretary Steve Reed—and copied to Prime Minister Keir Starmer and dozens of parliamentarians and councillors—the open letter calls on the government to revoke both the development consent order and the environmental permit for the new Edmonton incinerator (both granted in 2017), as well as to withhold all funding for the plant and its district heat network connections.

Mike Childs, head of policy at Friends of the Earth, said: 'These giant energy-from-waste incinerators are similar to coal-fired power stations or gas plants as they also rely on fossil fuels to create energy—such as plastic made from oil and gas. We should be trying to recycle waste materials rather than burn them, and incinerators are known to reduce local recycling rates. The government should say no to this polluting incinerator in one of the most deprived areas of London, that could have massive health and wellbeing impacts for residents.'

Enfield resident Aurora Yaacov, who has studied the pollution impacts of the planned incinerator, said: 'If they don't cancel the new incinerator, it will pump extremely dangerous nanoparticles onto a community that has already been exposed to high toxicity levels from the current plant for five decades. Unlike the larger PM2.5 particles, nanoparticles can pass through the most advanced filters just like a gas. And they can cross the blood-brain barrier and other membranes in your body, causing significant health problems.'

'There is no excuse for entrenching this social injustice. As cabinet members, Miliband and Reed surely have the power and duty to prevent further harm,' she added.

Former Enfield cllr Vicki Pite said: ‘Major developers need to adopt truly sustainable heating—and cooling—solutions, such as heat pumps. But instead, they are told to connect to dirty heat from the Edmonton incinerator, which is a long way from completion, meaning that the interim heat source for built and planned homes is gas. The ambition of Energetik, the local energy company owned by Enfield Council, to extend the district heat network across Enfield and beyond frustrates the construction of fully sustainable homes.’

The open letter notes that construction of the Edmonton incinerator, which is running significantly behind schedule, is ‘entirely [surplus](#) to the incineration capacity required to process London’s waste’. It specifies that ‘other plants could treat north London’s waste’ and that the government granted development consent based on ‘[flawed carbon calculations](#) that significantly underestimate its climate impact’. The letter also raises the issue of ‘stunted’ recycling because of a failure to sort waste, and skyrocketing costs, as the budget for the incinerator complex recently [increased](#) by 25%, from £1.2 billion to [£1.52 billion](#).

Printed in the [Enfield Dispatch](#), the letter is also available at <https://stop-edmonton-incinerator.org/2024-11-29-Miliband-open-letter-annotated>.

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