

## Swadlincote Residents Sell Homes over Incinerator Plans

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Homeowners on Woodland Road in Swadlincote, Derbyshire, are preparing to sell their properties following the approval of a controversial energy-from-waste incinerator. The facility, which was initially rejected by Derbyshire County Council, was later greenlit on appeal by a Government planning inspector, sparking backlash from residents.

The incinerator will be built off the A444 on the outskirts of Swadlincote, adjacent to the existing Willshee's waste site. Inspector Paul Griffiths concluded that the project's benefits in diverting waste from landfill and generating energy outweighed the "significant harm" it may cause to the surrounding community.

Four households have already initiated the process of selling their homes, with many citing concerns over pollution, traffic, and the visual impact of the 60-metre-tall facility. The redbrick houses on Woodland Road, many of them decades old, sit just metres from the approved development site.

Geoff Cooper, a resident of 50 years, voiced his disappointment. "I don't want it. I am not happy with it, but what can you do?" he said, recalling a recent fire at the existing Willshee's site that left the area covered in smoke.

Another resident, who preferred not to be named, said the daily flow of lorries from the current facility already makes leaving their driveway a challenge. "We're not looking forward to it. Thankfully, we're already selling."

Rebecca and Simon Cuff, who have lived in the area for a decade, described the project as "unsightly" and expressed serious concerns about emissions and round-the-clock disruption. Mrs Cuff, who suffers from asthma, is particularly alarmed by the potential health risks. "It's already bad enough. The existing plant stinks, and this will make things worse," she said.

Peter McQuilton, another long-term resident, criticised the Government's decision to overrule local objections. "We objected, but they didn't listen. This isn't new; local voices have been ignored for years," he remarked.

Another neighbour, who has lived on Woodland Road for 43 years, is also selling after soot and ash from the May fire settled on his garden furniture. "We just don't know what to do. Highways didn't object even though the traffic is already unmanageable," he said. "This new facility will be taller than the Tall Chimney. I thought the level of opposition would count for something."

In response to growing public anger, a Willshee spokesperson clarified that the company will not operate the new facility. "The Energy Recovery Facility will be run by an experienced

third-party contractor,” they said. “The project is aimed at reducing landfill reliance and supporting a more sustainable economy.”

Willshee’s has also confirmed that their existing operations will remain unchanged and in compliance with current regulations. They added that colocating the new facility would reduce vehicle traffic across the region.

Despite the official assurances, local sentiment remains overwhelmingly negative. Many residents now feel forced out of their homes, saying they no longer have confidence that their quality of life can be maintained.