House prices unaffected by incinerator plants

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Marchwood Incinerator. Credit: Peter Facey

The installation of waste incinerator plants – or Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities – is often contested in the UK. Arguments such as health, cost, noise, odours, traffic movement, resources depletion and house prices are often cited as reasons against the development of such facilities.

This study, carried out by Cranfield University, analysed property prices surrounding three EfW plants in the UK, all of which have been operational for at least seven years. Property sales data, within 5 km of the sites, was analysed in detail, and compared against the local house price index before and after the facilities became operational.

In all cases, there was no significant negative effect on property prices at any distance within 5 km from the plant, indicating that the perceived

negative impact of these plants on local property values is, in fact, negligible.

Dr Stuart Wagland, who led the study for Cranfield, said "Energy from Waste (EfW) is widely seen as an essential part of an integrated waste management solution, but the main constraint on its uptake has been the negative perceptions of politicians and the public, and the subsequent opposition to planning applications. This stems from a historic memory of 'dirty' incinerators of the past, but regulation and policy has ensured that modern incinerators are vastly improved."

More information: K.J.O. Phillips, P.J. Longhurst, S.T. Wagland, "Assessing the perception and reality of arguments against thermal waste treatment plants in terms of property prices," *Waste Management*, Volume 34, Issue 1, January 2014, Pages 219-225, ISSN 0956-053X, dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.wasman.2013.08.018.

Provided by Cranfield University

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