

## The Final (Maybe) Push – Saxongate/Residents & Myself – Johnsons Recycling Planning – Doubling The Amount of IBA

Latest from Saxongate last night 03<sup>rd</sup> March



Cambridgeshire County Council's Planning Committee will vote at 10am on Wednesday 4 March 2026 at New Shire Hall, Alconbury on Planning Application CCC/24/091/VAR. The application seeks to substantially increase incinerator bottom ash (IBA) processing at Saxon Pit, including a near-doubling of throughput, outdoor crushing and screening, increased HGV movements and higher stockpiles. **Officers are recommending approval.**

Today we are releasing (attached) an independent scientific peer review by Dr Andrew Neil Rollinson examining the UKHSA-led public health assessment, which concluded that there are “no identified public health risks” from current operations at the site.

Dr Rollinson's review finds that the headline conclusion rests on a limited evidential base. It highlights reliance on discrete sampling events rather than a longitudinal dataset, soil testing confined to lead and cadmium despite enrichment of multiple other metals in sediments, and a single macroinvertebrate survey without concurrent chemical analysis. It also notes that incinerator bottom ash was not assessed as a distinct contamination pathway and that irrigation pathways were screened out despite abstraction licences existing for King's Dyke water.

**Separately, a 43-page technical planning critique prepared by Dr Rollinson in November 2025 was submitted to the Council at the time but did not appear on the public planning portal until this week, following a request by County Councillor Chris Boden. In a material objection submitted this week, Cllr Boden highlighted that the applicant's dust assessment relies on quarrying guidance rather than recognised guidance specific to incinerator bottom ash processing.**

Recent aerial photographs taken on Sunday 1 March by Cambridgeshire From Above (used with permission here) ([1](#)) [Facebook](#) # [cambridgeshire fromabove](#) show IBA still stored outside the approved Waste Reception Area, Building 1 doors open despite stated containment controls, and standing water across operational surfaces. Visible grey contamination is present on roof-mounted

solar panels and surrounding structures. CCC Enforcement has confirmed in writing that storage outside the approved area constitutes a breach of Condition 25. The images are consistent with concerns raised in Dr Rollinson's November 2025 technical report regarding containment integrity and dust control.

On 20 February, the Environment Agency disclosed sediment contamination data under Environmental Information Regulations and confirmed that it was the dataset supplied to UKHSA for the public health assessment. That material showed elevated metal concentrations at and downstream of the discharge point. On 27 February, two working days before the vote, the Agency described those results as "preliminary and anomalous" and stated that further monitoring and modelling demonstrate no environmental harm. However, the material in the public domain does not demonstrate that the earlier exceedances have been invalidated, and the modelling relied upon has not been published. Furthermore, while the Agency has stated that a discharge permit has now been issued, the detailed permit conditions and monitoring requirements have not been made publicly available. The Middle Level Commissioners have also confirmed that there is currently no consent in place to discharge into King's Dyke.

Members are therefore being asked to determine a substantial expansion of IBA operations while elements of the underlying environmental evidence base remain unpublished and under internal review.

**We continue to request, at a minimum, a short deferral to allow Members to consider the full evidential position before reaching a decision.**

Vote: 10am, Wednesday 4 March 2026, New Shire Hall, Alconbury.

Across the country, people are beginning to understand what happens when environmental oversight fragments and regulators defer to reassurance rather than evidence. Channel 4's recent series *Dirty Business* has shown how long-term pollution can persist for years before being properly recognised, often because warning signs were dismissed, datasets were incomplete, or agencies worked in silos.

**We do not want Whittlesey to become another case study in hindsight.**

Whatever tomorrow's vote, this community will continue to insist on transparency, joined-up regulation and evidence that is complete, published and open to scrutiny. Residents have done the work. Residents have read the data. Residents have commissioned an independent scientific review. That civic scrutiny will not stop at 10am.

We again thank Councillor Roy Gerstner for arranging a free 52-seat coach from Whittlesey to New Shire Hall to enable residents to attend the meeting in person. Public attendance matters.

For those unable to travel, the Planning Committee meeting will be livestreamed from 10am on Wednesday 4 March via Cambridgeshire County Council's website:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/meetings-and-decisions/council-meetings-live-web-stream>

Saxongate Residents Group.