

WORK STARTS ON WILTSHIRE'S FIRST MBT PLANT

The two-year construction project by Hills Waste Solutions to build Wiltshire's first state-of-the-art waste treatment plant formally began today.

The £20 million Northacre resource recovery facility is a significant investment by Hills which will help underpin its expansion into new markets. It is also a key element in Wiltshire Council's strategy to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.



On site are (l to r) Cllr Toby Sturgis, Wiltshire Council cabinet member for Waste, Property and Development Control Services, Mike Hill, chief executive Hills Group and Simon Ohlenschlager, managing director Interserve Construction

Once complete 60,000 tonnes of household waste can be processed using mechanical biological treatment (MBT) in the facility located on the Northacre trading estate in Westbury under a contract agreed between Hills and Wiltshire Council.



The facility will increase the proportion of Wiltshire's municipal waste diverted away from landfill to more than 80 per cent, from a current performance of about 63 per cent and a total of less than 20 per cent a few years ago.

Alan Pardoe, Hills Group chairman, said: "I'm delighted that construction is ready to start on the Hills' Northacre facility. This is a significant milestone in both the company's development and the way Wiltshire handles its household waste.

"In the coming months we'll see innovative technology installed on the site by our contractors which will open up new markets for our company."

Toby Sturgis, cabinet member for Waste, Property and Development Control Services, said: "This is one part of a package of measures Wiltshire Council is rolling out that will hugely reduce what we send to landfill.

"These measures, of which the construction of the Northacre facility is a major part, not only make environmental sense but financial sense for residents."

The Hills' Northacre facility will receive 60,000 tonnes of municipal waste from households in the county and, in doing so, help the county's taxpayers avoid landfill tax, which will cost £80 per tonne by 2014.

It is estimated that the Hills' Northacre facility will save significant council lorry miles per year as waste from the west of Wiltshire will no longer need to be transported to Hills' landfill site at Lower Compton. By reducing the miles that these refuse collection vehicles travel, the facility has the potential to make a reduction in Wiltshire's carbon footprint. Initially the refuse derived fuel (RDF) produced will be transported by road to port and then shipped to Europe for use in renewable energy plants, but it is anticipated that the production of RDF will encourage the creation of a more local market.



MBT specialist, Entsorga Italia, is providing technology for the plant and Interserve plc has been awarded the design and build construction contract.

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KEY FACTS & FIGURES

- Wiltshire's current recycling rate (2010/11): 41%
- The Hills' Northacre facility will reduce the proportion of Wiltshire's municipal waste sent to landfill from 37% to less than 20%
- MBT capacity: accepts 60,000 tonnes of waste per year.
- When processed (averages) per year:
 - 28,200 tonnes of refuse derived fuel (RDF)
 - Equivalent of 20,000 tonnes lost through drying
 - 1,800 tonnes of recyclable metals recovered
 - 10,000 tonnes of bio-stabilised residue to landfill
- Area served: The west of Wiltshire
- Timetable
 - Planning permission: March 2009
 - Contract signed: February 2011
 - Construction started: Summer 2011
 - Operational: Late summer of 2013
- Cost
 - Approximately £20 million

The MBT process:-

The MBT process to treat waste employs natural microbes within the waste to accelerate the decomposition process. The process takes up to 14 days and is carried out inside a sealed building which is maintained under negative air pressure to avoid the release of odours to the environment. Process air from the building is passed through filters prior to release into the atmosphere. As the waste dries, it loses over 30 per cent of its original weight. Once dried, it is further processed to remove metals for recycling. It is from the remaining material that a refuse derived fuel (RDF) is manufactured. The RDF is a dry and sanitised material that can be safely handled.

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