

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
18th October 2018**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Phyl Davies, Portfolio Holder for
Highways, Recycling and Assets**

SUBJECT: Question from Jane Rees

Given reports confirm that over 300 fires a year occur in recycling plants throughout the UK* how satisfied are Powys County Council that in the event of a major incident at the planned recycling plant in Abermule the economy of Mid Wales will not be paralysed by the closure of the A483 trunk road and Cambrian Rail Line? Such a fire in a building wedged between two main arterial routes and with a cubic capacity of over 18545m³, will be left to burn out over several days. This will have a catastrophic effect on this sensitive environment and result in a long period of disruption. The noxious gasses known to issue from burning plastic+ will require the urgent evacuation of residents in the nearby village. In view of the above the Council should be considering other more suitable locations?*

<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2017/jul/06/troubling-fire-record-uk-recycling-plants>

*** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xjzrd7Vrh_Q**

+ <http://www.regeno.in/images/wastemanagement.pdf>

Response

The proposed building will only store material collected at the kerbside for a short amount of time before being regularly removed for onward transfer and will not be used for processing any forms of recycling. Therefore, there will be limited amounts of materials stored within the building to combust and given the low risk nature of the materials there are limited ignition sources to enable a fire to start.

The site will be managed by Powys operatives in accordance with a Natural Resources Wales Environmental Permit which will strictly govern operations at the site to minimise any environmental risks. An automatic fire alarm system with flame detectors will be installed within the building to alert staff and emergency services if there is any sign of fire emerging. Firefighting equipment will be available on site and will be regularly inspected.

The Welsh Government and Network Rail who have responsibility for the A483 Trunk Road and the Cambrian Rail Line respectively have been consulted as part of the planning process and have raised no concerns about fire risks at the facility.