



**SAVE
RADLEY LAKES**

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Record Ash Sales by Power Station Provide Ray of Hope for Radley Lake

Record ash sales by Didcot 'A' Power Station in 2006 demonstrate that the Power Station can operate until closure without having to destroy Thrupp Lake at Radley by dumping half a million tonnes of pulverised fuel ash (PFA) into it. So claims Save Radley Lakes who are committed to saving the lake from just such a fate.

In their recently published Corporate Responsibility Report¹ and accompanying emissions returns², RWE npower say that, in 2006, Didcot 'A' sold over 490,000 tonnes of ash (of which about 400,000 tonnes would be PFA³) which is actually more than they produced in the same year. This, together with a modest amount sent to landfill, has allowed power station operators to reduce the amount of ash stockpiled at the power station. To put this into perspective, this amount of ash is nearly as much as they say they will put into Thrupp Lake over the next 5 to 8 years, and has markedly reversed a general decline in ash sales since 2002, with previous sales of PFA averaging only 80,000 tonnes per year³ since figures were first published in 2001. What this demonstrates is that, with the will of its management, the power station can indeed operate, as indeed it has been doing for most of the past two and a half years, without recourse to dumping its ash at Radley. If these ash sales are sustained then there is certainly no need to destroy Thrupp Lake; there would be no ash at all left over to put in it.

The power station will however claim that they find it difficult to manage the ash, which can be produced at rates of up to 100 tonnes per hour, between production and sale. This, they say, is what forces them to dump what is evidently a useful and saleable product into landfill. Save Radley Lakes says that this is wrong, and that to destroy a beautiful lake in the Oxford green belt in order to solve what is really only a logistical problem is wasteful, destructive and unnecessary. They say that the recent ash sales show what the power station can achieve when driven by necessity and that conversely, the availability, in the past, of convenient lakes, literally on tap, in which to dump surplus ash has militated against recycling of the ash in more environmentally friendly ways.

Basil Crowley, chairman of Save Radley Lakes said "The Power Station is to be congratulated on a remarkable achievement. It only goes to show what can be done when driven by necessity rather than bowing to convenience. We only wish that this could have been done long ago. Think how many more lakes could have been saved, and the irreversible damage to the Thames floodplain that could have been avoided. We urge the Power Station to review their requirement for Thrupp Lake and to commit to the alternatives that they will have developed over the past two years to achieve an outcome that will be to the benefit of all."

An application to have Thrupp Lake, the lake that npower wishes to fill with ash, registered as a Town Green is currently pending. A Public Inquiry was held during April – June, and the Inspector’s report on this is expected in the autumn. This state of affairs means that, even with all their permissions in hand, RWE npower cannot count on the availability of Thrupp Lake for ash disposal and will need to be thinking seriously about alternatives. The record sales in 2006 suggest they might at last be on the right track.

For further information contact: Marjorie White on 01235 216428 or 01235 530174, or visit www.saveradleylakes.org.uk or the news pages at www.radleyvillage.org.uk .

Notes

¹ See www.rwenpower.com/cr/Power_stations/Didcot_A.html

² See www.rwenpower.com/cr/Power_stations/Emissions.html

³ The emissions returns do not distinguish between FBA (furnace bottom ash) and PFA (pulverised fuel ash, also known as fly ash). Since these different types of ash enjoy quite different markets, it is necessary for present purposes to consider them separately. See appendix 1 of Save Radley Lakes report SRL/PFA/001.2 (available at www.saveradleylakes.org.uk/documents/documents/documents/PFAReport_SRL_PFA_001_2.pdf)