



## The Commissioning Phase FAQs

**1. What is commissioning?**

Commissioning is the process of testing all systems and equipment in the facility to ensure they work properly. It is the first time that waste will be processed.

**2. Why does it need to happen?**

The commissioning phase is a standard but essential element of testing for any Energy from Waste facility, and is required to ensure the facility is fit for purpose and operates as intended.

**3. What does it involve?**

These are the first tests of the equipment using waste as fuel. All the systems are tested to ensure they work correctly, monitoring equipment is providing the correct feedback information and all emergency alarms and safety protection systems are working as they should.

**4. Will it be noticeable?**

The 'pre-prep phase' before the commissioning starts, involves the drying out of the refractory (the lining which protects the boiler from the high temperatures experienced during burning of the waste) and steam blowing (where steam is blown through the boiler tubes to ensure they are clean), both of which will emit some noise and a plume of steam which will be noticeable for short periods of time close to the site.

After this happens, the first batch of waste will enter the system. During this period, up until the facility is fully operational in summer 2019, there will be occasional loud noises, which sound similar to when you bleed a radiator, and plumes of steam as the first combustion gases are pushed through the ducting to test all systems.

**5. Is it safe?**

Yes. The testing is designed to ensure that all equipment is working safely before the facility begins processing residual waste.

**6. Will it smell?**

The facility is designed to ensure that all odours emitting from the waste material are contained within the facility. All waste will be processed indoors and there will be no waste stored outside.

**7. Will it affect the environment?**

The emissions of the facility will be continuously monitored and regularly audited by the Environment Agency (EA) to ensure all emissions are within the EA guidelines.

**8. Will there be emissions monitoring?**

Yes, emissions from this site will be continually monitored during the commissioning phase by Urbaser Balfour Beatty Gloucestershire. This information is provided to the Environment Agency who can perform spot checks at any time.

**9. Will it affect local residents?**

As we run through the commissioning process, there may be occasional noises as a result of these activities. If this occurs, they will happen infrequently but may occur during anti-social hours, although this will be avoided as much as possible. Disruption to the public should be minimal and noises will not be evident during normal operation of the facility. They are result of all systems running to maximum capacity during the commissioning phase.

**10. Will the incinerator be firing continuously during the hot testing phase**

Commissioning replicates all the stages of normal operation to fully test the systems. Although there may be short times when internal inspections are required, the system will be firing almost continuously throughout the commissioning period.

**11. Is the building work finished?**

90% of the building work will be complete including all the facility and process management and safety systems. The remaining 10%, including landscaping and selective architectural details to the buildings, may still be outstanding at the point of testing.

**12. Does it mean the facility is operational?**

Once the commissioning phase is complete, and all equipment and systems are verified as working correctly, the facility will begin operations in summer 2019.

**13. What happens if it goes wrong?**

All the systems within the facility are designed to 'fail safe' if anything is not working correctly. This means that in the event a system does not work as designed, there is an alternative back up system or process. In the rare instance these fail, the system can be closed down safely.

**14. How long does it take?**

'Pre-prep' has already started and will be followed by the commissioning process, which is scheduled to run until the facility is fully operational during summer 2019. Preparatory activities for commissioning are already underway.

**15. What is the difference from cold commissioning?**

Cold commissioning ensures that all equipment is fitted and connected correctly within the facility. It does not involve the burning of waste. This commissioning phase includes the burning of waste to confirm that all the equipment, once fitted, is operating correctly.

**16. Who monitors the commissioning process?**

The Urbaser Balfour Beatty commissioning specialists, supported by the Urbaser Balfour Beatty operations team who will operate the facility for the coming years, will monitor the commissioning process and ensure all tests are completed successfully.

**17. Who signs off that the commissioning process is complete and that all standards have been met?**

Once Urbaser Balfour Beatty has verified that the facility is compliant with the conditions and limits set out within the Environmental Permit, it is the responsibility of Urbaser Balfour Beatty to approve and sign off the successful the commissioning of the facility.

**18. What are the traffic movements during commissioning?**

As the facility moves from construction to operation, the nature of traffic movements will change. There will be a decrease in construction and site worker vehicles and an increase in waste delivery vehicles as deliveries of waste begin. These vehicles will deliver in line with planning permission conditions.

**19. Who can I talk to if I have concerns?**

If you have any concerns you can call 01452 379 880 (during office hours) and 07860 268578 (for emergency out-of-hours) or email [info@ubbglooucestershire.co.uk](mailto:info@ubbglooucestershire.co.uk). Alternatively, there are bi-monthly Community Liaison Group meetings attended by the local Parish Councils, District and County Council members and immediate local residents and you can contact one of these representatives to raise your concern. Representatives from Urbaser Balfour Beatty, the Waste Planning Authority (Gloucestershire County Council), Waste Disposal Authority (Gloucestershire County Council), Environment Agency, and District Environmental Health Authority (Stroud District Council) also attend.