

Metal Refinery, E Midlands, UK

50 Ha site closed in 2009. Two legacy operations remain – CHP plant and by-product plant with long term contract to fulfil. Closure process ongoing – depollution of tanks/pipework and removal of wastes nearing completion. The site was operating under a PPC environmental permit and remediation will be required for deterioration in site condition (acidification) – investigation work just completed. Also historic pollution of undeveloped part of the site.

A potential purchaser has been identified for the site and in parallel with regulatory closure, due diligence assessments and commercial negotiations are ongoing.

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Problems:

- Differing objectives and poor communication between different parts of closing organisation
- End State Vision not communicated and complicated by legacy operations
- Regulatory closure and site sale not considered together; timescale objectives conflict
- Lack of communication between service providers
- Disengagement of legacy operations from remainder of site
- Logistics of regulatory closure, eg depollution vs soil/gw investigations, demolition vs remediation
- Departure of staff with key knowledge from closing organisation
- Long term management of soil/gw impact reliant on effluent treatment operations planned for closure

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Adverse Consequences:

- Decision making more complex and may not account for all factors and implications
- Increase in time and cost for closure
- Post closure property tax and utility costs
- Closure and liability transfer impeded by continuance of legacy operations
- Loss of key knowledge of the site
- Cost of necessary changes to long term management of soil/gw impact
