Now the Yard's Just Scrap and Rubble...

Lessons Learned from Site Closure Implementation

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Solutions and Positive Outcomes

This presentation draws on several cases both from within RSK group and the author's wider professional experience over 15 years, involving closure of UK manufacturing facilities.

The second part of the presentation will identify solutions to problems and positive outcomes – and what can happen when things go wrong.

Lead Acid Battery Plant, Midlands, UK

Solutions

- Clear End State Vision related to site sale for redevelopment
- Entire closure process under single client project manager
- Use of employees limited to their own skill sets
- External service providers used for structural dismantling and HSE advice

Lead Acid Battery Plant, Midlands, UK

Positive Outcomes

- No HSE incidents
- Decommissioning carried out to program
- Decommissioned buildings handed over to developer on time for demolition/remediation
- Liability transfer successful
- Residential development underway on site

Metal Refinery, E Midlands, UK

- Work in Progress – watch this space !

Ceramics Factory, Midlands, UK

Solutions

- Clear End State Vision related to relocation and sale of site
- Phased remedial solutions developed to meet timescale needs, integrated into sale agreement
- Closure process under single closing organisation project manager
- Agreed phased closure activity programme
- Joint appointment of turnkey remediation service provider; remediation started before closure
- Co-operation between demolition and remediation service providers

Ceramics Factory, Midlands, UK

Ceramics Factory, Midlands, UK

Positive Outcomes

- Liability transfer and value realisation successful
- Relocation completed to programme
- First phase housebuilding started 2 months after closure
- First house occupancy before completion of last remediation phase
- Remediation finished 3 months early and below budget allowing building programme acceleration

Lead Smelter, Leeds, UK

4 Ha site, closed 2003. Closing organisation intended to exit liabilities/cover closure costs by sale of site. Site investigation showed high lead contamination levels from airborne deposition and remediation cost estimates greater than land value.

Instead of being remediated a “Gates Shut” approach was taken: the site was fenced securely and “mothballed” – remaining a continued blight on the local community.

Lead Smelter, Leeds, UK

Problems:

- Unrealistic expectations in closing organisation concerning land value vs closure costs and ability to realise a quick/clean exit
- Closing organisation lost focus due to takeover by larger company
- Lack of budgetary provision for decontamination
- Unawareness/lack of consideration of blight effects on community

Adverse Consequences:

- Inability to sell site, or to exit liability.
- “Gates Shut” approach adopted to avoid crystallising remediation liability
- Ongoing costs (security, property taxes)
- No remediation completed, only new fencing
- Derelict site remains a blight on community after 6 years
- Attempts to lease the site for “open storage” so far unsuccessful

Conclusions

- Site closure objectives and end state vision should be carefully defined
- Site closure should be managed as any other project or organisational change
  - Single point project management
  - Realistic integrated budget
  - Rigorous activity programming
- Supplement employee skill sets with specialised service provider skills
- Closing organisations should recognise social responsibility to facilitate re-use of site and avoid blighting communities