

## Steven Weemes

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**Categories:** Steve

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### Comments on the Application for an Anaerobic Digester at Streetly Hall Farm.

#### Application Number CCC/23/110/FUL

Below is a summary of comments made concerning this proposal by residents of Bartlow, Cambridgeshire.

Generally there is a division of opinion on the project as a whole. Some feel that the increase in HGV traffic is completely unacceptable and that therefore the scheme should be scrapped. Others – I think a sizeable number – have major concerns about the impacts but in general support the scheme's objective of creating renewable energy and reducing reliance on fossil fuel energy.

Our objections to the project fall into two groups: the impact of an increase in the number of HGVs passing through the village, and concerns about pollution caused by the plant, and other possible problems for water courses in Bartlow.

#### TRAFFIC

The crossroads in the village (Camps Road, Dean Road, Bartlow Road to Linton) is busy throughout the day with obviously more traffic at peak times – morning and evening commuters and school traffic.

Throughout the day from early morning into the early/late evening, particularly during harvest times from June to the end of October, there are, at the moment, a considerable number of large agricultural vehicles and large HGVs passing through the crossroads every day mostly coming from, or going to, Bartlow Estates/Hills Farm located along Dean Road, Bartlow toward Ashdon every day.

There are regular accidents at these crossroads, but as yet no fatalities or serious injuries, just damage to properties at the crossroads and the vehicles involved. It is regarded as an accident 'black spot' by Bartlow residents. CCC is aware of this situation and in fact under LHI 23/24 has agreed to supply us with double yellow lines and MVAS units to alleviate it.

The proposal documents indicate that HGV journeys through Bartlow will number about 6 single journeys per day (or 3 return journeys as stated in the proposal). The number at harvest time will be much higher and possibly lower at some other times in the year. This will be additional to much of the existing farm traffic. It has not been made clear yet which routes through Bartlow this new traffic will take. However:

- a) Residents are worried about any increase in the number of HGV journeys through the village.
- b) The increased HGV traffic will worsen the wear and tear on road markings at the crossroads. These are hardly visible at the moment as they need repainting more frequently than seems to be currently possible. This is downright dangerous as it means that at the village crossroads it is unclear from which direction traffic has priority.
- c) The increased traffic will also increase the risks for children waiting for or walking to or from the school bus stop at the crossroads.
- d) What will be the impact on the new entry/exit arrangements on Dean Road and Bartlow Road to Linton with the A1307?
- e) It seems very likely that a large proportion of the HGV traffic will use the Bartlow Road to Linton. This is a narrow and dangerous road for cyclists and pedestrians and makes the need for a cycleway/footpath along this road even more urgent. In fact it should be provided as a condition before this scheme can be approved. It would be a major mitigation of this problem.

#### POLLUTION AND ISSUES WITH WATER COURSES

As the crow flies, the anaerobic digester plant will be very close to Bartlow. Some of the mitigations to prevent the problems listed below are given in the planning documents. It is a question of how much faith our residents have in the plant owners, the company that runs it and the Environment Agency to ensure that they are avoided. Many of us have doubts.

- a) There are concerns about the risk of light pollution, noise pollution and, in particular odour pollution, which anaerobic digesters have a reputation for.
- b) There are supposed to be strict controls on surface water coming from the plant. We are concerned that this will not be controlled as well as the proposal states, and that pollution will seep into water courses running through Bartlow.
- c) If there is water seepage, could it also possibly cause flooding? The water courses in the village are at risk of flooding already.
- d) On the other hand, will the Environment Agency make sure that the scheme does not cause water to be removed from the River Granta which already struggles to retain water flow throughout the year?
- e) The plant is just uphill of a drinking water abstraction point. In the eyes of one of our residents who has looked into this, the planning documents do not satisfactorily show how this supply (and the chalk aquifer in general) will be protected.

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