

To whom it may concern:

STATEMENT ON SITE OPERATIONAL SAFETY

Acorn is aware that there is understandable concern following the recent explosion at a gas production facility in Oxfordshire and wish to provide an update on the safety procedures our sites will follow.

Lightning strikes are extremely rare, and there is currently no statutory requirement in the UK to provide lightning protection to buildings. However, Acorn will prepare for this eventuality by designing the digester tanks with effective lightning protection. Acorn's sites will be voluntarily compliant with the BS EN 62305¹ standard for lightning protection as a critical part of these control measures. Further, whilst the explosion in Oxfordshire was unfortunate, there was no loss of life or damage beyond the gas site itself.

It is crucial to Acorn's values that we meet the highest health and safety standards throughout the operation of the proposed plant. In addition to the lightning protection referred to above, the site will undergo a DSEAR² study which accounts for gas presence on site, and how gas safety is managed on site. This includes quantities and likelihood of exposure which then designates ATEX³ zones. Within these ATEX zones, risk is managed accordingly in line with the site's health and safety management plan and only certified equipment for these zones can be installed and operated, which must be installed by trained & certified personnel. Once operational, only authorised personnel will be allowed into the ATEX zones, and they will be clearly marked on site. This includes areas around the gas domes, key valves and gas processing line. This practice will control and prevent alternative sources of ignition, and particular attention will be given to the correct use of electrical equipment in these zones, for example, lighting, mobile phones and plant electrics. No smoking on site will be allowed and all footwear will be required to be anti-static.

To bolster our practice, we will also consider, once constructed, how climate change might affect our operational business. In line with UK government guidelines, our risk assessment will consider the impact of a 2°C rise in global average temperatures by 2050 and how will affect the resilience of each individual site. This assessment will consider additional risks including but not limited to wildfires, power failure, heavy snow fall. This risk assessment will be assessed by the Environment Agency as part of the Environmental Permit for each site and will contribute to our site safety management procedures.

We take climate change very seriously, and indeed our whole business model is focussed on a transition to a more sustainable future for the UK. All our plant designs have considered the impact of increasingly volatile weather patterns with heavy rain events. Our designs are rigorously assessed throughout the planning and permitting process. Coupled with our operational site management regimes, we will ensure the highest safety standards are maintained across our sites.

¹ <https://landingpage.bsigroup.com/LandingPage/Series?UPI=BS%20EN%2062305>

² The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002

³ <https://www.hse.gov.uk/fireandexplosion/atex.htm>

