

To: Andrew Rutter, Suffolk Planning Officer
Re: Anaerobic Digester Plant Proposal
Application Number SCC/0045/23SE

Dear Mr Rutter,

The Haverhill Wildlife Group has severe concerns at the proposed siting of the digester plant North of Spring Grove Farm, Withersfield.

The Stour Brook is a corridor for wildlife through the town of Haverhill. It has, in the past, been affected by pollution which destroyed the fish stocks upon which certain birds relied. The risk of this occurring again cannot be considered as being reduced by the act of building the site and then operating it. A spillage on site however caused would contaminate the brook once again, most likely with nitrogenous material and ruin the gradual resurgence of fish breeding which is essential to the Kingfisher, Egret and Heron population that did thrive in the area. Otter have been seen in the brook in the vicinity of the site and they should be protected at all costs.

The structures intended for the site are large and ugly compared to the existing landscape. Any mitigation of the view by tree planting will take decades to be effective leaving the site visible to all local residents and workers for many years.

Haverhill is an expanding town that is working hard to bring in high tech companies by providing the right mix of available residential houses, modern offices, and commercial properties together in an attractive environment in pleasant countryside. The obnoxious odours that the site will undoubtedly create together with the unattractive outlook to the site will jeopardise prospective tenants both residential and commercial from being attracted to the area.

The A1307/A1017 route is only a two-lane road with a poor accident history. At a time when much effort is being applied to reducing road casualties how can imposing a massive increase in vehicular activity to and from the site be considered as helpful. A site adjacent to a larger dual carriageway with dedicated access would be preferable for everyone. Traffic coming from the south will travel through the village of Sturmer before reaching the bypass and trucks using satnav will probably be guided through the centre of Haverhill which is slightly shorter in distance.

As the site will not employ many personnel there can be no argument on any benefit to Haverhill from reduced unemployment. The remote control used at similar sites would be a worry should an accident occur. It is well known that serious accidents at such sites have occurred, most recently in Oxford. In a changing climate with more unpredictable and more powerful storms forecast for the future we would say that the risk of a similar catastrophe happening close to a residential area is frighteningly high.

I trust that our letter on behalf of the group will be noted and acted upon.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Tatam, Treasurer Haverhill Wildlife Group