

Acorn Biodigester: Application Number: SCC/0045/23SE

Construction and operation of an anaerobic digestion facility, associated infrastructure and new access road, connecting pipeline and covered digestate lagoons

Applicant: Acorn Bioenergy Limited/Thurlow Estate

Dear Sir

I am writing to express my profound concerns about the proposed application highlighted above. Whilst I support green initiatives, I have a number of objections I wish to outline in respect of the plans submitted above.

Location: this facility is to be constructed in a restricted area of countryside in very close proximity to small villages (one to two miles), new (and still expanding) areas of new build houses, and newly developing areas of office accommodation, constructed to attract new businesses to the area. This facility will undoubtedly negatively influence choices to relocate to Haverhill.

There is no evidence that they have seriously considered alternative locations which are a respectable distance from dwellings, roads and businesses.

Traffic: the A1307 is the main road and public transport connection to Addenbrookes Hospital, Babraham Business Park and the city of Cambridge. This road is known to carry heavy traffic, and is already designated a frequent accident route. Access from minor roads, which are single lane width and extremely winding, with little or no lighting, is already difficult and dangerous.

We have been advised that at peak times in June/July an additional 148 lorry/tractor movements a day thus increasing the risk of accident, injury or fatalities.

Flood Risk: The area is already designated as Flood Risk Zone 3 which means there is a high possibility of flooding. This has been demonstrated by the events in the last few weeks where parts of the roads surrounding the proposed development were flooded.

It is essential that a Flood Risk Assessment is submitted.

Environmental impact: The proximity to Stour Brook reservoir and the edge of West Town Park will adversely impact both wild life habitat, migratory routes and public space for walking, and exercising.

Nature preservation and encouragement of exercise to maintain health is surely something the council should be keen to protect.

Visual Impact: The plans state that the huge site (the largest in England to date) 'does however appear rural in nature', and will not be seen from public roads or footpaths. This assumes that there will be footpaths on which to walk as the development cuts across many of these. Given its size and height it will certainly be visible from upstairs windows of local houses, the roads and the Epicentre complex.

Employment: According to information the site will employ only five people, this is hardly a point in its favour. Given that it is a specialist waste installation it will require specialist contractors who will not be local. In addition I understand that it will be monitored remotely from Spain. This would mean that if any problems such as leakage or spillage should occur, management would be difficult or impossible to undertake in a timely or effective manner.

Output: As a nation we need to consider alternative energy supplies. Acorn have advised that the plant will produce 17,400 tonnes biogas, 27,100 tonnes natural gas, 24,000 tonnes liquid petroleum gas, NONE of which will be used locally. The single and only output/benefit for our area will be the spent digestate from the composting process used for the 16,000 acres of Vestey owned farms.

It is disappointing that government MPs (Matt Hancock) and company representatives have not been present (despite invitations) to attend any public meetings to date to hear our concerns.

Yours faithfully

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