


From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 October 2023 16:23
To: SCC Planning Mailbox
Subject: Planning application for Anaerobic Digester SCC/0045/23 SE at Spring Grove Farm Haverhill

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Dear Sirs

I live at Turnpike House, Withersfield and wish to object in the strongest possible terms to the planning application for the Anaerobic Digester at Spring Grove Farm, Haverhill. The proposed location is totally unsuitable for a development of this kind. The western side of Haverhill will be blighted due to loss of amenity and flooding potential and much of the good work done to date to improve the town could be lost. This development will also have a serious detrimental impact on Withersfield, which is a conservation area and has many listed properties.

- Haverhill has made a great effort to introduce improvements to the town and to obtain new businesses involved in innovation and enterprise (such as at the Epicentre, which has several such tenants). See also Haverhill Vision 2031 - many of the plans relating to the western side of the town will be impacted by such a development. The proposed site is at the entrance to the town from the west and will not offer a pleasant introduction to the town. Additionally, there is a large housing development 600 ms away (the Arboretum) and the major Sainsbury's is not much further. Businesses may also be affected and lose both custom and investment, affecting employment.
- Backing onto part of the Stourbrook, we are in Withersfield just the other side of the hill from the proposed site, effectively to the northeast. (Turnpike is listed Grade II). Bearing in mind that most of our weather comes from the southwest/west, the potential in Withersfield for flies, constant smells and noise is considerable, not to mention an increase in vermin for those nearby in Haverhill. When fertiliser/manure is spread on the fields behind us now (roughly during one month in the year) it becomes almost impossible to sit in the garden because of the smell – how much worse will it be with regular work on the potential site. There is no question – such developments do smell.
- There is also likely to be light pollution as it will be a 24/7 operation.
- Despite possible planting, the size of the development will be visually intrusive and inappropriate.
- Heavy traffic at all stages (construction and operation) will impact heavily on the village (see further comments below) – we already have some heavy lorries on Silver Street on their way to the warehouses in West Wratting. They cause difficulty of movement due to the roads being too narrow to accommodate such two-way traffic, creating jams, not to mention creating considerable deterioration of the roads themselves, which in turn causes damage to local vehicles.
- The site proposed lies in a flood plain and the stream floods regularly. In the event of a leak, the potential for pollution downstream must be considered to be extremely serious. This, indeed the whole development, could render the Flood Park unusable for leisure. Quite apart from this, the large concrete area of hard standing which will be required for the site will mean much heavier run-off which again could impact the flood defences designed to save Haverhill. Even heavy rain could bring minor pollution to the stream, without flooding of the stream itself. There will also be a considerable impact on wildlife.
- The site proposed is zoned as agricultural and of a reasonable grade. This is clearly an industrial development which should not be sited on such land. It is against the aims of the local plan for West Suffolk and the draft neighbourhood plan for Withersfield. It also appears to conflict with the Suffolk Waste and Management Plan (WP3).
- There is the potential for explosion – several sites have had issues already, most recently that in Oxfordshire which was well away from any village or town – which this will not be.

- The product of this plant is due to be shipped to Milton Keynes (so why have a plant here) and there is no benefit to Haverhill and the surrounding area whatsoever. The products themselves are not eco-friendly – methane is a major greenhouse gas and burning it creates carbon dioxide.
- The potential result of the traffic generated by the development is horrendous. Once the construction is over, the regular traffic on the A1307 will increase on a permanent basis. That road is already extremely dangerous and overcrowded, with numerous accidents, several of which have been fatal. If the traffic is permitted to turn right out of the site access this will be very unsafe. If it is routed left and around the roundabout this will bring heavy (and possibly smelly) traffic even nearer the Epicentre and the main town and housing. Access from and to Silver Street from the A1307 to get in and out of Withersfield is already quite difficult – this additional traffic will make it even worse, and traffic in Withersfield is bound to increase, as there are areas where the local roads must be used.
- As the lorries are going to Milton Keynes, this is surely going to produce unnecessary use of fossil fuels, as will the importation of some of the items to be used at the plant (there are, for example, no chicken farms locally). It seems unlikely that this development can be carbon neutral.

Yours faithfully

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