

Andy Rutter

Objections and Observations regarding Acorn Biogester Plant proposal at Spring Grove Farm, Haverhill.

Planning Application SCC/0045/23SE.

Dear Andy Rutter

My objections to this plant firstly concern the environmental impact which this would undoubtedly cause to the immediate area and beyond, affecting any number of bird species, amphibians, bats, insects and flora and fauna which would be totally destroyed by the construction process and destruction of an important part of the local ecology. Further to the above, this area takes the Spring Grove Brook directly through the site, this brook is fed by other watercourses from the surrounding higher ground adding to an already flood prone area which takes this flow through various channels to the Meldham Washlands, joining up with the Stour Brook and eventually with the river Stour which flows all the way to the east coast. My point is that no amount of supposed guarantee can say that there will never be an accident whether caused by human error or a malfunction of some vital piece of equipment, machinery or pipework causing leakage into the surrounding soil and watercourses thereby polluting a vast length of waterway which would be impossible to mitigate or successfully clean up without resource to vast amounts of specialist knowledge and costs. It is noted that Acorn have never built a processing plant of any description anywhere in England and therefore can have no prior expertise in building or operating such an industrial unit as this.

The proposed site is absolutely unsuitable for this commercial building as it is only about 500-600 mtrs from an important office and business unit, The Epicentre and homes on the Arboretum Residential Development comprising 300 dwellings, a nearby public house/restaurant and a nursery school and play area. Despite arguments to the contrary by Acorn, the biogenerating process produces unpleasant smells which leak out in to the atmosphere when open movement of the material is taking place. Some of this gaseous odour can waft along on the breeze producing a very smelly environment to the local area and beyond.

Increased traffic movements will also contribute to an already overburdened local road system. 40 ton articulated lorries, slow moving farm tractors pulling 15cu mtr trailers turning in to and out of the entrance will cause tailbacks and congestion in and around the Spring Grove Farm entrance which is only 300mtrs from the Spirit of Enterprise roundabout. Buses from Haverhill, HGVs, trucks and works vehicles from the nearby industrial estates which include well known national carriers and commuters travelling west along the A1307 towards Cambridge and the A11 trunk road and on to the M11 will not feel happy with yet more traffic to contend with. This will also impact travelling east in the direction of Haverhill and beyond. Furthermore it will not only be a problem as mentioned above but also the local narrow lanes coming from other villages hereabouts are going to be congested at pinch points and junctions with large slow vehicles travelling to and from the proposed site. These sometimes single track roads are already in poor condition and with the tendency of HGVs and farm vehicles to drive over the edge of the road and occasionally on to the verge will cause even more damage along with the extension of our ever increasing network of unseen and sometimes unavoidable pot holes..

The sheer footprint, elevation and spread of this development will overwhelm this corner of the close approach to Haverhill. It will be an industrial eyesore and no amount of so called screening, will hide this inappropriate, unwanted and ill considered project. The areas just beyond the immediate boundaries of Haverhill consist entirely of rural farmlands, meadows, fields and pasture and to brutalise this precious landscape in our special corner of the wider Suffolk outlook should be prevented. I have walked many a mile around this area and would not want this structure to dominate my view from pretty much every angle.

Yours sincerely
Peter Hardy
Surridges Farmhouse, Hanchett End