

From: richard [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 23, 2023 4:12 PM
To: Andrew Rutter <Andrew.Rutter@suffolk.gov.uk>
Subject: AD plant

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Dear Mr Rutter,

We would like to establish our fierce objections to the proposed anaerobic digester at Spring Grove Farm.

I have lived at Hanchett Hall farm, neighbours to Spring Grove farm for the last sixty years. Our business (Hanchett Hall boarding Kennels and Cattery) being established in 1986. Over the years we have seen Haverhill develop and grow in various different ways, which have mostly been of benefit to the town. When the developments of the (spirit of enterprise) and the (Epicentre) were constructed over the last decade or so, it was described as the "Gateway to Haverhill". With this in mind the concept of having a colossal biogas plant looming over the supposed "gateway to Haverhill" is quite baffling.

Traffic

One of our major concerns is the impact that the plant would have on what is already a major casualty route. The massive increase of HGV's traveling to and from the site would severely impact the traffic in and around Haverhill. Acorn have provided some figures regarding the added traffic which include during summer months, 148 additional lorries/tractor to and from the site per day. A number which is quite staggering considering the already large volume of traffic already on these roads. Having our own farm access opposite the proposed site entrance/exit, we know how difficult and dangerous it is pulling out onto the A1307, let alone doing so in a tractor and trailer or articulated lorry. Acorn have proposed that when the vehicles exit the plant they will only exit to the left and use the roundabout to turn around and head back towards Cambridge. With these large numbers of HGV's attempting this on a daily basis, the impact it would have on the traffic approaching the roundabout would be catastrophic. Not to mention the safety impact. It has been stated that the Vesty estate are providing 36% of the feedstock for the plant. That leaves the other 64% to be provided by other farms. With that in mind, the concept of farmers carting the feedstock from surrounding villages and towns is another extremely worrying issue for road traffic and safety.

Flooding

According to the government's flood risk service for west Suffolk, the proposed site on a field known as "Meldham Washland" is mostly part of the flood zone three category. As you can see by the photos attached the flooding here is a real issue and happens on a regular basis. Also these photos which

were recently taken just after the Thurlow Estate spent three days digging the ditches out, to prevent such floods clearly to no avail. Not only is the flooding a major risk but also the positioning of the plant being extremely close to a main water course and the complications this could have I feel need to be addressed. If the flooding ever led to the water rising to the height of the storage clamps that the plant uses to store the feedstock; this in turn would lead to the feedstock then flowing down the ditches to the reservoir and then through the town polluting the water.

Odour

The impact that the odours from the plant would have for not only my own business, but other business situated locally to the proposed site would be horrendous. With the “flying shuttle pub” being a stones throw away and also the “Whitehorse” pub in Withersfield being less than a mile across the field, it is unimaginable how this plant may effect their business. The prevailing wind is predominantly western which means the awful odours from the plant would blow straight through Haverhill.

Visual impact

Visually the size proportions and scale of this site would be impossible to ignore. The fact the site sits on a hill makes this even more severe.

Employment and benefits to the town

With the information provided by Acorn, this site will employ only FIVE people and the biogas which is developed is then carted to Milton Keynes. Therefor the actual benefits to the town and its people is basically non existent.

Location

The Thurlow estate was asked to provide alternative sites for the plant, but have failed to do so. With the estate owning nearly a staggering 20,000 acres in the local area, much of which is not directly next to a town. I find it astonishing that there are no other areas this plant could be built.

In summary I am by no means unaware that plants such as these are a productive project and are a benefit to the country, but as you can see from the reasons above they must be built in the correct places. Having done much research into these plants since the proposal was put forward, I cannot find any other one that has been built in such close proximity to a town. The fact the site will not even provide anything to Haverhill makes the whole thing seem even more ludicrous.

I hope that with all the facts taken into account, the right decision for the town and its residents will be made.

Yours Sincerely
Richard Haylock