

7 Hawthorn Road  
Haverhill  
Suffolk  
CB9 9DL

24<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Dear Mr Rutter,

Application Number

SCC/0045/23SE

Location

Land to the north of Spring Grove Farm, Withersfield, Suffolk, CB9 7SW

### **Anaerobic Digester Plant Proposal**

I am writing to you as a resident of Hawthorn Road Haverhill and in proximity to the above proposal site.

I am deeply concerned at the audacity of the proposers wishing to put such a large digestate plant in this location adjacent to the Haverhill Western Gateway after so much has been done to enhance the approach to our town with the associated planning over recent years.

I find the proposal to be inappropriate on many counts which I should draw to your attention.

There are new housing developments near to the site with more to come and there would be a substantial visual impact due to the size and height of the proposed "largest anaerobic digestion plant in the uk" to date.

It is claimed that there will be tree screening but with the now dry summers these would be difficult to establish and take many years to reach a suitable height and be unlikely to attain the 16-metre height of the digester tanks.

In any case when the leaf fall occurs in autumn the plant would be visible through them.

The area is at the head of the river Stour valley and is prone to flooding, in fact it is flooded now at the time of writing.

The river downstream of the site passes through the centre of Haverhill town and through the East Town Wildlife Park and then the village of Sturmer.

I have lived along this valley since the 1940's and have recently witnessed pollution from industrial spills and the resulting loss of fish and fauna.

There would be spillages of digestate and raw organic material en-route from farms and on site leading to rainwater leaching nitrogenous liquor into the river catchment

causing imbalance to the growth of plant life and the water quality. Run off would come from the large area of concrete on what is currently prime agricultural land.

There would be a great impact on the wildlife in the area, which is immediately adjacent to the Haverhill West Town Park, recent evidence of Otters has been found at the site and surrounds and these are a protected species.

There would inevitably be smells from the site, from the processes involved, storing, loading, and transporting into site the excrement and rotting plant materials proposed.

Evidence gained from similar sites and lorry drivers confirms this and in most cases the sites are away from residential areas for such reasons.

There would be an increased amount of road traffic, lorries, and possibly tractor activity to feed and remove the products involving turning in and out of the site entrance, which is already adjacent to a fast and dangerous bend and road junction. My own aunt Vera Hayward was killed in a car crash at this very point!

There would be little control of the timings and congestion of the incoming material vehicles and I understand that one of the inputs would be agricultural maize vegetation, this is a very late crop to harvest and in what can be adverse soil conditions in autumn rains such as now and leading to mud carrying onto the roads in addition to the hazards outlined above.

There is a right of way access across this site namely the Via Devana which is an ancient roman road linking Colchester with Cambridge and beyond which must surely be protected.

Haverhill will not benefit from the output from this plant but suffer a further blight in an area which has recently been transformed to enhance the town's western approach with the building of the Epicentre at the Research Park and the Spirit of Enterprise roundabout sculpture.

My final concern is regarding the landowners at the Spring Grove Farm who have hitherto been well regarded in this area over many years, holding the office of High Sheriff of Suffolk and presence at the proclamation of King Charles here.

They own and farm in excess of 12,000 acres of land locally and there are other sites available, why would they wish to blight their local town with such an inappropriate eyesore.

Yours faithfully,

S.P. Sadler.  
Resident.