

**Lancashire County Council**

**Development Control Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 18th October, 2023 at 10.30 am in  
Committee Room 'A' - The Tudor Room, County Hall, Preston**

**Present:**

County Councillor Matthew Maxwell-Scott (Chair)

**County Councillors**

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| B Yates       | S Holgate  |
| J Berry       | M Pattison |
| S Clarke      | E Pope     |
| A Cullens BEM | P Rigby    |
| M Dad BEM JP  | D Westley  |
| A Hindle      |            |

**1. Apologies for absence**

No apologies were received.

**Permanent Replacement**

County Councillor Cullens replaced County Councillor Kay.

**2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

No pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests were disclosed.

**3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 6 September 2023**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the last meeting held on 6 September 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

**4. Update Sheet**

The update sheet was circulated prior to the meeting (copy attached).

**5. Fylde Borough: application number LCC/2022/0065 Proposed Anaerobic Digestion plant fuelled by imported feedstock including digester/gas holder and associated equipment, relocated flare, new earth banking/perimeter landscaping and underground gas export pipeline at Stanley Villa Farm, Back Lane, Weeton with Preese**

A report was presented on an application for a Proposed Anaerobic Digestion Plant including digester/gas holder and associated equipment, relocated flare, new earth banking/perimeter landscaping and underground gas export pipeline at Stanley Villa Farm, Back Lane, Weeton with Preese.

The report included the views of Fylde Borough Council, Weeton-with-Preese Parish Council, Greenhalgh Parish Council, the Environment Agency, LCC Highways Development Control and the Lead Local Flood Authority. Five representations objecting to the application had been received which were detailed in the Committee report.

Committee's attention was drawn to the Update Sheet which included details of an email from County Councillor Singleton and details of two additional letters from local residents objecting to the application.

The Head of Development Control presented a Powerpoint presentation showing site location plans, an air photograph of Stanley Villa Farm, proposals for the screen mound and digester vessel, cross sections and landscaping proposals. Also shown were photographs of the view along Back Lane looking towards the site entrance, the view of Back Lane looking east towards the application site and the view of Back Lane looking west towards the site entrance.

Mr Jonathan Johnson, local resident and business owner, addressed the Committee and said the following:

'The papers circulated provide Committee with some additional information that explains the area, as this is missing from the Committee report. One particular issue is so severe, it merits deferment of the application. The extra information with the map on the front shows the location. When the consultation was sent out, the Planning Officer made the assumption that the only issue for consideration was the transport network and screening. Within the documents circulated, it says there's 3,600+ additional uses of HGVs. These aren't silent when either being unloaded or loaded. In the location where we live is a south-westerly prevailing wind which, if you look at the map, blows from the bottom left to the top right hand corner meaning that the people who bear the brunt of this site is my family and our caravan park and, further afield, the residents on Greenhalgh Lane. Greenhalgh Lane is the most densely populated area local to this development and the residents were not notified about it. The reason why people are commenting now is because they found out after the officer's report was published. I told one of my neighbours about the recommendation to approve the application and she didn't know anything about it. Bearing in mind officers haven't contacted them, I ask that this is deferred so neighbours can be contacted. This is the most dangerous application that's ever been put into the area of Greenhalgh as it damages the characteristics of the countryside which has been developed supporting tourism, that are amenities to



people in the local area (horseriders, cyclists) and it is not sufficient to say they are not important. The amenities to people when you're developing towns should ensure they still have access to the places that actually contribute to their health and wellbeing and this is not served by 3,600 HGVs or the development of the site; that is dangerous. Whilst the officer's report mentions that it is safe, it also mentions there will be releases of carbon dioxide, in the event that it does not go into the methane process; that is a greenhouse gas and this type of development in other countries is being banned because it is greenwashing – it doesn't solve a green issue, it creates one in the location where it is sited.'

Mr Richard Johnson, local resident and business owner, addressed the Committee and said the following:

'I was surprised that the residents of Greenhalgh Lane weren't notified by letter as they are within half a mile of the plant and downwind from the prevailing wind. More than half of the people who were notified are upwind and unlikely to smell anything in the atmosphere. The second digester and associated plant is not needed by the potato factory. The first digester has exported electricity to the grid so it's provided all the electricity for the potato factory. Most of the waste is used in the first digester but the second digester unit, admitted in the report, will be virtually 100% imported on a road network that is not suitable for purpose. If you're going to make this particular digester unit, you need to put it somewhere where there's a decent road network. The potential health issues from the plant and the usage of its' produce are evidenced by what happened to me a few weeks ago. I was mowing the grass on the caravan site and they started spreading the digestate on a nearby field and immediately there was a strong ammonia smell. Ammonia is not mentioned as a greenhouse gas. In a couple of minutes, my eyes started to run and my throat was sore. In another couple of minutes, my eyes were streaming and my nasal passages were painful and I had difficulty breathing. I had to go indoors out of the ammonia stench and have several hot drinks to wash out my throat. This is the sort of problem that can exist downwind if there is a fault condition – perhaps with the digestate storage or the chicken manure storage on site. There is also not much information on liquid emissions in normal operation and we have a drain going through our land from the ponds. Currently, living downwind from the farmyard activities is like living next door to an industrial estate – vehicles reversing and beeping and dropping containers onto the concrete floor. I note that the landscaping has not been particularly successful in providing an appropriate degree of visual mitigation – that's because the Fylde Borough Council requirement of a bund and planting wasn't carried out, otherwise we would have trees over 10 metres high and you will see none in front of the digester. It's not safe driving on Back Lane at the moment when you meet an articulated lorry or large manure slurry tanker – you are forced into the hedgerows. A road with limited passing places will not provide a proper solution to the problem, particularly with 3,600 additional large lorries on the road.'

Mr Simon Leaver, one of the Directors for the applicant, addressed the Committee and said the following:

'Thank you for the opportunity to speak to express my strong support for a planning application for an anaerobic digestion facility that will produce bio-methane and inject it into the mains gas grid. This project aligns with the UK's net-zero targets, supports



local employment and contributes to a thriving agricultural economy in Lancashire. The proposed anaerobic digester will play a significant role in the UK's transition to a low carbon economy by producing renewable energy in the form of bio-methane. Bio-methane is a sustainable alternative to fossil fuels and its injection into the mains gas grid will reduce our reliance on non-renewable energy sources, heating 3000 homes, with green gas produced right here in Lancashire. This project directly contributes to the UK's commitment in achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The carbon capture element of the project will also ensure that nearly 5,000 tonnes of carbon is removed from the atmosphere every year – it is not greenwashing. In addition to its environmental benefits, the proposed anaerobic digester will provide valuable support to our co-located fresh produce business which currently employs over 100 people. The digester will utilise organic waste from the fresh produce business, turning it into a valuable source of renewable energy. Fresh produce is a volatile market, subject to large price swings in an increasingly uncertain climate. The symbiotic relationship between the digester and the fresh produce business provides a strong foundation as we face these headwinds, strengthens the local economy and contributes to job security in the region. Furthermore, the proposed project aligns with Lancashire's commitment to a vibrant agricultural economy. The anaerobic digester will not only utilise organic waste from the fresh food produce business but will also provide a sustainable outlet for agricultural waste from surrounding farms. This will create a circular economy model, reducing waste and generating renewable energy for local agricultural resources. The digestate from the plant is a valuable replacement for mineral fertilisers and is returned to the land using precision technology, under permitted conditions. Three weeks ago, our neighbours at Sunnybank Farm were spreading cattle manure using a splash plate spreader which does provide more ammonia emissions than our dribble bar systems. Finally, the proposed anaerobic digester will be operated by a company with a proven track record in managing such facilities. We have successfully operated a similar plant on the same site for the past 7 years, demonstrating our expertise and commitment to environmental stewardship through our successful permitting with the Environment Agency. In conclusion, the proposed anaerobic digester project aligns with the UK's net-zero targets, supports local employment and contributes to a thriving agricultural economy in Lancashire.'

The officer answered questions from Committee.

County Councillor Pope stated that Highways needed to look at the application again as the road structure was not strong enough for the HGVs and the volume of them.

County Councillor Cullens asked whether mounding to screen the site for Greenhalgh Lane residents and the caravan park could be requested.

It was reported that the county council had contacted the applicant to get the level of screening increased. The applicant had confirmed that there would be much wider screening around the proposed site and on the current site. If more landscaping was required, the applicant could be asked to arrange this.

County Councillor Holgate considered that the time allocated to speakers should be reviewed as the Committee benefitted greatly from the residents' insight and local



knowledge, acknowledging that the time should be extended for both objectors and supporters.

After a discussion, it was Proposed and Seconded that:

'the application be deferred, subject to a site visit taking place and more detail to be provided by the applicant on the highway plans, the details of which would be included in the next Committee report'.

Upon being put to the Vote, the Motion was Carried.

**Resolved:** That the application be deferred, subject to:

- (i) a site visit taking place; and
- (ii) more detail to be provided by the applicant on the highway plans, the details of which would be included in the next Committee report.

**6. West Lancashire Borough: application number LCC/2023/0022  
Retrospective application for the change of use of land to site for  
processing and recycling of inert waste. Former Haulage Yard,  
Simonswood Industrial Park, Stopgate Lane, Simonswood**

A report was presented on a retrospective application for the change of use of land to site for processing and recycling of inert waste at the former Haulage Yard, Simonswood Industrial Park, Stopgate Lane, Simonswood.

The report included the views of West Lancashire Borough Council, Knowsley Council, Simonswood Parish Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency, LCC Highways Development Control and the Health and Safety Executive. Nine representations objecting to the application had been received including comments from Councillor Rigby (West Lancashire Councillor) and Councillors Brennan, Rowe and Wright (Knowsley Council), which were detailed in the Committee report.

The Head of Development Control presented a Powerpoint presentation showing site location plans and aerial views of the site and the nearest residential properties and photographs of the view from the site entrance and view of the site.

Mr Dale Milburn, Knowsley Council addressed the Committee and said the following:

'I am Knowsley's Executive Director for Regeneration and Economic Development responsible for the council's planning function. Simonswood Industrial Estate is no longer an industrial estate, it is a waste estate. I know you're aware of just how bad the conditions are there, when you visited the site last year. The amount of waste being processed on the site overall is significantly more than your local plan envisaged and there's been a total failure of regulatory authority to the detriment of the local residents. Unfortunately, I don't believe it's a good idea to keep endorsing



waste activities on an estate where there are significant problems and evidence that the infrastructure cannot simply cope with what is already there. I firmly believe it's time to draw a line under it rather than continue to make things worse. At my request, officers from Knowsley have engaged with West Lancashire, Lancashire and the Environment Agency to develop an action plan to attempt to tackle the problems on the estate. Sadly, there is no guarantee that this will make anything significantly better or, even if it does, that things won't go backwards in a couple of years. With this in mind, I'll now turn to the application itself, which I do not feel is capable of support and I would respectfully urge you to move an alternative resolution to refuse it, based on the following reasons:

It is contrary to policy WM4; there is no processing building on site, despite the policy expectation on such sites. Why is Simonswood, which is in a terrible state, any different, especially given the irrefutable evidence of dust blown contamination to nearby residential properties. Access to the site is via the worst section of the estate road in terms of its condition and there is absolutely no certainty that that section of road will be improved, despite your officers suggestion to the contrary. There is no information about where the employees or visitors to the site would park. The site itself is insecure with an open boundary to the estate road, allowing material to spill out which it clearly has been doing. I strongly question the justification of need for this facility, albeit I welcome its reference, given the last time you considered an application on this estate, your officers were at pains to say the need was irrelevant when making a decision, despite my contention otherwise. Perhaps most surprisingly, the officers report says there is insufficient space for a wheel cleaning facility. Members, this is untrue; there is ample space on site for a wheel wash, if it's just that what is proposed in terms of layout suggests that the applicant has decided not to include one and instead use the area for waste storage. Given the nature of the site, a wheel wash is an essential requirement, though its omission suggests that either there is too much development on the site or that the site is simply too small. To make my point, I would use the following analogies:

You wouldn't grant planning permission for a school without a playground or a retail development without a service yard, yet instead you're being asked to approve a waste site without a wheel wash.

Members, this is not the right development for this site, irrespective of the suggested conditions, and if approved, the opportunity to reduce the harm being caused to local residents will be lost. I therefore respectfully ask you to move a recommendation to refuse.'

Councillor Tommy Rowe addressed the Committee and said the following:

'I, along with Councillors Wright and Brennan, live in and represent Shevington ward, the ward immediately south to Simonswood Industrial Estate, the ward that takes the brunt of the issues caused by all the waste businesses operating on this estate. I have previously addressed this Committee in relation to a proposed medical waste incinerator – I was opposed to the application and I'm equally opposed to this one. I am aware the Committee visited the estate last year in relation to the medical waste incinerator application – Members, the condition of the estate has not improved in any way whatsoever. The application before you seeks to regularise a waste use



that's been operating without planning permission or challenged by officers for a considerable time. Activity which, given the estate's condition, the lack of management and enforcement, only compounds to the problems being encountered by nearby residents, of which I am one. Members, you will be well aware that the industrial estate already accommodates 3 times the amount of waste it should and, having regard to your own waste plan, how can you therefore simply approve more, yet here you are today being asked to do just that. The officer's report references the poor condition of these estate roads but suggests these may be improved if the application for the medical waste incinerator is granted and built. Planning permission has not yet been granted for such a development and even when and if it is, it is potentially subject to a legal challenge. The report further references that your waste plan requires processes such as this one to be undertaken in a building yet this is housed outdoors, but officers say this is okay as the site is well away from residential properties and that noise and dust impacts would not be significant. The materials will be piled 5 metres high and, like on other sites, will be blown onto the road along Stopgate Lane and Pingwood Lane, resulting in dust pollution that will affect residents. Such is the scale of the issue, currently the Environment Agency are installing air quality monitors with a view to potentially taking action against companies operating on the estate, and here you are today being asked to compound the situation. You are being asked to approve this application and, if approved, officers will avoid having to take action against this unauthorised use – instead, they can simply say they are powerless to do anything as the Committee have approved the application. I can see no grounds whatsoever this application can be supported and I would urge you all to refuse it.'

Councillor Aimee Wright addressed the Committee and said the following:

'The Simonswood Working Group that is referred to on page 40 was pulled together at the behest of Knowsley Council because Lancashire County Council and the Environment Agency were not enforcing breaching of control on the site. Make no mistake, Knowsley Council has no enforcement powers over the site and West Lancashire cannot enforce against waste uses – if we could, we both would have acted long before now. We really are glad the group has been formed and that an action plan is being pulled together but this is still at an early stage and there has been no tangible progress made yet I strongly believe that the existing problem on site must be resolved before you can consider granting permission for anything else. Members, this business was operating at the time of your visit last year – it did not have planning permission and was one of the businesses that was contributing to the problems that you were talking about last September. Myself and Councillor Brennan sit on Knowsley's Planning Committee and we can emphasise how difficult it can be to go against the advice of your officers but I urge you to do so in this case. This site is operating but is unauthorised – you can, by refusal today, pro-actively reduce the amount of inert waste being handled on Simonswood Industrial Estate which is already far too much and, as you've already heard, exceeds your plans and limits threefold. Ultimately, it is only Lancashire County Council and you as Members of Development Control Committee that can determine if the site is appropriate for waste processing. Given the limited size of the site and the disproportionate scale of the existing operation, together with the lack of control measures, surely the only conclusion that can be reached is that, in this circumstance, the site is unsuitable for what is being proposed and should be refused. If we simply continue to grant



permission for operations that do not align with their immediate environment, we cannot expect to get any result other than inappropriate development that causes unacceptable harm to local residents. If you approve this application today, then you will be missing a once in a lifetime opportunity to go some way to addressing the awful conditions that you spoke about last September. By refusing this application, there is a good chance that the operation will cease and you will send a strong message to other businesses on the estate and to local residents, that Lancashire County Council is serious about making things better in Simonswood.'

Councillor Tony Brennan addressed the Committee and said the following:

'In addition to me sitting on Knowsley's Planning Committee, I am also the council's Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development, and therefore fully appreciate the constraints in which you must make your decisions and applications such as that before you this morning. That said, as Planning Committee Members, you must offer challenge to the advice offered by our officers, especially after balancing all of the facts we come to a different judgement. As my colleagues have said, we came to the Committee and spoke against the application for the medical waste incinerator last year. At that time, you were just undertaking a visit to the site and we were united in your views about Simonswood Industrial Estate. Let me remind you of some of the things that were said. Chair, Councillor Maxwell-Scott, you said you were shocked by the poor condition of the estate roads and size of the waste piles, a view which you said was shared by Members of the Committee. Councillor Pattison said that the site is a nightmare – skips have been dumped there, it is churned up with waste piles the height of Mount Everest. County Councillor Pattison concluded that it was disgusting. Councillor Holgate was horrified by the condition of the site generally; he said that it sends out worrying concerns to all Committee Members about the capacity and the capability of safe operations for many organisations, building or operation undertaken within the site as a whole. Councillor Clarke said that he was shocked after going on the site visit, about the condition of the site and the total lack of compliance which had been going on. He said it is an absolute disgrace, the whole site. Councillor Yates said that the residents had been let down by no enforcement controls on the site. Councillor Dad said that when he went to the site, he was gobsmacked about the condition of the site and that we needed to make sure that local authorities are doing their job properly. Councillor Kay said it was appalling and that the existing problems should be resolved before the medical waste application was decided. Fairly damning, I'm sure you will agree and nothing has changed. Mud continues to be tracked onto the highway, dust blows into the residents houses and businesses continue to operate without proper permission. This application today may be just one of the many making its way to Committee relating to a site in Simonswood, and I urge you to do the right thing and refuse it; in doing so, send a clear message to others operating without the proper approvals that such will no longer be tolerated. Reasons for refusal include this is not a sustainable development and it will add to the significant unacceptable harm being already caused to the immediate surroundings of the site and the wider area. The size and layout of the site and the nature of the development do not allow sufficient and appropriate environmental controls to be put in place to prevent unacceptable pollution being caused.'





Committee were informed that many of the comments about the condition of the site were not related to this particular application. This was a small application and Committee were reminded to judge it on the impacts of this particular site. In terms of the wider site, officers had been undertaking enforcement work, together with Knowsley Council, West Lancashire Borough Council and the Environment Agency and this application was as a result of that work. The application tried to regularise and bring some control over works that already had an Environmental Permit but no planning permission. It was important to separate out this small site from the overall environmental impacts on the much wider industrial estate, recognising that those impacts were due to other waste operations, and that enforcement action was being taken on those but that there were other issues on the site which were outside of the waste planning process. A very small number of HGV movements were associated with this application, compared to a much larger number, which already benefitted from permission across the wider site.

In relation to the application being retrospective, the applicant had had an Environmental Permit in place since operating but was not aware that planning permission was also required. It was likely that further planning applications would be received for the Simonswood site, to regularise things that were happening without planning permission, in order that the county council could bring things within its control. Where the county council were aware of operators working without planning permission, they had been given until the end of September to apply and, if they have not done so, the county council would apply its enforcement powers.

Officers answered questions from Committee.

Following a discussion, it was Proposed and Seconded that:

"The application be refused, for the reasons as set out in West Lancashire's consultation response, detailed at bullet points 2 and 4, subject to the inclusion of reference to DM2 in relation to bullet point 4"

**Resolved:** That planning permission be refused for the following reason:

*'The proposed development is not enclosed within a building as required by policy WM4 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Development Management and Site Allocation Policies. Without enclosure within a building the development would have unacceptable impacts on the local environment by way of noise and dust contrary to policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Site Allocation and Development Management Policies.'*

- 7. Burnley Borough: application number LCC/2023/0024 Demolition of existing building and construction and operation of an embedded waste fuel gasification and combined heat and power generation facility, utilising densified waste derived fuels at Hapton Valley Transfer Station, Hapton Valley Estate, Accrington Road, Burnley**



A report was presented on an application for the demolition of the existing building and construction and operation of an embedded waste fuel gasification and combined heat and power generation facility, utilising densified waste derived fuels at Hapton Valley Transfer Station, Hapton Valley Estate, Accrington Road, Burnley.

The report included the views of Burnley Borough Council and their Environmental Health Department, Hapton Parish Council, LCC Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency, LCC Highways Development Control, the Coal Authority, United Utilities and LCC Ecology Service. Forty representations objecting to the application had been received, which were detailed in the Committee report.

The Principal Planner presented a Powerpoint presentation showing the site location plan and nearest residential properties, aerial view of the application site, proposed site layout diagrams, 3D visual illustration, elevations, and photographs showing access to the A679, site entrance, existing building to be demolished and building B in front of the application site.

Mr Russell Palmieri, a resident of Valley Gardens, addressed the Committee and said the following:

'I have lived there for 16 years and in the last five years have seen a significant change in Envirofuels. The application is for the facility to operate 24 hours per day. Every morning, apart from Sundays and bank holidays, residents are woken up at 5.30am by revving car engines. In May, Lancashire Waste, parent company of Envirofuels, wrote to a selected number of residents consulting on a proposal to have HGV movements on Sundays and bank holidays. This application is pushing the envelopes of the planning system and talks about relieving the pressure – the facility is already working at capacity and when most businesses get to capacity, they consider relocation; that is what this organisation should do as the site is not fit for purpose. I believe Lancashire County Council have a vested interest as they use this facility. I am hoping that Committee make the right decision. I asked the applicant to demonstrate to Committee two fully functional, similar safe systems as others being used in the UK; one in Yorkshire was mentioned in the planning statement, not using the same fuel. This is about heating and creating gas. I am concerned about gas storage. The applicant says it will create two jobs working 9.00am to 5.00pm – if this is Monday to Friday, it means the facility will not have anyone technically competent to look after it in the event of a failure.'

Councillor Jamie McGowan, Burnley Borough Council addressed the Committee and said the following:

'I am speaking on behalf of over 100 residents who are extremely concerned about the potential health risks of this site. This is a very complex planning application which involves Lancashire County Council, the Environment Agency and Burnley Council Environmental Health. I have visited Valley Gardens on numerous occasions and have seen the issues the residents are having with pollution emissions – black dust/char on windowsills and orange deposits on fences. The Environment Agency visited the site last year and found that no proper filtration was taking place. My main concern is the health of the residents and I would implore Committee to defer a decision on the application and visit the site to see things for themselves. Whilst the



Environment Agency and Burnley Council Environmental Health are the experts in the field, Lancashire County Council and Burnley Borough Council are elected members who represent the people's voice and speak to their residents on the ground. Lots of residents are concerned about the health issues of this application that only elected members have the ability to bring to the front. If Committee could defer this decision and visit the site, I would appreciate that.'

County Councillor Alan Hosker, addressed the Committee and said the following:

'I am here today as County Councillor for this area. I have been to visit the site and have seen the issues that are causing concern. I would personally like to see this application dismissed but would support the proposal to defer the decision and for Committee members to visit the site prior to making a decision. The site is a health hazard. The Environmental Health Team have been involved late in the application and should be asked what their findings are. I support the concerns raised by Councillor McGowan and Mr Palmieri. I represent this area and, as such, request deferral or dismissal of this application.'

Mr Steve Butler, agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee and said the following:

'I am an Independent Environmental Consultant and Chartered Environmentalist through the Society of Environment, bound under the professional Code of Conduct, to provide accurate and impartial advice regarding environmental impacts assessments. The applicant seeks approval to install a small scale gasification plant that provides low carbon renewable heat and power to the wider Lancashire waste management site at Hapton Valley. The fuels used by the gas fire are already produced on site by Envirofuel Ltd. The proposed development seeks to achieve 3 key aims:

- Reduced reliance on fossil fuels, which enables the switching off of the existing large diesel generators on site.
- A reduction of greenhouse gas and other pollutant emissions from the site.
- Reduction in the impacts of the wider waste management activities at Hapton Valley.

There is a pressing need to decrease carbon emissions throughout all aspects of our global economy and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Lancashire, along with Burnley Council, have made a climate emergency declaration and commits to a reduction of industrial carbon emissions and further deployment of renewable energy. The proposed development will directly reduce the fossil fuel usage at the site by 840,000 litres per annum and leads to overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction of over 2,300 tonnes per annum. The project will make the wider Hapton Valley site operations carbon neutral, increase levels of site recycling and reduce outgoing vehicle movements. Various concerns have been raised by the local community and councillors about the use of gasification technologies at the site. These concerns are unwarranted although understandable and all aspects of the proposed plant and equipment have been tested and proven to operate reliably on a wider range of different fuel types. The air impacts of the scheme have been assessed on all identified human health and ecological receptors and habitat sites within 10km, and



the assessments conclude there would be no adverse impacts arising from this development. The applicant can also robustly demonstrate that there would be no adverse impacts arising from noise, transport or landscape and visual effects from the proposed development.

Furthermore, and the key point, is the ability to switch off the existing diesel generators will also significantly reduce local air quality impacts around the site and will positively benefit the local residential communities, and a likely source of the black particulate that has been spoken about.

In summary, the proposed development is environmentally sustainable and required to be delivered under regional and national carbonate energy policy. The sustainability benefits of the proposed development are a material planning consideration and will ensure a sustainable future for the waste operations at the Hapton Valley site.'

The Officer answered questions from Committee.

Committee noted that, although the condition stated that no heavy goods vehicles should leave the site on Sundays or Public Holidays, this condition was historical and that reference to HGVs not being allowed to enter the site on Sundays and bank holidays could be included within the condition.

After a discussion, it was Proposed and Seconded that:

'A site visit be arranged and the application be deferred until the visit had taken place'.

Upon being put to the Vote, the Motion was Carried.

**Resolved:** That a site visit be arranged and the application be deferred, until the visit had taken place.

- 8. Wyre Borough: application number LCC/2023/0030 The extraction and processing of sand and gravel including the construction of new site access roads, landscaping and screening bunds, minerals washing plant and other associated infrastructure with restoration to leisure end-uses, agricultural land and biodiversity enhancement, using imported inert fill. Land off Bourbles Lane, Preesall**

A report was presented on an application for the extraction and processing of sand and gravel including the construction of new site access roads, landscaping and screening bunds, minerals washing plant and other associated infrastructure with restoration to leisure end-uses, agricultural land and biodiversity enhancement, using imported inert fill, at land off Bourbles Lane, Preesall.

It was reported that this application had attracted over 500 representations. It was therefore considered that members of the Committee should visit the site and the surrounding area before considering the application.



**Resolved:** That the Committee visit the site before considering the planning application.

**9. Planning decisions taken by the Director of Environment and Planning in accordance with the County Council's Scheme of Delegation**

It was reported that, since the last meeting of the Development Control Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023, five decisions had been taken on development control matters by the Director of Environment and Planning, in accordance with the County Council's Scheme of Delegation.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

**10. Urgent Business**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

- (i) A provisional meeting date had been set for an Extra-Ordinary Committee on 8 November 2023 at 10.30am in Committee Room B – the Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston.
- (ii) The next scheduled meeting of the Committee be held on Wednesday, 6 December 2023 at 10.30am in Committee Room B - the Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston.

H MacAndrew  
Director of Law and Governance

County Hall  
Preston





## Development Control Committee – 18 October 2023

### Update Sheet

**Item 5 - Planning Application LCC/2022/0065 – Fylde Borough: application number LCC/2022/0065 Proposed Anaerobic Digestion plant fuelled by imported feedstock including digester/gas holder and associated equipment, relocated flare, new earth banking/perimeter landscaping and underground gas**

Email received from County Councillor John Singleton on 17 October 2023: Draws attention to his view that the highway needs widening or at the very least several passing places created to avoid the issue of verge erosion, these works to be funded by the applicant.

CC Singleton notes the issues being raised by one resident regarding the extent of consultation and considers that these views may have merit although notes that it would delay determination of the application.

Representations: Two additional letters have been received from local residents raising concerns/objection to the application.

The first resident is concerned that the current road structure will not support the additional heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic. Attention is drawn to the current condition of Back Lane and Greenhalgh Lane and that these are single lane roads not designed for heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic and where there are conflicts between heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and pedestrians. Concern is also raised regarding odour and general environmental impacts resulting from the chicken manure that is used as a feedstock. The resident also comments that whilst these plants are labelled as 'green energy', they are not quite so green when the feedstock is being imported using diesel powered heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

The second resident is concerned that the consultation process undertaken on the planning application is flawed as it did not include residents on Greenhalgh Lane near to where the digestate is spread.

Advice: The issues raised by the first resident are addressed in the report. With regard to the second resident, the County Council wrote to approximately 25 residents near to the site as well as advertising the application by site and press notice which exceeds the legal requirements. The application is for the anaerobic digestion plant and not for the spreading of digestate and therefore the residents that were consulted were the ones closest to the actual application site and to the route used by the majority of traffic to the site.

