Agenda Item No: 4

At: Land at Streetly Hall Farm, Streetly End, West Wickham CB21 4RP

Applicant: Mr C Covey, Streetly Hall Farm

Application Number: CCC/23/110/FUL

For: Farm-based anaerobic digestion renewable energy facility, construction of vehicular access/road to A1307, associated infrastructure and landscaping

To:	Planning Committee
Date:	17th July 2024
From:	Head of Service, Planning and Sustainable Growth
Electoral division(s):	Linton
Purpose:	To consider the above planning application.
Recommendation:	That permission is granted subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 12.1.

Officer contact: Helen Wass
Post: Team Leader (Principal Planning Officer, Development Management)
Email: helen.wass@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 07771 972694

1. Introduction / Background

1.1 This application is brought to the Planning Committee to determine because there is an unresolved material objection from the local planning authority, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, that cannot be overcome by conditions or planning obligations. A large number of householder responses have also been received with objections which they consider could not be addressed by planning conditions or planning obligations.

1.2 Streetly Hall Farm is a business operating over 950 hectares at three farm locations which works in partnership with other businesses on a further 1,350 hectares and with local straw producers covering an area of 2,000 hectares.

1.2 The applicant sought pre-application advice from the waste planning authority (WPA) and from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) transport assessment, highway development management, ecology and the historic environment team (HET) in early 2023. The advice related to a proposal broadly the same as the proposed development set out in this report. It is noted that some of the WPA's advice has been copied directly into the applicant's Planning Statement. The applicant also engaged with the local community via the local parish councils, prior to submitting the application, in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Statement of Community Involvement (January 2019) and National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) paragraphs 39 – 42.

1,3 Suffolk County Council (SCC) is considering an application for a similar proposal on land to the north of Spring Grove Farm, Withersfield, CB9 7SW which is approximately 4 km southeast of the Streetly Hall Farm site (their planning reference SCC/0045/23SE). If approved, this application to SCC would accept in the region of 92,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) of energy crops, straw, poultry litter and farmyard manure from Thurlow Estates and other local farms.

1.4 Anaerobic digestion (AD) is the breakdown of organic material by micro-organisms in the absence of oxygen. AD produces biogas, a methane-rich gas that can be used as a fuel, and digestate, a source of nutrients that can be used as a fertiliser. Increasingly AD is being used to treat waste and turn it into renewable energy.

2. The Site and Surroundings

2.1 The proposed development site (the site) is within the South Cambridgeshire District Council administrative area at the south of the parish of West Wickham and close to the boundaries with Horseheath to the south and Linton to the west. It is approximately 1.15 km northwest of the hamlet of Streetly End with West Wickham a similar distance to the north east. The application area, including the proposed new access road is 11.17 hectares. The site is part of approximately 25 hectares of field immediately to the west of the Streetly Hall Farm complex and includes 3.8 hectares of trees and wildflower meadow to deliver biodiversity net gain (BNG). The field is bounded a watercourse approximately parallel to Dean Road to the northwest, by Webbs Road to the northeast and public bridleway Horseheath No. 21 to the south. Access to the field is currently from the Streetly Hall Farm complex and at the southeast corner where it joins the bridleway.

2.2 A watercourse runs along most of the field's Webbs Road boundary and becomes the northwestern boundary of the field which renders the adjacent land susceptible to flooding and it is designated as flood zone 2 and 3. The proposed development would be outside flood zones 2 and 3. The site is within a groundwater source protection zone.

2.3 The following residential properties are within 700 metres of the site.

- Streetly Hall Farmhouse (grade II listed)	380 metres southeast
- Streetly Hall	290 metres southeast
- 1 & 2 Streetly Hall Cottages	400 metres southeast
- Dean Road Cottage, Dean Road	660 metres southwest
- Mill House, Linton Road	200 metres east (of access road)

2.4 The proposed access road would cross public bridleway Horseheath No. 21 which follows the route of a Roman Road known as the Via Devana; the nearest section that is designated as a scheduled monument is Worstead Street, 4.7 km to the northwest. Horseheath Lodge (grade II listed) is 1 km southwest, the Church of St Mary, West Wickham (grade II*) is 1.25 km northeast and West Wratting Park House (grade II*) 3.25 km north of the site.

2.5 The site is 1 km to the southeast of Balsham Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and 2.2 km to the west of Over and Lawn Woods SSSI. It is within the Impact Risk Zone for Balsham Wood SSSI and the proposed development is of type where consultation with Natural England is required. The site is 1.3 km to the east of Borley Wood County Wildlife Site (CWS), 1.9km to the northwest of Hare Wood CWS and 2.3 km to the southwest of Leys Wood CWS.

2.6 The site is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) for chalk in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021).

3. The Proposed Development

3.1 The proposed development is an AD facility which would use 60,000 – 75,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) of agricultural waste and energy crops from the applicant's and other local farms to generate approximately 750 cubic metres of biomethane per hour for export to the national gas grid. The AD process would also produce approximately 30,000 cubic metres of liquid digestate and 20,000 tonnes of solid digestate. The liquid digestate would be held in a covered storage lagoon until it can be applied to arable land. The digestate would be either applied to the adjoining arable land via pipes or transported by tanker to other arable areas of the farm or to farms that have supplied feedstock, especially straw. It may also be converted to a solid fertiliser for application to the land alongside the solid digestate. Biogas produced by the anaerobic digestion of the feedstock would be separated into biomethane and carbon dioxide (CO^2). The biomethane would be injected into the gas network at a point close to the facility, where an intermediate pressure (2-7 bar) gas pipeline runs. CO^2 would be collected for use in the food industry or sequestration off-site, making the facility have the net effect of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere rather than adding it.

3.2 The proposed development would comprise:

- Creation of a new access from the A1307 approximately 200 metres west of Mill House;
- 2 silage clamps each measuring 112 metres x 25 metres;
- 2 silage clamps each measuring 112 metres x 21 metres;
- 3 fermenter tanks each with a diameter of 30 metres; height to top of wall 8 metres; maximum dome height 16.1 metres;
- Post fermenter tank with a diameter of 30 metres; height to top of wall 8 metres; maximum dome height 16.1 metres
- Pre-storage tank with a diameter of 9 metres and height of 4 metres;
- Ferric chloride tank with a diameter of 3.79 metres and height of 4 metres;
- 3 pasteurisation tanks each with a diameter of 2.89 metres and height of 7 metres;
- Buffer tank with a diameter of 3.2 metres and height of 7.2 metres;
- External desulphurisation infrastructure comprising 2 tanks each with a diameter of 3.9 metres and height of 4.3 metres and a container measuring 6 x 2.2 metres x 3 metres high;
- Gas technology unit measuring 10 metres x 5 metres x 3.7 metres high;
- LV board and emergency generator measuring 6.2 x 4.6 x 2 metres high;
- Grid entry unit measuring 8 x 3 metres x 2.52 metres high;
- CHP unit measuring 9.6 x 6.27 metres x 4.59 metres high;
- Power to heat module measuring 9 x 3 metres x 2.8 metres high;
- 4 CO2 tanks with a combined measurement of 21 x 13.10 metres x 3.4 metres high;
- 2 feed hoppers each measuring 4 x 14.6 metres x 4.7 metres high;
- Covered digestate storage lagoon;
- Surface water lagoon;
- Dirty water lagoon;
- CO2 recovering unit measuring 11. 84 x 5.76 metres x 3.7 metres high;
- Gas upgrade unit measuring 11. 84 x 5.76 metres x 3.7 metres high;
- Feedstock storage building measuring 80 x 36 metres x 12.6 metres high;
- Straw barn measuring 50 x 20 metres x 11.6 metres high;
- Flare with a diameter of 2.2 metres diameter and height of 7.3 metres;
- Technical building measuring 4.34 metres x 4.34 metres x 3 metres high;
- Weighbridge office measuring 8 metres x 5 metres x 6.2 metres high; and
- Weighbridge.

Feedstock and traffic movements

3.3 At least half of the feedstock would be agricultural wastes and residues such as straw, farmyard manure, slurry, and poultry litter; the remaining portion would be energy crops such as maize and whole crop silage, or other agricultural products, such as sugar beet pulp and waste food and vegetables before they have entered the food chain. At least half of the feedstock would be supplied by the applicant's own and partner farming businesses from arable rotation and waste/residue production. In combination, at least 70% of feedstock would be sourced from farms within a 10km radius of the plant. At least 10% of the feedstock would be directly from Streetly Hall Farm, such as from the cattle sheds immediately to the east of the site and would not use the public highway. Of the traffic that would use the public highway, 75% would use the proposed new access directly from the A1307. This road would also be used for other farm traffic. The primary feedstock locations and transport routes are shown on Figure 1 below.

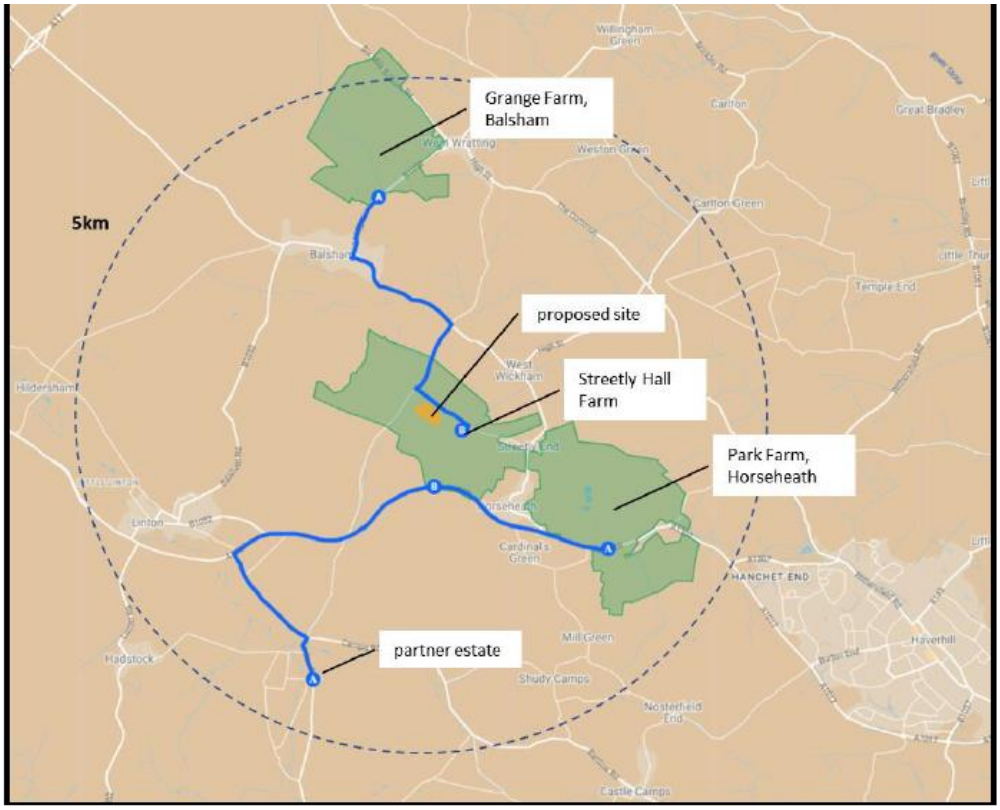


Figure 1 – Feedstock sources and transport routes (Source: Planning Statement)

3.4 It is proposed that feedstock would generally be delivered to the plant Mondays to Saturdays (except bank holidays) at regular intervals between 07:00 and 19:00 but during the busiest harvest season this could be between 06:00 and 22:00 seven days per week. HGV movements on the public highway would be generated by importing the off-farm feedstock, removal of the digestate and removal of CO^2. There would be a total of 10,736 HGV movements (5,368 in and 5,368 out) spread over 305 days of deliveries during a calendar year. There would be peaks in June, July, September and October during harvest season and when digestate is removed when there would be 1,272 HGV movements per month and troughs in January, August, November and December when 484 HGV movements per month would be generated. This amounts to an average of 36 HGV movements per day (18 in and 18 out) and during peak months 46 (23 in and 23 out) per day. The breakdown of these movements on an average day is shown in Figure 2 below.

Daily trips to/from	Loads of material type				
	Energy crops	Straw	Digestate	Other	Total
Streetly Hall Farm (local)	0.50	0.14	0.47	0.09	1.21
Park Farm (A1307 east)	0.50	0.14	0.47	0.28	1.40
Grange Farm (Dean Road north)	1.02	0.11	0.50	0.19	1.82
Partner Farms (A1307 west)	1.29	0.58	1.67	0.38	3.91
Other Farms (Dean Road north)	0.17	0.11	0.25	0.09	0.63
Other Farms (A1307 east)	0.51	0.33	0.76	0.28	1.88
Other Farms (A1307 west)	1.02	0.65	1.53	0.56	3.77
Other ag waste sources (Dean Road north)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.15
Other ag waste sources (A1307 east)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.30
Other ag waste sources (A1307 west)	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.03	1.03
Bio CO2 to Humber (A1307 west)	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.07	1.07
Plant total	**5.03**	**2.06**	**5.65**	**4.42**	**17.16**
rounded up	**6.00**	**3.00**	**6.00**	**5.00**	**18.00**

Figure 2 – Average daily movements (loads) (from Transport Statement May 2024)

3.5 It is anticipated that there would be 5 full-time employees with 3 or 4 working on site at any one time and a maximum of 1 visitor per day therefore there would generally be up to 10 small vehicle movements per day (5 in and 5 out).

Hours of operation

3.6 AD is a continuous process but operations such as the receipt of feedstock and operation of mobile plant would generally take place between 07:00 and 19:00 Mondays to Saturdays (except bank holidays) but during the busiest harvest time this could be between 06:00 and 22:00 seven days per week. Plant operators would usually be on site between 07:00 and 17:00 Mondays to Saturdays.

4. Planning History

4.1 There is no planning history relating to the proposed development site (source: Greater Cambridge Shared Planning public access and CCC records).

5. Publicity

5.1 The application was advertised in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 by means of a notice in the Cambridge News on 2 November 2023 and site notices at the entrance to Streetly Hall Farm on Webbs Road, at the junction of Webbs Road and Dean Road and on bridleway 131/21 at its junction with Dean Road on 3 November 2023. Discretionary

notification letters were sent to the occupiers of properties within 500 metres of the site.

5.2 Additional information was submitted by the applicant on 15 May 2024. Consultees and individuals who had already commented on the application were notified.

6. Consultation Responses

6.1 The following section is a summary of the consultation responses received. The full responses are available on the Council's public access planning webpages.

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (GCSP) – **Object**

6.2 Landscape Officer - There is concern about the development's impact on the local landscape character and that in some instances the landscape has been under-valued. Whilst the intention to heavily plant trees in the area around the proposed structures and lagoons is justified and positive, it cannot screen the proposals from many of the identified views and will be a detractive element in the open landscape which is not in keeping with the character of the area. While the topography of the area does reasonably well at screening the development from the south east, the same topography opens the site up to views from hillsides and adjacent areas. Ultimately the facility will be visible and will be a negative component of the rural landscape despite the improved green infrastructure and landscaping. If planning permission is granted further landscape details should be secured by condition. The applicant has not considered or supplied information on how the access road will cross the Roman Road/Harcamlow Way. There are concerns about the impact additional traffic may have on this section of the Roman Road and the agricultural land in the vicinity.

GCSP Conservation officer [no comments received on applicant's response to initial comments]

6.3 The site does not contribute to the significance of St Mary's Church (grade II* listed) or West Wratting Park House (grade II*) and the proposed development would have a negligible impact on their respective settings due to the distances and screening provided by intervening trees and landscape features. The development would have a harmful impact on the setting and significance of the Streetly Hall Farmhouse (grade II listed). The harm is considered less than substantial and should therefore be balanced against the public benefits of the proposal as required by NPPF paragraph 202 [since the December update of the NPPF this is now paragraph 208].

6.4 The proposed access track would cross the route of the Via Devana Roman road, which is non-designated in this location but considered of local historic landscape significance. The track is likely to result in harm to the significance of the road, and therefore mitigation, as recommended by County Council archaeological advisors, is required.

South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) Environmental Health Officer (EHO)

6.5 Agrees broadly with the conclusions in the applicant's Noise Impact Assessment and do not expect significant adverse impact from the development as proposed. A condition

restricting noisy works to between the hours of 08:00 -18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00-13:00 Saturday and not at any time on Sundays or Bank or Public Holiday is recommended.

6.6 The applicant's Odour Assessment models odour emissions from the proposal and the likely impact it may have on nearby sensitive receptors, taking into account meteorological data. It suggests that odour complaints are unlikely to arise from the development which will be subject to an environmental permit which will regulate the site in relation to odour (and noise) impacts.

6.7 The applicant's Air Quality Assessment models pollutant emissions from the proposal and the likely impact it may have on nearby sensitive human and ecological receptors, taking into account meteorological data. Its conclusions that air quality impacts can be classified as not significant for both human and ecological receptors are acceptable. The environmental permit required for site operation will ensure that pollutant concentrations will remain acceptable for the operational period of the development.

Environment Agency (EA) – **No objection**

6.8 The information submitted by the applicant in May 2024 overcomes previous objections relating to groundwater contamination principally from the lagoons and leachate storage tank. Planning permission could be granted subject to conditions covering:
- previously unidentified ground contamination during construction;
- surface water disposal scheme; and
- piling or other penetrative works.
Without these conditions, the proposed development poses an unacceptable risk to the environment.

6.9 The development will require a permit under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (England and Wales) 2016. The following will be considered further when the permit application is assessed: techniques for pollution control including in process controls, emission control, management, waste feedstock and digestate, energy, accidents, noise and monitoring; emission benchmarks for combustion products, temperature and pH; air quality impact assessment, including odour and Habitats Regulations Assessment. A permit will only be granted where the risk to the environment is acceptable.

6.10 The application of digestate to agricultural land is regulated under the Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2015 and the Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations 2018 (Farming Rules for Water) and may also require an environmental permit under Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016. The applicant must ensure that there is sufficient land bank for the digestate and that contingency measures are in place for when this is not available.

Natural England – **No objection**

6.11 Anaerobic digester plants, and their associated infrastructure, such as digestate stores, are a potential ammonia (NH_3) emission source, which is directly toxic to vegetation and especially to lower plants (mosses, liverworts and lichens). Ammonia is also a major contributor to the deposition of nitrogen, which reduces habitat biodiversity by promoting the growth of a relatively small number of more vigorous plant species that are nitrogen

tolerant. These nitrogen tolerant species can out-compete and impact on many characteristic ancient woodland species plants and mosses, degrading the ecological integrity of ancient woodland sites such as Over and Lawn Woods SSSI. Without appropriate mitigation the application would damage or destroy the interest features for which Alder Carr, Balsham Wood, Over and Lawn Woods, Fleam Dyke, Furze Hill, and Roman Road Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) have been notified. In order to mitigate these adverse effects and make the development acceptable, the lagoon cover and associated systems and any future replacements should be of equivalent or better effectiveness as that specified in the application documents, to ensure that the air quality assessment remains accurate.

6.12 Historic England – Do not wish to offer advice.

6.13 Active Travel England – No comments to make.

CCC Transport Assessment Team – **No objection**

6.14 The methodology and assumptions used to determine the proposed vehicle trip generation and distribution are agreed. The maximum proposed plant capacity of 75,000 tonnes per year is anticipated to generate a worst-case 64 daily vehicle trips during the peak harvest periods (56 HGV trips and 8 car trips with accessing and egressing being separate trips). During the peak traffic periods within peak harvest, the development will generate 14 two-way HGV trips (10 using the new access from the A1307 and 4 using the existing farm access off Webb's Road) and 4 two-way car trips. The existing access from the A1307 which is shared with a dwelling would no longer be used for farm traffic which use the new access at a rate of 2 two-way trips per day in the traffic peak and harvest peak.

6.15 The future assessment years modelled are agreed. The committed development traffic flows and TEMPRO background traffic growth included within the assessment are also agreed. The proposed site access junction off the A1307 is anticipated to operate within capacity under all future year assessment scenarios. The right turn lane and left turn in slip road have been demonstrated to be able to accommodate the vehicles anticipated to access the site from the A1307. Construction traffic (timings and routing) could be managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) which could be secured by planning condition.

6.16 The proposed new access from the A1307 would have a right-hand turn lane for right movements in and a slip road for left movements in. The design has gone through the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit process which has been approved by the CCC Highways Development Management Team.

CCC Highway Development Management – **No objection**

6.17 Following submission and completion of the Road Safety Audit Stage 1, the proposed new access is acceptable to the highway authority. The effect of the proposed development on the public highway would likely be mitigated if the following are secured by condition:
- no vehicles associated with the development to use the existing access from the A1307 which is shared with a dwelling;
- the new access to the A1307 to be constructed in accordance with detailed design before the development is brought into operation

- a construction traffic management plan;
- no gates to be erected across the new access onto the A1307 within 20 metres of the junction give way;
- the first 25 metres of the new access to be constructed using a bound material; and
- the new access to be constructed so that no water from the site drains across or onto the public highway.

CCC Public Rights of Way – **No objection**

6.18 The proposed access to the site crosses Public Bridleway No. 21, Horseheath (also known as The Roman Road). The previous objection is removed because the applicant has provided sufficient details on signage and has submitted a satisfactory surface change authorisation form to the CCC Rights of Way Officer which would be approved separately to the planning application.

CCC Ecology Officer **– No objection**

6.19 The proposal is acceptable on ecology grounds, providing that the information to ensure protection and enhancement of biodiversity is secured through suitably worded planning conditions. Previous concerns about badgers have been addressed. Natural England's position on the impact of the development on designated wildlife sites is noted.

6.20 The Ecological Impact Assessment has not been expanded to assess the proposed landscape works within the blue line boundary, as previously requested and has not been updated to include hedgerows. The reversion of intensive arable fields to "other neutral grassland" habitat of "good condition" is considered unrealistic at this location, based on local knowledge of habitat creation delivered as part of other development schemes. Over a 30-year management period the site would deliver, at best, a grassland flora of "moderate" condition. An adjusted BNG calculation would show that the proposals within the red line boundary [the application area] would result in a net loss of 0.78 habitat units (-3.4%). However, if the off-site landscape proposals are taken into account there is the potential for the development to deliver a net gain of approximately 8.21 habitat units (35% net gain).

CCC Historic Environment Team (CHET) – **No objection**

6.21 A programme of trial trenched evaluation has been undertaken within the development area which was designed to target a number of anomalies identified in the previous geophysical survey and identified remains including a middle Iron Age pit cluster and a trackway to the south of the development area. Further evaluation is required to establish the presence, absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the wider development. Based on the result of this initial phase of archaeological evaluation, this does not need to be undertaken before the planning application is determined and can be secured by condition.

Lead Local Flood Authority – **No objection**

6.22 The AD plant drainage system will reuse surface water runoff create a sustainable system. A pumped system has been designed to ensure that it can contain up to and including the 1 in 100-year rainfall event plus appropriate allowance for climate change which will

ensure that there is no above ground surface water flooding including for pump failure. A lined attenuation basin and permeable paving is proposed. Surface water disposal via infiltration is proposed. One of two infiltration tests failed therefore further testing is proposed at the detailed design stage. Should infiltration testing fail again, surface water would be discharged to the watercourse to the north as close to greenfield rates as possible. Conditions are recommended to secure the detailed design.

CCC Public Health Officer – **No objection**

6.23 Agree that the points about noise, odour and dust, identified as neutral in the Rapid Assessment have no potentially significant effect on human health as long as mitigation and management are carried out. The overall scheme brings positive impacts to human health and wellbeing if the site is run in accordance with the environmental permit such as meeting the wider determinants of health and the potential ensuing benefits to our communities including contributing to mitigating climate change and achieving energy security.

CCC Climate Change and Energy Service (CC&ES) – **Support**

6.24 From the information provided by the applicant the net carbon impacts of the proposed development are likely to be beneficial. The main benefits in terms of carbon emissions/savings are indirect because they do not occur from the development itself, but from the avoidance of fossil fuel use elsewhere, provided the green gas is replacement not new capacity. The size of this benefit will reduce when the mains gas grid has a higher proportion of green gas and there is less fossil fuel to replace.

6.25 Fire and Rescue Service – **No objection**

6.26 Adequate provision should be made for fire hydrants, secured by planning condition.

British Horse Society – **Objects**

6.27 The proposals impact negatively on the amenity of Bridleway 131/21 which is the only bridleway in West Wickham, Horseheath and Streetly End and is a peaceful, traffic-free and safe route. The vehicle movements that would cross the bridleway will be a danger for horse riders and other users. The proposal does not include improvements to the rights of way network such as upgrading footpaths in Horseheath and West Wikham to bridleways.

Ramblers Association (Cambridge Group) – **Objects**

6.28 Not opposed to AD plants in principle because of their long-term benefits for the environment but the size of the proposed development would change the character of the area to industrial and it would be visible from local well-used footpaths. The vehicles crossing bridleway 131/21 would compromise the safety of walkers. Webbs Road and Dean Road are used by walkers to connect to footpaths and are not wide enough for the traffic generated by the development to pass safely. Noise from the plant and associated traffic would disturb the peace and quiet of the countryside.

West Wickham Parish Council – **Objects**

6.29 - Contrary to SCLP Policy NH/2 because does not respect, retain or enhance the landscape character and distinctiveness of the area. The mitigation will not address this and the impacts have not been minimised.
- Contrary to SCLP Policy CC/2 because there will be unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of residents in West Wickham and other villages because of increased traffic on narrow rural roads and odour and air pollution. It should be a requirement that the clamps storing the animal waste are covered except during loading as stated in the Air Quality Addendum.
- Contrary to Neighbourhood Plan WWK/8 in that it will impact adversely on the public enjoyment of rights of way through high numbers of large vehicles crossing the Roman Road and visual and odour impacts.
- Contrary to Neighbourhood Plan WWK/6 int that the application does not specify the lighting that will be used. Continuous lighting should not be permitted.
- Contrary to SCLP Policy NH/3 because it would lead to the irreversible loss of 8 hectares of high quality agricultural land.
- The plant could be smaller if it were sized to only deal with Streetly Hall Farm and other locally sourced feedstocks.

Horseheath Parish Council – **Objects**

6.30 - Should be on brownfield site in line with MWLP.
- Local roads unsuitable for proposed volume of traffic.
- Increased risk of accidents on A1307 from large volume of slow-moving vehicles and mud.
- Feedstock likely to be drawn from further than the proposed 'home farms'
- Will be very visible in the landscape; further screening is needed.
- Impact on grade II listed Horseheath Lodge has not been considered (noise, light odour).
- Roman Road should be treated as equivalent to the scheduled parts. The vehicle crossing will damage it and affect users (noise, odour, light, visual impacts).
- Flies and vermin not addressed.
- Odour and inability of regulators to control this.
- Carbon footprint would change if biogas cannot be injected to the gas main locally and instead it transported by road.
- Very little economic or social benefit to the community; end products will not be used locally. Funding for local projects should be required.

Balsham Parish Council – **Objects**

6.31 - the route from Grange Farm to Streetly Hall Farm past the junction of Burrell Way/West Wratting Road is used by school children so is unsuitable for additional heavy traffic. Movement of large vehicles should be restricted between 08:00 and 09:00 and 14:45 and 15:45 on weekdays.
- any increase in traffic movements on all roads in Balsham is opposed.

Bartlow Parish Council – **Some support in principle but objections**

6.32 - support the general objective of creating renewable energy.
- the increase in HGVs passing through the village is unacceptable; traffic should not be allowed to use the Bartlow Road to Linton.

- the crossroads is already busy especially at peak school and commuter times with regular accidents; will increase wear and tear on road markings making the junction priorities unclear.
- light, noise and particularly odour pollution.
- water seepage affecting drinking water source and causing flooding.
- abstraction of water from River Granta which already has periods of low flow.

Linton Parish Council - **Objects**

6.33 - safety of large number of lorries/tractors on A1307.
- increased number of large number of large vehicles on narrow country road and in the surrounding villages
- site is on a slope - impacts on surface and groundwater including River Granta.
- impact on users and wildlife of the Roman Road bridleway
- odour and noise exacerbated by wind

Haverhill Town Council (West Suffolk) – **Objects**

6.34 - No economic or social benefit to the area as the gas will be transported by truck to Hull and then exported by pipeline to the continent.
- The proposed access onto the 50 mph A1307, even with the ghost island, will be dangerous for trucks.
- Much of the feedstock from a 12-mile radius would go through Horseheath, Withersfield and Haverhill.
-The same local farms cannot supply feedstock to both this and the proposed AD plant at Spring Farm.
- Potential leakage of liquid digestate and contamination of groundwater.
- Manure, fruit and sugar beet pulp will have a strong odour.
- Maize is bulky and many trucks will be required to transport it.
- Land will be taken out of food production.
- Will deter high-tech companies from locating in Haverhill
- Methane gas is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide and any leaks will be detrimental to the atmosphere.
- Impact on bridleway for users and wildlife.

Withersfield Parish Council (West Suffolk) – **Objects**

6.35 - number and distribution of large vehicle movements going through West Wickham, Balsham, Horseheath and possibly Withersfield on unsuitable roads.
- impact on A1307 of slow-moving vehicles in combination with traffic from proposed AD plant at Spring Grove Farm.
- local sourcing of feedstock is not a binding commitment.
- impact on the Roman Road and its users' recreational enjoyment of the landscape.
- impact on protected groundwater source from leakage or spills.
- risk of explosions of methane tanks.
- noise from fixed plant, loading plant and HGVs delivering feedstock.
- odour pollution especially from silage and animal waste.
- proposed screening is inadequate for 17 metre high structure on a hill.
- would affect views across the rural area and the quiet enjoyment of the area by residents.

- light pollution.
- conflict with development plan policy and the NPPF; adverse impacts significantly outweigh the benefits claimed by the applicant.
- if the biomethane is not injected into the gas grid locally and instead transported by road would not be environmentally sound.

6.36 West Wratting Parish Council - No comments received.

6.37 Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) – No comments received.

6.38 Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke – No comments received.

7. Representations

7.1 Representations have been received from around 130 individuals or households, some having made more than one submission. Of those, 3 support the proposal in principle because it would generate renewable energy or be the development of a farm business but consider that it is the wrong place because of traffic and the source of feedstock. Another is neutral if traffic does not use Dean Road and Webbs Road. The great majority object to the development for the reasons summarised below. A copy of the full representations will be shared with members of Planning Committee one week before the meeting.

7.2 Traffic and highways

- Will exacerbate congestion and accident risk on the A1307
- Increased traffic on unsuitable narrow country roads a danger to other users especially pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders including from two local racehorse training yards
- Increased traffic in combination with traffic from the proposed Spring Grove Farm AD plant
- Damage to roads and verges
- Emissions from traffic and impact on air quality
- Straw etc dropped from loads
- Queries on what route the digestate will take.

Roman Road

- Damage to a historic feature
- Frequent HGV movements would make it unsafe for right of way users, especially horse-riders
- Visual, noise and odour impacts would make unattractive to use, adversely affecting well-being.

Landscape and visual impact

- Industrialisation of rural landscape harming character of the area
- Visible from near and distant viewpoint including rights of way.

Historic environment

- Impact on setting of listed farmhouse
- Impact of traffic vibration on old and/or listed buildings.

Impact on local businesses
- Will deter customers for instance from using hospitality/tourism businesses
- Traffic will affect viability of racehorse training yards

Wildlife
- Impact on SSSIs
- Impact on local wildlife including on Roman Road
- Energy crops will create mono-culture.

Pollution
- Odour from especially animal waste and digestate
- Of watercourses and groundwater affecting drinking water source and wildlife
- Noise from plant, other site operations and traffic
- Lighting will spoil rural dark skies and affect wildlife
- Will attract flies.

Agriculture
- Permanent loss of high-quality agricultural land for the plant site
- Land taken out of food production for energy crops
- Crops unsuited to area & will result in soil damage
- Too large for the farm's and locally sourced feedstock – will generate high transport miles
- Feedstock sources not guaranteed.

Sustainability
- Carbon balance incorrect owing to transport impacts
- Carbon balance makes incorrect assumption about crops
- If biogas not direct to grid transport by tanker, would be unsustainable
- Water use in area of water shortage.

Safety
- Risk of explosion (has happened at other AD plants)
- Geological instability of the site.

Other
- 5 new jobs not outweighed by impact on residents .

The following comments that are not material planning considerations have also been made in representations – effect on house prices; source of funding/subsidies; ability of EA to regulate; site management expertise; potential expansion.

8. Planning Policy

National planning policy

8.1 There is a raft of legislation, policy and targets which seek to deliver more sustainable waste management and protect the environment. These include the revised Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC (transposed into English legislation through the Waste

(England and Wales) Regulations 2011), as well as national policy on waste as set out within the Waste Management Plan for England (2021). The EU Withdrawal Act 2018 maintains established environmental principles and ensures that existing EU environmental law continues to have effect in UK law. The Waste Management Plan for England (2021) focuses on waste arisings and their management. It is a high-level, non-site-specific document and sets out the Government's ambition to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. The Government's Anaerobic Digestion Strategy and Action Plan (Defra/DECC June 2011) is supportive of the principle of AD in contributing to renewable energy. In October 2023 the then Government announced that it would be extending the Green Gas Support Scheme to 31 March 2028. The Green Gas Support Scheme Mid-Scheme Review (Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, January 2024) states that:

> "Biomethane is a renewable energy source which can contribute to our net zero goals and increase our country's energy security across a range of sectors through the decarbonisation of heating, power generation, transport, and agriculture. … The production of biomethane from anaerobic digestion (AD) also presents an opportunity to create a more circular economy which delivers upstream emissions savings and wider environmental benefits through its role as a waste management technology."

8.2 In England, the waste hierarchy is both a guide to sustainable waste management and a legal requirement, enshrined in law through the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011. The waste hierarchy ranks options for waste management giving priority to preventing the creation of waste in the first place, followed by preparing waste for reuse, recycling and then recovery including by incineration where there is energy recovery. Disposal – in landfill for example or incineration without energy recovery – is regarded as the worst option. The 2011 Regulations require everyone involved in waste management and waste producers in England (and Wales) to, on the transfer of waste, take all reasonable measures to apply the priority order in the waste hierarchy except where for specific waste streams departing from the priority order is justified by lifecycle thinking on the overall effects of generating and managing the waste.

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) (the NPPF)

8.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. At its heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 states that:

"For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most relevant for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless:

i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of this Framework

taken as a whole."

8.4 Paragraphs 2 and 47 of the NPPF reminds us that "Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise." Paragraph 8 sets out three interdependent overarching objectives of the planning system to achieve sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

8.5 Paragraph 4 states that the NPPF should be read in conjunction with the Government's planning policy for waste, the National Planning Policy for Waste.

National Planning Policy for Waste (October 2014) (the NPPW)

8.6 Paragraph 1 of the NPPW states that "Positive planning plays a pivotal role in delivering this country's waste ambitions through:

• delivery of sustainable development and resource efficiency, including provision of modern infrastructure, local employment opportunities and wider climate change benefits, by driving waste management up the waste hierarchy (see Appendix A [of the NPPW]);
• ensuring that waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns, such as housing and transport, recognising the positive contribution that waste management can make to the development of sustainable communities;
• providing a framework in which communities and businesses are engaged with and take more responsibility for their own waste, including by enabling waste to be disposed of or, in the case of mixed municipal waste from households, recovered, in line with the proximity principle;
• helping to secure the re-use, recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment; and
• ensuring the design and layout of new residential and commercial development and other infrastructure (such as safe and reliable transport links) complements sustainable waste management, including the provision of appropriate storage and segregation facilities to facilitate high quality collections of waste."

8.7 Paragraph 7 states that "When determining planning applications, waste planning authorities should:

• only expect applicants to demonstrate the quantitative or market need for new or enhanced waste management facilities where proposals are not consistent with an up-to-date Local Plan. In such cases, waste planning authorities should consider the extent to which the capacity of existing operational facilities would satisfy any identified need;

• recognise that proposals for waste management facilities such as incinerators that cut across up-to-date Local Plans reflecting the vision and aspiration of local communities can give rise to justifiable frustration, and expect applicants to demonstrate that waste disposal facilities not in line with the Local Plan, will not undermine the objectives of the Local Plan through prejudicing movement up the waste hierarchy;

• consider the likely impact on the local environment and on amenity against the criteria set out in Appendix B and the locational implications of any advice on health from the relevant health bodies. Waste planning authorities should avoid carrying out their own

detailed assessment of epidemiological and other health studies;

• ensure that waste management facilities in themselves are well-designed, so that they contribute positively to the character and quality of the area in which they are located;

• concern themselves with implementing the planning strategy in the Local Plan and not with the control of processes which are a matter for the pollution control authorities. Waste planning authorities should work on the assumption that the relevant pollution control regime will be properly applied and enforced;

• ensure that land raising or landfill sites are restored to beneficial after uses at the earliest opportunity and to high environmental standards through the application of appropriate conditions where necessary."

8.8 Appendix B of the NPPW states that in determining planning applications, waste planning authorities should consider the following factors and bear in mind the type and scale of the proposed waste facility:

a. protection of water quality and resources and flood risk management
b. land instability
c. landscape and visual impacts
d. nature conservation
e. conserving the historic environment
f. traffic and access
g. air emissions, including dust
h. odours
i. vermin and birds
j. noise, light and vibration
k. litter
l. potential land use conflict

Where relevant to the current proposal, these matters are covered later in this report but not necessarily in that order.

8.9 Other paragraphs of the NPPF considered to be relevant to the proposal are listed below and set out in full in Appendix 1.

Paragraphs 7 & 8 Achieving sustainable development
Paragraphs 39 – 42 Pre-application engagement and front-loading
Paragraph 85 Building a strong, competitive economy
Paragraphs 88 & 89 Supporting a prosperous rural economy
Paragraphs 108, 109, 114 – 117 Promoting sustainable transport
Paragraphs 135 & 139 Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
Paragraphs 157, 159 & 163 Planning for climate change
Paragraphs 173 & 175 Planning and flood risk
Paragraph 180 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Paragraph 186 Habitats and biodiversity
Paragraphs 191 & 194 Ground conditions and pollution
Paragraphs 200, 201, 203, 205, 208, 209 & 211 Conserving the historic environment

The development plan

8.10 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) states that "in dealing with an application for planning permission the authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application and any other material considerations." Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise." The development plan comprises the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (adopted July 2021) and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (adopted September 2018). The relevant development plan policies are listed in paragraph 8.11 and 8.12 below and are set out in full in Appendix 1.

8.11 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) (MWLP)

Policy 1	Sustainable Development and Climate Change
Policy 3	Waste Management Needs
Policy 4	Providing for Waste Management
Policy 5	Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAS)
Policy 17	Design
Policy 18	Amenity Considerations
Policy 20	Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy 21	The Historic Environment
Policy 22	Flood and Water Management
Policy 23	Traffic, Highways and Rights of Way
Policy 24	Sustainable Use of Soils
Appendix 3	The Location and Design of Waste Management Facilities

8.12 South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) (SCLP)

Policy S/3	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Policy S/7	Development Frameworks
Policy CC/1	Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change
Policy CC/2	Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation
Policy CC/4	Water Efficiency
Policy CC/6	Construction Methods
Policy CC/7	Water Quality
Policy CC/8	Sustainable Drainage Systems
Policy CC/9	Managing Flood Risk
Policy HQ/1	Design Principles
Policy NH/2	Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
Policy NH/3	Protecting Agricultural Land
Policy NH/4	Biodiversity
Policy NH/5	Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance
Policy NH/14	Heritage Assets
Policy SC/2	Health Impact Assessment
Policy SC/9	Lighting Proposals
Policy SC/10	Noise Pollution
Policy SC/12	Air Quality

Policy SC/14 Odour and Other Fugitive Emissions to Air
Policy TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel
Policy TI/3 Parking Provision

8.13 West Wickham Neighbourhood Plan (made 23 September 2023) (WWNP)

Policy WWK/6 Dark landscape
Policy WWK/8 Access to the countryside

8.14 The following Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are relevant:

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (July 2016);
Health Impact Assessment SPD (March 2011);
Landscape in New Developments SPD (March 2010);
Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction (January 2020); and
Greater Cambridge Biodiversity SPD (February 2022).

9. Planning Considerations

Principle of the proposed development

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraphs 7, 157 & 163
	MWLP	Policy 1 & Policy 3
	SCLP	Policies S/3, CC/1 & CC/2

9.1 The purpose of the proposed development is to use primarily agricultural waste and energy crops, with some food waste, to generate energy (biomethane). The digestate by-product would be used on land as fertiliser. The process would result in little or no waste and the CO^2 would be captured and stored off site. Energy from waste (EfW) is a type of recovery which is below prevention, preparing for re-use and recycling but above disposal in the waste hierarchy as shown in Appendix A of the NPPW. The waste element of the feedstock would principally be straw, farmyard manure, slurry, and poultry litter where potential options higher up the waste hierarchy are limited. NNPF paragraph 163 states that:

> "When determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should:
> a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to significant cutting greenhouse gas emissions;
> b) approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas; and
> c) in the case of applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing renewable sites, give significant weight to the benefits of utilising an established site, and approve the proposal if its impacts are or can be made acceptable."

9.2 SCLP Policy CC/2 states:

> "1. Planning permission for proposals to generate energy from renewable and low carbon sources, with the exception of proposals for wind turbines, will be permitted provided that:
> a. The development, and any associated infrastructure, either individually or cumulatively with other developments, does not have unacceptable adverse impacts on heritage assets (including their settings), natural assets, high quality agricultural land, the landscape, or the amenity of nearby residents (visual impact, noise, shadow flicker, odour, fumes, traffic);
> b. The development can be connected efficiently to existing national energy infrastructure, or by direct connection to an associated development or community project, or the energy generated would be used for on-site needs only;
> c. Provision is made for decommissioning once the operation has ceased, including the removal of the facilities and the restoration of the site; and
> d. Developers have engaged effectively with the local community and local authority."

9.3 It is considered that the proposed development would in principle be consistent with the policy aims of NPPF paragraphs 7, 157 and 163 in promoting sustainable development and the generation of renewable energy and would be in accordance with the broad aims MWLP Policy 1, SCLP Policy S/3, Policy CC/1 and Policy CC/2.

9.4 Although NPPF paragraph 163 states that applicants are not required to demonstrate an overall need for renewable development the proposal is for the treatment of waste so MWLP policies should be taken into account. MWLP Policy 3 deals with waste management needs. No site-specific allocations for new waste management facilities have been identified in the Local Plan. Paragraph 3.41 of the MWLP states that: "However, the Plan's indicative capacity needs do not form a ceiling; where justified and in line with the wider aims and policies of this plan the Councils would be supportive of opportunities for additional capacity to be approved for a range of waste management methods where this will drive waste up the waste management hierarchy.".

Policy 3 states that:

> "The net capacity figures in the table above are not ceilings for recycling, treatment or recovery of waste. As such, proposals will, in principle (and provided they are in accordance with Policy 4: Providing for Waste Management), be supported if any of the following scenarios apply:
>
> (a) it would assist in closing a gap identified in the table, provided such a gap has not already been demonstrably closed; or
> (b) it would assist in closing a new gap identified in the future, with such identification to be set out in the annual monitoring of the Plan; or
> (c) it moves waste capacity already identified in the above table up the waste hierarchy."

Each will be addressed in turn:

9.5 (a) it would assist in closing a gap identified in the table, provided such a gap has not already been demonstrably closed

The table in Policy 3 shows that for Treatment and energy recovery processes [which includes AD] (Mixed – Municipal, C&I) that in 2021 there was a capacity surplus of 124,000 tpa (159,000 tpa if permitted but not yet operational capacity comes on line); by 2026 this would be 23,000 tpa (598,000 tpa) capacity surplus and by 2031 there would be a capacity gap of 57,000 tpa (surplus of 518,000 tpa) which would be a 80,000 tpa gap (495,000 tpa surplus) by 2036. The permitted but not operational capacity is the Peterborough Green Energy Ltd (PGEL) scheme which would have an annual throughput of up to 595,000 tpa including the biomass fraction from commercial, industrial, construction and agricultural wastes. If the PGEL scheme is developed the Streetly Hall Farm proposal would increase the capacity surplus. If the PGLE scheme does not come forward the Streetly Hall Farm proposal would address the capacity gap from 2031.

9.6 Planning permission for the PGEL scheme (reference 08/0108/ELE) was granted in 2009 and has been implemented insofar as groundworks and a car park have been undertaken. It is unlikely that even if the PGEL scheme was to be built out and become operational, agricultural waste would be sourced from Streetly Hall Farm. The straw from the farm is currently sold to an energy from waste plant at Sutton, Ely less than half the distance from the farm than Peterborough. Given the uncertainty around the PGEL scheme it is considered that the current proposal is neutral in respect of capacity.

9.7 (b) it would assist in closing a new gap identified in the future, with such identification to be set out in the annual monitoring of the Plan – not applicable.

9.8 (c) it moves waste capacity already identified in the above table up the waste hierarchy.

The straw element of the proposed feedstock is currently sent to an energy from waste plant. AD and incineration with energy recovery are both classed as ‘Other recovery’ in the waste hierarchy so on the face of it the proposal would be neutral in respect of the straw element of the feedstock. According to ‘Applying the Waste Hierarchy: evidence summary’ (Defra June 2011), AD is better than other recycling and recovery options such as composting or combustion with energy recovery because it has two outputs: energy in the form of methane and digestate. All the nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium present in the feedstock remains in the digestate as none is present in the biogas. These nutrients are more available than in raw slurry, meaning it is easier for plants to make use of them. Digestate has a lower biological oxygen demand and can be used as a more uniform, easily calibrated fertiliser than the original untreated manure. It is considered that the proposal would at worst be neutral in terms of the waste hierarchy and would be beneficial in respect of the straw that is currently combusted.

Climate change

9.9 MWLP Policy 1 requires applicants to take account of climate change for the lifetime of the development through measures to minimise greenhouse gas emissions, and measures to ensure adaptation to future climate change. For waste management proposals applicants should broadly quantify the reduction in carbon dioxide and other relevant greenhouse gases that should be achieved as part of the development. The proposed AD plant will use

agricultural and other waste and energy crops to provide a sustainable source of natural gas and bio-fertiliser. The biogas produced will displace natural gas derived from fossil sources resulting in avoidance of equivalent CO^2 from fossil fuel combustion. Bio-fertiliser will replace fossil-fuel derived synthetic fertiliser, avoiding emissions from its production. CO^2 captured by the process will be transported off site to be sequestered. The applicant has undertaken a carbon balance which shows that there would be 5,774 tonnes of CO^2 in construction, 155 tonnes of CO^2 emitted annually from transport and 3,957 tonnes emitted annually from operations. The biomethane would offset 10,700 tonnes CO^2 per year and the exported CO^2 7,838 tonnes per year, making the project carbon negative.

9.10 The CCC Climate Change and Energy officer has not challenged those figures and as set out in paragraph 6.24 above considers that the net carbon impacts of the proposed development are likely to be beneficial although indirect. For the reasons given in the preceding paragraphs it is considered that the proposed development should be supported in principle. It is now necessary to consider the proposed location.
The proposed location

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraphs 85 & 88
	MWLP	Policy 4
	SCLP	Policy S/7

9.11 MWLP Policy 4 sets out a broad spatial strategy for the location of new waste management development which starts by directing proposals to suitable sites within the settlement boundaries of the main urban areas. It does recognise that waste development on other sites may be appropriate and states that:

> "New waste management proposals that are unable to demonstrate benefits of co-location under part 2 of this policy, that are within the planning permission boundary of existing waste management sites (i.e. where extensions to the site area is not required) that already operate outside of the main settlements identified in the locational criteria above will, in principle, be supported. Each case will be considered on its own merits and will be assessed against all the policies within the Development Plan."

9.12 The AD plant would be a single waste management process and would not be operated alongside any other waste management process therefore the benefits of co-location could not be demonstrated. The proposed development site is not an existing waste management site.

9.13 The site is outside the development frameworks for West Wickham and Horseheath. SCLP Policy S/7 states that:

> "Outside development frameworks, only allocations within Neighbourhood Plans that have come into force and development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside or where supported by other policies in this plan will be permitted."

It is necessary to consider whether the proposed AD plant would be a use which needs to be located in the countryside and MWLP Policy 4 deals with waste management facilities in rural areas stating that:

> "Only waste management facilities which are located on a farm holding, and where the proposal is to facilitate agricultural waste recycling or recovery (the majority of which is generated by that farm holding) will, in principle, be supported. Outdoor composting proposals which require the importation of waste material will be determined in accordance with wider policies of the Development Plan."

9.14 The proposed AD plant would be located on a farm holding. The applicant states that at least 50% of the proposed feedstock would be waste, principally farmyard manure, slurry and straw with some food processing waste. The balance would be energy crops. At least half of the feedstock is expected to be supplied by the applicant's and partner farming businesses from arable rotation and waste/residue production. Provided that at least 50% of the feedstock is waste and at least 50% of the feedstock is sourced from the farm holding it is considered that the proposed development would comply with the Waste Management Facilities – Rural Areas part of MWLP Policy 4.

9.15 The application has been made by Mr Chris Covey for Streetly Hall Farm which is the applicant. One of the directors of Streetly Hall Farm Limited is challenging Chris Covey's right to make the application in the name of Streetly Hall Farm or to commit to the farm and partner farms providing a large proportion of the feedstock. Chris Covey is one of 5 directors of Streetly Hall Farm Ltd. He and the objector are two of the eight partners in Harcamlow Farming LLP (source: information filed at Companies House and in the public domain).

9.16 At the time the application was submitted, Streetly Hall Farm and Mr A Covey (since deceased) together owned the area defined as the application site (outlined in red on - Site Location Plan ref. 27951/150 Rev G). The land outlined in blue is other land owned by Streetly Hall Farm, "close to or adjoining the application site" (as required by the Government's Planning practice guidance). Notice was served on Mr A Covey and certification completed under Article 14 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) to ensure that the owners of the land were aware of the application. No representation was received from Mr A Covey. Mr A Covey was until April 2023 a director of Streetly Hall Farm Ltd and a partner in Harcamlow Farming LLP.

9.17 Harcamlow Farming LLP is a partnership between Bartlow Estate and Streetly Hall Farm which combines agricultural operations to improve efficiency. In conjunction with other member farms, Harcamlow currently operates on 2,350 hectares of land, of which 920 hectares are at Streetly Hall Farm. The management of farm wastes is carried out by NJ and AM Howlett, which has a base at Streetly Hall Farm and farms other land in the local area. NJ and AM Howlett have stated that they are interested in supplying approximately 17,000 tpa feedstock, mostly straw, to the proposed AD plant. The Bartlow Estate has also stated that they could be interested in supplying straw via NJ and AM Howlett and energy crops as a break crop and using digestate from the plant in place of synthetic fertiliser.

9.18 Given the extent of the land owned by Streetly Hall Farm shown on Figure 1 above, it is considered likely that at least 50% of the feedstock would be sourced from the farm holding and therefore the proposed development would comply with the relevant locational criterion of MWLP Policy 4. Policy 4 provides support where a proposal falls within one of

the subheadings in the second half of the policy and does not need to meet the criteria of another.

9.19 NPPF paragraph 85 states that planning decisions should "help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt." Paragraph 88 gives support to the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. Paragraph 89 requires development adjacent to or beyond existing settlements to be sensitive to its surroundings and not have an unacceptable impact on local roads. These aspects of the proposed development and the other relevant locational criteria in NPPW Appendix B will be addressed in the next part of this report.

Traffic and access

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraphs 108, 109, 114 – 117
	MWLP	Policy 23
	SCLP	Policies TI/2 & TI/3
	WWNP	Policy WWK/8

9.20 NPPF paragraph 108 states that: "Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, …" Paragraphs 39 – 42 encourage early and pre-application discussions with the planning authority and other stakeholders. The applicant sought pre-application advice from the highway authority who considered that the three junctions available for access from the farm to the A1307 (two in Horseheath and Dean Road) were not ideal for HGVs. The application was submitted with a proposed new access onto the A1307, the design of which has been refined to meet the highway authority's safety requirements.

9.21 MWLP Policy 23 shares many of the aims of NPPF paragraph 114 and states that waste development will only be permitted if:

> "(a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be, or have been, taken up, to the degree reasonably available given the type of development and its location. If, at the point of application, commercially available electric Heavy Commercial Vehicles (HCVs) are reasonably available, then development which would increase HCV movements should provide appropriate electric vehicle charging infrastructure for HCVs;
> (b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users of the subsequent development;
> (c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree;
> (d) any associated increase in traffic or highway improvements would not cause unacceptable harm to the environment, road safety or residential amenity, and would not cause severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network; and
> (e) binding agreements covering lorry routing arrangements and/or HCV signage for mineral and waste traffic are agreed, if any such agreements are necessary and reasonable to make a development acceptable."

9.22 SCLP Policy TI/2 also promotes sustainable travel and requires developers to address the environmental and amenity impacts of traffic. MWLP Policy 23 goes on to say:

> "Where mineral and/or waste is to be taken on or off a site using the highway network, then all proposals must demonstrate how the latest identified HCV Route Network is, where reasonable and practical to do so, to be utilised. If necessary, arrangements ensuring that the use of the HCV Route Network takes place may need to be secured through an appropriate and enforceable agreement. Any non-allocated mineral and waste management facility in Cambridgeshire which would require significant use of the highway must be well related to the HCV Route Network."

9.23 Feedstock not sourced from the farm would be delivered via the proposed new access from the A1307 approximately 200 metres west of Mill House. The A1307 is an HGV Route Type A Road on the Cambridgeshire Advisory Freight Map so the section of MWLP Policy 23 set out above would be met.

9.24 Of approximately 130 representations objecting to the proposed development, most refer to traffic and highways. The objections fall into 3 broad areas:

i) A1307 safety (in context of junction improvements being undertaken by the highway authority and cumulative with traffic from the proposed Spring Grove Farm, Haverhill AD project);
ii) Use of minor roads and disturbance through villages including cumulative with traffic from the Spring Grove Farm AD project; and
iii) Impact of HGVs on leisure users of minor roads (walkers, cyclists and horse-riders) and racehorse training businesses.

9.25 There have been recent changes to the A1307 between Linton and Horseheath namely at the junction with the C242 Horseheath Road where a roundabout has been installed to serve the eastern extension of Linton and at the Dean Road Crossroads. To enable the majority of traffic to access the proposed AD plant directly from the A1307 a new access is proposed, the design of which has been agreed with the highway authority. It includes a ghost island so that HGVs approaching from the east will not obstruct the flow of traffic whilst waiting to turn right, and a slip road for eastbound traffic to turn left into the new access. The site access proposals have gone through the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit process which has been approved by the council's Highways Development Management engineers.

9.26 From a highway capacity perspective, the most important factor for consideration is the number of vehicle movements that would be generated during the morning and evening traffic peaks. The CCC Transport Assessment team has considered the number of movements at the busiest harvest time during the traffic peaks and is satisfied that it would not cause significant detriment to the operation and safety of the local highway network.

9.27 Most of the feedstock for the proposed AD plant would be a combination of agricultural waste and energy crops sourced from the applicant's, partner and other local farms. Some parts of these farms are relatively remote from the principal highway network therefore minor country roads are used to transport harvested crops and crop residues for direct use, processing, sale or disposal. The seasonal movement of harvested crops and their

byproducts and the application of fertilizer and other treatment of land is a necessary part of farming in this area and an existing source of traffic in the countryside. Therefore, whether the proposed AD plant is built or not, there will be a seasonal concentration of heavy farm vehicle movements in the area. The effect of the proposed AD plant may be that some of this traffic is re-distributed around the local road network.

9.28 For these reasons it is considered that the traffic serving the AD plant that would use local country roads would not be significantly different in nature or total quantity than is currently experienced from the existing farm cropping practices and would not therefore have a materially greater impact on other road-users including walkers, cyclists and horse-riders.

9.29 Planning policies encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. However, the majority of vehicle movements generated by the proposed development would be deliveries of feedstock for which there is no alternative to HGVs and the site is in a rural location which is not well served by public transport. Five car parking spaces are proposed which would be adequate for staff and visitors. There would be sufficient space within the site for temporary parking of HGVs between off-loading and departure.

Public rights of way

9.30 MWLP Policy 23 states:

> "Public Rights of Way
> During all phases of development, including construction, operation and restoration, proposals must make provision for suitable and appropriate diversions to affected public rights of way, and ideally the enhancement of the public rights of way network where practicable. Opportunities should be taken for the provision of new routes and links between existing routes, especially at the restoration stage. Priority should be given to meeting the objectives of any Rights of Way Improvement Plans. Where development would adversely affect the permanent use of public rights of way (including temporary diversions) planning permission will only be granted where alternative routes are provided that are of equivalent convenience, quality and interest."

SCLP Policy TI/2 (c) also seeks to protect the rights of way network. WWNP Policy WWK/8 seeks to retain and enhance the existing rights of way network and states that "Proposals which will impact adversely on the public enjoyment of rights of way will not normally be supported."

9.31 The access into the site would cross a public bridleway (the Roman Road) and this is of concern to users of the route. The CCC Rights of Way Officer is satisfied that appropriate signage and surfacing to mitigate any harm from the development would be provided. During peak season there would be an average of 23 loads (46 movements) per day. Spread over the likely 14 hour harvesting day (07:00 – 21:00) this would amount to 3 - 4 movements per hour. There would not be a high probability of users of the bridleway are encountering a vehicle serving the AD.

9.32 WWLP Policy WWK/8 encourages enhancements from development proposals located within 300 metres of a public right of way and some objectors have asked that the applicant be required to provide alternative public rights of way. However, the very small

impact that the proposed development would have on users of the rights of way network does not justify such a requirement and it has not been sought by the CCC Rights of Way Officer.

9.33 NPPF paragraph 15 states that:

> "Development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe."

No objection has been raised by the highway authority in terms of highway capacity or safety and it is considered that refusing the application on highway grounds would not be justified. For the reasons set out in paragraphs 9.23 to 9.32 above it is considered that the proposed development would comply with the policies set out at the start of this section.

Landscape character and visual impact

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraphs135 & 180
	MWLP	Policy 17 and Appendix 3
	SCLP	Policies HQ/1 & NH/2

9.34 NPPF paragraph 135 states that:

> "Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments: …
> b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
> c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);"

NPPF paragraph 180 states that:

> "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
>
> a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
> b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; ..."

9.35 SCLP Policy NH/2 states that:

> "Development will only be permitted where it respects and retains, or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the local landscape and of the individual National Character Area in which it is located."

SCLP Policy HQ/1 states that:

> "As appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, proposals must:
> a. Preserve or enhance the character of the local urban and rural area and respond to its context in the wider landscape;
> b. Conserve or enhance important natural or historic assets and their setting; ...
> d. Be compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, density, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, materials, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area; ..
> m. include high quality landscaping and public spaces that integrate the development with its surroundings, …"

9.36 MWLP Policy 17 states that new mineral and waste management development must, among other things:

> "(f) be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
> (g) retain or enhance important features and assets (including trees and hedgerows) within the landscape, treescape or townscape and conserve or create key views; and
> (h) provide a landscape enhancement scheme which takes account of any relevant landscape character assessments (including any historic landscape characterisation) and which demonstrates that the development can be assimilated into its surroundings and local landscape character;"

Landscape character

9.37 In national terms the proposed development site is not within an area designated for its landscape value (National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and is not afforded special protection. It is, however, accepted that it is an area of countryside which is highly valued by the people who live and work in and visit the area. It is towards the western edge of Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland described. This NCA is widely rural with a very high percentage retained as arable farmland and noted for being remote and tranquil. The proposed development site falls into this characteristic, set within a rolling river valley surrounded by arable fields. At a District level, the site falls into the Linton Chalk Hills character area which is characterised again by irregularly shaped arable fields and an openness which contributes to long, open views across the rural valleys. The Character is also defined by the presence of the Roman Road which is distinctively linear.

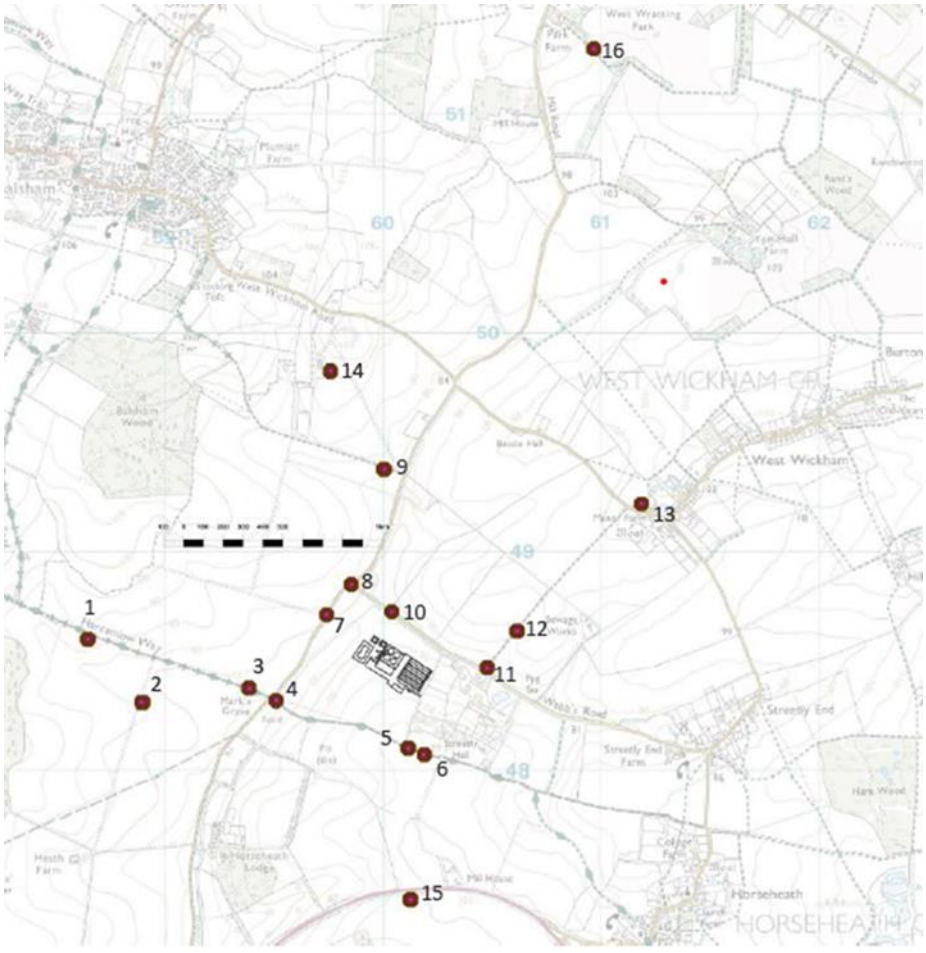
9.38 The applicant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Broome Lynne, October 2023) (LVIA) has assessed the Landscape Character Sensitivity of the site as being Medium/High and the overall landscape capacity (to change) to be Medium/Low suggesting that "development can be accommodated only in limited situations, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas." The GCSP Landscape Officer is of the opinion that the applicant has in some instances undervalued the landscape.

Visual impact

9.39 The field in which the AD plant would be sited falls from approximately 95 metres AOD in the southeast corner to around 70 metres AOD next to the watercourse then rising back to approximately 80 metres AOD at the northwest corner. The proposed development site would be on land with current level sloping from 88 metres AOD in the southeast to 71 metres AOD to the northwest. South of the site, the land rises to a ridge at an elevation of around 100 metres before falling away to the south and west. This ridge effectively screens the site from viewers south of it. North-west and northeast the land falls to the valley floor at an elevation of around 75 metres before rising to the plateau areas around Balsham Wood and West Wickham village at around 110 metres . Figure 3 below shows the contours of the local area.

9.40 The proposed development includes the erection of tanks with a diameter of 30 metres and 16.1 metres high when the dome, which rises and falls according to the volume of gas being stored, is fully 'inflated'. Other significant structures would be the feedstock storage building (80 x 36 metres x 12.6 metres high), straw barn (50 x 20 metres x 11.6 metres high) and 4 silage clamps (total area 10,304 sq metres).

9.41 The applicant's LVIA has identified 16 representative viewpoints from which to make the assessment shown in Figure 3 below. Panoramic visualisations have been created to show how the proposed development would appear from these locations. Examples which indicate the locations from where the proposed development would be most visible are shown below.



iewpoints used in the visual assessment

Figure 3 – Viewpoints used in the visual assessment (from LVIA)

9.42 Viewpoint 3 – View northeastwards from Harcamlow Way 440 metres from the site

Existing view


With development (no mitigation)


With development (mitigation) - Part of the digester domes and the feedstock storage building would, with mitigation, be noticeable.

9.43 Viewpoint 7 – View eastward from Dean Road 170 metres from the site

Existing view

With development (no mitigation)

With development (mitigation) – the digester domes, feedstock storage building and some of the smaller infrastructure in front of them would be visible

9.44 Viewpoint 14 – View southeastwards from The Gallops, Dean Road (private house) 1.3 km from the site

Existing view

With development (no mitigation)

With development (mitigation) – the digester domes, part of the feedstock storage building and the top of the sileage clamps will be visible.

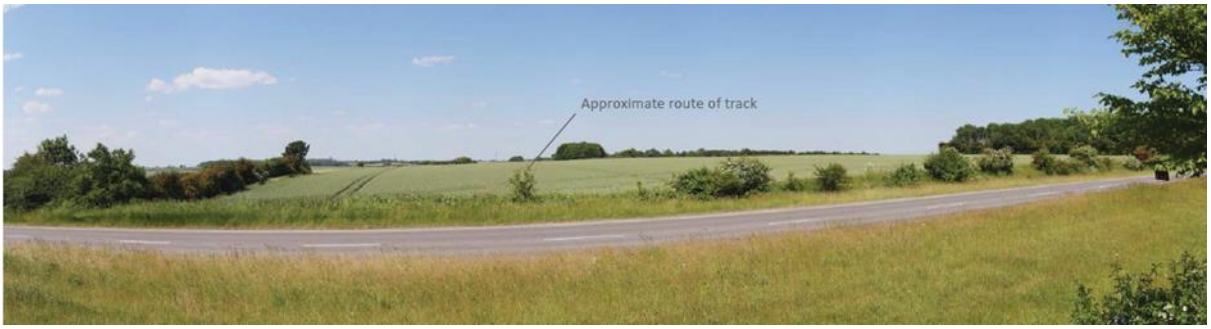
9.45 Parts of the proposed development will be clearly visible from some publicly accessible locations. From roads these views would be fleeting from cars, but walkers, cyclists and horse riders would experience them for longer. It is acknowledged that the development would be seen from some places such as the private residence at Viewpoint 14 but at this distance it would not be a prominent feature of the landscape.

9.46 The site is in a slight valley location close to existing agricultural buildings rather than more elevated or exposed places in the farm holding. The applicant's LVIA acknowledges that there will be unavoidable impacts on the landscape character and does not claim that the landscape planting will completely screen the development. The development would be seen as a distinctive cluster of new structures in the landscape, some not typical in size or shape to conventional agricultural buildings. This would be in part mitigated by the proposed planting which the applicant's LVIA concludes would after 5 years result in an overall irreversible Moderate Adverse effect but once the planting had matured (15 years) the effect would be Minor Adverse.

9.47 The applicant's response (22 December 2023) to comments made by the GCSP Landscape Officer has not changed their opinion on the application from a landscape perspective. The Landscape Officer considers that "Whilst the intention to heavily plant the area around the proposed structures and lagoons is justified and positive in nature, it cannot screen the proposals from many of the [id]entified views and will be a detractive element in the open landscape which is not in keeping with the character of the area. While the topography of the area, does reasonably well at screening the development from the south east, the same topography opens the site up to views from hillsides and adjacent areas as seen in views 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 14 in the LVA."

9.48 The impact of the development on the public right of way, the Roman Road, has been raised by many individuals and aspects of this have been covered in paragraphs 9.31 and 9.32 above. LVIA viewpoints 3, 4, 5 and 6 give an indication of the visual impact of the proposed development on this right of way. From Viewpoint 3, west of Dean Road (see paragraph 9.42 above) the larger elements of the development would, with mitigation, be noticeable. The prominence of the development would change with distance and the presence of existing vegetation and mitigation planting. The existing hedge largely precludes clear views from the bridleway into the field where the plant would be located. The proposed additional planting would increase the screening effect of the hedge.

9.49 The new access road would be a new feature in the landscape and its location is shown in LVIA Viewpoint 15 below, taken from the A1307.



There is a substantial belt of trees between it and Mill House to the east. It is proposed that a hedge would be planted along both sides of the new road which, when established, would screen the road from the Roman Road and the public footpath to Horseheath (131/2) and to a lesser extent the HGVs using it. The road would be most apparent from the south from where there are no public viewpoints within 1 km apart from the A1307 from which views would be fleeting.

9.50 In conclusion, the proposed development would have an impact on the character of the landscape within which it would sit and there would be visual impact that could not be fully mitigated by the siting, layout or colour of the plant or by the proposed planting. For these reasons the proposal would not be wholly in accordance with the relevant parts of NPPF paragraphs 135 and 180, MWLP Policy 17 and SCLP Policies HQ/1 and NH/2. This is clearly a negative aspect of the proposal which needs to be given appropriate weight in the planning balance.

Conserving the historic environment

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraphs 200, 201, 203, 205, 208, 209 & 211
	MWLP	Policy 21
	SCLP	Policy NH/14

9.51 MWLP Policy 21 and NPPF paragraph 200 require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by the development, including any contribution made by their setting. The application was accompanied by a Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (HEDA). NPPF paragraph 201 requires planning authorities to "identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking into account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise." The relevant experts are the GCSP Conservation Officer and CCC Historic Environment Team whose comments are summarised in paragraphs 6.3, 6.4 and 6.21 above. Historic England were consulted but did not wish to comment on the application. MWLP Policy 21 and SCLP Policy NH/14 seek to protect heritage assets.

Designated heritage assets

9.52 The proposed development site's relationship to designated heritage assets is set out in paragraph 2.4 above. The GCSP Conservation Officer agrees that the site of the proposed development does not contribute to the significance of St Mary's Church (grade II* listed) or West Wratting Park House (grade II*), and that the proposal would have a negligible

impact on their respective settings due to the distances and screening provided by intervening trees and landscape features. Streetly Hall Farmhouse, a grade II listed building, is within approximately 280 metres of the proposed development site. The farm complex includes barns and outbuildings to the north and east of the farmhouse that are curtilage listed and of historic interest. There are also a series of more modern farm buildings of low significance. The arrangement of buildings and open character of the landscape mean the farm is experienced within its landscape towards the development site from both public and private viewpoints. This rural and agricultural setting, including the site of the proposed development, is considered a key aspect of the listed building's significance. The applicant's LVIA and HEDA confirm that there would be intervisibility between the listed farmhouse, its curtilage, and the proposed development.

9.53 The HEDA concludes that "the proposed development will have no impact on any designated heritage assets in the surrounding area". However, in the Conservation Officer's opinion, the significance of the site to the listed building is underplayed by the applicant: "While it is agreed that the general nature of the proposals relate to the character and continuous development of the farming complex, their extent and scale exceeds any existing modern structure on site. At 16.1 metres and 12 metres, the digester and largest barn would be substantial structures in the immediate context of the historic farmhouse and outbuildings, introducing dominant and competing forms in the landscape. Together with the proposed access track, the structures would be visible from the listed farmhouse and its context, changing the way the asset is appreciated within its immediate and wider setting." The Conservation Officer has drawn attention to Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which at Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 18a-013-20190723 states:

> "Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity…" and that;
>
> "The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting."

9.54 The Conservation Officer considers that the development would have a harmful impact on the setting and significance of the listed Streetly Hall Farmhouse and that the harm is less than substantial. NPPF paragraph 208 states:

> "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its viable use."

The less than substantial harm to Streetly Hall Farmhouse is a factor which will weigh against the proposed development and will be considered in the planning balance with other material planning considerations.

Non-designated heritage assets

9.55 NPPF paragraph 209 requires that:

"The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."

9.56 The status of the Roman Road (Via Devana) is set out in paragraph 2.4 above. Where it is close to the proposed development site it is a non-designated heritage asset which the Conservation Officer considers to be of local historic landscape significance. The Roman Road would be crossed by the proposed access to the site which would result in a small amount of physical harm. The CCC HET has agreed that a non-dig approach to creating the crossing would be acceptable. There would be short-term, intermittent indirect harm when HGVs are using the crossing at the same time the Roman Road is being used as a right of way. Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke were invited to comment on the application but have not done so.

9.57 Other non-designated heritage assets would be any archaeological remains within the proposed development area. In response to the CCC HET's initial advice, the applicant has undertaken a programme of trenched evaluation which has identified remains including a middle Iron Age pit cluster and a trackway to the south of the development area. Due to the archaeological potential of the site a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area, and to establish the need for archaeological mitigation of the development as necessary. This does not need to be done pre-determination and could be secured by planning condition and would comply with NPPF paragraph 211.

9.58 It is considered that with appropriate mitigation the proposed development would comply with the policies above in respect of non-designated heritage assets.

Protection of water quality and resources

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraph 180 (e)
	MWLP	Policy 22
	SCLP	Policy CC/7

9.59 The polices listed above seek to protect the quantity and quality of water resources. The site is close to watercourses, is underlain by chalk and is within groundwater protection zones SPZ1 and SPZ2 which are designated for the protection of public water supply. The treatment of waste has the potential to pollute groundwater and surface water which may affect human health and wildlife. The EA's initial objection to the development has been addressed by the information submitted by the applicant in May 2024. In order for the development to be acceptable, the EA requires that the surface water disposal scheme be approved before development commences and this can be secured by planning condition (see paragraph 6.8 above).

9.60 Based on the EA's advice it is considered that the proposed development would be constructed and operated in such a way that the risk of polluting ground and surface water would be reduced to an acceptable level so would comply with NPPF paragraph 180 (e), MWLP Policy 22 and SCLP Policy CC/7.

Flood risk management

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraphs 159, 173 & 175
	MWLP	Policy 22
	SCLP	Policies CC/8 & CC/9
	Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (July 2016)	

9.61 These policies seek to ensure that development is located in areas least at risk of flooding and will not unacceptably increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, chiefly by the use of a sustainable drainage scheme. The proposed development would be located within flood zone 1. The LLFA's initial objection has been addressed by the additional information submitted by the applicant in June 2024 and they are satisfied that the proposed sustainable drainage system will accommodate extreme rainfall events. If following further testing, the proposed disposal of surface water by infiltration is not acceptable, an alternative is possible, subject to detailed design which could be secured by planning condition.

9.62 It is considered that with appropriate design the proposed development would be constructed and operated in a way that would comply with NPPF paragraphs 173 and 175, MWLP Policy 22, SCLP Policies CC/8 and CC/9 and the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (July 2016) in respect of minimising the risk of flooding.

Emissions to air, including odour and dust

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraphs 180 (e), 191 & 194
	MWLP	Policy 18 & Policy 23 (d)
	SCLP	Policies SC/14, CC/6, SC/2, SC/12 & TI/2

9.63 These policies seek to protect the occupiers of nearby land or property from dust, odour and other emissions to air, SCLP Policy CC/6 relating specifically to the construction phase. The air quality impact on designated sites is covered paragraph 9.75. The proposed development site is not within or close to an air quality management area. The Institute of Air Quality Management 'Land -Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality' (January 2017) advises that an air quality assessment in respect of traffic generated by a development would be needed where the change in HCV flows is more than 100 annual average daily traffic (AADT). Traffic flows generated by the proposed development would be below this threshold. However, MWLP Policy 23 (d) and SCLP Policy TI/2 (3) require the amenity impacts of traffic arising from a development to be taken into account.

9.64 The applicant's Air Quality Assessment and Air Quality Assessment Addendum have been reviewed by the EHO who agrees with the conclusion that the air quality impacts can be classified as not significant for human receptors. The CCC Public Health team does not raise any concerns about the emission to air, dust or odour.

9.65 Elements of the AD process have the potential to generate odour notably food and animal waste, depending on its composition and method of transfer to the digester. The digestate storage lagoon would be covered. The EHO has reviewed the applicant's Odour Assessment and Odour Technical Note and does not dispute the conclusion that the

development is unlikely to give rise to odour which would result in complaints about odour. West Wickham Parish Council has visited an AD plant where the clamps storing malodourous waste were left open at one end even when loading and has asked that a condition be imposed to prevent this.

9.66 Both the EHO and CCC Public Health team refer to the operation of the AD plant being controlled by an environmental permit issued by the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency, in their consultation response, refer to the matters that would be covered by the permit (see paragraph 6.9 above). This would ensure that odour and other emissions to air are limited to levels that are not harmful to human or other receptors. NPPF paragraph 194 makes clear that:

> "The focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively. Equally, where a planning decision has been made on a particular development, the planning issues should not be revisited through the permitting regimes operated by pollution control authorities."

For that reason, it is considered that to impose a planning condition requiring the clamps to be fully closed except when loading would be duplicating the role of the environmental permit and the EA.

9.67 The proposed feedstocks such as straw and energy crops may generate dust when delivered to the AD plant which would be similar to that arising from harvesting. Dust could also be generated during the construction phase, but which could be mitigated by the measures set out in the Construction Environmental Management Plan which could be secured by condition.

9.68 It is considered that with appropriate mitigation in place, secured by planning conditions or the environmental permit, the proposed development would comply with NPPF paragraphs 180 (e) and 191, MWLP Policy 18 and Policy 23 (d) and SCLP Policies SC/14, CC/6, SC/2, SC12 and TI/2 in respect of dust and emissions to air including odour.

Noise and vibration

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraph 191
	MWLP	Policy 18 & Policy 23(d)
	SCLP	Policy SC/10, Policy CC/6 & Policy TI/2

9.69 MWLP Policy 18 and SCLP Policy SC/10 seek to protect the occupiers of nearby land or property from noise and require development proposals to include mitigation where necessary. AD is a continuous process there would be some noise from plant at all times. The proposed hours of operation are set out in paragraph 3.6 above.

9.70 The closest noise sensitive properties to the proposed development site are those within the Streetly Hall Farm complex. The applicant's noise impact assessment considers the impact of the proposed AD plant on receptors at Streetly Farm Cottages. It was reviewed

by the EHO who broadly agrees with the conclusions and would not expect significant adverse impact. SCLP Policy CC/6 relates specifically to the construction phase which is potentially noisier than the operational phase and the EHP has recommended that limits on construction working hours be imposed. Vibration would only arise if piling was needed for foundations and the EHO has recommended a condition accordingly.

9.71 MWLP Policy 23 (d) and SCLP Policy TI/2 (3) require the amenity impacts of traffic arising from a development to be taken into account. Noise from traffic generated by the vehicles transporting feedstock which does not originate from the farm would be concentrated on the A1307 and would be a very small proportion (approximately 0.2%) of the total daily traffic using that road therefore contributing little to the noise environment. As set out in paragraph 9.27, the traffic movements of the farm-derived feedstock would be similar in nature to the seasonal movement of harvested crops and their byproducts and noise impacts would also be similar.

9.72 It is considered that that with appropriate mitigation in place, secured by planning conditions or the environmental permit, the proposed development would comply with NPPF paragraph 191, MWLP Policy 18 and Policy 23(d) and SCLP Policy SC/10, Policy CC/6 and Policy TI/2 in respect of noise and vibration.

Lighting

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraph 191
	MWLP	Policy 18
	SCLP	Policy SC/9
	WWNP	Policy WWK/6

9.73 These policies seek to ensure that lighting of development does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties, the night sky in the surrounding countryside or wildlife. Some activities associated with the proposed development would be undertaken outside daylight hours and therefore lighting would be needed. This has the potential to pollute the dark sky in a rural area and, as acknowledged in the applicant's Ecological Report (Norfolk Wildlife Services 22/02/2024), affect bats. The applicant's submission sets out that low-level security/bulkhead type lighting would be installed on buildings. West Wickham Parish Council's view that continuous lighting is neither necessary nor desirable is supported. Lighting systems can be designed that are task-orientated and movement sensitive.

9.74 Details could be secured by condition, if planning permission is granted, to ensure that any lighting is designed and used in such a way that its impact on the amenity of nearby residents, the countryside and wildlife would be kept to an acceptable level in accordance with NPPF paragraph 191 , MWLP Policy 18, SCLP Policy SC/9 and WWNP Policy WWK/6.

Nature conservation and biodiversity net gain (BNG)

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraphs 180 & 186
	MWLP	Policy 20

SCLP Policy NH/4 & NH/5
Greater Cambridge Biodiversity SPD (February 2022)

9.75 The relationship of the site to closest designated areas is set out in paragraph 2.5 above. Natural England identified Ader Carr, Fleam Dyke, Furze Hill and Roman Road SSSIs which are between 3.9 and 4.8 km from the application site as also being potentially affected by the proposed development (see paragraph 6.11 above). Natural England is satisfied that provided the digestate storage lagoon cover system meets the standard of effectiveness set out in application documents the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on these designated sites. This could be secured by planning condition. The proposed development would therefore comply with the relevant parts of NPPF paragraphs 180 and 186, MWLP Policy 20 and SCLP NH/5.

9.76 NPPF paragraph 180 (d), MWLP Policy 20 and SCLP Policy NH/4 seek to protect the ecological value of a development site and its surroundings. The proposed AD plant site is for the most part arable land with low ecological value. Approximately 10 metres of native hedge would be lost to create the access road. There are trees and a section of hedgerow that could be damaged in constructing the new access road. The applicant's The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Norfolk Wildlife Services, August 2023) identifies that they will require protection during the construction phase. The recommended protection measures are set in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which could be secured by condition. The applicant's Ecological Report identified potential minor negative impacts on bats, badger, hedgehog, brown hare and nesting birds. It is considered that these impacts could be adequately mitigated during the construction phase by means of a CEMP which could be secured by condition. This is supported by the CCC Ecology Officer.

9.77 The planning application was submitted before 12 February 2024 therefore the statutory requirement set out in the Environment Act 2021 for the development to deliver at least 10% BNG does not apply. However, MWLP Policy 20 (f) states that all development must "deliver a measurable net gain in biodiversity, proportionate to the scale of development proposed, by creating, restoring and enhancing habitats and enhancing them for the benefit of species". NPPF paragraph 180 (d) and SCLP Policy NH/4 have similar requirements.

9.78 The proposal includes planting native tree species for visual screening purposes which would also contribute to BNG; 3.65 ha of meadow; 2,531 metres of new hedgerow; filling gaps in the hedgerow along the Roman Road; and the installation of bird and bat boxes. The CCC Ecology Officer does not agree with the applicant's BNG calculation for the land within the application area (see paragraph 6.20 above). She has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the landscape proposals including those that would be undertaken outside the 'red line' application area but within the 'blue line' land under the applicant's control which when combined with the application area suggest that the development has the potential to deliver a net gain in biodiversity value of approximately 8.21 habitat units (35% BNG). A more accurate BNG assessment and plan which includes long-term management could be secured by condition.

9.79 It is considered that subject to securing a CEMP and a detailed BNG plan the development would comply with the NPPF paragraph 180, MWLP Policy 20 and SCLP Policy NH/4.

Sustainable use of soils and agriculture

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraph 180 (b)
	MWLP	Policy 24
	SCLP	Policy NH/3

9.80 The proposed development site is within a wide area of mostly grade 2 agricultural land which in planning terms is considered to be best and most versatile. NPPF paragraph 180 (b), SCLP Policy NH/3 and MWLP Policy 24 have similar aims. Policy 24 states that:

> "Mineral or waste development which adversely affects agricultural land categorised as 'best and most versatile' will only be permitted where it can be shown that: (a) it incorporates proposals for the sustainable use of soils (whether that be off-site or as part of an agreed restoration scheme); and (b) (for non-allocated sites) there is a need for the development and an absence of suitable alternative sites using lower grade land has been demonstrated."

9.81 It is acknowledged that there is very little land within the area that would serve the applicant's farm businesses that is grade 3 or lower. The development would result in the permanent loss of 6.7 hectares of productive farmland for the AD plant itself (taking into account that part is an existing farm track) and further land for landscape planting and habitat creation. This is a very small proportion of the whole farm holding and would not adversely affect the business.

9.82 Concern has been raised in the representations about taking good quality agricultural land out of food production to grow energy crops and the impact this may have on soil quality in the area. The Anaerobic Digestion Strategy and Action Plan (see paragraph 8.1 above) recognises the contribution energy crops can make as an AD feedstock but also the need to ensure that energy crops do not supplant food crops at a large scale. The Bartlow Estate has suggested that energy crops could be a break crop in the arable rotation and a farming enterprise's cropping regime is outside the control of the planning system.

9.83 For the reasons given in paragraphs 9.81 and 9.82 it is considered that the proposed development complies with NPPF paragraph 180 (b), MWLP Policy 24 and SCLP Policy NH/3.

Mineral safeguarding area (MSA)

9.84 The proposed development site is within an MSA for chalk. MWLP Policy 5 seeks to protect mineral resources of current or future value from being sterilised by non-mineral development. Policy 5 states that:

> "Development within MSAs which is not covered by the above exceptions will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that:
> (i) the mineral can be extracted where practicable prior to development taking place; or
> (j) the mineral concerned is demonstrated to not be of current or future value; or
> (k) the development will not prejudice future extraction of the mineral; or

(l) there is an overriding need for the development (where prior extraction is not feasible)."

9.85 Chalk is the bedrock and at the proposed development site is not, according to the British Geological Survey Geology of Britain viewer, overlain by superficial deposits. The soil on the proposed development site is unlikely to be deep therefore any excavation to construct buildings or infrastructure partially below the existing ground level would be mostly into the underlying chalk . The applicant's soil investigation shows that the chalk is variable in thickness and unlikely to have any use other than low-quality general fill. Chalk is abundant within Cambridgeshire and has limited use and value and for this reason it is considered that the proposed development would comply with MWLP Policy 5 (j).

Sustainable design

Relevant policies:	NPPF	paragraphs 135 & 139
		MWLP Policies 1 & 17 and Appendix 3
		SCLP policies CC/1, CC/4 & HQ/1.

9.86 The policies referred to above seek to ensure that new development is well-designed taking into account its location and the proposals are informed by sustainability. Other than MWLP Policy 17, these policies are intended to cover a wide range of types of development so not all elements will be relevant to the proposed development. Appendix 3 of the MWLP provides guidance specifically related to waste management facilities. In rural locations it recommends that the design of facilities should reflect the scale and design of agricultural buildings.

MWLP Policy 17 states that:

"All waste management development, and where relevant mineral development, should secure high quality design. The design of built development and the restoration of sites should be sympathetic to and, where opportunities arise, enhance local distinctiveness and the character and quality of the area in which it is located. Permission will be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available to achieve this."

9.87 This is further developed in MWLP Appendix 3: The Location and Design of Waste Management Facilities. The SCLP has a number of requirements relating to sustainable design set out in policies CC/1, CC/4, HQ/1. The design of the proposed buildings is not dissimilar to modern agricultural buildings. The design of the other structures is dictated by their function with few alternative options. It is considered that the proposed finishes – dark green and pale grey are appropriate in the rural setting. All rainwater captured from the roofs, hard surfaces and the digestate cover would be collected and stored within the lagoons where it can be recirculated into the process. Based on average rainfall it is expected that 20,000 m^3 would be collected which would represent approximately 80% of the plant's requirement.

9.88 It is considered that taking into account its function, the design of the proposed development is acceptable in visual and sustainability terms so would comply with the

relevant parts of NPPF paragraphs 135 and 139, MWLP Policies 1 and 17 and Appendix 3 and SCLP policies CC/1, CC/4 and HQ/1.

Litter, vermin and birds

Relevant policies: NPPF paragraphs 194
MWLP Policy 18

9.89 The proposed feedstocks would all bio-degradable and except for the food waste would in any case be found in an agricultural area. It is considered unlikely that litter would be generated by the proposed development.

9.90 It is proposed that the feedstock would include food waste which may be attractive to vermin or birds if transported or stored on the site uncovered. The operation of the AD plant would be controlled by an environmental permit issued by the Environment Agency (see paragraph 9.66 above with reference to NPPF paragraph 194). It is considered likely that with good practice and appropriate mitigation in place the proposed development would not attract significant vermin or birds so would comply with MWLP Policy 18 (i).

Other matters

9.91 Concerns have been raised that it will not be possible to connect the plant to the gas grid and that instead the biogas would be transported by road. The applicant has been working with Cadent Gas and established that there is capacity to inject the gas locally.

Planning balance

9.92 It is considered that there is enough information before the waste planning authority to enable it to make an informed decision on whether or not the proposed development is acceptable in land use planning terms. The following judgements have been reached taking into account the effect of mitigation which would be secured through planning conditions and controls that would be in place via the environmental permit.

9.93 It is considered that the following aspects of the proposed development are positive and weigh in favour of the application being approved:

- The use of waste to generate renewable energy – this has been given moderate – high weight in the planning balance
- Most feedstock from the host farm businesses and 10 km radius – this has been given low weight in the planning balance
- Biodiversity net gain (estimated 35%) through the introduction and long-term management of habitats – this has been given moderate weight in the planning balance

It is considered that the following aspects of the proposed development are neutral because, as set out above, any potential impact from them can be mitigated:

- Impact on air quality on human health and natural environment receptors

- Odour
- Noise and vibration (construction and operational phases)
- Dust (construction phase)
- Water quality
- Surface water drainage
- Protected species and designated sites
- Pests and litter

It is considered that the following aspects of the proposed development would have an adverse impact which could not be entirely mitigated and so would weigh against the application being approved:

- Landscape and visual impact including lighting – this has been given moderate weight in the planning balance
- Setting of grade II listed Streetly Hall Farmhouse – this has been given less than substantial weight in the planning balance
- Impact on bridleway and its users – this has been given low weight in the planning balance
- Traffic from off-site feedstocks - this has been given low weight in the planning balance
- Loss of small area of high-quality agricultural land - this has been given insignificant weight in the planning balance

10. Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED)

10.1 Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 places a statutory duty on all public bodies to consider the needs of all individuals in their day-to-day work, including those with protected characteristics. The protected characteristics under PSED are: disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity/ paternity, race, religion or belief (including non-belief), sex and sexual orientation. In May 2023, elected members of the Council agreed that those leaving care (care leavers) must be treated as having a protected characteristic. The Council, in the exercise of the planning functions, must have due regard to the need to the following aims in their decision-making: eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it. Furthermore, consideration must be given to removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; meeting the needs of people with protected characteristics; and encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low. The proposed development is for the treatment of farm and other organic waste and use of energy crops to create renewable energy in the form of biogas and digestate for use on land in place of synthetic fertilizers. It is considered unlikely that this particular development would have any negative impact on those with protected characteristics and there would be no known implications of the proposal in relation to the council's PSED duties under the 2010 Act.

11. Conclusion

11.1 National planning policy, which is influenced by international commitments, is to steer the country away from reliance on fossil fuels and promote their replacement with sustainable sources of energy. Deriving energy from waste is one of a number of options which would contribute towards this goal. AD is a process which uses organic waste and/or crops grown for the purpose to produce biogas which can either be injected into the gas grid or used to produce electricity. The proposed development would therefore comply with this broad policy aim.

11.2 The principal component of the feedstock would be agricultural waste and some food waste together with energy crops. The application therefore falls to the waste planning authority to determine and the MWLP is the main element of the development plan against which to assess it. In order to comply with MWLP Policy 4, the majority of the feedstock must be generated by the host farm holding in order to justify the rural location. It is considered that Streetly Hall Farm and its partner farms are sufficiently large to generate at least 50% of the plants input. The applicant proposes that 70% of the feedstock would be drawn from within a 10 km radius of the plant. This is a smaller 'catchment area' than is usually applied to waste management sites where the whole of the MWLP area (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) and/or a 30 km radius is the norm.

11.3 The SCLP, which is also part of the development plan contains Policy CC/2 which states that proposals to generate energy from renewable and low carbon sources will be permitted provided 4 criteria are met (see paragraph 9.2 above). Criterion (a) encapsulates most of the environmental factors that have been discussed in this report and requires that:

> "The development, and any associated infrastructure, either individually or cumulatively with other developments, does not have unacceptable adverse impacts on heritage assets (including their settings), natural assets, high quality agricultural land, the landscape, or the amenity of nearby residents (visual impact, noise, shadow flicker, odour, fumes, traffic);"

The key word is "unacceptable", and it should be noted that what may be acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another. The negative impacts of the development on the landscape, the setting of a heritage asset, the Roman Road bridleway, traffic and loss of agricultural land have been identified and, as set out above, afforded weight by planning officers, as have the positive aspects of the proposed development. It is the function of the planning process to decide, have taken into account all material planning considerations, where the balance lies.

11.4 In this case there appears to be a tension between the national interest in contributing to the move from fossil fuels to renewable energy, delivering BNG and general support in the NPPF for businesses to invest, expand and adapt and for agricultural businesses to develop and diversify, and the local interest. Local residents are understandably focussed on the negative impacts of the proposed development which they consider would adversely affect the local environment and their enjoyment of it, and their daily lives. With advice from statutory and other technical consultees, it is considered that some of those concerns are unfounded in that the impacts, where there were any, would be suitably controlled by planning conditions and / or the environmental permit. Given that the

proposed AD plant would be regulated by an environmental permit, it is considered that it would be designed and operated in a way that any impacts on local amenity or the natural environment from odour and other emissions to air, noise and water quality would be mitigated to acceptable levels.

11.5 However, it is acknowledged that that some adverse impacts cannot be wholly mitigated, notably the impact on the local landscape and visual impact from parts of the surrounding area and the less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed farmhouse. The GCSP Landscape officer is the only statutory consultee who objects to the proposal based on these factors but does not appear to afford any weight to others. The consideration of all the material planning considerations and the weighting of the negative, positive and neutral impacts of the proposed development is the role of the determining planning authority. In the officer's opinion, the generation of renewable energy using primarily locally sourced feedstock and the potential for the development to deliver a BNG that would be at least three times that required for schemes that are subject to the statutory requirement (set out in the Environment Act 2021), carry sufficient weight to tip the planning balance in favour of the proposed development.

12. Recommendation

12.1 It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

Advisory Note

The Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 requires the Planning Authority to give reasons for the imposition of pre-commencement conditions. Conditions 5, 6, 11, 15, 24, 25 and 27 require further information to be submitted, or works to be carried out before work starts on site and are therefore attached as a pre-commencement condition. The developer may not legally commence development on site until these conditions have been satisfied.

1. Site area

This permission relates to the land outlined and shaded in red on drawing no. 27951/150 Rev H Site Location Plan dated 30-04-24 (received 15 May 2024) referred to in these conditions as "the Site".

Reason: To define the permission for the avoidance of doubt.

2. Commencement

The development hereby permitted shall be commenced not later than three years from the date of this permission. Within seven days of the commencement of development, the developer shall notify the waste planning authority in writing of the exact commencement date.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004.

3. Approved plans

The development hereby permitted shall not proceed except in accordance with the following approved drawings unless otherwise stated in this permission or as amended by the information approved as required by the other conditions of this permission (received 15 May 2024 unless otherwise stated):

i) Site Location Plan, 27951/150 Rev H dated 30-04-24;
ii) Proposed Site Layout, 27951/007 Rev P dated 01-03-24;
iii) Proposed Site Levels, 27951/008 Rev E dated 08-05-24;
iv) Proposed Plant Elevations Sheet 1 of 2, 27951/050 Rev B dated 27-07-23 (received 05/09/2023);
v) Proposed Plant Elevations Sheet 2of 2, 27951/051 Rev B dated 27-07-23 (received 05/09/2023);
vi) Proposed Site Drainage Layout Sheet 1 of 2, 27951/009 Rev B dated 13-06-24 (received 26/06/2024);
vii) Proposed Site Drainage Layout Sheet 2 of 2, 27951/010 Rev A dated 08-05-24;
viii) Proposed Site Sections, 27951/055 Rev B dated 27-07-23;
ix) Typical Containment Bund Wall RC Details, (6m Bay), 27951/080 Rev A dated 08-05-24;
x) Primary Containment Sump GA & RC Details, 27951/081 Rev A dated 08-05-24;
xi) Containment Bund Wall Gate RC Details, 27951/082 Rev A dated 08-05-24;
xii) Typical Containment Bund Joint Details, 27951/120 Rev B dated 03-05-24;
xiii) Typical Hardstanding & Kerbing Details, 27951/121 Rev B dated 03-05-24;
xiv) Typical Drainage Details Kerbing Details, 27951/122 Rev B dated 03-05-24;
xv) Typical Silage Clamps Sections & Details, 27951/123 Rev B dated 03-05-24;
xvi) Typical Containment Bund Drainage Details, 27951/124 Rev B dated 03-05-24;
xvii) Typical Water Storage Pond Construction Details, 27951/125 Rev B dated 03-05-24;
xviii) Typical Digestate Lagoon Construction Details, 27951/126 Rev B dated 03-05-24;
xix) Leachate Tank Construction Details, 27951/127 Rev 0 dated 03-05-24;
xx) Proposed Schematic Surface Water Drainage, 27951/805 Rev A dated 26-04-24;
xxi) Proposed Access Road Layout & Details Sketch, 27951/SK05 Rev F dated 30-04-24;
xxii) Proposed Access Road Roman Road Crossing Sketch, 27951/SK06 Rev B dated 07-02-24; and
xxiii) Ghost Island Design – A1307/Proposed Access Junction, PC5769-RHD-ZZ-JN-DR-D-0100 Rev P05 dated 30/04/24.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and to define the site and preserve the character, appearance and quality of the area in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 17, Policy 22 and Policy 23 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy HQ/1, Policy TI/2 and Policy TI/3.

4. Vehicular access

No vehicle associated with the development hereby permitted shall use the access from the A1307 which serves Mill House, Linton Road, Horseheath, CB21 4QF.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 23 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy TI/2.

5. Construction traffic management plan

No development shall take place until a construction traffic management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. The principal areas to be addressed are:

i. Movement and control of vehicles (all loading and unloading to be undertaken off the public highway);
ii. Contractor parking to be within the curtilage of the Site;
iii. Prevention of dust, mud and debris being deposited on the public highway; and
iv. The design and location of warning signage along the A1307 throughout the construction phase.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 23 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy TI/2.

This is a pre-commencement condition because the construction traffic management plan needs to be in place before construction starts.

6. Construction ecological management plan

No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works and vegetation clearance) until a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. The CEMP: Biodiversity shall incorporate recommendations of the Ecological Impact Assessment and Badger Report and must include the following:

a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;
b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”;
c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements);
d) The location and timings of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features;
e) The times during which construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works;
f) Responsible persons and lines of communication;
g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person; and
h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs if applicable.

The approved CEMP: Biodiversity shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the ecological interests of the Site and the surrounding area in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 20 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy NH/4.

This is a pre-commencement condition because the means of protecting the ecological interests of the Site and the surrounding area needs to be in place before development starts.

7. Construction environmental management plan

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan Revision 0 dated August 2023 except that the hours of construction shall be in accordance with condition 8 below.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the occupiers of nearby premises and users of the local area during the construction phase of the development in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 18 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy CC/6.

8. Construction hours

No construction machinery or plant shall be operated, no noisy works shall be carried out and no construction related deliveries shall be taken at or dispatched from the Site except between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays and not at any time on Sundays or Bank or Public holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the occupiers of nearby premises and users of the local area during the construction phase of the development in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 18 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy CC/6.

9. Piling

No piling or any other foundation designs and investigation boreholes using penetrative methods shall take place until a report / method statement for detailing the type of works and mitigation measures to be taken to protect local residents from noise and or vibration has been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. Potential noise and vibration levels at the nearest noise sensitive locations shall be predicted in accordance with the provisions of BS 5528, 2009 - Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites Parts 1 - Noise and 2 - Vibration (or as superseded). The report / method statement shall demonstrate that there will be no resultant unacceptable risk to groundwater. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants associated with current and previous land uses in line with National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) paragraphs 189 and 190 and relevant position statements within the Environment Agency's Approach to Groundwater Protection, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 122 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy CC/7.

10. Contaminated land

If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the waste planning authority shall be carried out except in accordance with a remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with has been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. The approved remediation strategy shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants associated with current and previous land uses in line with National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) paragraphs 189 and 190 and relevant position statements within the Environment Agency's Approach to Groundwater Protection, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 22 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy CC/7.

11. Surface water disposal

No development shall take place until a scheme for surface water disposal has been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. Infiltration systems shall only be used where it can be demonstrated that they will not pose a risk to groundwater quality. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approval details.

Reason: To prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants associated with current and previous land uses in line with National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) paragraphs 189 and 190 and relevant position statements within the Environment Agency's Approach to Groundwater Protection, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 22 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy CC/7.

This is a pre-commencement condition because the means of disposing of surface water need to be designed and approved before development starts.

12. New access road

No feedstock shall be accepted at the Site until the new access onto the A1307 has been constructed in accordance with Proposed Access Road Layout & Details Sketch, 27951/SK05 Rev F dated 30-04-24; Ghost Island Design – A1307/Proposed Access Junction, PC5769-RHD-ZZ-JN-DR-D-0100 Rev P05 dated 30/04/24; and Proposed Access Road Roman Road Crossing Sketch, 27951/SK06 Rev B dated 07-02-24 unless superseded by detailed design approved by the highway authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 23 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy TI/2.

13. New access road construction

The new access referred to in condition 12 shall be constructed so that:

i) No gate shall be erected within 20 metres of the junction give way;
ii) The first 25 metres shall be constructed using a bound material; and
iii) No water from the Site shall drain across or onto the public highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 23 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy TI/2.

14. Public right of way

Notwithstanding drawings Proposed Access Road Layout & Details Sketch 27951/SK05 Rev F dated 30-04-24 and Proposed Access Road Roman Road Crossing Sketch 27951/SK06 Rev B dated 07-02-24 referred to in condition 3, no vehicle associated with the development hereby permitted shall cross Public Bridleway No. 21 Horseheath (also known as the Roman Road) until the crossing has been surfaced in accordance with drawings which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 23 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy TI/2.

15. Archaeology

No development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has implemented a programme of archaeological work, commencing with the evaluation of the application area, that has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has been submitted to and approved by the waste planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no development shall take place other than under the provisions of the agreed WSI, which shall include:
a) The statement of significance and research objectives;
b) The programme and methodology of investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;
c) The timetable for the field investigation as part of the development programme;
d) The programme and timetable for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material and digital archives.

Reason: To safeguard archaeological assets within the Site from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development and to ensure the proper and timely preservation and/or investigation, recording, reporting, archiving and presentation of archaeological assets affected by the development, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) paragraph 211, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 21 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy NH/14.

This is a pre-commencement condition because the means of protecting any heritage assets within the Site needs to be in place before development starts.

16. Feedstock

Not less than 50% (in tonnes) of the feedstock accepted at the Site each calendar year shall be waste. Not less than 50% (in tonnes) of the feedstock accepted at the Site each calendar year shall originate from the land at Streetly Hall Farm; Grange Farm, Balsham; Park Farm, Horseheath; Streetly Hall partner farms, contract farms and tenants of Streetly Hall Farm shown in green and identified on Figure 2 of the Planning Statement dated October 2023 or any land subsequently added to those holdings. Not less than 70% (in tonnes) feedstock accepted at the Site in each calendar year shall originate from outside a 10 km radius of the Site.

Reason: In order to comply with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 4.

17. Record of feedstock inputs

A record of the quantity and source of feedstock delivered to the Site shall be maintained by the operator and shall be made available to the waste planning authority within 10 days of receipt of a written request. All records shall be kept for at least 48 months.

Reason: To enable the waste planning authority to monitor compliance with condition 16.

18. Hours of operation

No HGV shall enter or leave the Site outside the hours of 06:00 – 22:00 daily.

Reason: To minimise disturbance to residents and users of the area in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 18 and Policy 23 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy SC/10.

19. Mobile plant

All mobile plant used on the Site that uses reversing alarms shall be fitted with and use ‘white noise’ reversing alarms.

Reason: To minimise disturbance to residents and users of the area in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 18 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy SC/10.

20. Silencing of plant and machinery

No vehicle, plant or machinery shall be operated at the Site unless it has been fitted with and uses an effective silencer. All vehicles, plant and machinery shall be maintained in accordance with the manufacturers’ specification at all times.

Reason: To minimise disturbance to residents and users of the area in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 18 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy SC/10.

21. Lighting

No external lights shall be installed or used except in accordance with details, including hours of illumination, that have been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents and the rural environment in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 18, South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy SC/9 and West Wickham Neighbourhood Plan Policy WWK/6.

22. Fire hydrants

No feedstock shall be brought to the Site until fire hydrants are in place in accordance with a scheme that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. The fire hydrants shall be maintained in accordance with the approved scheme for the duration of the development.

Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents and users of the area in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 18 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy SC/14.

23. Surface water drainage

No laying of services, creation of hard surfaces or erection of a building shall commence until a detailed design of the surface water drainage of the Site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. The scheme shall be based upon the principles within the Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy prepared by Plandesil Consulting Engineers (ref: 27951) dated May 2024 and shall also include:

i) Full calculations detailing the existing surface water runoff rates for the QBAR, 3.3% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) (1 in 30) and 1% AEP (1 in 100) storm events;
ii) Full results of the proposed drainage system modelling in the above-referenced storm events (as well as 1% AEP plus climate change), inclusive of all collection, conveyance, storage, flow control and disposal elements and including an allowance for urban creep, together with an assessment of system performance;
iii) Detailed drawings of the entire proposed surface water drainage system, attenuation and flow control measures, including levels, gradients, dimensions and pipe reference numbers, designed to accord with the CIRIA C753 SuDS Manual (or any equivalent guidance that may supersede or replace it);
iv) Full detail on SuDS proposals (including location, type, size, depths, side slopes and cross sections);
v) Site investigation and test results to confirm infiltration rates;

vi) Details of overland flood flow routes in the event of system exceedance, with demonstration that such flows can be appropriately managed on site without increasing flood risk to occupants;
vii) Demonstration that the surface water drainage of the site is in accordance with DEFRA non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems;
viii) Full details of the maintenance/adoption of the surface water drainage system;
ix) Permissions to connect to a receiving watercourse or sewer; and
x) Measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface water.

Those elements of the surface water drainage system not adopted by a statutory undertaker shall thereafter be maintained and managed in accordance with the approved management and maintenance plan.
Reason: To ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained; that there is no increased flood risk on or off site resulting from the proposed development; and to ensure that the principles of sustainable drainage can be incorporated into the development in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 22 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy CC/8 and Policy CC/9.

24. Construction drainage

No development, including preparatory works, shall commence until details of measures indicating how additional surface water run-off from the site will be avoided during the construction works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. The applicant may be required to provide collection, balancing and/or settlement systems for these flows. The approved measures and systems shall be brought into operation before any works to create buildings or hard surfaces commence.

Reason: To ensure surface water is managed appropriately during the construction phase of the development so as not to increase the flood risk to adjacent land/properties or occupied properties within the development itself in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 22 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy CC/8 and Policy CC/9.

This is a pre-commencement condition because initial works to prepare the site could bring about unacceptable impacts.

25. Landscape planting

No development shall commence until a detailed landscape planting scheme based on drawing no. 2022-444-013 Rev G dated Sept 2023 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority.
i) Soft landscape works shall include planting plans, written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants with species, plant sizes and proposed numbers and densities where appropriate.
ii) All trees, shrubs and hedge plants shall comply with the requirements of British Standard 3936, Specification for Nursery Stock. All pre-planting site preparation, planting and post-planting maintenance works shall be carried out in accordance with the

requirements of British Standard 4428 (1989) Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations (excluding hard surfaces).
iii) All new tree plantings shall be positioned in accordance with the requirements of Table 3 of British Standard BS5837: 2005, Trees in relation to construction – Recommendations.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.
Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 17 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy HQ/1.

This is a pre-commencement condition because early planting would maximise the intended benefits of screening the proposed development.

26. Maintenance of soft Landscaping

Any trees or hedging planted within the Site which dies, becomes diseased or is removed within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species as those originally planted.

Reason: To ensure the benefit of the planting is maintained in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 17 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy HQ/1.

27. Biodiversity net gain plan

No development shall commence until a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. The BNG Plan shall target how a net gain in biodiversity will be achieved through a combination of on-site and / or off-site mitigation. The BNG Plan shall include:

i) A hierarchical approach to BNG focussing first on maximising on-site BNG, second delivering off-site BNG at a site(s) of strategic biodiversity importance, and third delivering off-site BNG locally to the application site;

ii) Full details of the respective on and off-site BNG requirements and proposals resulting from the loss of habitats on the development site utilising the latest appropriate DEFRA metric;

iii) Identification of the existing habitats and their condition on-site and within receptor site(s);

iv) Habitat enhancement and creation proposals on the application site and /or receptor site(s) utilising the latest appropriate DEFRA metric; and

v) An implementation, management and monitoring plan (including identified responsible bodies) for a period of 30 years for on and off-site proposals as appropriate.

The BNG Plan shall be implemented in full and subsequently managed and monitored in accordance with the approved details. Monitoring data as appropriate to criterion v) shall be submitted to the waste planning authority in accordance with the latest DEFRA guidance and the approved monitoring period / intervals.

Reason: To secure an increase in biodiversity net gain in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 20 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy NH/4.
This is a pre-commencement condition because the BNG needs to be designed into the development and management of early landscape planting that needs to be in place.

28. The digestate storage lagoon (item 25 on Proposed Site Layout, 27951/007 Rev P dated 01-03-24) shall not be brought into use until details of its cover and ammonia (NH_3) abatement system have been submitted to and approved in writing by the waste planning authority. It shall be completely sealed and maintained so that the ammonia (NH_3) abatement system provides a reduction in emissions to levels at or below those stated in the Redmore Environmental Technical Note Ref: 5949c1 dated 25th June 2024 for the duration of the development.

Reason: To protect the ecological interest of Sites of Special Scientific Interest in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) Policy 20 and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) Policy NH/5.

Informatives

Lead Local Flood Authority

1. Infiltration rates should be worked out in accordance with BRE 365/CIRIA 156. If for an outline application it is not feasible to access the site to carry out soakage tests before planning approval is granted, a desktop study may be undertaken looking at the underlying geology of the area and assuming a worst-case infiltration rate for that site. If infiltration methods are likely to be ineffective then discharge into a watercourse/surface water sewer may be appropriate; however soakage testing will be required at a later stage to clarify this.

2. Ordinary Watercourse Consent - Constructions or alterations within an ordinary watercourse (temporary or permanent) require consent from the Lead Local Flood Authority under the Land Drainage Act 1991. Ordinary watercourses include every river, drain, stream, ditch, dyke, sewer (other than public sewer) and passage through which water flows that do not form part of Main Rivers (Main Rivers are regulated by the Environment Agency). The applicant should refer to Cambridgeshire County Council's Culvert Policy for further guidance: https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Cambridgeshires-Culvert-Policy.pdf Please note the council does not regulate ordinary watercourses in Internal Drainage Board areas.

3. Pollution Control - Surface water and groundwater bodies are highly vulnerable to pollution and the impact of construction activities. It is essential that the risk of pollution (particularly during the construction phase) is considered and mitigated appropriately. It is important to remember that flow within the watercourse is likely to vary by season

and it could be dry at certain times throughout the year. Dry watercourses should not be overlooked as these watercourses may flow or even flood following heavy rainfall.

4. Construction Surface Water Maintenance - Prior to final handover of the development, the developer must ensure that appropriate remediation of all surface water drainage infrastructure has taken place, particularly where the permanent drainage infrastructure has been installed early in the construction phase. This may include but is not limited to jetting of all pipes, silt removal and reinstating bed levels. Developers should also ensure that watercourses have been appropriately maintained and remediated, with any obstructions to flows (such as debris, litter and fallen trees) removed, ensuring the condition of the watercourse is better than initially found. This is irrespective of the proposed method of surface water disposal, particularly if an ordinary watercourse is riparian owned.

Environment Agency

5. Environmental Permitting - Notwithstanding the preceding, the LPA and the applicant should be aware that the proposed development will require a permit under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (England and Wales) 2016. The following will be considered further when the permit application is assessed: techniques for pollution control including in process controls, emission control, management, waste feedstock and digestate, energy, accidents, noise and monitoring; emission benchmarks for combustion products, temperature and pH; air quality impact assessment, including odour and Habitats Regulations Assessment. A permit will only be granted where the risk to the environment is acceptable. We have previously recommended that the planning and permit applications for this development be parallel tracked.

6. Pollution Prevention - The proposed development must fully comply with the terms of The Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) (England) (SSAFO) Regulations 2010 and as amended 2013. You must inform the Environment Agency of a new, reconstructed or enlarged slurry store, silage clamp or fuel stores at least 14 days before starting any construction work. Although we recommend that you notify us earlier than this. The notification must include
   - the type of store you're proposing to build or change
   - the exact location of the site (8-figure grid reference)
   - site plan drawing of the structure
   - a design drawing confirming the materials that will be used and their design, specification and layout – you may also be asked to confirm that your design meets British Standard 5502-22:2003 A1:2013
   - if you plan to use prefabricated products, a copy of the manufacturer's specifications and guarantee
   - if the structure is constructed from earth, analysis about the soil type, depth and permeability and a description of how it will be engineered
   - for underground or partially underground silage effluent tanks you'll need a certification from the installer – you must provide this certification to the Environment Agency because the tank is required to perform for at least 20 years without maintenance.

7. The application of digestate to agricultural land is regulated under the Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2015 (NVZ) and the Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural

Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations 2018 (Farming Rules for Water). The application of digestate to land may also require an environmental permit under Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 The applicant must ensure that there is sufficient land bank for the digestate and that contingency measures are in place for when this is not available, in accordance with the aforementioned regulations and codes of good agricultural practice.

Highway authority

8. The granting of planning permission does not constitute a permission or licence to a developer to carry out any works within, or disturbance of, or interference with, the public highway, including public rights of way, and that separate permissions must be sought from the Highway Authority for such works.

9. The proposed works to the public highway which are required as part of the highway mitigation, will result in a material loss of established vegetation and / or damage to existing ecosystems (including potentially both habitats and protected species) within existing highway or adjoining land. Notwithstanding any consent granted under the Town and Country Planning Act, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their works comply with relevant legislation and that any supplementary permits or permissions are secured prior to undertaking the highway works.

Definitive Map Officer (Rights of Way)

10. Obstruction DMapI 01: Public Bridleway No. 21, Horseheath must remain open and unobstructed at all times. Building materials must not be stored on Public Rights of Way and contractors' vehicles must not be parked on it (it is an offence under s 137 of the Highways Act 1980 to obstruct a public Highway).

11. Access DMapI 02: The Public Bridleway must not be used to access the development site unless the applicant is sure they have lawful authority to do so (it is an offence under S34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to drive on a Public Bridleway without lawful authority).

12. Surface DMapI 03: No alteration to the Bridleway's surface is permitted without our consent (it is an offence to damage the surface of a public footpath under s 1 of the Criminal Damage Act 1971).

13. Boundary Maintenance DMapI 04: Landowners are reminded that it is their responsibility to maintain boundaries, including trees, hedges and fences adjacent to Public Rights of way, and that any transfer of land should account for any such boundaries (s154 Highways Act 1980).

14. Obstruction DMapI 05: The granting of planning permission does not entitle a developer to obstruct a Public Right of Way (Circular 1/09 para 7.1).

15. Dominant Rights DMapI 06: Members of the public on foot, horseback and pedal cycle have the dominant right of passage along the public bridleway; private vehicular users must 'give way' to them.

16. Costs DMapI 08: The applicant will be required to meet the costs of any new or amended signage that may be required as a result of any legal changes to the Public Rights of Way network.

17. Maintenance DMapI 09: The Highway Authority has a duty to maintain Public Rights of Way in such a state as to be suitable for its intended use (S41 Highways Act 1980 and S66 Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981). If the surface of the bridleway is damaged as a result of increased motorised vehicle usage, the Highways Authority is only liable to maintain it to a bridleway standard. Those with private vehicular rights will therefore be liable for making good the surface of the Public Right of Way.

18. Biodiversity DMapI 10: It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that any works which may result in a material loss of established vegetation and/or damage to existing ecosystems (including potentially both habitats and protected species) within the existing public right of way or adjoining land, comply with relevant legislation and that any supplementary permits or permissions are secured prior to undertaking their public rights of way works.

Compliance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework

The applicant sought pre-application advice from the waste planning authority and its specialist advisers (transport, ecology, historic environment). The waste planning authority has worked proactively with the applicant and statutory and technical consultees to ensure that the proposed development is, on balance, acceptable in planning terms. The applicant has responded positively to the advice and recommendations provided and amendments have been made (where required) to satisfy concerns raised. All land use planning matters have been given full consideration, which resulted in support for the development proposal from most statutory consultees. The proposed development would make a small contribution to addressing climate change by generating renewable energy.

Source Documents

Link to planning application documents and consultation responses on the Cambridgeshire County Council website: Simple Search (cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Link to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021): Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals & Waste Local Plan 2021

Link to the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018): South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018

Link to the West Wickham Neighbourhood Plan (2022): West Wickham Neighbourhood Plan

Link to Planning practice guidance: Planning Practice Guidance

Link to the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023): NPPF December 2023

Link to the National Planning Policy for Waste (2014): National Planning Policy for Waste

Link to the Anaerobic Digestion Strategy and Action Plan (Defra/DECC June 2011): Anaerobic Digestion Strategy and Action Plan

Link to the Green Gas Support Scheme Mid-Scheme Review (Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, January 2024): Green Gas Support Scheme Mid-Scheme Review