

SCOPING OPINION

Opinion requested by:

Name and address of agent (if any)

Advanced Fuel Partners Ltd & Warrendale Farms Ltd

Lichfields
3rd Floor
15 St Paul's Street
Leeds
LS1 2JG

Part I - Particulars of request

Date of request:

LCC Ref No:

20 April 2023

EIA/07/23

Description of development:

For the installation of a gas to grid biofuel plant, plus ancillary infrastructure and equipment, landscaping and access

Location:

Land at Walcott Farm, Digby Road, Walcott, LN4 3TD

Type of review (ROMP development only)

Part 2 - Particulars of decision

The Lincolnshire County Council hereby gives notice that it has adopted the Scoping Opinion that an Environmental Statement submitted with an EIA application for the development described in Part 1 should include the information set out below.

General comments

Having reviewed the document entitled "*Walcott Farm Biofuel Plant Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report*" dated April 2023 prepared by Pell Frischman (hereafter referred to as "the Scoping Report") and taking into account comments received from statutory consultees it is agreed an Environmental Statement (ES) for the development is required.

The Waste Planning Authority (WPA) agrees with the proposed structure of the ES (as set out in Section 15 of the Scoping Report) and that the following topics/matters should be 'scoped in' with appropriate assessments carried out as part of the ES:

- Air Quality
- Noise and Vibration
- Archaeology and Heritage
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Ecology (Biodiversity)

Date: 5 June 2023

N McBride

Head of Planning

Planning
Lincolnshire County Council
County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL

- Flood Risk and the Water Environment
- In combination and Cumulative Effects

In addition to the main ES a series of Additional Documents and assessments are proposed to be carried out and submitted in support of the ES and future planning application. These Additional Documents are listed within paragraph 15.2.1 of the Scoping Report and would supplement the ES and address matters or topics that are proposed to be 'scoped out' of the main ES or cover matters that are not required to form part of the ES. The WPA is agreeable to proposed list of Additional Documents identified and for the following topics/matters to being 'scoped out' of the ES at this stage for the reasons cited:

- Climate Change – based on the information presented within the Scoping Report, the WPA agrees that climate change and greenhouse gas emissions as a stand-alone topic is not required as part of the ES. However, the ES should still comment on the proposed development's adaption and resilience to climate change scenarios and that the future impacts of climate for drainage and flooding be considered as part of the Flood Risk Assessment.
- Ground Conditions and Contamination (inc Agricultural Land) – the Environment Agency has confirmed that, based on the information presented within the Scoping Report, they have no concerns with the proposed approach to 'scope out' ground conditions and contamination from the ES at this stage. Therefore the WPA is agreeable to the approach as set out in the Scoping Report.

In relation to agricultural land, an agricultural land assessment/report is to be submitted with the planning application but is to sit outside the ES as an Additional Document. A review of provisional ALC data (pre-1988) indicates that the majority of the proposal site is located on land classified as Grade 2 (approximately 10.84 hectares), whilst a small section of existing access track would be classified as Grade 3 (approximately 0.06 hectares or 622m²). The farm is currently used for intensive poultry farming and an ecological walkover survey has confirmed the site is predominantly modified grassland that has not been used for arable farming since at least 1990. Given the current and historical use of the land, and taking into account flooding data and the walkover surveys conducted so far, it is suggested that the quality of land within the site is unlikely to be high quality BMV land or Grade 2 ALC.

Although a detailed survey has not been carried out to confirm the soil quality at this stage, given the relatively small footprint of land that would be lost and taking into account its current condition/historical use, the WPA does not consider it necessary for further detailed or semi-detailed surveys to be conducted at this stage. Instead the agricultural land assessment/report should assess the potential impacts of the development in terms of loss of BMV land based on data/mapping and information already available and consider and identify measures that would be taken to enable the recovery and restoration of the site in the event the development were to cease operation. The WPA is therefore agreeable to the proposed approach to 'scope out' this topic as a specific chapter of the ES so long as the assessment forms part of an Additional Document as proposed.

- Population and Human Health – based on the information presented within the Scoping Report, the WPA is agreeable with the proposed approach to 'scope out' impacts on population and human health as a stand-alone chapter of the ES. A socio-economic assessment is to be produced as an Additional Document supporting the planning application that will consider employment and the overall business case for the proposed development. In relation to other human receptors, impacts will be assessed as appropriate within the other topics of the ES (e.g. noise, odour, visual impact, etc). Therefore the WPA is agreeable to the approach as set out in the Scoping Report.
- Major Accidents and Natural Disasters – whilst there is always a potential risk that a major accident or natural disaster could result in a significant environmental effect, given the nature of the proposed development based on the information presented within the Scoping Report, the WPA is agreeable with the proposed approach to 'scope out' major accidents and natural disasters as part of the ES.

In relation the Planning Statement (identified as an Additional Document), this should contain details of all relevant national and adopted local development plan policies and guidance and an analysis of how the proposal will seek to accord with those policies. This should include the documents identified within Appendix 3.1 of the Scoping Report and have particular regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the adopted Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Core

Strategy & Development Management Policies (2016) (CSDMP) and the recently adopted Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (2023) (CLLP2023) which was adopted in April 2023 and replaces the earlier 2017 version.

Work has also begun on the preparation of a replacement for the current Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) and the current Local Development Scheme envisages a Preferred Approach (Draft) of the new LMWLP (Regulation 18) document to be published by Spring 2023. As a result, it is also recommended that consideration and reference also be made to any relevant emerging policies that may be contained within this document if this is available by the time the application for this development is submitted.

Information to be supplied in the Environmental Statement

Notwithstanding the informational requirements as already set out within Schedule 4 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the EIA Regulations), the following information should be contained within the Environmental Statement (ES).

Introduction and Description of the development

A full description of the proposed development during construction and operational phases including:

- details of the site's location and the existing features;
- the existing land uses affected and surrounding the proposed development;
- any relevant planning history of the site/proposed development;
- details of existing levels, boundary treatments and screening measures including trees, shrubs, hedges and bunds within or adjacent to the site;
- details of the site operations and description of the processes to be carried out by the development (all elements);
- details and description of the feedstocks to be used by the development and their source, quantities to be handled and outputs;
- details and description of all site infrastructure, buildings and plant and equipment that form part of the development;
- details of the means of access, vehicle movements and numbers associated with both the construction and operational phases of the development;
- details of the hours of operation for the development including those associated with the import of feedstocks and export of products; and
- details of mitigation measures embedded or proposed as part of the development.

The above should reflect the information given in Section 2 of the Scoping Report.

Scope and methodology & relevant expertise

The ES should identify, describe and assess the likely significant effects of the development. A description of the methods used for data collection should be given together with an indication of any difficulties, including technical deficiencies, unavailable data and gaps in knowledge that have been encountered. The WPA agrees with the approach that the study areas to be used in relation to assessing different topics should be identified and explained within each relevant chapter of ES.

The assessment and ES must be prepared by competent experts and should be accompanied by a statement, or the assessments contained therein should contain, information outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts.

Data required to identify and assess the main effects which the development is likely to have on the environment

Air Quality

The WPA agrees that the potential air quality impacts of the development should be 'scoped in' and appropriate assessments included as part of the ES. This chapter of the ES should consider impacts in respect of impacts on air quality, construction dust and odour.

The Scoping Report states that based the currently anticipated number of daily traffic movements associated with both the construction and operational stages, an assessment of the impact of vehicle emissions on air quality is not currently proposed. Given the numbers currently proposed do not exceed the indicative screening criteria provided within the Institute of Air Quality Management guidance then the WPA agrees with this approach however this position would be reviewed once final development traffic numbers are confirmed.

In terms of odour, an assessment of the potential operational odour effects of the development should be undertaken and should be carried out in accordance with the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) *“Guidance on the assessment of odour for planning”*. The following should form part of the assessment:

- A description of existing baseline odour conditions (including complaints history) where relevant
- A description of the location of receptors and their relative sensitivities to odour effects.
- Details of potential odour sources (whether existing or proposed), including the activities and materials involved (including a brief outline of quantities, durations, methods of handling and storage, etc) and the resulting potential for generating odours, covering fugitive sources, diffuse sources and point sources as applicable.
- A description of control/mitigation measures incorporated into the scheme (including management controls and, where appropriate, engineering controls).
- A prediction or observation (or combination of both), using appropriate assessment tools, of the likely odour impact and resulting effects at relevant sensitive receptors, and taking into account:
 - a. the likely magnitude of odour emissions (after control by measures incorporated into the scheme, if applicable);
 - b. the likely meteorological characteristics at the site;
 - c. the dispersion and dilution afforded by the pathway to the receptors and the resulting magnitude of odour that could result;
 - d. the sensitivity of the receptors; and
 - e. the potential cumulative odour effects with any odours of a similar character;
- Where odour modelling has been used the assessment should contain full details of the input data and modelling options used.
- A odour contour map showing predicted odour emissions and concentrations from the site at the nearest sensitive receptors/residential properties.
- Where odour effects are assessed as significant, details of appropriate further mitigation and control measures that could allow the proposal to proceed without causing significant loss of amenity;
- The residual odour impacts and their effects.
- A conclusion on the significance of the residual effect, i.e. whether “significant” or “not significant”.

In all cases the assessment(s) should include a description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible, remedy significant adverse effects and also include details of any measures that would be taken to ensure the mitigation measures are effective.

Noise and Vibration

The WPA agrees this matter should be ‘scoped in’ and an appropriate assessment included as part of the ES.

The assessments should be carried out in accordance with the proposed approach, methodology and guidance as set out in Section 5 of the Scoping Report contain a description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible, remedy significant adverse effects should also be included along with details of any measures that would be taken to ensure the mitigation measures are effective.

Archaeology and Heritage

The WPA agrees this matter should be ‘scoped in’ and an appropriate assessment included as part of the ES. The ES should contain a description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible, remedy significant adverse effects on heritage assets and archaeological receptors, and should also include details of any measures that would be taken to ensure the mitigation measures are effective.

The proposal site is considered to have a high archaeological potential and the potential to affect the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) of Catley Priory to the immediate south of the site.

In terms of designated heritage assets, sufficient information and evaluation is required to understand the potential impacts of the development. Paragraph 6.6.4 of the Scoping Report appears to suggest that the Study Area for assessing impacts on designated assets would be limited to 1km from the proposed development location and that the assessment would also be informed by the Zone of Visual Influence adopted for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. The WPA is of the opinion that the proposed 1km study area is too tightly drawn and risks scoping out other key receptors. Impacts on designated assets are not limited to visual impact only, as the setting of a designated asset can also be affected by other factors such as noise, odour, vibration and lighting impact, etc. As a result, for the avoidance of doubt, any impact on setting should not be limited to just a consideration of potential visual impacts and therefore the WPA does not agree with the proposed study area being limited to 1km at this stage. Instead the study area should be set at a minimum of 3km for the assessment of impacts on designated heritage assets in the first instance (in line with the ZTV of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment) and can then potentially be reduced to 1km where intervisibility between the site and any designated assets is demonstrated not to exist.

In terms of impacts on non-designated assets (buried archaeology), sufficient information and evaluation should be carried out to identify archaeological potential and to inform a reasonable and appropriate mitigation strategy in the ES. This should include the full suite of evaluation methods including desk-based assessment using the County's Historic Environment Record (which holds records of archaeological finds and potential features within the application area), as well as other available records including air photos, LiDAR and local sources. To ensure the ES takes appropriate account of the heritage assets, reference should be given to Historic England's '*Historic Environment Good Practice Guide in Planning 2: Managing significance in the decision-taking in the Historic Environment*'. Where the desk-based assessment identifies the need for further non-intrusive and intrusive pre-development site evaluation and fieldwork to be carried out (e.g. geophysical survey and targeted trial trenching), then this should be carried out in full and in accordance with a scope of works agreed with the WPA's Historic Environment Team and the results of this works submitted as part of the ES.

You are advised to also refer to the advice/comments from the LCC Historic Places Manager and Historic England (attached to this decision).

Landscape and Visual Impact

The WPA agrees this matter should be 'scoped in' and appropriate assessments included as part of the ES.

An assessment of the potential effects of the development on landscape and visual amenity during both the construction and operation of the development should be undertaken. The WPA is generally agreeable to the proposed approach and methodology to be taken as set out within Section 7 of the Scoping Report and agrees that the LVIA should be conducted in accordance with GLVIA3 and TGN 06/19 but it is not clear why, at this stage, inclusion is to be given to Visual Representation of Windfarms, Version 2.2 (February 2017) by Scottish Natural Heritage (where relevant for ZTV methodology) (as identified in paragraph 7.4.1 of the Scoping Report). This should therefore be clarified but in any case it is recommended that the following publications also be taken into consideration when carrying out the LVIA:

- Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 1/20 Reviewing Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) and Landscape and Visual Appraisals (LVAs)', 10th January 2020 by the Landscape Institute; and
- Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 2/21 Assessing landscape value outside national designations, May 2021 by the Landscape Institute.
- The North Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment (2007) (LCA) – this will be applicable and the site is within the Central Plateau regional landscape character type. The 2007 LCA should be utilised and inform the LVIA.

The WPA agrees with the proposed study area being set at 3km given the findings of the ZTV undertaken at this stage and also agrees with the proposed viewpoint locations identified within Appendix 7.1 of the Scoping Report. It is advised that photomontages should be produced to a minimum of AVR level 2.

As with all other topics, this chapter of the ES should contain a description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible, remedy significant adverse effects and details of these should be included along with details of any measures that would be taken to ensure the mitigation measures are effective.

Ecology (Biodiversity)

The WPA agrees this matter should be 'scoped in' and appropriate assessments included as part of the ES.

A desk-top study and extended Phase 1 habitat survey have already been carried out and identified the potential for sensitive habitats and species on the site. These initial studies have identified the need for further protected species to be carried out in relation to great crested newts and reptiles and paragraph 8.2.4 of the Scoping Report confirms that further botanical surveys will be carried out to inform the priority habitat assessment. Given the findings presented to far further pre-determination surveys are not proposed in relation to nesting birds, water voles, badgers or other species as identified within Table 8.1.

The WPA agrees with the proposed approach within Section 8 of the Scoping Report and in particular that the ES Chapter should combine the preliminary findings and reports undertaken to date with the findings of any additional protected species surveys. The ES should contain a description of the measures envisaged in order to avoid, mitigate and compensate for any significant adverse effects on nature conservation interests or on individual species and details of any measures that would be taken to secure biodiversity enhancements and ongoing aftercare for the duration of the proposed development. In terms of biodiversity net gain, it is recommended that the latest DEFRA Biodiversity Metric be taken into account and this should be completed and submitted in support of any future application (as part of the supporting documentation or within the ES) in order to demonstrate a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) would be delivered through this development as required by the Environment Act 2021. The ES and application documentation should clearly state how a minimum of 10% BNG would be delivered on-site, and should it not be possible to achieve this on-site then the full mitigation hierarchy should be observed.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The WPA agrees this matter should be 'scoped in' and appropriate assessments included as part of the ES.

The proposal site lies within Flood Zones 1 and 2 with a small parts of the site also being located within Flood Zone 3. Flood Zone 2 is defined as land classified as having between a 1 in 100 (1%) and 1 in 1000 (0.1%) annual probability of flooding from fluvial sources whilst Flood Zone 3 is defined as land classified as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of flooding from fluvial sources. This means that the site (or parts of it) is at medium and high risk of flooding. The Witham Internal Drainage Board (IDB) has confirmed that in 2019 the site was subject to overland flows from Queens Dyke (which lies to the south-west of the site) and so any changes in ground levels and flow routes as consequence of this development should not adversely affect third party land. The IDB also highlight that an IDB maintained drain (Old Drain 2144) runs through the proposal site and

The WPA agrees that a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Outline Drainage Strategy should be undertaken and should form part of the ES. The FRA should be compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance 'Flood Risk and Coastal Change' and include an appraisal of flood risk and any flood levels for the application area and demonstrate surface water flood risk is not increased as a result the development during its operation. The FRA should also identify any necessary proposed mitigation measures and consider the potential impact of the proposed restoration profiles on the hydrological environments, drainage and flood risk to ensure that there will be no long-term effects.

An Outline Drainage Strategy should also be provided as part of the ES which demonstrates how foul and potential contaminated waters as well as surface water run-off from the site surface and buildings would be managed and disposed of. The IDB has advised that any surface water discharge must be attenuated to a greenfield rate and that Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) principles should be adopted wherever possible.

Finally, at this stage the IDB have commented that the proposed layout of the site would not be acceptable as it would appear to impede or impact upon the Old Drain 2144 which runs through the site. The IDBs prior written consent is required for any temporary or permanent works or structures within a 9m distance of the top of the bank of the IDB drain to allow access for future maintenance. A permanent undeveloped strip of land of

sufficient width should therefore be retained and if this is not current reflected in the layout drawings then this will need to be amended or agreed with the IDB in advance of the plans progressing further.

You are advised to also refer to the advice/comments from the Environment Agency and Witham 1st Internal Drainage Board (attached to this decision).

In-combination and Cumulative Effects

The WPA agrees that the ES should contain a chapter which identifies, describes and evaluates the effects that are likely to result from the proposal in combination with other major projects and activities that are being, have been or will be carried out. This includes plans or projects for which have been completed; approved but uncompleted and applications that have been made and which are under consideration by either the Local Planning Authority (North Kesteven District Council) or Mineral and Waste Planning Authority (Lincolnshire County Council) and which are reasonably foreseeable (i.e. projects for which an application has not yet been submitted but which are likely to progress before completion of the development and for which sufficient information is available to assess the likelihood of cumulative and in-combination effects).

This include a similarly proposed AD Plant that proposes to utilise similar/same technologies and feedstocks as that proposed by this development. The WPA has recently issued a Scoping Opinion decision (ref: EIA.37/22) in connection with this proposal which would be located approximately 4.5km to the north of the site on the former RAF Metheringham airfield. This development also proposes to import chicken manure from other nearby farms and spread final digestate on surrounding farmland. Given the feedstock catchment and spreading areas of these two proposals are likely to overlap, the ES should assess and identify whether there are any potential cumulative effects likely to arise as a result of the potential existence of two such AD Plants in close proximity to one another and, in particular, that there are sufficient quantities of feedstock available to serve both developments and that the local environment could safely absorb and accommodate the digestate taking into account Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) spreading restrictions and applications rates. The combined potential impact of traffic should also be taken into consideration as well as other potential impacts such as odour.

In addition to the above, a large-scale solar farm (known as Springwells) is currently being promoted by EDF in the local area. This project is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and lies to the west of the proposal site and covers an area extending over 1,700 hectares. The plans are still being finalised and so the overall footprint and arable land to be lost through this development (if consented) is unknown however it is this is granted consent would result in the loss of large areas of farmland in and around the area which may have otherwise been potential receptors sites for spreading of digestate produced by this proposal. The development would also give rise to other impacts during both its construction and operational phases such as increased traffic movements and landscape and visual impacts and therefore any in-combination and cumulative effects assessment should also take this development into account.

Non-technical Summary

In accordance with Schedule 4, paragraph 9 of the EIA Regulations a non-technical summary of the information and findings of the ES should be provided.

Informative(s)

- (i) The applicant's attention is also drawn to the correspondence and comments received from statutory and non-statutory consultees upon which the basis of this opinion has been formed:
- Environment Agency letter dated 24 May 2023
 - Historic England letter dated 25 May 2023
 - Highway & Lead Local Flood Authority response dated 24 May 2023
 - LCC Historic Places Manager response dated 23 May 2023
 - Witham 1st Internal Drainage Board response dated 23 May 2023
 - Digby Parish Council response dated 17 May 2023
 - Walcott Parish Council response dated 24 May 2023
 - County Council Local Member, Cllr Kendrick response dated 9 May 2023.

- (ii) Please note that at the time of issuing this opinion a response from North Kesteven District Council (NKDC) had not been received and these are not expected until after 13 June 2023. Therefore, whilst NKDC's views and/or advice on the scope of the ES is not included within this response, given the impact of the development on their district, you are strongly encouraged to take into account any comments NKDC may make and therefore consider these as a supplement to this formal opinion. Any comments received post-issuing of this response will therefore be forwarded onto you for information.

- (iii) In addition to the above, comments from members of the local community have been submitted and made to NKDC in connection with this proposed development. Whilst these comments/concerns do not offer specific advice on the content of the ES, they do give an indication of specific issues and concerns that the community have about the proposed development. Therefore at this stage you are advised to take these into account when preparing the application and carrying out any pre-application community consultation and engagement. Copies of the comments can be found on NKDC's website at <https://planningonline.n-kesteven.gov.uk/online-applications/> using reference 23/0543/EIASCO

Lincolnshire County Council
County Offices
Newland
Lincoln
Lincolnshire
LN1 1YL

Our ref: AN/2023/134330/01-L01
Your ref: EIA/07/23
Date: 24 May 2023

Dear Planning Officer

Request for a scoping opinion for the installation of a gas to grid biofuel plant, plus ancillary infrastructure and equipment, landscaping and access Land At Walcott Farm, Digby Road, Walcott, LN4 3TD

Thank you for consulting us on the above EIA scoping opinion request, which we received on 05 May 2023.

Environment Agency position

We have reviewed the submitted Scoping Report. The following comments, made in respect of Flood Risk, Water Quality, Groundwater and Contaminated Land and Permitting will ensure that the environmental statement addresses the key environmental issues for this proposal.

1. Flood Risk

The proposed development is in Flood Zone 2 and 3, which is land defined by the planning practice guidance as having a high and medium probability of flooding. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paragraph 167, footnote 55) states that a flood risk assessment (FRA) must be submitted when development is proposed in such locations, and we therefore agree with the conclusion of the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report that a FRA will be undertaken to support the design and planning of the proposed development and that flooding will be scoped into the Environmental Assessment.

The FRA must be submitted in support of any future planning application submitted to the local planning authority for the proposed development at this location.

We have considered the need for compensatory floodplain storage at this location and do not think that it is required and will not therefore ask for it to be included in the FRA.

We would encourage the LPA to discuss any land raising with the local IDB as although flood risk is unaffected, land drainage may be.

2. Water Quality

The proposed development site is located between two main rivers that run along the sites western and eastern boundaries. There is the potential for the proposed development to impact the water environment. The NPPF (paragraph 174(e)) states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural local environment by preventing new development from contributing to unacceptable levels of water

Environment Agency

Ceres House, Searby Road, Lincoln, LN2 4DW
Email: LNplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/environment-agency

*Customer services line: 03708 506 506
Calls to 03 numbers cost the same as calls to standard geographic numbers (i.e. numbers beginning with 01 or 02).*

Cont/d..

pollution. Development should help to improve local environmental conditions such as water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans.

We therefore agree with the conclusion of the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report that surface water quality will be scoped into the Environmental Assessment.

3. Groundwater & Contaminated Land

The proposed development appears to be located on Greenfield land and in an area of low environmental sensitivity for groundwater, underlain by Unproductive strata.

On this basis, we have no concerns with the approach to scope ground conditions and contamination out of the Environmental Statement.

4. Environmental Permitting

This development will require a bespoke permit under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (England and Wales) 2016.

Information on Environmental Permits can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-environmental-permits#check-if-you-need-a-standard-rules-permit>

If you would like to speak to us regarding Environmental Permits, please contact our Permitting Support Centre at PSC@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Review of Documentation and Further Work

We do have a voluntary charged-for service where we can provide detailed pre-application advice. As part of this service we can provide a dedicated project manager to act as a single point of contact to coordinate any problems, data requests or review technical documents. Should the applicant wish us to undertake a detailed review of any FRA or want further advice to address these issues, we can do this as part of our charged for service.

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact me via the details below.

Yours sincerely

Hannah Kelly

Planning Adviser

✉ Ceres House, Searby Rd, Lincoln, LN2 4DW

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Team email: LNplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk

Historic England EIA SCOPING CONSULTATION your ref EIA/07/23 our ref PL00792982

Allen, Tim <Tim.Allen@HistoricEngland.org.uk>

Thu 25/05/2023 22:03

To: Dev_PlanningSupport <Dev_PlanningSupport@lincolnshire.gov.uk>

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EIA SCOPING CONSULTATION your ref EIA/07/23 our ref PL00792982

Land at Walcott Farm
Digby Road
Walcott
LN4 3TD

HISTORIC ENGLAND ADVICE

Thank you for consulting Historic England on this EIA scoping request.

The Historic Environment should be scoped in on the basis of potential significant effects in respect of setting and direct impacts and in order to ensure an holistic approach to all environmental matters, we refer you to the expertise of your authority's own specialist advisors on archaeology and the historic built environment.

Setting impacts in respect of scheduled monuments viz Catley Priory NHLE 1017524 and Neolithic Long Barrow 770m ESE of Rowston Grange NHLE 1013916 should be given particular attention.

See also our published advice including :-

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/planning-archaeology-advice-note-17/>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/deposit-modelling-and-archaeology/>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/preserving-archaeological-remains/>

yours sincerely
Tim Allen

Tim Allen MA FSA
Development Advice Team Leader (North)

Midlands Region
Historic England
The Foundry, 82 Granville Street, Birmingham B1 2LH

Direct Line 07770 610214
<http://www.historicengland.org.uk/> | [@HistoricEngland](#)



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LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

District: Lincolnshire County Council

Application number: EIA/07/23

Application Type: EIA Scoping Opinion

Proposal: For the installation of a gas to grid biofuel plant, plus ancillary infrastructure and equipment, landscaping and access

Location: Land at Walcott Farm, Digby Road, Walcott, LN4 3TD

Response Date: 24 May 2023

This report includes the Substantive response of the Local Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority to a planning consultation received under the Development Management Order and includes details of any planning conditions or informatives that should be attached in the event that permission is granted and any obligations to be secured by way of a S106 agreement.

General Information and Advice

Outline applications and contributions

The anticipated number and type of dwellings and/or the floor space may be set by the developer at the time of application which is used to assess necessary mitigation. If not stated in the application, a policy compliant mix will be used. The number and type of dwellings used when assessing S106 planning obligations is set out on the first page of this response.

In the case of outline applications, once the unit mix/floor space is confirmed by reserved matters approval/discharge of condition a matrix (if appropriate) will be applied to establish any increase in contributions payable. A further increase in contributions may result if there is a reserved matters approval changing the unit mix/floor space.

Please note that although the Definitive Map and Statement proves the existence of any recorded rights of way, there may be further or higher rights that are not shown on this document that the County Council is not currently aware of. This would be especially relevant where the public has had informal access to the site or where there are references to routes across this in maps or other historic documents. As the County Council has received no application to recognise further rights of way affecting the site, no more informed guidance can be offered at this stage.

Application number: EIA/07/23

Location: Land at Walcott Farm, Digby Road, Walcott, LN4 3TD

Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority Report

Substantive Response provided in accordance with article 22(5) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015:

Recommendation:

No Objection

Comments:

This consultation request is for a Scoping Opinion on the information that should be included in the ES, rather than the development.

With regard to environmental impact on Highways and surface water flood risk, there is no requirement for these to be covered in the ES. However, the transport impacts and surface water flood risk will need to be assessed for a future planning application, which will need a supporting Transport Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy.

Officer's Name: Ian Field

Officer's Title: Growth Manager (Special Projects)

Date: 24 May 2023

From: Ian George
Sent: 23 May 2023 11:01
To: Dev_PlanningSupport
Subject: FW: SCOPING OPINION CONSULTATION - LAND AT WALCOTT FARM, DIGBY ROAD, WALCOTT, LN4 3TD

REFERENCE: EIA/07/23

**DEVELOPMENT: FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A GAS TO GRID BIOFUEL PLANT, PLUS ANCILLARY INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT, LANDSCAPING AND ACCESS
LOCATION: LAND AT WALCOTT FARM, DIGBY ROAD, WALCOTT, LN4 3TD**

GRID REFERENCE: 511415 356350

Dear Colleague

The EIA scoping report produced by Pell Frischmann on behalf of Advanced Fuel Partners contains a chapter on Archaeology and Heritage (chapter 6).

We are pleased to see that potential impacts on buried archaeology and effects on settings is recognised. It is clear that a reasonable level of archaeological evaluation, including trial trenching, is necessary to get an understanding of the presence, extent, character and significance of archaeological remains across the site and to provide the basis for a mitigation strategy to deal with addressing the potential harm caused by the development.

Below are some specific comments:

6.2.1. This initial historic environment baseline has been formed from a review of open-source information available on the National List¹⁵ and the on-line Lincolnshire Historic Environment Records¹⁶ database of Historic England¹⁷ data.

It is always useful to start from first principles and establish a good baseline. There is no indication that a search has been made of the county's Historic Environment Record which must be a prerequisite for establishing such a baseline. There is no mention of how big a search area has been covered to establish the baseline evidence. Our normal expectation for proposals which require EIA we recommend the HER search be for a radius of 2km for non-designated heritage assets and 5km for designated assets.

6.2.2. The site has been subjected to prolonged intensive arable farming, considerably reducing the chances of archaeological remains surviving.

Whilst there is inevitably an impact of cultivation on the survival of archaeological remains it is still true to say that the vast majority of archaeological remains in this country are found on arable land. We can not, at this early stage, pre-judge what the impact of agricultural practices over the years might have been. In a county which relies on an agrarian economy like Lincolnshire there are a wealth of archaeological sites, some of which are regionally, nationally and even internationally significant, which have been subject to ploughing at some time in their history.

6.2.4. There are two scheduled ancient monuments to the south of the site. Catley Priory (143m south) and the Neolithic Long Barrow 770m ESE of Rowston Grange 215m to the south. The Historic England survey of Catley Priory (see below) indicates that doubt has been cast on this interpretation of the Neolithic Long Barrow.

Regardless of the possible challenges to interpretations of features like the neolithic long barrow (NHLE:) the potential impact of the development upon the high significance of designated heritage assets and their settings must be appropriately assessed.

6.3.1. Consultation with key statutory consultees, including Historic England and the County Historic Environment Officer will be undertaken as part of this process. LCC has identified the site as having high archaeological potential as well as the potential to affect the “setting” of the Scheduled Monument of Catley Priory to the immediate south of the site.

The Settings Impact Assessment will need to take into account the potential impact on all designated heritage assets and the views of Historic England must be sought in this respect. Historic England are a statutory consultee and will have observations to make on the potential harm any development may have on the historic environment.

6.3.2. A Heritage Impact Assessment incorporating desk based data and the results of a geophysical survey will inform the heritage ES chapter, which will include consideration of the identified archaeological potential within the site and surrounding area along with the setting of designated heritage assets. Following review of the desk based data and geophysical survey the information will be provided to the LPA’s heritage advisers to ascertain the need (or otherwise) for additional information to be provided in support of the planning application.

A Heritage Impact Assessment should be based on the full range of sources of information. Historic England in Historic England Advice Note 12 have set out what they consider is appropriate for the development of a high quality Statement of Heritage Significance. We recommend this guidance is followed. We expect that this work will utilise the full suite of standard archaeological evaluation techniques. Any fieldwork must follow a thorough understanding based upon more readily available sources like LiDAR, air photos, PAS data, local sources and so on.

6.3.3. Due to the distance and associated lack of influence of the proposed development to listed buildings and conservations areas within the surrounding area, these will not be considered for further assessment in the ES.

The report does not state what distance they have treated as their threshold for consideration so this can not be tested. We cannot agree to the proposed descopeing.

6.4.1. The baseline section above identified the receptors which could potentially be affected as a result of the proposed development and will thus be assessed within the ES. Additional receptors may be included if identified by further technical study. As part of this Scoping Opinion the applicant would also request that LCC provide any additional receptors they consider should be included.

It is clear the potential receptors have not been identified as is stated here. A statement of this sort cannot be made until, as a very minimum, they have undertaken the required HER search of 2km for non-designated heritage assets and 5km for designated assets

Section 6.5

It is essential that both the historic environment and the landscape impacts are assessed together. The potential impact of mitigation measures, such as tree planting, must be assessed for its risk to buried heritage assets.

Section 6.6.2

At this early stage a search area which ‘may be up to 1km’ is setting the parameters far too tightly and risks scoping out key receptors. It is essential that the EIA demonstrates the potential impact on the historic environment in its widest possible sense and this means understanding all heritage assets in their landscape context.

Section 6.6.3

There is no mention of LiDAR or aerial photos as value sources of information in achieving a high-quality baseline assessment.

Section 6.6.4

The drawing of such a tight boundary on the consideration of designated assets is clearly not appropriate. In a fenland environment where topographical features are minimal significant landmarks like medieval churches can have a far greater significance than might otherwise be expected because of their presence in the landscape.

Section 6.7.1

It may be too early to make this assessment. If archaeological remains are present on site but they can be mitigated by design their presence may be a factor for consideration when future expansion is being planned, for example.

I hope these observations are helpful and make it clear of the extent to which considerations of the historic environment must be scoped in.

Kind regards,
Ian

Ian George
Historic Places Manager
Planning Services, Lincolnshire County Council,
County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL

Mobile: 07990 785499

Email: ian.george@lincolnshire.gov.uk

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RE: SCOPING OPINION CONSULTATION - LAND AT WALCOTT FARM, DIGBY ROAD, WALCOTT, LN4 3TD

Guy Hird <guy.hird@witham3idb.gov.uk>

Tue 23/05/2023 15:44

To: Dev_PlanningSupport <Dev_PlanningSupport@lincolnshire.gov.uk>;ehteam@n-kesteven.gov.uk <ehteam@n-kesteven.gov.uk>;John.Manuel@lincs.police.uk <John.Manuel@lincs.police.uk>;e-midlands@historicengland.org.uk <e-midlands@historicengland.org.uk>;HighwaysSUDsSupport <HighwaysSUDsSupport@lincolnshire.gov.uk>;Countryside_Access <Countryside_Access@lincolnshire.gov.uk>;LFR Fire Safety <Fire.Safety@lincolnshire.gov.uk>;PHLocalityteam <PHLocalityteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk>;Planning and Consents <planning@witham3idb.gov.uk>

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TD-6470-2023-PLN

Dear Sir/Madam

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017
REQUEST FOR A SCOPING OPINION**

REFERENCE: EIA/07/23

**DEVELOPMENT: FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A GAS TO GRID BIOFUEL PLANT, PLUS ANCILLARY INFRASTRUCTURE
AND EQUIPMENT, LANDSCAPING AND ACCESS**

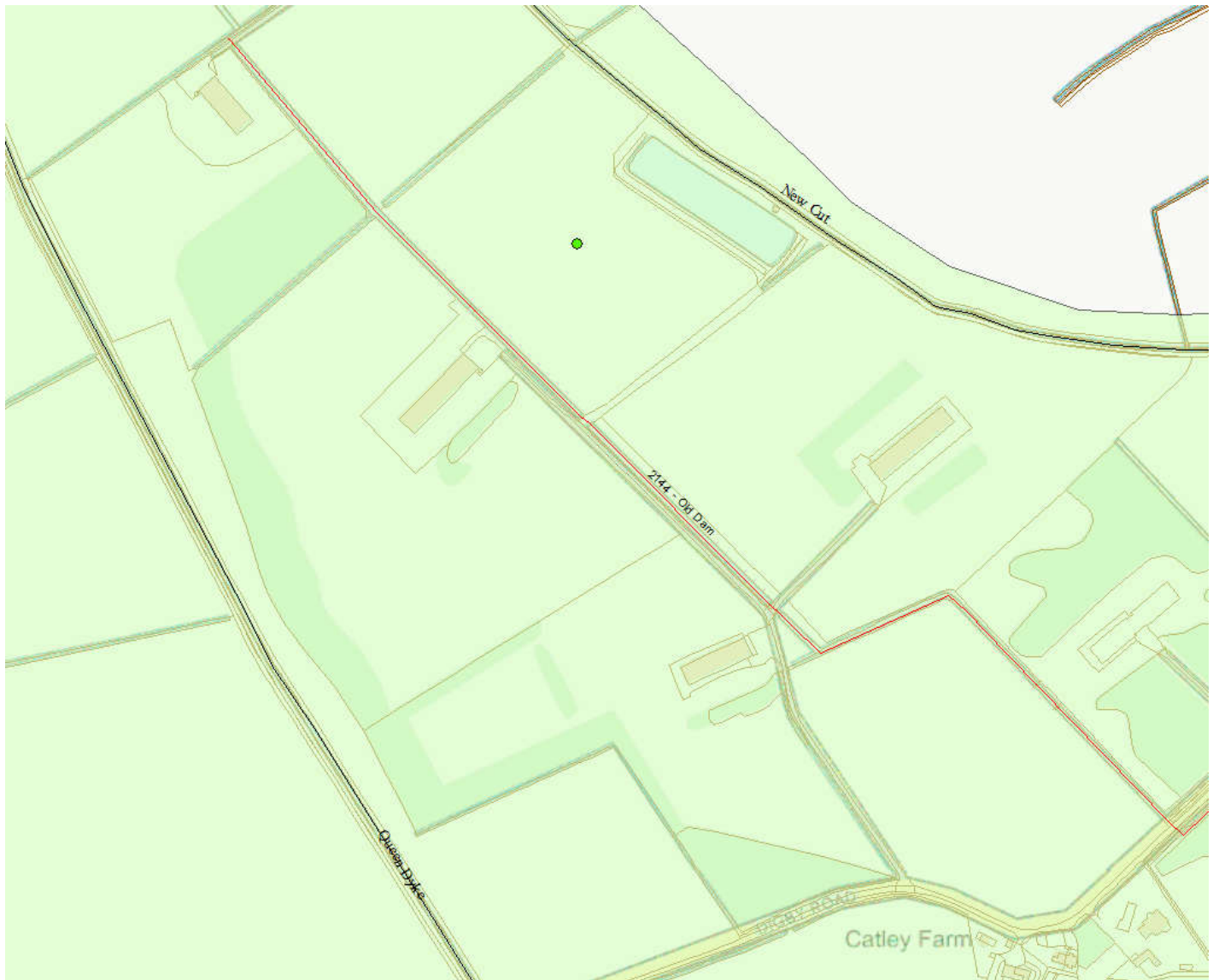
LOCATION: LAND AT WALCOTT FARM, DIGBY ROAD, WALCOTT, LN4 3TD

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above. The site is within the Witham First District Internal Drainage Board area. The Board maintained Old Drain (2144) runs through the proposed site, see below.

Under the terms of the Board's Byelaws, the prior written consent of the Board is required for any proposed temporary or permanent works or structures in, under, over or within the byelaw 9m distance of the top of the bank of a Board maintained watercourse. The full 9m is required to be kept clear of all obstruction to facilitate maintenance access for the Board's large plant. The current layout is **NOT** acceptable.

For all other watercourses apart from the Environment Agency main rivers under the terms of the Land Drainage Act. 1991 the prior written consent of the Board is required for any proposed temporary or permanent works or structures within any watercourse including infilling or a diversion.

A permanent undeveloped strip of sufficient width should be made available adjacent to the top of the bank of all watercourses on Site to allow future maintenance works to be undertaken.



It is noted that a Flood Risk Assessment will be produced for the planning submission and the Scoping Report has already identified flood risk to the location which must be taken into account. The Board can confirm that the site was subject to over land flows from Queen Dyke during 2019 as shown on aerial photographs referred to in the report. Any changes to ground levels and flow routes must not adversely affect third parties.

Any surface water discharge must be attenuated to the greenfield rate and the Board would support the use of SuDS.

Regards

Guy Hird
Head of Technical & Engineering Services

We have Engineering vacancies: <https://witham3idb.gov.uk/notices-ads/>

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accounts@witham3idb.gov.uk
planning@witham3idb.gov.uk
consents@witham3idb.gov.uk

Witham First District Internal Drainage Board
Witham Third District Internal Drainage Board
Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board
North East Lindsey Drainage Board

Witham House,
Meadow Lane
North Hykeham,
LINCOLN,
LN6 9QU (*for sat nav use LN6 9TP*)
Tel: 01522 697123

Four independent statutory Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management Authorities working in partnership.

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DIGBY PARISH COUNCIL

Ian Davies - Chairman

Angie McDonald – Parish Clerk

17th May 2023

Technical Support Team
Planning Services
Lincolnshire County Council
County Offices
Newland
Lincs LN1 1YL

Dear Sirs

Ref: **THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017**
REQUEST FOR A SCOPING OPINION

REFERENCE: EIA/07/23

DEVELOPMENT: FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A GAS TO GRID BIOFUEL PLANT, PLUS ANCILLARY INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT, LANDSCAPING AND ACCESS
LOCATION: LAND AT WALCOTT FARM, DIGBY ROAD, WALCOTT, LN4 3TD
GRID REFERENCE: 511415 356350

These are the comment and objections from Digby Parish Council.

On viewing this application, the Parish Council acknowledges the need for such installations but have great concerns for the location choice of this particular application. This is an extremely rural location and is served by very poorly maintained, narrow (mainly single vehicle wide) rural roads. This infrastructure is not designed to withstand the vehicular traffic this site will produce. The possibility of up to 40-50 lorries a day transiting these roads is of great concern. This does not include the extra traffic connected to those that will be employed on the site. The increase in traffic will be detrimental to our environment, with the increase in fumes and damage to our green verges. It is noted that passing places are being offered to be installed. This will be very difficult as the road from Walcott the Digby is bordered by dykes on either side, so this is not a suitable suggestion.

It is also noted that the traffic, to serve this site, is expected to travel through Digby Village. Digby is a small residential village with no shops. There is also a historic monument in the shape of a large stone cross which placed in the centre of the main thoroughfare, in the middle of the village, which narrows the road considerably.

Already the Cross is at risk due to the narrowness of the road as it forces large vehicles to mount the kerb as they struggle to pass it, which then creates further danger to pedestrians. The primary school is close to this area and the Parish Council does not want to see the children put at risk. This is a quiet village and Beck Street and Church Street, the main route through the village which the traffic from the plant will have to transit, are both generally reduced to a single lane due to legal

residential parking. Therefore, even currently lorries, that serve the agricultural businesses in the area, find it very difficult to travel through the village.

It should be pointed out that the field of 42 allotments on the outskirts of the village has no roadside footpath to it and therefore cyclists and pedestrians wishing to use the facility will be placed in more danger than they currently are by the increase in the heavy traffic flow.

We do not want to seem unsympathetic to the need to provide biofuels, but we strongly request the location of this site be seriously re-assessed. Even a purpose-built road created direct from the site to the B1189 which would then bypass both the narrow back roads of Walcott and the village of Digby, would not help improve the totally inappropriate location. The infrastructure in this area is completely inefficient to support this development. We would strongly request that traffic serving the installation must be prohibited from transiting through Digby.

The other serious issue raised is air pollution. Although it is acknowledged the units are sealed, but it is known that the smell is released when the product is delivered and removed from the site. With the number of vehicles expected then this must mean the smell will be virtually constant. Living in a rural environment, unpleasant smells are expected and tolerated at certain times of the year. But to live with it day in and day out is not acceptable.

We must conclude that we strongly object to this application for the protection of this village and its inhabitants.

Yours sincerely

A S McDonald, Parish Clerk
On behalf of Digby Parish Council


Ref: EIA/07/23 Installation of a Gas to Grid Biofuel Plant - LN4 3TD

walcottpcparishclerk@gmail.com <walcottpcparishclerk@gmail.com>

Wed 24/05/2023 12:10

To: Dev_PlanningSupport <Dev_PlanningSupport@lincolnshire.gov.uk>

Cc: Neil McBride <Neil.McBride@lincolnshire.gov.uk>; mark.willis@lincolnshire.gov.uk <mark.willis@lincolnshire.gov.uk>

 2 attachments (466 KB)

Digby PC.docx; Mr Sewell.doc;

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Dear Sirs,

Please see the objection for the above from Walcott Parish Council. Also attached two objections from Digby Parish Council and Walcott Primary School for your consideration.

Walcott remains a sensitive rural location with a thriving school, Village Hall and pub with other agricultural allied business.

The road system is unaltered since the roads were tarmacked before the last war. We have constant issues with speeding cars and the volume of traffic coupled with people parking on the roads opposite their houses. Digby Road, is in places single track certainly where lorries are concerned. There are dykes both sides of the road leading to the site so there is no availability to put in passing places to facilitate 80 lorries a day.

I have lived here for 65+ years and remember two deaths occurring on the High Street involving vehicles.

We already have a serious fly problem and god forbid it is made worse.

A major issue is the school and people crossing the main High Steet the B1189 but also Pinfold Lane leading to Digby Road. The primary school is on a particularly dangerous crossroads and there have already been accidents.

I have informed the school of the scoping opinion request . Their concerns are attached. I have also attached a report with Digby Parish Council's concerns.

Pinfold Lane leading to Digby Road is totally unsuitable for lorries and risking children's lives is something the Parish Council could never entertain. This is now on record. The other site for an AD plant at Martin Moor is about to bring another huge number of lorries through the village.

I used to own the site where the buildings are proposed. The soil type is made up of 40% peat and in wet times is quite bottomless so any buildings will require very large rafts. We had to dig down 30 foot to find clay to build the reservoir on the site.

Regards

Simon Grantham

Chair of Walcott Parish Council

From: CllrR Kendrick
Sent: 09 May 2023 13:07
To: Dev_PlanningSupport
Cc: Marc Willis
Subject: RE: SCOPING OPINION NOTIFICATION - LAND AT WALCOTT FARM, DIGBY ROAD, WALCOTT, LN4 3TD

Categories: Elaine W

Dear Elaine,

Thank you for this notice. With regard to Rowston they nominally have parish clerk Susan Williams with whom I deal but no parish council exists as such.

Mrs Williams can be contacted on susanwilliams4712@gmail.com.

With regard to neighbouring councils, the proposed development will impact parishes further away as HGV traffic will have to pass through them.

Bearing in mind the 120,000 tons of material it is stated that the plant will take plus digestate leaving the plant, HGV traffic will come from a wide area.

I would anticipate that such traffic would pass through Metherringham in particular via B1188, B1202 from the A15 from both the north, south and west.

There is even the possibility that traffic from the south would pass through Leasingham and Ruskington.

Kind regards,

Rob K

Councillor Rob Kendrick
Member for Metherringham Rural Division
Chairman of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL

Twitter: @robkendrick53



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