

Comments from The Green Party

The Harborough, Oadby and Wigston Green Party objects to the planning approval of this Anaerobic Digestion (AD) Plant. While we advocate for an urgent and rapid transition to renewable energy sources this project is in an entirely inappropriate setting due to its close proximity to residents homes, the national cycle route and the new country park. It will create a conflict between heavy commercial traffic and families enjoying the area. Anaerobic plants are notorious for their noxious odours and this should be a primary consideration and cause enough for rejection.

This plant is to be sited 300 meters away from the nearest house, it is on the National Cycle path and on a small country road, opposite the Council depot (which already houses large vehicles causing noise and pollution). It will be at the entrance to the new Market Harborough rewidling area so families wishing to enjoy and appreciate the natural environment will have to contend with the traffic from the existing depot and the new AD plant.

The Green Party welcomes new renewable energy initiatives and AD plants promise to help deal with the ever-growing issue of food waste, however renewable energy sources must be safe, protective of the surrounding environment and appropriately located. This site is proposing to have 52 lorries a day, this will cause significant noise and emissions pollution to local residents.

Siting the plant close to the nature park and homes will cause long term damage to the surrounding residents and environment, including water sources. The Environment Agency completed a report in 2019 which reviewed a "significant number of incidents at Anaerobic Digestion Plants which have caused or had potential to cause pollution and identified serious failures which posed a serious risk of pollution or harm to human health." (A Review of Environmental Incidents at Anaerobic Digestion (AD) Plants and Associated Sites between 2010 and 2018 September 2019 https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/environmental-permitting/standard-rules-consultation-no-20/user_uploads/incidents-report--2010-2018--final.pdf). A 2023 paper outlined the possible health effects of AD sites, which include odour nuisance and carcinogenic pollution, "Besides odor, carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic risks commonly existed in food waste AD plants." (Food waste anaerobic digestion plants: Underestimated air pollutants and control strategy <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S004896972304768X>).

Furthermore, rather than reducing greenhouse gas emissions several studies have shown that AD sites can actually increase harmful gases such as methane and for this reason other methods for disposing of organic waste and the reduction of waste at the source should be prioritised.

Councillors Darren Woodiwiss, Rose Forman and Lynne Taylor.

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