

30th September 2025

Objection to GMT Biomass Anaerobic Digestion plant in Great Bowden - planning application No: 2023/CM/0053/LCC

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 site due to:

- 1) It is in close proximity to a residential area (300m away from nearest home.
- 2) It is on the National Cycle path, which is used by families, individual cyclists and cycling groups – they will be placed at unnecessary risk of harm due to the heavy goods vehicles.
- 3) It will be in close proximity to the entrance to land that has been set aside for a significant rewilding project and country park – this was not even considered in the application.
- 4) Smell and emissions - anaerobic plants are notorious for their noxious odours and this should be a primary consideration and cause enough for rejection.
- 5) Updated traffic report suggests that there will be a significant increase in HGV and that previous estimates were much lower.

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 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.

Green Party.

Harborough District Council

Dear Sirs

The application by Green Bowden Green Energy Limited (Case Reference: 2023/CM/0053/LCC) should be refused because its requirement to grow 15,000 tonnes of non-indigenous maize may directly conflict with core planning and environmental policies. This massive monoculture could permanently damage the local landscape in violation of the National Planning Policy Framework and divert vital agricultural land from food production, defying the Government's Food Strategy. Furthermore, processing dedicated crops for fuel may violate the legally binding 5-stage waste hierarchy, accelerate severe biodiversity loss contrary to the Government's Biodiversity Strategy, and potentially introduces critical risks of soil erosion, water pollution, and flooding as established by Oxford and Exeter Universities.

Yours faithfully



Councillor Buddy Anderson
Harborough District Council
Great Bowden & Arden Ward

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