

16/00274/COC	Erection Of Energy Recovery Facility Comprising A Materials Recovery Plant And Advanced Thermal Treatment Facility With An Integrated Education And Visitor Centre, Access, Landscaping And Associated Works – Site G Land, Shelton Road, Willowbrook East Industrial Estate, Corby
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Background

The application site is located off Shelton Road, within Willowbrook East Industrial Estate, approximately 2.2 kilometres north-east of Corby Town. The site occupies 2.53 hectares of land and is bound to the north by a watercourse with green space beyond. The east of the site is bounded by Shelton Road with light industrial units to the south and car/vehicle storage to the west. The site currently forms part of a larger open car storage and distribution operation. There are no structures or buildings on the application site itself however, the site has planning permission for an energy recovery centre.

The original permission Ref: 13/00079/WASFUL was granted on 7th February 2014 by Northamptonshire County Council for the erection of an Advanced Conversion Technology (ACT) and Anaerobic Digestion (AD) Facility comprising of an 8–12MWe pyrolysis plant and a 2–3MWe digestion facility with an integrated education centre, access, landscaping and associated works.

Following the above approval Northamptonshire County Council have subsequently consulted Corby Borough Council on three variation of condition applications (14/00387/COC, 15/00042/COC and 15/00288/COC). Corby Borough Council objected to all three variation of condition applications. Application 14/00387/COC was subsequently withdrawn whilst Northamptonshire County Council approved 15/00042/COC which allowed for a wider catchment area for waste to be imported to the site. Northamptonshire County Council concluded that:

“Overall the proposed variation to the catchment area is not contrary in principle to the NMWLP (Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan) and the is support in both this plan and the National Planning Policy for Waste for catchment areas to not unduly constrain waste development in terms of economic viability and competitiveness. The nature of this development as an advanced treatment facility adds support to a wider catchment than currently permitted and a regional catchment is considered appropriate, therefore this increase in the catchment area is on balance considered to be acceptable”.

The last variation of condition (15/00288/COC) was to allow for construction of gasification plant instead of pyrolysis plant and anaerobic digestion facility and changes in height of the building from 9 metres to 22 metres, increase in size of building from 5,710 square metres to 12,875 square metres and increase in flue height from 25 metres to 45 metres. Corby Borough Council objected on the basis that the proposal could not be dealt with under variation of condition application because of the extent of the changes and that new application should be submitted. That application was ‘called in’ by the Secretary of State for decision. However, the application was withdrawn before the proposed Public Enquiry.

Corby Borough Council has now been consulted by Northamptonshire County Council on a new planning application which is essentially a resubmission of 15/00288/COC albeit as a new detailed application. The proposal is subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and pre-application consultation was undertaken by the applicant and Northamptonshire County Council.

Description

The proposal is for an energy recovery facility comprising of a materials recovery facility and advanced thermal treatment facility with an integrated education centre, access, landscaping and associated works. The facility will utilise gasification technology and generate approximately 16.4MWe. the fuel will comprise up to 195,000 tonnes per annum of refuse derived fuel and mixed solid waste.

Site History

13/00278/COC - Erection of an Advanced Conversion Technology (ACT) and Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility comprising of a 8-12 MWe pyrolysis plant and a 2-3 MWe digestion facility with an integrated education centre, access, landscaping and associated works – Approved by Northamptonshire County Council 7th February 2014

14/00387/COC - Variation of condition 30 of application number 13/00079/WASFUL for the erection of an Advanced Conversion Technology (ACT) and Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility comprising of a 8-12MWe pyrolysis plant and a 2-3MWe digestion facility with an integrated education centre, access, landscaping and associated works – Withdrawn by Applicant 11th December 2014

15/00003/DPA - Erection of a new industrial building with a gross floor area of 1430 square metres with yard and car parking – Approved by Corby Borough Council 19th June 2015

15/00042/COC - Variation of condition 30 of 13/00079/WASFUL (13/00278/COC) – Approved by Northamptonshire County Council 25th March 2015

15/00288/COC - Removal of conditions 4 and 5 and variation of conditions 2,7,14,15 and 20 of planning permission 15/00004/WASVOC – Withdrawn by Applicant 2nd June 2016

Policies

National Planning Policy Framework

Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Framework

Policies 1, 8, 9, 22, 23 and 26 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

Consultation

Local Plans

The site falls within an area of land (WL18), identified in the adopted Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, within which waste management uses would be acceptable in principle under Policy 16.

It also falls within the boundary of the Rockingham Motor Racing Circuit Enterprise Area identified in the adopted Joint Core Strategy. Policy 27 of the Joint Core Strategy supports employment development within the Rockingham Motor Racing Circuit Enterprise Area. According to the Planning Statement prepared by Icen Projects Limited the proposed facility will generate 25-30 full time jobs which is obviously a positive. However based on the information provided it is not clear how this proposal plans to relate to the wider Rockingham Motor Racing Circuit Enterprise Area or contribute towards delivering the place shaping requirements of Policy 27.

Environmental Services (Noise and Vibration)

The construction phases and vibration phases and controls are satisfactory for the development and providing all the suggested mitigation measures are implemented then there will be no further comments.

However, the BS412:2014 report is very poor and falls well below the standard required and is not considered satisfactory for the officers to make a considered decision as it lacks a number of vital and very important key points which all BS4142 reports must contain.

The issues are detailed below and must be included:

- Competence – page 165 – what/how are they competent, what are their qualifications, memberships of professional organisation and was the report for BS4142:2014 peer reviewed before publication?

- Map of measuring locations?
- Need to reflect and prove the effective octave bands which may cause issues and to which corrections have been made. This can be done as equipment and processes are known and measurements at similar sites would give a more accurate octave analysis of potential on-site inputs identify potential measurement locations – where and how were these decided upon – were future housing areas considered as the whole of Priors Hall will be developed. This needs to be future proofed.
- The necessary measurement frequencies, durations and timings need to be determined
- No temperature recorded in the weather section
- BS4142 section 7.2 states that the specific sound shall be evaluated over - Daytime – 1 hour and 15minutes at night – not 16 hours and 8 hours as table 9.9 states
- The Ambient sound level (carried out between 6-9th June 2016) does not describe soundscape of the area, the description of the sources (and specific sources identified as ambient) the bigger world picture of this site in relation to the site and industry/residential and how these interact as at present, and recordings made (over the 1 hour and 15minute periods respectively) and records made of measurements not typical during the recordings and why these were included or screened out. And where these sources were from
- Is there any directivity modelled which could affect noise sensitive receptors (which includes schools)
- Section 9.74 states that noise levels at the stack will be 45dB(A) at a distance of 10m but no statements or modelling is given to show the impact of wind borne influences and the carryover of the noise in worst case scenarios to protect sleeping residents.
- 9.76 and 9.77 make assumptions and promise future assessments will be done in detail – at present a full BS4142 report has not been completed the confidence is low regarding the statement.
- 9.78 makes a worst case correction of 6dB – however under BS4142:2014 penalties are cumulative – therefore why only 6dB – no proof or evidence is given as to why this figure has been arrived at. Penalties are applied for a number of factors and are cumulative (unlike the old BS4142). Acoustic features (Impulse can add from 3-9dB) e.g. from vehicles tipping, reversing beepers – Tones from machinery (anywhere from 2-6dB added) and other (3dB) It is noted that no other sounds are noted and no impulse sounds are noted – WHY?
 - There is no context in the BS4142 noise report this is the sound in the acoustic landscape (traffic, rustling of clothes, bird song - is this consistent with the development and what makes the sound climate now distinctive (there is no detail)

In light of the Piling Operations – this will be further controlled by a Construction Management Plan – however the hours of operation for all piling will take place only between the hours of 0900-1600 Monday to Friday, No piling at weekends or Bank Holidays.

In light of the failure of many aspects of BS4142:2014 report which is vital for the ongoing operation of the site Health Protection cannot recommend approval until all data is provided to a satisfactory standard to enable a decision to be made by members.

Environmental Services (Air Quality and Odour)

At the present time I would recommend refusal based on insufficient information.

I have reviewed the application documents and environmental statement (and appendices) held on the Northamptonshire County Council website and have the following comments to make:

Section 6.11 of the Planning Statement authored by Icen Projects Limited dated June 2016 (PS) states: 'An air quality assessment has been prepared to determine the local air quality impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed gasification facility'

however this assessment has not been included with the application, therefore subsequent statements such as in section 6.13 of the PS: 'The significance of the maximum predicted process concentrations at nearby sensitive receptors has been assessed as negligible' cannot be evidenced. The supporting air quality information contained in Chapter 8 of the Environmental Statement: Volume 1, Main Text authored by Entran Limited (ES) dated June 2016 'Air Quality and Odour' is detailed, however the cited air quality assessment has not been included and it does not give the name or qualifications of the author. There does not appear to be a correlation between the substances modelled and the substances that are anticipated to be emitted after abatement.

Section 6.16 of the PS states: 'Odour impacts associated with the site will be effectively mitigated by the design of the installation and the implementation of an Odour Management Plan' but as there is no assessment of the potential for odours included with the application, this statement cannot be evidenced. The supporting odour control information contained in Chapter 8 of the ES 'Air Quality and Odour' is detailed, however it does not give any information regarding the proposed Odour Management Plan other than there should be one. It does not give the name or qualifications of the author.

Section 8.25 of the ES states: 'The scope of the impact assessment for stack emissions from the Proposed Development has been determined in the following way: 'consultation with the Environmental Health Department of Corby Borough Council (CBC)' and 'desk study to confirm the location of nearby areas that may be sensitive to changes in local air quality' however there is no information regarding who was spoken to, when the conversation took place or the content of the conversation. The cited desk study has not been included.

Section 8.3 of the ES refers to 3 stacks of 45m, grouped to appear as 1 stack, however there is no supporting chimney height calculation to justify this height as being sufficient to ensure adequate dispersal. A chimney height calculation is required and should be submitted together with more detailed information regarding the proposed methods of abatement and the anticipated content of the abated emissions. That information should then be used to model dispersion.

Further information is required regarding the potential air quality impact on any future nearby development containing sensitive receptors.

I acknowledge the applicants' assertion that should consent be given, a full contaminated land assessment is to be carried out before any demolition or construction takes place.

I acknowledge that should consent be given, the Environment Agency will be the Regulatory Authority for the Part A Environmental Permit rather than Corby Borough Council.

Advertisement/Representations

The application was not advertised as this is Northamptonshire County Council consultation. However, one resident has written to the Corby Borough Council with the following comments:

- Hazards of syngas production and biomass facilities.
- Health issues caused by mismanagement of waste.

Report

Introduction

This application is a consultation from Northamptonshire County Council in respect of a energy recovery facility treatment facility on part of a larger open car storage site at the north end of Shelton Road.

Willowbrook East Industrial Estate is allocated for waste management uses under Policy WL18 of the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Framework. The principle of the proposed use is therefore acceptable. It must also be noted that permission was granted in 2014 for a waste management use as highlighted in the site history above.

Environmental Statement

The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement which covers a wide range of topics to ascertain the environmental impacts of the proposal. Northamptonshire County Council as the determining Authority for this application will need to assess and consult relevant statutory bodies on the submitted information to determine the acceptability of the scheme.

Corby Borough Council has been consulted by Northamptonshire County Council as the proposal is located within the Borough. As such it is for the Corby Borough Council to assess those elements which are most pertinent. In this case we have concentrated on impacts in regards to Transport; Air Quality and Odour; Noise and Vibration; Townscape and Visual Amenity; and Health.

Previous Planning Consents

Planning permission was granted in 2014 for:

- Erection of an Advanced Conversion Technology (ACT) and Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility comprising of a 8-12MWe pyrolysis plant and a 2-3MWe digestion facility with an integrated education centre, access, landscaping and associated works.

This application included the construction of an industrial building measuring 130 metres in length, 40 metres in width and 9 metres in height, four flues measuring 25 metres in height with a gross floorspace of 5,710 square metres. Four anaerobic digester tanks were proposed measuring 8 metres in height, 1 gas holder tank measuring 9 metres in height, two weighbridges and associated works.

The proposal was granted consent to process 195,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste; and commercial and industrial waste; and green waste. The consented application allowed for a HGV drive time catchment area of 30 minutes from the site. An application was subsequently submitted to vary the condition on the original consent to allow a larger catchment area which approved by Northamptonshire County Council last year.

The Proposal

This current application is for:

- Erection of an Energy Recovery Facility comprising a Materials Recovery Plant and Advanced Thermal Treatment Facility with an integrated education centre, access, landscaping and associated works. The facility will utilise gasification technology and generate approximately 16.4MWe. The fuel will comprise up to 195,000 tonnes per annum of refuse derived fuel and mixed solid waste.

This application consists of the construction of an industrial building 173 metres in length, 80.5 metres in width and 22 metres in height with a gross floorspace of 12,875 square metres. The proposal will have three flues, one for each gasifier, with a height of 45 metres, which are grouped together to appear as a single exhaust stack.

It is still proposed to process 195,000 tonnes however, this will be for refuse derived fuel and unsorted mixed solid waste. The catchment area will remain the same as per the previous catchment area approved by Northamptonshire County Council under the variation of condition.

In regards to the processes the facility will in summary:

- Receive waste directly into a sealed reception area of the building. After inspection the refuse derived fuel will be transferred using a front-end loading shovel directly into the gasifier fuel store. The mixed solid waste will undergo preparation using mechanical separation and pre-treatment.
- A mechanical materials recovery plant will be contained within the waste reception hall for the purposes of processing untreated waste. The pre-treatment stage will recover any plastics, metals and other materials. All segregated materials will be sent off site for recycling, or disposal where appropriate. Residual material from the process will then be transferred into the fuel store for the gasifiers.

- Material within the fuel store will be managed by overhead cranes and placed onto feed conveyors which will transfer the fuel into metering hoppers which are used to control the rate at which fuel enters the gasifiers.
- Three gasification plant systems will gasify the fuel in a reduced oxygen environment and convert it to synthesis gas. The synthesis gas is then combusted to produce heat in an efficient process in three boilers which heat water to produce superheated steam.
- The steam from the boilers then passes into the steam turbine and generator which efficiently converts the heat energy in the steam into electricity which is then exported to the grid, less any electricity that is used in the operation of the plant. The gross electricity production is expected to be approximately 16.4Mwe. A secondary valve will also be incorporated into the turbines to allow steam or hot water to be extracted for district heating purposes. An air cooled condenser then converts remaining low grade steam back into liquid water which is then recycled back into the boilers to minimise water usage through the process.

The proposal provides for a dedicated conference/education centre within the building.

Transport Impact

The proposal will give rise to 106 HGV trips per day. In terms of staff vehicle movements which will be on a shift pattern, a worst case scenario is assessed at 22 trips per day.

Compared to extant 2014 permission (13/00278/COC) the proposal will result in less traffic movement in terms of HGV trips which was previously 128 trips.

The Transport Assessment concludes that the proposed development would result in an increase in traffic on the local highway network that is less than daily variation and imperceptible to other highway users. The effect is concluded to be neutral.

Northamptonshire County Council as the determining Authority has consulted Highway Authority on the application and they will need to make the assessment as to the acceptability of the scheme in regards to highway impacts.

Air Quality and Odour

An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared to determine the local air quality impacts associated with the construction and operation of the gasification facility. A qualitative assessment of the impact of dust generating activities has been carried out in accordance with the Institute of Air Quality Management Guidance. The reports determine that due to the significant distance of sensitive receptors from the site boundary the risk of dust nuisance and human health or ecological impacts is considered negligible.

The Environmental Services department have assessed the submitted information and have concluded that the information submitted within the Environmental Statement is insufficient to determine the acceptability of the proposal and therefore it should be refused.

Noise and Vibration

In regards to noise and vibration, information has been submitted which concludes that during the construction phase of the proposal, there is likely to be a negligible impact on nearby receptors and although the construction works are temporary by the very nature, mitigation measures have been formulated to minimise the noise disturbance. During the operational phase of the development, the noise impacts will have a negligible effect on existing residential receptors due to the appropriate design and mitigation of the buildings. All noise sources will be adequately controlled by design of the buildings and with appropriate level of attenuation resulting in noise levels below 20 decibels at the nearest noise receptor at Priors Hall.

The Environmental Services department have assessed the submitted information and conclude that the construction and vibration phases and controls are satisfactory for the development and providing that all the suggested mitigation measures are implemented then there will be no further comments. However, the BS412:2014 report (Noise Assessment) is very poor and falls below the standard required and not considered satisfactory for officers to

make a considered decision as it lacks a number of vital and very important key points which all BS4142:2014 reports must contain.

On the basis of the comments received from the Environmental Services department Corby Borough Council have concerns with the submitted information in respect to noise and vibration and as such object to the proposed scheme.

Townscape and Visual Amenity

Townscape and visual amenity have been considered within the submitted information. In regards to townscape the assessment concludes that the site is well suited for the proposed development. Occupying allocated brownfield land adjacent to an industrial estate in an urban fringe location. There are several features within the surrounding area which will screen the site from public viewpoints including commercial buildings, woodland and Rockingham Motor Speedway. There are no designated landscapes, conservation areas, listed buildings or scheduled monuments either nearby or within the zone of visual influence.

Visual impacts during construction will be relatively short in duration and well shielded by existing features. Once built the main building will not be a prominent feature within the landscape. The only clear public viewpoint will be from a short section of Phoenix Way to the east where the proposed development will be viewed in the context of an industrial setting at a distance over 1 kilometre. Only the stack, by virtue of its height will be a noticeable addition to the skyline but this will be from a few limited viewpoints and will also be seen in the context of the industrial/commercial area. The stack will not be visible from the Grade I listed Kirby Hall.

It is noted that the Local Plans section have asked that the proposal should have regard to the Rockingham Circuit Enterprise Area which this site is located within. As such it is advised that Northamptonshire County Council consider the place shaping principles outlined within Policy 27 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

Having considered the submitted information it is considered that the proposal has minimal impact on the townscape and visual amenity however, Northamptonshire County Council will need to have regard of the place shaping principles outlined in Policy 27 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

Health Impact

The proposed gasification technology to create syngas is defined by Ofgem and DEFRA as 'low carbon' or 'renewables' by virtue of the fact that it will combust a 'renewable fuel' to generate electricity. The gasification technology will require a permit from the Environment Agency in order to operate, which will impose strict controls on all aspects of the process.

The proposal has also been considered by the Environmental Services department who have considered the proposal and have confirmed that there is insufficient information to determine the acceptability of the proposal and therefore it should be refused. As such it would be difficult to determine that the proposal would not result in any impacts on health until the additional information is submitted and assessed. Accordingly an objection to the proposal will be put forward by Corby Borough Council.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered acceptable in principle on the basis that the site already benefits from planning permission (13/00278/COC) for a waste management process. Willowbrook East Industrial Estate is allocated for waste management uses under Policy W3 of the Location of Waste Development of the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Framework.

In regards to highways impact the proposal will result in less HGV movements than what has already been approved under application 13/00278/COC. Whilst this is the case it is for the Highway Authority to determine the acceptability of the scheme in regards to its highway impact which Northamptonshire County Council will need to consider in the determination of the application.

In relation to air quality and odour the conclusion of the submitted information confirms that the impact of the scheme to be negligible. The Environmental Services department has assessed the submitted information and is of the view that there is insufficient information to determine the acceptability of the proposal.

In regards to noise and vibration the submitted information confirms that the proposal will not result in any adverse impact on sensitive receptors providing the recommended mitigation is put in place. The Environmental Services department has considered the submitted information and have concerns that the submitted noise information falls below the standard required. Therefore Corby Borough Council objects to the proposal on these grounds.

In relation to townscape and visual amenity Corby Borough Council are of the opinion based on the submitted information that the scheme will not result in any adverse impact. Whilst the development is not considered to have significant adverse impact on the townscape and visual amenity it is expected that Northamptonshire County Council have due regard to the place making principles outlined in Policy 27 (Rockingham Circuit Enterprise Area) of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

In regards to health the proposal will require a permit from Environment Agency to operate and therefore the development will operate under strict controls. The Environmental Services department has assessed the submitted information in regards to air quality and odour and is of the view that there is insufficient information to determine the acceptability of the proposal and therefore it should be refused.

On the basis of the above Corby Borough Council object to the proposal.

Recommendation:

Object for the following reasons:

Willowbrook East Industrial Estate is allocated for waste management uses under Policy WL18 of the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Framework. The principle of the proposed use is therefore acceptable. The site however, is located within Rockingham Circuit Enterprise Area and therefore it is advised that Northamptonshire County Council consider the place shaping principles outlined within Policy 27 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

Following review of the information following internal consultation of the application it has been determined that the submitted information in regards to noise and vibration; and air quality and odour is inadequate and insufficient information to determine the acceptability of the proposal. On this basis Corby Borough Council object to the application.

Officers to contact:

Mitesh Rathod

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LOCATION PLAN 16/00274/COC
Site G Land, Shelton Road
Willowbrook East Industrial Estate

Scale: 1:2,500

Corby
Borough Council

