

Executive Summary:

Cambridgeshire County Council and Fenland District Council

Relevant Representations

1 Introduction

- 1.1 On 15 November 2022, Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) submitted their Relevant Representation to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) jointly with Fenland District Council (FDC) in respect of the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) submitted by Medworth CHP Limited for a Combined Heat and Power (Energy from Waste) Facility.

2 Background, Context and Key concerns

- 2.1 The technical comments sit in the context of the motions approved by elected Members of CCC and FDC to oppose this development, (CCC on 21 July 2020 and FDC on 20 February 2020), both motions included a letter being sent to the then Secretary of State to make clear the Councils' opposition to these plans.
- 2.2 The key concerns highlighted align with the Environmental Statement (ES) chapter headings.

3 Traffic and Transport

- 3.1 For roads required for DCO works, highway boundary information should be sought from the Local Highway Authority (LHA) and should be marked on Access and Rights of Way sheets and clearly included in the legend. It is vital to define the assets for which the LHA is responsible and where it may need to make representations.
- 3.2 Access arrangements do not take into account the potential need to turn east from accesses towards the A47, when the aspirations of the South Wisbech Broad Concept Plans are realised and a link is formed to a new roundabout on the A47 (See [Broad Concept Plans - Fenland District Council](#)).
- 3.3 Algores Way is not a public highway beyond Britannia Way but is owned by FDC. CCC has no statutory function in relation to these streets and any streets created by the DCO cannot legally be created as public highway.
- 3.4 Provisions, Consents and approvals (S278 works and highway dedications) will need to be secured for any alterations to means of access are acceptable and the payment of reasonable fees, commitment to any commuted sums, commitment to undertake condition/dilapidation surveys of highways, and any necessary mitigation requirements, such as a bridge to avoid prejudicing the reopening of Wisbech rail.
- 3.5 Detailed discussions are required to understand the status of the statutory undertaker following the discharge of the DCO. Longitudinal non-passive private apparatus in the

highway would be an unacceptable safety risk. If the Department for Transport (DfT) do not recognise the applicant as a statutory undertaker, the applicant will not be able to connect their EfW facility to the power grid.

- 3.6 CCC request a requirement to consult with the LHA prior to any Temporary prohibition or restriction of use of streets and public rights of way which could impact the adjoining public highway network and to observe any reasonable requests made in respect of the timing of such closures.
- 3.7 New accesses A3, A4 and A5 are to be maintained at public expense. This is unacceptable to CCC as these accesses are not connected to any publicly maintainable highways.
- 3.8 The increase in slow moving right turning HGV vehicles at Cromwell Road / New Bridge Lane roundabout could cause capacity and safety issues at the junction. The applicant should be required to signalise the junction to reduce the risk of localised issues.
- 3.9 Thomas Clarkson Academy (TCA) is situated approximately 750 metres from the site but there is no reference or acknowledgement of it in Chapter 6 of the ES. The increase in traffic will potentially impact the TCA and other schools in the area, particularly during peak times.

4 Noise and Vibration

- 4.1 The Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and the Outline Noise Management Plan (NMP) provide mitigation measures. Provision for securing these needs to be clarified and confirmed.
- 4.2 The TCA should be regarded as a sensitive receptor and further consideration and monitoring to mitigate any real-time impact should be provided. Longer term mitigation for other local school sites need to be given further consideration.

5 Air Quality

- 5.1 CCC's Air Quality Consultant categorised errors and omissions in the application as Minor, Moderate or Major. Any one of the Major issues listed would be likely to invalidate the reported conclusions. Rigorous Quality Assurance and checking of all model inputs and results presented in the ES is required.
- 5.2 Further revisions of the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Outline CEMP) should include the air quality impact assessment and be agreed prior to commencement of any use of plant and machinery on site.
- 5.3 The transportation of incinerator bottom ash (IBA) and air pollution control residues (APCr) should be enclosed or transported in such manner as to mitigate releases of particulates.
- 5.4 Dust mitigation measures should prevent the escape of airborne IBA from all storage and handling buildings. This should be included in the Air Quality Environmental Management Plan.

- 5.5 There is ambiguity in the Outline Odour Management Plan (OMP) on what the controls will be.

6 Landscape and Visual

- 6.1 Serious concerns are raised regarding the applicant's assessment of the extent to which potential significant effects to landscape character and to the surrounding townscape character would extend as well as the visual effects of the vertical prominence of the chimneys and the mass of the buildings on residential properties within proximity of the site.
- 6.2 The analysis of the significance of heritage assets is insufficient. The scale of the structures of the new facility will impact the setting of both designated and undesignated built heritage assets within the historic town and in the broader landscape.

7 Historic Environment

- 7.1 The provision for a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for monitoring and recording should be led by a brief prepared by CCC's Historic Environment Team to ensure that the county's archaeological priorities and requirements are met.

8 Biodiversity

- 8.1 Officers are concerned about the following:
- Net loss in biodiversity value;
 - incomplete protected species surveys;
 - lack of compensation and enhancement for protected species;
 - more details required for assessment of habitats;
 - lack of priority habitat within the scheme appropriate for the location or to off-set losses; and
 - wording of DCO requirement(s).

9 Hydrology

- 9.1 The Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) expects that as much water is reused within the scheme as possible, in line with the drainage hierarchy. The LLFA commented on: Climate Change Allowance; Pumping of surface and groundwater; Half Drain Times; Hydraulic Calculations; Wider drainage proposals; and Maintenance.

10 Climate Change

- 10.1 Greenhouse Gas emissions from operation of the plant are very high.

- 10.2 The baseline scenario assumes that, without the development, all of the annual 625,000 tonnes of waste would go to landfill every year for the 40 years of operation. This seems very unlikely.
- 10.3 The scale of emissions is huge, with and without the proposal being built. The assumptions made regarding the composition of the waste can tip the balance as to whether or not the proposed development will lead to lower carbon emissions than without the development.
- 10.5 Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) is necessary in order for the proposal to be compatible with a Net Zero pathway.
- 10.6 No project on its own is large enough to have a ‘beneficial Significant effect’ when compared to UK carbon budgets.

11 Socio-Economics

- 11.1 No amount of S106 contributions, or commitments would outweigh the economic harm perceived to exist from these proposals.
- 11.2 The significant disruption to existing businesses on the industrial estate should not be underestimated.
- 11.3 It is crucial that if permission is granted, the re-opening of the Wisbech to March rail route should not be prejudiced.

12 Health

- 12.1 The following consideration of effects on physical and mental health and wellbeing need improvement or have not been addressed:
- Access to local public and key services.
 - Physical security.
 - The noise and impact of the connection to grid taking place and the proposed mitigation measures.
 - The potential for impacts on mental health from perceived pollution and emissions.
 - The impact of the proposed operational operating hours.
 - What mitigation measures are being proposed to address any adverse health impacts.

13 Major Accidents and Disasters

- 13.1 The site operator should engage with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (CPLRF) to develop the Operational Flood Emergency Management Plan.
- 13.2 The impact of the development on local mains water supply should be assessed and any implications on firefighting flow rates. The impact of compulsory acquisitions which include access to mains water supplies and hydrant provision should be considered.

14 Waste Policy matters, including Waste Availability and Composition

- 14.1 There are three areas of particular concern: the facility achieving R1 Status; compliance with Policies 3 and 4 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021) / Waste Availability; and Compatibility with surrounding land uses.

15 Cumulative Impacts

- 15.1 The Fenland Education Campus (CCC/21/215/FUL) on Barton Road has been identified as one of the projects in the cumulative assessment but the site of the proposed Free School, which is significantly closer has not. The traffic and transport and air quality assessments do not accurately assess the potential impact on the TCA or the proposed Free School site.