Joint Local Impact Report – Medworth CHP EfW

Cambridgeshire County Council

Fenland District Council

9 March 2023

Contents

Glossary of Acronyms

APC	Air Pollution control residues
BCKLWN	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
CCC	Cambridgeshire County Council
CCS	Carbon Capture and Storage
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CHP	Combined heat and power
CPCA	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
CPLRF	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum
CPO	Compulsory Purchase Order
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
DCO	Development Consent Order
DEMP	Demolition Environmental Management Plan
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
EFLP	Emerging Fenland Local Plan
EfW	Energy from Waste
ES	Environmental Statement
ExA	Examining Authority
FDC	Fenland District Council
FLP	Fenland Local Plan 2014
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GLVIA	Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
HERCS	Housing Estate Road Construction Specification
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HWICS	Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy

IAQM	Institute of Air Quality Management
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
IBA	Incinerator Bottom Ash
IDB	Internal Drainage Board
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LCWIP	Draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
LEMP	Landscape and Ecology Management Plan
LHA	Local Highway Authority
LIR	Local Impact Report
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
LTP	Local Transport Plan
LTPC	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport and Connectivity Plan
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
MoC	Magnitude of Change
MVV	Medworth CHP Limited
MWLP	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2021
MWPA	Minerals and Waste Planning Authority
NCC	Norfolk County Council
NCR	National Cycle Route
NG	National Grid
NMP	Noise Management Plan
NMU	Non-motorised User
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPS EN	National Policy Statement for Energy
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
OMP	Odour Management Plan
PINS	Planning Inspectorate

PM	Particulate Matter
PROW	Public Rights of Way
ROWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan
RR	Relevant Representation
RVAA	Residential Visual Amenity Assessment
RVAT	Residential Visual Amenity Threshold
rWFD	revised Waste Framework Directive
S106	Section 106 legal agreement
S278	Section 278 Highways Agreement
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SoAs	Statements of Action
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground
SPA	Special Protection Area
TA	Transport Assessment
TCA	The Thomas Clarkson Academy
WFA	Waste Fuel Assessment
WHO	World Health Organisation
WRAP	Waste Resources and Action Programme
ZTV	Zones of Theoretical Visibility

Overview

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This report constitutes the Local Impact Report of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and Fenland District Council (FDC), referred to jointly as 'the Councils' who are host authorities for the proposed Development Consent Order (DCO). Norfolk County Council (NCC), and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN), as the other Host Authorities for the Medworth CHP Ltd proposal, will be submitting a separate joint Local Impact Report (LIR) covering the impact specific to their administrative areas.

1.1.2 CCC is the upper-tier local authority for the county of Cambridgeshire as a whole and has a variety of statutory responsibilities to provide services and discharge regulatory functions, which affect a great many aspects of the built, natural, and social environments. These functions include acting as local highway authority, traffic authority, transport authority, waste planning authority, waste regulation authority, minerals planning authority, county planning authority, lead local flood authority, fire authority (including public safety), public health authority, education authority, and social services authority. CCC also holds responsibility for maintaining the Definitive Map and the Historic Environment Record. The Medworth Combined Heat and Power (CHP) proposal is predominantly hosted within the administrative boundary of CCC, with the electricity connection to the National Grid and associated infrastructure being within the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk which sits within the upper tier local authority of Norfolk County Council.

1.1.3 In preparing this LIR, the Councils have had regard to the purpose of LIRs as set out in s60(3) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government guidance for the examination of applications for development consent and the Planning Inspectorate's (PINS) Advice Note One: Local Impact Reports.

1.1.4 The Councils have considerable experience of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) planning regime. The Councils are host authorities for the A14 and A428 Road Improvement NSIPs as well as the Sunnica Energy Farm.

1.2 Purpose and Structure of this report

1.2.1 This report does not describe the proposed development itself but relies on the Applicant's detailed description of the development, as set out in the DCO application documents.

1.2.2 Section 60 (3) of the 2008 Planning Act defines the purpose of Local Impact Reports as: "*a report in writing giving details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the authority's area.*"

1.2.3 This report describes the impacts of the proposed development under headings by topic, which follow the topics and order set out in the Applicant's Environmental Statement (ES). The key issues and impacts for the Councils and the local community are identified for each topic, followed by commentary on the impact of the proposal with reference to the application documentation, including the DCO articles, requirements, and obligations.

1.2.4 For each topic area, this report sets out:

- Local policy context
- The positive, neutral, and negative impacts of the development during each phase of the development (the construction, operation, and decommissioning, as anticipated by the Councils)
- The suitability and adequacy of the measures proposed by the Applicant to avoid, reduce, mitigate, or compensate for the identified impacts
- Where applicable, proposals by the Councils for alternative or additional measures to better address the identified impacts, and,
- The need for obligations and requirements.

1.2.5 As set out above, this is a joint report by the Councils and reflects the assessment and views of both Councils.

1.2.6 The contents of this report build upon the joint Relevant Representation (RR) response submitted by CCC and FDC. References are made to these responses throughout this report.

1.2.7 This report should be read in the context of the two separate motions that were individually and independently approved by elected Members of CCC and FDC to oppose the proposed development. Both Councils also sent letters to the then Secretary of State to make clear the Councils' opposition to these plans. The full details of the Council motions are set out in the RR and the letters to the Secretary of State were included in the Appendices of the RR. Full details of the Councils' position in respect of this proposal will be set out in the written representations.

Description of the Area

1.3 Natural and Built Environment

1.3.1 The natural and built environment in the area around the site for the proposed Energy from Waste (EfW) facility has a set of characteristics which draw from the combination of the landscape, geology, ecology, cultural heritage, and historic designations. These are important at international, national, and local levels and it is this complex interlocking background that sets the scene for the key issues upon which the Councils will consider the impact of the development on the area.

1.3.2 The Fenland administrative district is located to the North of the County of Cambridgeshire, covering an area of approximately 200 square miles, much is rural and sparsely populated (1.9 people per hectare 2021) with diverse communities, each with different needs. The sub-regional centres of Cambridge (to the south), Peterborough (to the west) and Kings Lynn (to the east) have considerable influence on the various parts of the district in terms of employment, education, retail, and health provision. The major employment sectors in Fenland are within agriculture, food and drink industries and distribution.

1.3.3 Wisbech sits within a predominantly flat Fen landscape, and the town is located at the centre of rich Fenland agricultural and flower-growing industries.

1.3.4 Wisbech is a historic market and port town which has excellent examples of Georgian, Anglicised-Dutch style architecture, particularly alongside the North and South Brinks, which line either side of the River Nene as it enters the town from the west. The North Brink area, which is mainly Dutch in character, is noted as one of the most elegant of all Georgian streets in Britain and it, and the nearby Old Market and Norfolk Street, have remained relatively unchanged over two centuries.

1.3.5 Wisbech has award-winning parks and gardens, and Wisbech Park in particular has 12 acres of mature trees and open parkland.

1.3.6 The town's location and facilities make it a focal point for business and commerce for the surrounding villages and the history, architecture, and location in the Fens make it a stopping point for tourists visiting the area.

1.3.7 Further information on the social and economic background of Wisbech can be found in Annex 1.

1.4 Transport

1.4.1 The town of Wisbech is located along the A47 trunk road route between Norfolk (to the east) and Leicester and the Midlands (to the west). North of Wisbech is the A17, a key arterial route connecting Norfolk to Lincolnshire and the North. As Wisbech is between the A17 and A47, vehicles travelling between the two roads often use Wisbech and travel through the town centre as there is no alternative route.

1.4.2 The nearest railway stations to Wisbech are March, Downham Market and Kings Lynn. A number of bus routes service Wisbech linking it to places such as Peterborough, Kings Lynn and Norwich (x1 service) as well as links to March and a town bus service.

1.4.3 The Wisbech Access Strategy[1] provides more detailed information on existing traffic conditions in Wisbech, along with a package of individual transport schemes that aim to improve the transport network in Wisbech. However, it should be noted that the information in the Access Strategy reports was gathered and collated some time ago as part of the development of a number of schemes in key locations around Wisbech to assist with the delivery of the Fenland Local Plan and that none of the schemes are currently funded.

1.5 Other relevant development in the area

1.5.1 The adopted Fenland Local Plan[2] identifies a number of strategic allocations in the vicinity of the proposed development. These are:

- The South Wisbech Broad Concept Plan[3] area

[redacted]

- The East Wisbech Broad Concept[4] Plan area

Within the South Wisbech Broad Concept Plan area there are a number of consented schemes including:

- B8 Storage under application ref F/YR20/0899/F
- A mixed-use development originally approved under application ref F/YR16/0996/F

Within the East Wisbech Broad Concept Plan area, there are the following schemes with decisions on planning applications pending:

- 325 dwellings, application ref F/YR22/1256/F, Land Northeast of Meadowgate Academy Access from Sandy Lane Walsoken Wisbech Cambridgeshire
- 224 dwellings, application ref F/YR22/0844/O, Land East of Stow Lane Wisbech

1.5.2 In addition to the above the District Council is anticipating an application for a further 200 dwellings at Land East Of 61 - 125 Stow Road, Wisbech.

1.5.3 The allocations and associated schemes, and any potential impact on them from the proposed development, whether it be traffic, air quality, or visual impact, should be taken into account when assessing the proposed development.

Statutory Development Plans

1.6 The Planning Inspectorate guidance on preparing LIRs suggests that it is useful to set out relevant local plan policies that apply to the proposed development. Annex 2 contains the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) 2021, the Fenland Local Plan (FLP) (2014). The Emerging Fenland Plan can be found below.

1.7 Emerging Fenland Local Plan (EFLP)

1.7.1 FDC is preparing a new Local Plan which will determine what the district will look like in the future. Once the proposed plan has been through Examination and is adopted, the new Local plan will replace the current FLP. Consultation on the Draft version of the Local Plan took place between 25 August 2022 and 19 October 2022. The Draft Plan[5] sets out the emerging policies and proposals for growth and regeneration, and the proposed sites to deliver the growth. A Proposed Submission version is due to be published in summer 2023 for public consultation. This version of the plan will then be submitted to central government who will appoint an independent Planning Inspector to carry out a public examination into the document.

1.7.2 The new Plan will focus on commercial deliverability, market demand, and meeting growth targets as well as supporting and encouraging economic growth.

[4] [redacted]

1.7.3 The following proposed polices in the emerging plan would be relevant to the proposal, should the Plan be approved following examination:

LP4	Securing Fenland's Future
LP6	Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure
LP7	Design
LP20	Accessibility and Transport
LP24	Natural Environment
LP25	Biodiversity Net Gain
LP26	Carbon Sinks and Carbon Sequestration
LP27	Trees and Planting
LP32	Flood and Water Management
LP34	Air Quality

Other Relevant Local Policy

1.8 Cambridgeshire County Council Priorities 2023-2024

1.8.1 The Strategic Framework 2023-2024 sets out CCC's vision and corporate ambitions. It is approved by the Full Council of its democratically elected joint administration. All Council decisions and policies are made within the context of this Framework.

1.8.2 CCC's Strategic vision is to: "*Create a greener, fairer, and more caring Cambridgeshire. This vision guides a 'decentralised' approach to CCC's relationships with partners, communities, and residents, so that Cambridgeshire can become greener, fairer, and more caring in the ways that are most suitable to the variety of people and communities we serve.*"

1.8.3 CCC has 7 ambitions to achieve the Strategic vision:

1. *Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes*
2. *Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable*
3. *Health inequalities are reduced*
4. *People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs*
5. *Helping people out of poverty and income inequality*
6. *Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services, and social justice is prioritised*
7. *Children and young people have opportunities to thrive.*

1.9 Fenland District Council Priorities 2022-2023

1.9.1 FDC's Business Plan (2023-2024[6]) sets out FDC's vision and corporate ambitions. All Council decisions and policies are made with the following priorities in mind;

Communities:

- *Support vulnerable members of our community*
- *Promote health and wellbeing for all*

[6] [redacted]

- *Work with partners to promote Fenland through Culture and Heritage*

Environment:

- *Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling, and street cleansing service*
- *Work with partners and the community on projects that improve the environment and our street scene*
- *Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion*

Economy:

- *Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland*
- *Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth, and regeneration across Fenland*
- *Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across the districts*

1.10 CCC's Climate Change and Environment Strategy (published February 2022)

1.10.1 This Strategy outlines CCC's vision in relation to climate change and informs all of the Council's work. It is available to view in full on the County Council's public-facing website[7], it states the following:

"*Climate Change is a very real challenge for our communities, businesses, and nature. We believe that, as a Council, it is our responsibility to act now. We must: reduce the contribution the county is making towards Climate Change through our carbon emissions, support the development of resilient communities so that they can adapt to the impacts of climate change, and reduce our impact on the natural environment by supporting nature and biodiversity to thrive. We recognise, and take seriously, the opportunity we have to provide much needed local leadership to tackling the climate crisis in Cambridgeshire. This new Strategy is our commitment to working for and with people, communities, businesses, and all political parties to deliver - urgent action across Cambridgeshire. This ambition and our principles will provide a practical framework to guide creativity and collaboration. CCC has identified 9 priority areas to action:*

1. ***Communication and engagement*** *with Businesses and our communities*
2. ***New economic models*** *and sustainable finance*
3. *Energy efficient,* ***low carbon buildings***
4. ***Low carbon transport*** *– prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, and supporting the uptake of electric vehicles*
5. ***Waste and Pollution*** *- Reducing waste, minimising pollution, and rethinking how we deal with the waste we produce*
6. ***Green spaces****, restoring natural habitats and Beneficial land management*

[7] [redacted]

7. ***Peatland -*** *developing understanding of the scale of the challenge and opportunities for management best practice*

8. ***Water management****, availability, and flood risk, to improve water quality while improving resilience to flooding and droughts*

9. ***Resilience of our services,*** *Infrastructure and supporting vulnerable people."*

1.10.2 The County Council has an additional ambition for Cambridgeshire to be Net Zero by 2045. The strategic approach to this is:

- *"We commit to ensuring the County Council delivers on its target of net zero emissions. This means achieving net-zero for our direct emissions and halving scope 3 emissions through our supply chains by 2030. We will take a broad and long-term view of initiatives in order to deliver the most sustainable change possible and lead by example.*

Driving change through collaboration

- *We want to work transparently and in partnership with other organisations, businesses, and communities to support all sectors to reduce carbon emissions, benefit nature and take positive climate action. Aligning our efforts will bring greater impact for all of us.*

Harnessing the power of our local communities

- *We will take a place-based approach to climate change. Local communities know their environment best and can identify solutions to local environmental challenges. Harnessing the power of local communities and local networks will enable all of us to amplify impact and support a socially just transition to net zero.*

Carbon Literate Cambridgeshire

- *We will work to develop a county-wide understanding of carbon reduction so that people, communities, and businesses have the knowledge they need to identify and act upon nature based and other opportunities for carbon reduction and doubling nature".*

1.11 Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy[8] (2011)

1.11.1 This Strategy is designed to assist in shaping and coordinating the delivery of green infrastructure in the County to provide social, environmental, economic benefits now and in the future. This Strategy demonstrates how Green Infrastructure can be used to help achieve four objectives:

1) *To reverse the decline in biodiversity*

2) *To mitigate and adapt to climate change*

3) *To promote sustainable growth and economic development*

4) *To support healthy living and well-being*

[redacted]

1.11.2 *"Green Infrastructure is part of our natural life-support system. It is the network of natural and man-made features such as open spaces, woodlands, meadows, footpaths, waterways, and historic parks, which help to define and to link the communities, villages, towns, and cities of Cambridgeshire with each other and to the surrounding landscape. Green Infrastructure is vital to quality of life for both existing and future residents of Cambridgeshire and is nationally acknowledged as an important element of well-designed and inclusive places."*

1.12 Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Health & Wellbeing and Integrated Care Strategy[9] (HWICS)

1.12.1 The HWICS sets priorities to benefit health and wellbeing for residents. In 2022, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council agreed to form a Joint Health and Wellbeing Board. It collaborates with the Integrated Care Partnership, bringing together and creating a stronger local partnership around integrated health and social care.

1.12.2 The overarching mission of "All together for healthier futures" is supported by three overarching ambitions:

- *Have better outcomes for our children;*
- *Reduce inequalities in deaths under 75 years;*
- *and increase the number of years that people live in good health*.

1.12.3 The four priorities of the HWICS are:

- *Ensure our children are ready to enter education and exit, prepared for the next phase of their lives*
- *Create an environment to give people the opportunity to be as healthy as they can be*
- *Reduce poverty through better employment, skills, and housing*
- *Promote early intervention and prevention measures to improve mental health and wellbeing*

1.13 Local Transport Plan (LTP)[10]

1.13.1 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) are the Strategic Transport Authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan (January 2020) is the LTP which sets out the vision, goals, and objectives that define how transport will support the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority's Growth Ambition, and approach to meeting these objectives. The Plan will remain current until the adoption of the final Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

1.13.2 The vision for the LTP is to deliver a world-class transport network for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that supports sustainable growth and opportunity for all. The vision is intended to capture the aspirations for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's transport network, reflecting our ambition to provide:

[9] [redacted]

- '*A world-class transport network'* – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough aspire toward a transport system of the highest quality on a global stage, which meets the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.
- '*Sustainable growth'* – the network will support the delivery of future economic and housing growth across the region that enhances overall quality of life, supports the transition to a Net Zero carbon economy and protects or enhances the environment.
- *'Opportunity for all'* – the network should support access to jobs, services, and education for all, irrespective of income, age, ability, location, or access to a car.

1.14 Cambridgeshire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan (2016 Update)[11]

1.14.1 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) is a statutory document under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000, which forms part of the CPCA's Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3). The Plan is a strategy document that contains the vision of improved countryside access in Cambridgeshire and builds on the rights of way network to bring benefits to transport, tourism, the rural economy, social integration, health, and the environment.

1.14.2 The ROWIP recognises that demand for access to the countryside is growing and is becoming increasingly important due to its importance to the rural economy, public health and well-being and place-making as well as the significant contribution that the public rights of way network makes to the active travel agenda. Delivery of the Plan requires a range of functions and organisations to work in partnership to achieve the strategic plans of the ROWIP in co-ordination with the emerging Active Travel Strategy and the LTP3.

1.14.3 The ROWIP's Statements of Action (SOAs) are intended to protect and bring about improvements to the rights of way network and countryside access. The following key SOAs are relevant to this Application:

- SOA2: A safer and health-enhancing activity: Countryside access provision should be safe for users and encourage healthy activities.
- SOA3: 72,500 new homes: new development should not damage countryside provision. Where appropriate, development should contribute to the provision of new links and/or improvement of the existing PROW network.
- SOA5: Filling the gaps: Countryside provision should build on the platform of the historical network to meet the needs of today's users, particularly equestrians, and land managers.

1.14.4 The ROWIP works in partnership with the existing Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Health & Wellbeing and Integrated Care Strategy.

1.15 The Defra 25 Year Environmental Plan[12] (D25YEP)

1.15.1 The D25YEP sets out the government's plan to improve the environment within a generation, including details how this is to be achieved. It is this Government's ambition to leave our environment in a better state than we found it. The 25 Year Environment Plan outlines the steps we must take to achieve the ambition. The policies in Chapter 3 concern connecting

[redacted]

people with the environment in order to improve health and wellbeing, they seek to enhance people's engagement with the natural world and to address inequalities in access, by opening up the mental and physical health benefits of the natural world to people from the widest possible range of ages and backgrounds.

1.15.2 The Covid pandemic has underlined the important role of nature for our health and wellbeing, particularly for those living in disadvantaged areas, and there is growing evidence to support the many beneficial effects of being outside, including reducing stress and increased physical activity. The relevant actions and outcomes detailed in Chapter 3 include:

"1. Helping people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces;

2. Encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school; and,

3. Greening our towns and cities."

1.15.3 Through increased engagement with nature, people come to care more about the natural environment and take steps to protect and enhance it. Delivery of the D25YEP outcomes depends upon engaging people with nature and supporting their behaviour change. Through engagement with the local community and provision, the proposed significant EfW facility has the opportunity to help address the requirements of the Plan.

Impacts by Issue

Traffic and Transport (ES Chapter 6)

2.1 Summary

2.1.1 The effects of construction and operational traffic from the proposed facility upon the existing highway network, for which Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible, need to be assessed and appropriate mitigation and compensation will need to be provided to the Authority.

2.1.2 Section 3 of the Relevant Representations document contained a number of comments relating to Traffic and Transport and, in addition to the overarching policies detailed above, further information on the impacts and the required mitigation, should the proposal be granted consent, are detailed below.

2.1.3 Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways and Transport teams have provided comment on the ES Chapter 6 and its potential impacts, as set out in the following text. From 2.4 onwards, these comments have been split into the different disciplines, to aid comprehension and focus. The teams that have commented and their functions are as follows:

- Highways Asset Management: This service manages the planned maintenance of the highway network and the legal asset records that underpin all the different highways, including public rights of way, under two different teams. The Asset Information team also leads the response to public rights of way matters (see under PROW).

- Highway Development Management: The team provide comments on the safety of the proposals and their impact on the existing highway. This includes junction design, visibility splays, and standards that must be met before adoption of a highway.

- Transport Assessment: The team review all of the potential transport impacts of proposed developments and consider plans to mitigate any adverse consequences. They consider the access to the site by all modes, focussing on active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport in preference to the use of private cars, and also the reduction of vehicle trips through robust travel planning interventions.

- Transport Strategy: The team assess the impact of proposals on existing strategies and those currently in development.

- Public Rights of Way (PROW): Public rights of way issues straddle practical maintenance of the assets, traffic management, user experience and needs, community connectivity, heritage elements, ecology and landscape, public health, and active travel. They sit within a formal legal framework. Asset Information is responsible for managing the legal processes to change the alignment and status of PROW. PROW are therefore complex and require careful assessment of these interconnected matters.

2.2 Transport Policy Context

2.2.1 There are several national and local policies that are relevant to the DCO proposal that the Applicant must consider and address, these include, but are not limited to:

2.2.2 **The Local Transport Plan**: The responsibility to produce the Local Transport Plan (LTP) has passed from Cambridgeshire County Council to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). The CPCA is currently updating the adopted LTP (2020), and this strategy is aligned with the emerging Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP).

2.2.3 The County Council transport strategy documents sit under the CPCA's LTCP and are linked with the Fenland Transport Strategy[13] (which will be considered for adoption in March 2023) and the FLP and transport policy documents.

2.2.4 The County Council, as the Local Highway Authority (LHA), continues to produce transport strategy documents, including the emerging Fenland Transport Strategy, which are aligned with the emerging vision and objectives of the CPCA LTCP to refresh and reflect the County Council's investment priorities and future aspirations. This strategy work also supports and complements district Local Plans and will review and propose transport improvement schemes for investment for each area.

2.2.5 **Gear change: A bold vision for cycling and walking 2020[14]**

This is central government's vision for a transformation of the transport system. This policy document sets out the ambition that:

"*England will be a great walking and cycling nation. Places will be truly walkable. A travel revolution in our streets, towns, and communities will have made cycling a mass form of transit. Cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys…*

- *Healthier, happier, and greener communities,*
- *Safer streets,*
- *Convenient and accessible travel,*
- *At the heart of transport decision making."*

2.2.6 **Transport Decarbonisation Plan[15] - Decarbonising transport: a better, greener Britain.** This is a government plan which sets out the government's commitments and the actions needed to decarbonise the entire transport system in the UK. It includes:

- a pathway to net zero transport in the UK
- the wider benefits net zero transport can deliver

[13] [redacted]
[14] Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[15] Transport decarbonisation plan - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- the principles that underpin our approach to delivering net zero transport
- Inclusive Mobility.

2.2.7 **Inclusive Mobility**[16] - A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure. This central government plan describes features that need to be considered in the provision of an inclusive environment and issues related to disabling barriers, the use of technology, maintenance, awareness of the needs of disabled people, and engagement.

2.3 Local Policy

2.3.1 **Cambridgeshire's Draft Active Travel Strategy**[17] is a topic-specific transport strategy produced by the County Council that will sit under the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough LTCP. The strategy sets out an ambitious vision that seeks to embrace active travel at the heart of all future transport projects and developments, that will prioritise walking and cycling and other active travel modes to create a well-connected, safe, and inclusive active travel network across Cambridgeshire to ensure it becomes the 'go-to' travel option for many local journeys.

2.3.2 **Draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**[18] **(LCWIP)** forms part of the Government's aim to make walking and cycling the natural choice for all short journeys or as part of a longer journey. DfT recommended that all local authorities should develop LCWIPs and have advised that those authorities with plans will be well placed to bid for future funding. The Cambridgeshire LCWIP covers the whole County and focuses on each district to highlight priority routes for cycling using census data to identify where funding could have the greatest effect in terms of where people live and work. For walking it focuses on Cambridge City and the Market Towns to identify the main routes to school, local shops, employment, and train/bus stations. The routes that are identified in the LCWIP are detailed in Cambridgeshire's draft Active Travel Strategy[19] action plan as Tier 1 of the proposed active travel network vision.

2.3.3 The **CPCA's sustainable growth ambition**[20] frames how they seek to achieve sustainable good growth using their 'Six Keys' to improve lives and double the economy of the region, through all their plans. The Six Keys are:

- Climate and Nature
- Health and Skills
- Innovation
- Reducing Inequalities
- Infrastructure
- Finance and Systems

[16] Inclusive mobility: making transport accessible for passengers and pedestrians - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[17] [redacted]

2.3.4 **Vision Zero Partnership[21]: Towards 2030 – Making our road safer for all (2020).** The Partnership is working towards a long-term strategic goal of Vision Zero, where there are no deaths and serious injuries on the Partnership's roads. This is an ambitious goal and will need time and effort to be achievable. With this Strategy starting in 2020, the goal is to move towards zero deaths or severe serious injuries in the Partnership area by 2040.

2.3.5 **Cambridgeshire County Council Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Policy[22]** was adopted by the Highways and Transport Committee in October 2022 and sets out the County Council's approach to managing HGV movements across the county.

2.3.6 **Fenland Cycling, Walking and Mobility Aid Improvement Strategy[23].** FDC, with support from the Hereward Community Rail Partnership, has approved the development of a Fenland Cycling, Walking and Mobility Improvement Strategy which will set out proposals to develop a core network of routes that can be improved in the short and medium term and built upon in the future. To achieve this, key walking and cycling routes linking densely populated residential areas with safe, direct walking/cycling routes to places of education and employment will be identified, along with routes to rail or bus stations for longer distance multimodal journeys.

2.3.7 **Housing Estate Road Construction Specification[24] (2023)** (HERCS) sets out the standards and specification required for the construction for all highways maintainable at public expense within Cambridgeshire.

2.3.8 **General Principles for Development[25]** sets out the principles for design and implementation for new development related highway infrastructure in Cambridgeshire.

2.3.9 The **Design Manual for Roads and Bridges**[26] (DMRB) suite of documents is applied within Cambridgeshire to major works comprising complex junction design (i.e. traffic signal installations), structures/ culverts design, AIP, Road Safety Audit process etc which are outside the remit of the HERCS document.

2.3.10 The **Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984[27]** relates to the processes and procedures relating to the imposition of a new speed limit on New Bridge Lane.

2.3.11 **Cambridgeshire County Council Street Lighting Specification[28] (2016)** provides the standards required for new street lighting infrastructure to comply with the adoption principles of Cambridgeshire's long term PFI contract for the implementation and maintenance of new adoptable infrastructure.

[21] [redacted]
[26] Standards For Highways | Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)
[27] Legislation.gov.uk
[28] Street_lighting_Development_Specification (cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

2.3.12 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan**[29] Policy 23: Traffic, Highways and Rights of Way also applies. It states that Mineral and waste management development will only be permitted if:

(a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be, or have been, taken up, to the degree reasonably available given the type of development and its location. If, at the point of application, commercially available electric Heavy Commercial Vehicles (HCVs) are reasonably available, then development which would increase HCV movements should provide appropriate electric vehicle charging infrastructure for HCVs;

(b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users of the subsequent development;

(c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree;

(d) any associated increase in traffic or highway improvements would not cause unacceptable harm to the environment, road safety or residential amenity, and would not cause severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network; and

(e) binding agreements covering lorry routing arrangements and/or HCV signage for mineral and waste traffic are agreed, if any such agreements are necessary and reasonable to make a development acceptable.

2.3.13 **Cambridgeshire County Council's Highway Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Highway Operational Standards**[30] are also relevant to the proposed DCO in the context of traffic and transport issues.

2.4 Highway Asset Management: Construction Phase Impacts

2.4.1 The Draft DCO, Article 11 (Power to alter layout, etc., of streets) does not make provision for certification by the Local Highway Authority (HA) that any alterations to the highway are acceptable. Any amendments to the local highway network will fall to CCC to maintain and therefore it is essential that CCC has the facility to approve the design and construction of alterations, including the facility to inspect works during construction. CCC requires appropriate processes for the certification of the design and construction of any amendments to the local highway network, acceptance by the HA of the infrastructure is contingent upon this certification. Failure to provide infrastructure acceptable to CCC as the HA might impose unreasonable financial burdens associated with future maintenance liabilities and might result in infrastructure being handed over that does not satisfy CCC's requirements regarding road safety. The proposed development would precipitate increased levels of heavy goods vehicles using the local highway network, both in the construction and operational phases. Such vehicles have a markedly disproportionate effect upon the condition of roads and will cause extensive damage to local roads, including: B198 (Cromwell Road), New Bridge Lane, Algores Way and Weasenham Road. It will fall to CCC to maintain these roads and make good any such damage and therefore, CCC will require

[29] [redacted]

appropriate recompense for damage caused by such extraordinary traffic, preferably via the provisions of Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980.

2.4.2 **Positive**: None identified.

2.4.3 **Neutral**: The proposed improvements to New Bridge Lane include the re-instatement of the road across the former Wisbech-March railway level crossing. The highway rights over this level crossing were extinguished by virtue of the British Railways Act 1981. Since that time, only private rights have been permitted across the former railway, although non-motorised users appear to have been afforded permissive access via a gap in the obstructions that have been installed to prevent vehicular access. As the highway rights were extinguished by virtue of the 1981 Act, it is unclear how the Applicant/undertaker intends to re-create these rights, or indeed if this is the intention. Without clarity on the applicant's intentions, it is impossible for the Council to know how the rights of the public will be secured along the improved section of New Bridge Lane. There is currently a risk that an improved road will be constructed that has the appearance of being a continuous public highway, but which, in terms of both the rights of the public to pass-and-repass and the responsibility of the Council to maintain, has a severance at the point of the level crossing. This has the potential to create confusion for the public and may require unnecessarily complex maintenance arrangements between the Council, the Applicant, and Network Rail.

2.4.4 As the adjoining road (to both sides of the level crossing) is highway that is maintainable at public expense, it is very important that the Council understands the nature of the connecting part of the route across the level crossing, so it is able to contribute to detailed design, to understand the extent of its maintenance responsibility, and to secure network connectivity for the public user.

2.4.5 **Negative**: Construction traffic will constitute a significant and extraordinary level of traffic upon the local road network (including: B198 (Cromwell Road), New Bridge Lane, Algores Way and Weasenham Road). This will result in more rapid deterioration of the highway and increased damage to it, which will require reactive and/or planned maintenance to be undertaken. Please see para 2.4.1 above.

2.4.6 Please see related comments under Public Rights of Way concerning the need to protect the existing, and enhance, Non-Motorised Users (NMU) rights along New Bridge Lane, over the crossing and beyond to the wider road and rights of way network. NMUs could be significantly adversely affected by the construction traffic, and this point should be explicitly considered as part of the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). Appropriate measures to protect NMUs/NMU access should be agreed with the County Council in the CTMP.

2.4.7 **Mitigations:** Noting that there will be a degrading of the highway, the HA requires that condition surveys be undertaken of the affected highways before, during and after the works. The survey method and frequency must be as agreed with the HA. These surveys should be at the expense of the Undertaker and the Undertaker is to provide the HA with appropriate compensation for damage to the local highway network.

2.4.8 With regard to the creation of rights across the former level crossing, the HA requires further engagement from the Applicant to understand its intentions and would encourage constructive liaison between the Applicant and Network Rail, as the landowner of the former railway. The Council would be content to attend a tripartite meeting between itself, the

Applicant, and Network Rail to try to resolve this matter. The Council also refers to its comments under Public Rights of Way on this matter.

2.4.9 If the development is allowed to go ahead, then it is vital that the developer is required to provide a bridge over the railway line at New Bridge Lane, in the event that the March to Wisbech rail line is reopened.

2.5 Highway Asset Management: Operational Phase Impacts

2.5.1 **Positive**: None identified.

2.5.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.5.3 **Negative:** Operational traffic to and from the development site will constitute a significant and extraordinary level of traffic upon the local road network, including: B198 (Cromwell Road), New Bridge Lane, Algores Way and Weasenham Road. This will result in more rapid deterioration of the highway and increased damage to it, which will require reactive and/or planned maintenance to be undertaken. While it is noted that there are no formal user rights across the level crossing at the present time, New Bridge Lane currently represents a relatively quiet through-route for non-motorised users, owing to the fact that the crossing is closed to motor traffic. This will dramatically change if the improvements to New Bridge Lane are completed and opened to the heavy goods traffic that will be accessing the development site. Those non-motorised users (NMUs) that currently have use of the full width of the carriageway to the east of the level crossing would, after implementation of the proposed improvements, be restricted to a narrower 2m footway that is adjacent to a heavy goods route and requires crossing a busy site entrance. NMUs could be significantly adversely affected by the operational traffic and should be explicitly considered as part of the Operational Traffic Management Plan (OTMP).

2.5.4 **Mitigations:** The HA requires that suitable funding be provided by the Undertaker to enable the relevant sections of the local highway network (specifically Cromwell Road, and, after improvements proposed by the applicant are complete, New Bridge Lane) to be made up to and maintained at a standard appropriate to accommodate the increased levels of traffic. The HA will establish the extent of works required, based upon condition surveys at the end of the construction phase and predicted traffic levels.

2.5.5 Appropriate measures to protect NMUs/NMU access should be included in the OTMP.

2.6 Highway Asset Management: Decommissioning Phase Impacts

2.6.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.6.2 **Neutral**: Significant changes are proposed to the layout of New Bridge Lane, including the widening of the highway in some locations. In order for Cambridgeshire County Council to effectively manage the amended road layout for the benefit of highway users, it will need to receive updated information detailing the revised highway extent, the as-built road layout, and details of any new or revised highway assets that are provided.

2.6.3 **Negative:** Please see above comments regarding the construction phase impacts upon the condition of the local highway network which might be applicable to the decommissioning phase, dependent upon the extent of works undertaken.

2.6.4 **Mitigations**: Please see above comments regarding the construction phase. In respect of highway asset information, the undertaker will be required to enter into a section 278 (Highways Act 1980) and section 38 (Highways Act 1980) agreement with the County Council to ensure that the amendments to New Bridge Lane meet the requirements of the County Council and that the appropriate highway asset information is provided to the Council upon completion of the works.

2.6.5 With regard to the creation of rights across the former level crossing, the Councils perceive that there is a risk that any decisions on the DCO may prejudice the bringing forward of the link. Therefore, the DCO must include rights on that land and the Councils need to be sure that whatever agreement is reached doesn't stifle to possibility of the reopening of the rail link or another beneficial use.

2.7 Highway Development Management: Construction Phase Impacts

2.7.1 The Examining Authority (ExA) is referred to comments from the Highway Asset Management and Transport Assessment Team regarding traffic during the Construction Phase.

Signal Junction Design and Road Safety Audit

2.7.2 **Positive:** None identified.

2.7.3 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.7.4 **Negative:** Improvements to the junction of Cromwell Road/ New Bridge Lane in the form of signal control have been identified as necessary by the Transport Assessment Team. A preliminary design has been provided to the County Council for consideration, however, commentary from the Signals and Safety Audit Team indicate that an acceptable form of junction design may not be achievable within the existing highway constraints. The consequence of this junction not being property signalised would be that the principal access to the scheme would be unacceptable.

2.7.5 Any junction alterations must be subject to design approval by the County Council and appropriate Road Safety Audit under the terms of GG119 of the DMRB. Such approvals are normally secured prior to the determination of a given planning submission to ensure that an appropriate and safe junction can be delivered in the fullness of time and minimise the risk to the developer and ensure that appropriate mitigation can be achieved in the fullness of time.

New Bridge Lane Securing Highway Improvements

2.7.6 **Positive:** None identified.

2.7.7 **Neutral:** Noting the commentary above, the authority requires that new adoptable highways works are submitted for technical approval, including carriageway/ footway improvements, street lighting/ signing, lining, drainage etc, this includes junction/ signals design and the attendant road Safety Audit process.

2.7.8 **Negative:** There are a number of details along the New Bridge Lane improvement works that require further review, including pedestrian crossing detail/ siting and access details

relating to adjacent land uses/ premises affected by the widening works, and protection and enhancement of NMU access along the lane and over the old railway crossing.

2.7.9 A street lighting design brief, with details of the design requirements covering the area of the proposed improvements along New Bridge Lane and the junction with Cromwell Road must be provided. Until such time as the street lighting design is complied with, in line with the supplied street lighting design brief, the indicative new street lighting positions shown are insufficient. The street lighting design brief would be issued as part of the Section 278 agreement process.

2.7.10 Given the highway changes and signalisation of the junction of New Bridge Lane/Cromwell Road, this section of road would need to be lit as a conflict area which would mean that the current existing lighting at this junction would need to be redesigned/replaced. The requirements for the lighting of the conflict area would include the approaches to the junction which would be outside of the area currently shown on the supplied drawings within the order limits.

2.7.11 The existing street lighting columns/lighting installation in the vicinity of the New Bridge Lane/Cromwell Road junction are not currently adopted by the County Council but were installed as part of the Tesco S278 – G106.335 agreement. The associated Highway works have never been completed/ placed on maintenance, and therefore these remain the responsibility of Tesco Stores.

2.7.12 **Mitigations:** The off-site highway improvements, if the ExA considers that they are achievable and grants consent for the DCO, should be secured by an appropriate mechanism (for example under S278/S38 of the Highways Act 1980), which can make provision for dedication of additional land as public highway, and for any necessary commuted sums (i.e. for signal maintenance/ renewal).

<u>New Bridge Lane – Network Rail Intervening Land</u>

2.7.13 **Positive:** None identified.

2.7.14 **Neutral:** Whilst New Bridge Lane is a highway, maintainable at public expense between Cromwell Road and the A47(T), a small intervening length exists at the intersection with the former railway line which is apparently in the control of Network Rail. Although these areas are identified in the submitted Land Plans, they need to be amended in light of new information obtained by the County Council in respect of the extent of the extinguishment of public rights.

2.7.15 **Negative:** None identified

2.7.16 **Mitigations:** Further consideration of and clarity on the extent of the intervening private land belonging to Network Rail is required. The impact that the proposal would have on this requires mitigation during construction and future maintenance and public access (between the adjacent public highway extents) needs to be secured.

<u>Ditches/ Drains Culverts</u>

2.7.17 **Positive:** None identified.

2.7.18 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.7.19 **Negative:** Watercourses will not normally form part of the public highway. On the south-west side of New Bridge Lane, the new carriageway construction is shown in close proximity to the adjacent drain, with limited land being included within the DCO for the construction. The County Council remains concerned that there will be insufficient land available to achieve a robust construction within the DCO boundary. The new highway infrastructure works are likely to require alterations to the watercourse embankments / culverts in order to provide stability and protection for the adjacent carriageway and protect the watercourse asset. Failure to consider the full extent of the land take required for the new carriageway and design amendments accordingly, could result in the proposed works not being achievable.

2.7.20 **Mitigations:** The Applicant should be required to review the extents available and relevant constraints, identify potential construction options, and then include additional land within the DCO as may be necessary.

2.7.21 Approvals from the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) / Internal Drainage Board (IDB) or relevant drainage body will be required for alterations to the affected drainage channels.

Street Lighting Provision

2.7.22 **Positive:** None identified.

2.7.23 **Neutral:** Preliminary consultation identified the need for additional lighting to be provided on New Bridge Lane for safety reasons and to enable the speed limit to be reduced to 30mph. This provision is acknowledged in the submission; however, the document references the contribution of funding to enable the County Council to implement the works.

2.7.24 **Negative:** Failing to provide the additional street lighting required in the area to the required specification, particularly around the junction (a conflict area), is that the improved / amended junction would not be lit to the correct standard in line with BS5489--1:2020 Design of road lighting. Lighting of roads and public amenity areas - code of practice. The failure to implement the necessary lighting would affect the safety of all road users (including pedestrians).

2.7.25 **Mitigations**: Street lighting should be provided as part of the S278/S38 works, designed to County Council specification, and secured accordingly before being implemented by the developer.

New Bridge Lane Speed Limit Reduction

2.7.26 **Positive:** None identified

2.7.27 **Neutral:** In conjunction with the street lighting provision, the reduction of the speed limit on new bridge Lane is required from 60mph to 30mph between Cromwell Road and the site access.

2.7.28 **Negative:** subject to the need to provide the appropriate highways and street lighting mitigation already detailed above, no negative impacts associated with the reduction in the speed limit have been identified at this stage.

2.7.29 **Mitigations:** As part of S278/S38 works, the Applicant should be required to sponsor and implement a reduction in the speed limit in New Bridge Lane from 60mph to 30mph from Cromwell Road to the site access.

CHP Construction Access 1 & 2 Cromwell Road

2.7.30 **Positive:** None identified.

2.7.31 **Neutral:** Reference is made in the submission to the formation of construction accesses to Cromwell Road at the point where the former railway line is bisected, however, no details of the access have been provided.

2.7.32 **Negative:** It is not possible to fully comment on the potential negative impacts of the construction access without provision of the details of the access and therefore the Councils reserve the right to highlight possible impacts once further details have been provided.

2.7.33 **Mitigations:** Prior to the determination of the DCO, the Applicant should provide additional details relating to the provision of works access at CHP 1 & 2 Cromwell Road.

New Bridge Lane Abnormal Indivisible Loads Swept Path Analysis

2.7.34 **Positive:** None identified

2.7.35 **Neutral**: None identified

2.7.36 **Negative:** With reference to Figure 9.2 in the Outline CTMP, as far as can be ascertained, as single swept path diagram is provided for the ingress of Abnormal Indivisible Loads from Cromwell Road to New Bridge Lane. Noting that the details of Abnormal Indivisible Loads are proposed to be agreed via the appointed haulage contractor, the swept path indicates significant over-run of adjacent verges, footways, and services.

2.7.37 **Mitigations:** The Applicant should provide egress swept path and acknowledge the potential need for temporary accommodation works to the exiting highway and associated assets to accommodate AILs, which needs to be secured by an appropriate agreement with the County Council.

Access via Algores Way

2.7.38 **Positive:** None identified.

2.7.39 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.7.40 **Negative:** None identified

2.7.41 **Mitigations:** Algores Way from a point approximately 230m south-west of Weasenham Lane is a private road owned/ maintained by Fenland District Council and therefore any works to extend Algores Way or alterations thereto are beyond the remit of the County Council as Local Highway Authority and are to be agreed with Fenland District Council.

2.8 Highway Development Management: Operational Phase Impacts

2.8.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.8.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.8.3 **Negative:** Please refer to comments from Transport Assessment Team on this matter, at section 2.11.3 below.

2.8.4 **Mitigations:** The mitigations that are required to address the significant impacts of the development on the road network are set out in section 2.7 above.

2.9 Highway Development Management: Decommissioning Phase Impacts

2.9.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.9.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.9.3 **Negative:** It is considered that the impacts of the decommissioning will be similar to those detailed in the section on Construction Phase Impacts above and do not require further commentary. See comments in 2.7.36 above in respect of Abnormal Indivisible Loads.

2.9.4 **Mitigations:** None identified.

2.10 Transport Assessment: Construction Phase Impacts

2.10.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.10.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.10.3 **Negative:** The construction phase will have the most significant daily weekday impact on the network, with a maximum of 643 2-way daily vehicles and 14 HGV movements in each peak hour (ref: Tables 6B.11 and 6B.12 of the Environmental Statement – Chapter 6 Traffic and Transport, Appendix B, Transport Assessment).

2.10.4 The use of New Bridge Lane for the construction phase is predicated on the assumption that vehicles will be permitted to cross the (now disused) Wisbech to March railway line. The crossing has been legally closed by Network Rail and thus Network Rail will need to give the requisite permissions to re-open this crossing as a through route.

2.10.5 The Applicant has advised that the correct procedure has been followed and that network rail agree with their approach. However, the Transport Assessment Team have not yet had sight of any correspondence to that effect.

2.10.6 There is likely to be daily variance in the traffic pattern through the construction period, which will depend on pick -up and delivery slots which may take place during peak hours for commuting traffic. This cannot easily be predicted at the high-level programming stage as details of the origin of construction has not been detailed in the assessment.

2.10.7 The large volume of slow-moving HGV's turning right from Cromwell Road into New Bridge Lane both during construction and operational phases does raise safety concerns, particularly if these are not evenly spaced throughout the day. The Transport Assessment Team are therefore of the view that the existing junction arrangement is not suitable to cater for the additional construction or operational traffic.

2.10.8 **Mitigations:** The junction of Cromwell Road with New Bridge Lane will need to be converted to an all-movements signalised junction to address the concerns of the Transport Assessment Team. The Applicant has submitted a concept plan showing such a junction. Comments from both the County's Signals and Road Safety Audit teams have been received and the design is deemed to be unsatisfactory as proposed. The Applicant should be required to submit a satisfactory scheme along with supporting modelling, signals design and Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. This will be subject to further review by the relevant County Council teams.

2.11 Transport Assessment: Operational Phase Impacts

2.11.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.11.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.11.3 **Negative**: The operation phase of the development will have a negative impact due to the increase in motorised vehicular traffic particularly HGV's.

2.11.4 The Operational phase will see an additional 362 2-way daily weekday traffic movements with 42 vehicles (27 HGV) movements in the AM peak and 22 (10 HGV) movements in the PM peak hour (ref: Tables 6B.13 of the Environmental Statement – Chapter 6 Traffic and Transport, Appendix B, Transport Assessment).

2.11.5 The TRL 'Junctions' software has been used to model the junction of Cromwell Road with New Bridge Lane in the future year (2027) with the additional Operational traffic added to the network. The outputs for the AM and PM peaks respectively (Tables 6B.20 and 6B.23 Environmental Statement – Chapter 6 Traffic and Transport, Appendix B, Transport Assessment) indicates that there will be no capacity issues.

2.11.6 However, the modelling assumes that the operational traffic will be evenly spaced throughout the day, and this may not be the case as delivery and pick-up times at the origin of the waste and destination of the residuals will be dependent on the operation of those individual sites and are not covered by this application.

2.11.7 As with the construction phase, the use of New Bridge Lane for operational traffic is predicated on the assumption that vehicles will be permitted to cross the (now disused) Wisbech to March railway line. Again, the Transport Assessment Team will require sight of any correspondence from Network Rail that this has been agreed.

2.11.8 **Mitigation**: The implementation of signals at the junction of New Bridge Lane with Cromwell Road will assist in reducing this impact. However, a satisfactory signalised solution has yet to be received from the Applicant.

2.12 Transport Assessment: Decommissioning Phase Impacts

2.12.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.12.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.12.3 **Negative:** The decommissioning phase is expected substantially increase traffic levels above that of the operational phase. However, there are no details in the Transport Assessment of the likely level of vehicle movements in the decommissioning phase.

2.12.4 **Mitigation**: The implementation of signals at the junction of New Bridge Lane with Cromwell Road will assist in reducing this impact. However, a satisfactory signalised solution has yet to be received from the Applicant.

2.13 Transport Strategy: Construction Phase Impacts

2.13.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.13.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.13.3 **Negative:** The construction may adversely impact on the Wisbech Access Strategy schemes and the re-opening of the Wisbech to March rail line detailed above.

2.13.4 **Mitigations:** None identified.

2.14 Transport Strategy: Operational Phase Impacts

2.14.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.14.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.14.3 **Negative:** None identified over and above those outlined above for Construction Phase Impacts.

2.14.4 **Mitigations:** Public rights of way, as highways, must be included in the Construction & Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to ensure appropriate measures to protect public access to those routes during the course of construction, and appropriate measures for any temporary closures. The CTMP must:

- recognise closures as a last resort
- require agreement of any closures with the relevant highway authority;
- require agreement of alternative routes during any closures, including signage and location of signage
- include a communications plan

2.14.5 The County Council requests consultation of the Communications Plan to ensure that appropriate stakeholders are included and that appropriate timescales are proposed for notifications and consultations.

2.14.6 The impact during operation is largely dependent on the mitigation that is put forward. If the correct mitigation is put in place, it is expected that much of the impact can be mitigated. More information related to this is provided in comments from the Transport Assessment team.

2.15 Transport Strategy: Decommissioning Phase Impacts

2.15.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.15.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.15.3 **Negative:** None identified.

2.15.4 **Mitigations:** None identified.

2.16 Public Rights of Way: Construction Phase Impacts

2.16.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.16.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.16.3 **Negative**: PROW are highways and must be included in the Construction & Traffic Management Plan to ensure appropriate measures to protect public access to those routes during the course of construction, and appropriate measures for any temporary closures.

2.16.4 Currently, New Bridge Lane rail level crossing is open to NMUs and New Bridge Lane unclassified road provides a safe, quiet access for active travel alternatives to the busier roads within Wisbech, as well as recreational activities that support physical and mental well-being. Although the proposed site is within an industrial area of town, the lane is on the very edge of Wisbech and provides views out to the countryside. New Bridge Lane continues beyond the A47 to an important network of byways and quiet roads in the wider countryside, and has the potential to be a key arterial route out to the countryside and its communities.

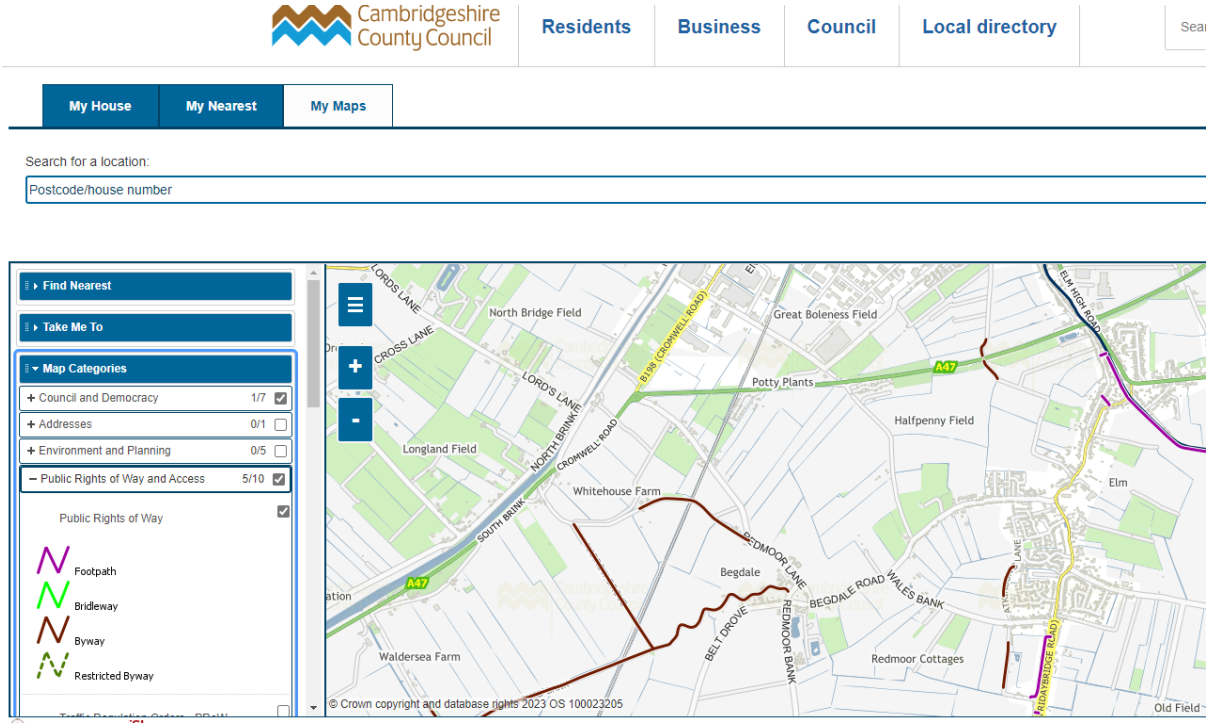

Figure 1 PROW and Access

2.16.5 NMUs are sensitive visual and noise receptors in the landscape. Existing NMU access along New Bridge Lane is likely to be significantly adversely affected by the Application because changing what is currently a quiet countryside fringe route into a significantly more industrialised, noisier environment with increased heavy traffic along the route during construction site will have a significant adverse psychological effect on users which may result in changing their travel choices and lifestyle habits. They may therefore be discouraged from using the route during construction of the development. Wisbech has low public health outcomes, and so it is particularly important that NMU access is protected to support public health outcomes and active travel opportunities.

2.16.6 **Mitigation:** The Applicant's Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be reviewed to consider how the adverse impact of construction on NMUs as both visual and noise receptors during construction can be mitigated. This should include explaining how NMU access along the route will be retained and protected, in order not to break healthy lifestyle habits people in the local area may currently have.

2.16.7 The CEMP should be reviewed to consider how NMU rights along New Bridge Lane, including over the crossing, can be adequately protected during construction, along with protection of the ROWIP and the right of the public to use this highway under statutory provisions of the Highways Act 1980.

2.16.8 The CTMP should be amended to:

- Require NMU access to be retained during construction
- Recognise closures of PROW and linking local roads, especially New Bridge Lane, as a last resort;
- Require agreement of any closures with the relevant highway authority;
- Require agreement of alternative routes during any closures, including signage and location of signage; and,
- Include a communications plan with key stakeholders (that has been designed in consultation with the Councils to ensure that appropriate stakeholders are included and that appropriate timescales are proposed for notifications and consultations).

2.17 Public Rights of Way: Operational Phase Impacts

2.17.1 **Positive:** None identified

2.17.2 **Neutral:** It appears that NMU access is to be retained along New Bridge Lane with a replacement pavement.

2.17.3 **Negative:** As noted above under Public Rights of Way Construction Phase, NMUs are sensitive visual and noise receptors in the landscape, and are likely to be significantly adversely affected by the proposed development during the operational phase due to the change from a quiet countryside fringe route into a significantly more industrialised, noisier environment with HGV traffic along the route servicing the operational site. This will have a significant adverse psychological effect on users, and is likely to discourage them from using the route both during operation of the development.

2.17.4 **Mitigations:** It is vitally important that the adverse impact of the development on NMUs and the local community who use New Bridge Lane and connecting routes is adequately

mitigated. To help achieve this the CEMP should be reviewed in light of the Council's landscape conclusions in terms of adverse impact upon rights of way as historic and living features in the landscape, and the needs of NMUs and the local community. The CEMP should be reviewed and explain how NMU rights along New Bridge Lane, including over and beyond the crossing, will be adequately protected and what enhancement will be put in place to improve NMU provision along the route and in the area to help mitigate the adverse impact of the scheme experienced during construction and through the operational phase of the development. The CEMP needs to demonstrate how it will meet the requirements of SOA 2, 3, and 5 of the ROWIP; the Defra 25-year Environment Plan, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Health & Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy, and the emerging Active Travel Strategy.

2.18 Public Rights of Way: Decommissioning Phase Impacts

2.18.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.18.2 **Neutral:** None identified

2.18.3 **Negative:** Existing NMU access along New Bridge Lane appears to be retained during operation but there is no clear plan as to what will happen upon decommissioning. No enhancement to NMU provision is proposed for the local community to mitigate the adverse impact of the development.

2.18.4 **Mitigations:** The Applicant needs to demonstrate how it will provide lasting mitigation of the adverse impact of the development on users of New Bridge Lane and the connecting NMU network that it serves from the construction and operational phase beyond the life of the scheme. Meaningful enhancement of NMU provision along New Bridge Lane and connecting routes in the immediate vicinity is needed.

2.19 Wisbech Access Strategy and Wisbech Rail: Construction Phase Impacts

2.19.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.19.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.19.3 **Negative:** Comments were made in the Relevant Representations document at 3.44 onwards. Strategic Road schemes along the A47 (considered as part of the Wisbech Area Strategy) and future rail opportunities linked to the Wisbech area to deliver this will need to be considered by PINS when assessing this DCO application. It should be noted that the Wisbech Access Strategy is a package of individual transport schemes that aim to improve the transport network in Wisbech. The following key areas were investigated by the Wisbech Access Strategy, and these are noted because the impact of the proposed DCO on the local highway network has the potential to prejudice the ability to deliver the improvements:

- Freedom Bridge Roundabout
- Wisbech Bus Station
- Cromwell Road and the A47 roundabout
- Elm High Road and the A47 roundabout

- Weasenham Lane and Ramnoth Road junction
- A New River Crossing
- A Western Link Road
- Southern Access Road- including New Bridge Lane
- A47 Broad End Road Junction

All these individual areas have been developed to different extents ranging from very high-level concept early feasibility and options development to preliminary design. It should also be noted that National Highways are currently developing options for Elm High Road A47 roundabout and Weasenham Lane and Ramnoth Road junction.

2.19.4 **Mitigations**: No funding has been committed to delivering the Wisbech Access Strategy, therefore none of the proposals can be viewed as committed schemes. However, both CCC and the CPCA will be seeking the necessary reassurance and appropriate mitigation as part of the Examination process to ensure that these proposals wouldn't be prejudiced moving forward if consent is granted.

2.19.5 The details of the March to Wisbech link are not yet finalised, and the nature of the solution for the New Bridge Lane Crossing is not currently known. The commitments in relation to a bridge will therefore also need to provide sufficient flexibility to apply to any crossing form in the event that the final solution changes. Without this guarantee, we cannot be reassured that the proposals would not prejudice the reopening of the disused Wisbech Rail for sustainable travel.

2.19.6 Discussions on the design detail and securing the legal obligations to deliver this strategic infrastructure in line with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) are required.

2.20 Wisbech Access Strategy and Wisbech Rail: Operational Phase Impacts

2.20.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.20.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.20.3 **Negative:** No new impacts identified over and above those detailed in 2.19 above.

2.20.4 **Mitigations:** No new mitigations identified over and above those detailed in 2.19 above.

2.21 Wisbech Access Strategy and Wisbech Rail: Decommissioning Phase Impacts

2.21.1 **Positive:** None identified.

2.21.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

2.21.3 **Negative:** No new impacts identified over and above those detailed in 2.19 above.

2.21.4 **Mitigations:** The Demolition Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) should include a requirement to agree, and deliver before decommissioning is complete, the status of public rights over the rail crossing with the local highway authority and Network Rail, if it has not been resolved at the DCO stage.

Noise and Vibration (ES Chapter 7)

3.1 Summary

3.1.1 As set out in Chapter 4 of CCC and FDC's RR, FDC's Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) are satisfied that the applicant's assessments and conclusions were undertaken by suitably competent personnel, in accordance with all relevant legislation and technical guidance.

3.1.2 Reference is made to potential noise and vibration impacts during the proposed development having been assessed using the relevant nationally recognised guidance, that being BS 5228–**1**:2009+A1:2014 '*Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites'* – Part 1: Noise and BS 5228–**2**:2009+A1:2014 – Part 2: Vibration, as stated within section 7.8 'Assessment Methodology' para 7.8.3 of ES Chapter 7. Any potential negative Construction Phase Impacts as outlined below will therefore be measured against predicted levels and compliance with the aforementioned British Standard.

3.1.3 It is accepted within ES Chapter 7 that for operational noise, the agreed method for measurement and analysis will be BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 *'Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound'*. Tables 7.34 and 7.35 show results for initial estimates of impact for weekdays and weekends respectively. From calculations of figures shown and reference to the significance evaluation matrix (Table 7.29), it has been determined that in certain measurement locations (R2 and R3) that Major effects indicated in the initial estimate during daytimes are considered as Significant. This is stated within para 7.9.62 and confirmed in the Summary (paras 7.9.68 – 7.9.70) for which those locations classed as Not Significant are also listed.

3.1.4 Whilst the methodology and results within ES Chapter 7 are acknowledged and accepted, reference is also made to measures outlined within section 7.10 'Consideration of optional additional mitigation or compensation' and subsequent Conclusions (7.12) that state with the additional mitigation measures, impacts will be reduced such that the resultant effects are Not Significant. The documented figures and inclusion of detail in respect of magnitude of impact and subsequent significance are considered valuable and also allow for comparison and scrutiny if required during the construction and operational phases.

3.2 Policy Context

3.2.1 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan - Policy 18: Amenity Considerations states that:

'Proposals must ensure that the development proposed can be integrated effectively with existing or planned (i.e. Development Plan allocations or consented schemes) neighbouring development. New development must not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of existing occupiers of any land or property, including:

(c) noise and/or vibration levels resulting in disturbance;

…. Where there is the potential for any of the above impacts to occur, an assessment appropriate to the nature of that potential impact should be carried out, and submitted as part of the proposal, in order to establish, where appropriate, the need for, and deliverability of, any mitigation'.

3.3 Construction Phase Impacts

3.3.1 **Positive:** None identified.

3.3.2 **Neutral**: None identified.

3.3.3 **Negative**: There is concern that the proposed development will lead to increased noise levels and exhaust emissions from additional HGVs and associated vehicle movements during the construction phase. The Thomas Clarkson Academy (TCA) and its surrounding play areas and sports pitches have not been identified as a noise receptor by the Applicant, as identified in 4.13 of CCC and FDC's Relevant Representations. No monitoring has been proposed to assess the impact of the proposed development on the school and its assets during construction.

3.3.4 The Outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan (Outline CEMP) proposes measures to reduce construction noise including using quieter plant, programming activities to avoid overlapping with other intensive works. Therefore, the implementation of mitigation measures in the Outline CEMP and monitoring of their performance will be key to ensuring that all noise and vibration sensitive receptors are appropriately protected. This encompasses residential, educational, and environmental settings.

3.3.5 **Mitigations**: An updated CEMP should be submitted for approval by all relevant consultees prior to the commencement of any site clearance, ground preparations, demolition and construction associated with the site, which:

- Is drawn up in accordance with the relevant legislation and technical guidance – and contains all associated content;
- Is presented in a logical format, to enable ease of interpretation;
- Includes a table which provides a high summary level of the determined significance of construction noise and vibration impact at each receptor; and,
- Includes detailed explanation of the measures which will be implemented to address each identified impact as necessary for each measure, a statement and/or other evidence/calculations as necessary - to verify the predicated impact outcome of the implementation of each mitigation measure at each receptor.

3.3.6 The CEMP should be reviewed to take into consideration adverse impact on NMUs, and should identify appropriate mitigation.

3.3.7 Given that the TCA should be regarded as a sensitive receptor, some acknowledgement and further consideration, along with monitoring to mitigate any real-time impact, should be provided. Furthermore, on the basis that only short-term monitoring is proposed for the Cambian Education Foundation Learning Centre and Riverside Meadows Academy school sites this also needs to be given further consideration and longer-term mitigation.

3.3.8 The Outline CEMP also proposes to reduce construction noise by measures such as using quieter plant and programming activities to avoid overlapping with other intensive works. Therefore, the implementation of mitigation measures in the Outline CEMP and their performance will be key to ensuring the noise and exhaust emission levels do not further impact air quality in and around the TCA and Free School site.

3.4 Construction Phase Impacts

3.4.1 **Positive:** None identified.

3.4.2 **Neutral**: None identified.

3.4.3 **Negative**: The proposed development will lead to increased exhaust emissions from additional HGVs and associated vehicle movements during the operational phase. The Thomas Clarkson Academy (TCA) and its surrounding play areas and sports pitches have not been identified as a noise receptor by the Applicant, as identified in 4.13 of CCC and FDC's Relevant Representations. No long-term monitoring has been proposed to assess the impact of the proposed development on the school and its assets.

3.4.4 Low frequency noise has longer wavelengths and can be a concern because sound at lower frequencies is harder to control, it is less directional and can travel around barriers. Insulation is also less effective at lower frequencies and thicker and denser materials are required to reduce the level. When the frequency of the sound is so low that it becomes in-audible to the human ear (usually below 20Hz), it is possible for other parts of the body to feel resonance which can then cause annoyance.

3.4.5 **Mitigations:** An updated Noise Management Plan to be submitted for approval by the relevant consultees prior to the operation of the site which:

- Is drawn up in accordance with the relevant legislation and technical guidance – and contains all associated content;
- Is presented in a logical format, to enable ease of interpretation;
- Includes a table which provides a high summary level of the determined significance of operational noise impact at each receptor; and,
- Includes detailed explanation of the measures which will be implemented to address each identified impact as necessary for each measure, a statement and / or other evidence / calculations to verify the predicated impact outcome of the implementation of each mitigation measure at each receptor.

3.5 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

3.5.1 **Positive:** None identified.

3.5.2 **Neutral**: None identified.

3.5.3 **Negative**: Although the DCO, if granted, would provide consent for the whole project, including decommissioning, concerns are raised regarding the impact of noise and vibration on any new noise and vibration sensitive receptors and impacts at the time of the decommissioning.

3.5.4 **Mitigations:** A demolition management plan should be drawn up to detail the mitigation measures, in accordance with the relevant legislation and technical guidance, it must be:

- presented in a logical format, to enable ease of interpretation;
- Include a table which provides a high summary level of the determined significance of operational noise impact at each receptor; and,

- Include detailed explanation of the measures which will be implemented to address each identified impact as necessary for each measure, a statement and / or other evidence / calculations to verify the predicated impact outcome of the implementation of each mitigation measure at each receptor.

3.5.5 Notwithstanding the content of the EN010110-000530-MVV Volume 5.2 Statement of Statutory Nuisance, legal advice received confirms that should FDC receive allegations of any type of statutory nuisance (not just noise), it would still have a duty to investigate - and take enforcement action if any such allegation is substantiated.

Air Quality (ES Chapter 8)

4.1 Summary

4.1.1 The air quality assessment has considered the air quality impacts of emissions from the Energy from Waste (EfW) stack and traffic during the operation phase. The impacts of dust and traffic during the construction phase, and odour during normal and abnormal operating conditions have also been assessed.

4.1.2 Chapter 8 of the ES concludes that statutory limits are not exceeded and there would be no significant effects. However, no significant effects does not equate to there being no effects and the review of the ES identified a number of errors and omissions in the application which have been discussed with the Applicant. Although the Councils understand that an addendum to the ES is being prepared, until such time as it is formally submitted to the Examining Authority, the information set out below is based on the information submitted to date.

4.2 Policy Context

4.2.1 Policy 1 of the MWLP notes that design should: *"take into account any significant impacts on human health and wellbeing and on air quality".* Policy 18 addresses amenity considerations, stating that: *"new development must not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of existing occupiers of any land or property, including: ... (f) air quality from odour, fumes, dust, smoke, or other sources...".*

4.2.2 The current Fenland Local Plan includes Policy LP16 to deliver and protect high quality environments. This states that a development would only be permitted if it: "*does not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring users such as noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and loss of light.*"

4.2.3 Policy LP34, Air Quality, of the Emerging Fenland Local Plan sets out the circumstances under which a Low Emissions Strategy will be required to mitigate the impacts of development. These include proposals that would:

"j. have a significant adverse effect on air quality; k. have an adverse effect on the air quality factors that led to the affected AQMA being designated; l. cause a significant increase in the number of people that would be exposed to poor air quality; or m. lead to a designated nature conservation site or protected species that is sensitive to poor air quality being adversely affected by changes in air quality."

4.2.4 It could be argued that the proposed development would increase Nitrous Oxides (NOx), Particulate Matter (PM) and Sulphur Dioxide (SO2) emissions in the retained Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) PM and SO2 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). The NO2 AQMA was declared due to traffic emissions and PM and SO2 from an industrial source (no longer operating), both road and industrial emissions would have an 'adverse effect'. If this is the case, then the Fenland Policy requires a 'Low Emission Strategy'.

4.3 Construction Phase Impacts

4.3.1 **Positive:** None identified.

4.3.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

4.3.3 **Negative:** The impact of construction phase dust and PM emissions on dust soiling and human health. The 2014 Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction that has been followed to identify the risk of impacts and identify appropriate mitigation states that if mitigation measures commensurate with the identified levels of risk are put in place, then the effects will be not significant. However, this terminology relates to the technical guidance and it should not be assumed that 'not significant' means that there is no negative impact. The assessment of emissions from construction phase traffic demonstrates that statutory limits would be met and although the impacts would be defined as negligible using the 2017 IAQM Guidance on Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality[31], this is again a technical qualification that does not imply that there are no negative impacts.

4.3.4 **Mitigations:** The CEMP should include a Dust Management Plan and measures to minimise emissions from Non- Road Mobile Machinery.

4.4 Operational Phase Impacts

4.4.1 **Positive:** None identified.

4.4.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

4.4.3 **Negative:** Human Health

The assessment of the combined impact of emissions from the EfW stack and traffic generated by the proposals demonstrated that all statutory limits will be met and the effect of the proposals on annual mean concentrations of pollutants would be defined as negligible using the 2017 IAQM Guidance on Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality. Based on a number of worst-case assumptions, the maximum impacts upon short-term concentrations of nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide are described as small, for all other pollutants the short-term impacts would be negligible. Although there are no proven significant impacts on human health, the perception of impacts is also important as it can detrimentally affect mental health and well-being which could further justify a requirement for air quality monitoring.

4.4.4 **Negative:** Ecological Receptors

The effects on ecological receptors are discussed in Chapter 7.

4.4.5 **Negative:** Odour

The process has been designed to minimise odour emissions during normal operations. During abnormal operations, when it is not possible to vent building air via the furnace, the modelled odour concentration at the nearest receptor would be below the guideline value.

[31] [redacted]

4.4.6 **Mitigations:** Monitoring of Air quality at agreed locations. The ES notes that additional mitigation would be in place during any periods of abnormal operations, although it is not listed in the ‘environmental measures to be implemented in the ES’.

4.5 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

4.5.1 **Positive:** None identified.

4.5.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

4.5.3 **Negative:** The decommissioning phase impacts have not been assessed.

4.5.4 **Mitigation:** It was requested that further work was undertaken by the Applicant on the Health Impact Assessment in relation to the impacts of the decommissioning which will have similarities but there will be clear differences i.e. decommissioning a "dirty" incinerator.

Landscape and Visual (ES Chapter 9)

5.1 Policy Context

5.1.1 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan - Policy 17: Design**

All waste management development, and where relevant mineral development, should secure high quality design. The design of built development and the restoration of sites should be sympathetic to and, where opportunities arise, enhance local distinctiveness and the character and quality of the area in which it is located. Permission will be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available to achieve this.

New mineral and waste management development must:

(a) make efficient use of land and buildings, through the design, layout and orientation of buildings on site and through prioritising the use of previously developed land;

(b) be durable, flexible and adaptable over its planned lifespan, taking into account potential future social, economic, technological and environmental needs through the structure, layout and design of buildings and places;

(c) provide a high standard of amenity for users of new buildings and maintain or enhance the existing amenity of neighbours;

(d) be designed to reduce crime, minimise fire risk, create safe environments, and provide satisfactory access for emergency vehicles;

(e) create visual richness through building type, height, layout, scale, form, density, massing, materials and colour and through landscape design;

(f) be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

(g) retain or enhance important features and assets (including trees and hedgerows) within the landscape, treescape or townscape and conserve or create key views; and

(h) provide a landscape enhancement scheme which takes account of any relevant landscape character assessments (including any historic landscape characterisation) and which demonstrates that the development can be assimilated into its surroundings and local landscape character;

and, where appropriate for the development:

(i) provide well designed boundary treatments (including security features) that reflect the function and character of the development and are well integrated into its surroundings; and

(j) provide attractive, accessible and integrated vehicle and cycle parking which also satisfies the parking standards of the Development Plan for the area, and incorporates facilities for electric plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

5.1.2 *For waste management proposals, detailed design guidance can be found in Appendix 3: The Location and Design of Waste Management Facilities. This guidance provides a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design. Whilst the guidance provides a degree of flexibility, it will be used to assist in determining whether a proposal is consistent with the approach set out in this policy.*

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 The LVIA identified Significant effects within the landscape character area closest to the Proposed Development, which is within the Wisbech Settled Fen landscape character area. These Significant effects are identified as being located immediately around the EfW CHP Facility Site, along New Bridge Lane and south to the closest section of A47.

5.2.2 The LVIA identified Significant effects on the character of the landscape closest to the Proposed Development. These Significant effects are identified as being located immediately around the EfW CHP Facility Site, along New Bridge Lane and south to the closest section of A47 all of which are located within the Wisbech Settled Fen landscape character area. The LVIA identifies Moderate (although not Significant) effects for the remainder of the Wisbech Settled Fen Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). It is considered that Significant effects to the character of the Wisbech Settled Fen LCA have been underassessed and that Significant effects extend further into the landscape surrounding the site than as identified within the LVIA with Significant effects extending out across the rural hinterland landscape to the south of Wisbech towards the surrounding rural villages.

5.2.3 The LVIA concludes that for the host TCA, (TCA8: Wisbech Retail, Industrial and Commercial Development), despite identifying that once operational the EfW CHP Facility would become the dominant or a prominent built element within the closest parts of the TCA, effects would be Negligible and Not Significant. This is considered to be an underrepresentation of the likely effects on the character of TCA8 (despite its pre-existing light industrial and commercial character), with effects being of a greater significance than those identified by the LVIA, although still not significant.

5.2.4 The LVIA identifies Significant visual effects for a substantial number of visual receptors located locally to the development site, within the settlement of Wisbech, within surrounding settlements and with the wider countryside. The viewpoints used to identify potential visibility of the proposals are considered suitable with the submitted photomontages accurately representing the development. Whilst only a tool for identifying potential visibility, the Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) are considered representative of the extensive visibility of the proposals. Concerns are raised regarding the sheet number and distribution of visual receptors which would experience adverse visual effects (a combination of Significant and Non-Significant effects) as a consequence of the development proposals.

5.2.5 The Landscape Institute's Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment[32] (GLVIA) para 3.34 states: "*It should be made clear that effects not considered to be significant will not be completely dismissed*."

[32] [redacted]

5.2.6 GVLIA3 para 3.35 states: *"In reporting on the significance of the identified effects the main aim should be to draw out the key issues and ensure that the significance of the effects and the scope for reducing any negative/adverse effects are properly understood by the public and the competent authority before it makes its decision. This requires clear and accessible explanations."* As such, non-significant effects should not be disregarded from the assessment process and it is not clear from the Applicants LVIA how the impact of this extensive visibility has been considered within the assessment.

5.3 Landscape Impact Construction Phase

5.3.1 **Positive:** An Outline Landscape and Ecology Strategy has been produced for the proposed development. This is supported by an Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) (Volume 7.7). Detailed landscape plans would be secured post consent.

5.3.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

5.3.3 **Negative:** The loss of landscape elements within the site itself during construction, would have only highly localised landscape effects at the scale of the LCA. These effects stem from construction activities associated with the EfW CHP Facility (including Access Improvements), and the shorter lasting construction activities for the CHP Connection, the Grid Connection, and the Water Connections, all of which would be concentrated on the southern edge of Wisbech.

5.3.4 More direct landscape effects would be on landscape character and be associated with the introduction of high levels of activity across the site connected with the construction practices required for the erection of the EfW CHP Facility including the presence of temporary and permanent structures, plant, and vehicular movement. Elevated construction activities including the deployment of tall cranes (a maximum height of 75m (95m for a very short duration close to the end of the construction period)), would have a visual presence from within much of the study area over the 36-month construction period.

5.3.5 The gradual elevation of the EfW CHP Facility out of the site over the 36-month construction period, and due to its eventual scale and mass would lead to Significant effects on the character of the rural landscape to the south of Wisbech towards the surrounding rural villages of Elm, Begdale and Wisbech St Mary within the Wisbech Settled Fen and The Fens landscape character areas with the development being perceived as the dominant built element in this landscape.

5.3.6 Photomontages produced from viewpoints 8 and 9 on the northern edges of Elm and Begdale and 15 from the eastern edge of Wisbech St. Mary demonstrate the visual prominence associated with the scale and mass of the taller elements of the proposed EfW facility across this landscape. The conflict provided by the industrial nature of the development which would be detrimental to the rural character of the landscape between these settlements and the southern edge of Wisbech that forms the rural hinterland to Wisbech.

5.3.7 There would only be highly localised landscape effects associated with presence of smaller scale construction plant and activity along the route of the CHP Connection, with effects confined to the disused March to Wisbech Railway corridor which passes through the adjacent industrial area. Effects associated with these works would have minimal influence on the character of the surrounding industrial area or landscape. Similarly, works associated with the undergrounding of the Grid Connection alongside New Bridge Lane and the A47 (presence of excavator plant) would have limited effects, particularly given the immediate proximity and disturbance associated with the adjacent A47.

5.3.8 The LVIA concludes that for TCA, (TCA8: Wisbech Retail, Industrial and Commercial Development), despite identifying that once operational the EfW CHP Facility would become the dominant or a prominent built element within the closest parts of the TCA, effects would be Negligible and Not Significant. The host TCA8: Wisbech Retail, Industrial and Commercial Development is of low sensitivity. However, despite its pre-existing light industrial and commercial character, it is considered that the LVIA's findings underrepresent the likely effects on the character of TCA8.

5.3.9 As shown on the photomontages produced for viewpoints 1, 2 and 5 through its scale and mass, the EfW CHP Facility would become the dominant built element within the area surrounding the Site, leading to a Magnitude of Change (MoC) greater than that identified within the LVIA. The Applicants LVIA identifies a Low MoC on TCA8:

> *"A small- scale change that may include the loss of some landscape characteristics or elements of limited characterising influence, or the addition of some new features or elements of limited characterising influence. They may be a small partial change in landscape character, typically, but not always affecting a localised geographical extent."*

However, having reviewed the definitions for MoC utilised within the Applicants LVIA, the Councils take the view that, given the scale, mass and visual appreciation of the EfW CHP Facility within TCA8 that the MoC would more likely to be Medium:

> *"A medium scale change that may include the loss of some key landscape characteristics or elements or the addition of some new uncharacteristic features or elements that could alter the perceptual characteristics of the landscape. The size or scale of landscape change could create new landscape characteristics and may lead to a partial change landscape character, typically, but not always affecting a more localised geographical extent."*

5.3.10 The increase in the MoC to Medium increases the significance of effect of the development on the character of TCA8 to Minor from the LVIAs initial conclusions of Negligible. However, effects on the character of TCA8 would remain not significant. The terminology of not significant is a technical classification and it does not mean that there is no effect.

5.3.11 The LVIA identifies Significant visual effects for the following receptors during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases of the development:

- Residents of 9 and 10 New Bridge Lane;

- Residents of No. 25 Cromwell Road would see the construction and final form of the middle and upper sections of the EfW CHP Facility above existing commercial buildings;
- A small number of properties on the northern edge of Begdale;
- People walking along a section of the Nene Way – south of Wisbech;
- Cyclists using a stretch of the Sustrans National Cycle Route 63 heading into Wisbech approximately 1.3km from the EfW CHP Facility;
- People walking along Halfpenny Lane towards Wisbech would experience short-lived close distance views;
- Bank/Narrow Drove/Broad Drove at a distance of 1-2.9km would see upper parts of the main building and chimneys once the EfW CHP Facility had been constructed;
- Vehicular users of the A47 eastbound (to Wisbech) which would be short-lived and when operational, seen in the context of the existing cold store and other buildings; and
- Vehicular users of the B198 Cromwell Road (southwest of Wisbech town centre) although during both construction and operation the Proposed Development would be seen in the context of existing buildings and would be often screened by them in close-up views.
- Significant visual effects were also identified for Recreational users of the Public Right of Way 'The Still', south of Leverington for the operational phase only and at a distance of 1.8km to 2.8km. Users would see the EfW CHP Facility as a low focal point above a short section of the south-eastern horizon above the intervening vegetation.

5.3.12 As demonstrated on the ZTVs potential visibility of the EFW CHP Facility extends across the entirety of the Study Area with the LVIA identifying Significant Major Adverse visual effects extending to distances of up to 2.9km from the site, (Bank/Narrow Drove/Broad Drove). The wide-ranging visibility of the Facility as it is constructed is supported by the photography and photomontage work undertaken by the Applicant which demonstrates visibility of the Boiler Building and Chimneys from locations on the very extent of the Study Area; Viewpoint 28: Welney Wildlife Trust Visitor Centre at 16.12km from the site and Viewpoint 30: Nene Washes NNR Car Park at Eldernell at 16.24km from site.

5.3.13 The findings of the LVIA are that there are potential significant visual effects arising as a consequence of the construction of the development, the Councils have concerns regarding the sheer number and distribution of visual receptors that would experience adverse visual effects (a combination of Significant and non-Significant effects).

5.3.14 Many of the PRoW across the Study Area would allow users views of the EFW CHP Facility, with significant effects being identified at a distance of 2.9km from the site. Adverse visual effects during the construction phase would impact upon users on seven nationally promoted routes; National Cycle Route (NCR) 1, NCR 11, NCR 63, Nene Way, Ouse Valley Way, Hereward Way, and Fen Rivers Way.

5.3.15 Users of the road network within the Study Area would experience various degrees of visibility of the EFW CHP Facility during construction with Significant visual effects identified for localised sections of the A47 and B198.

5.3.16 Road users heading east on the A47 would approach Wisbech with the EFW CHP Facility, and hence its construction, being aligned within their direction of travel which would act as a waypoint within the landscape. Despite not being from the A47, the photomontage produced from viewpoint 13 gives an indication of the visibility of the construction of the development that would be likely on this main approach to Wisbech.

5.3.17 During the construction phase, visual receptors using the local minor roads to the east and south of the Proposed Development comprising North Brink – Bevis Lane to Barton Road (B1542), Cox's Lane/Mile Tree Lane, and Redmoor Lane would sustain a Low magnitude of change with most views being of the construction of the upper parts of the boiler house building and the chimneys.

5.3.18 For the remainder of vehicular visual Receptors (the network of 'A', 'B' and minor roads across the remainder of the Study Area), there would be some limitation of visibility but there would still be locations from which transient views of the construction of the EFW CHP Facility would be possible.

5.3.19 The LVIA acknowledges that the majority of communities outside the urban area of Wisbech would experience views of the development during the construction phase resulting in minor effects on the settlements of Friday Bridge, Emneth, Chequers Corner/Marshland St. James, The Smeeth/St. John Fen End, Terrington St. John/Tilney St. Lawrence, Walpole Highway, Walton Highway, West Walton, Walpole St Peter/Walpole St Andrew, Gorefield, Wisbech St. Mary/Leverington Common, Guyhirn, Upwell/Outwell, Tydd St. Mary/St. Giles, Parson Drove/Murrow, and March. The LVIA assesses effects on these receptors as being Minor and not significant, which is a good indication of the wide-ranging visibility of the development across the countryside surrounding Wisbech.

5.3.20 As people live within and move throughout this flat open landscape, there would be continuous opportunities for direct views of the construction of the upper sections of the main buildings and the chimneys of the EFW CHP Facility, constantly indicating the presence of Wisbech and this industrial elements within this otherwise overwhelmingly rural landscape.

5.3.21 **Mitigations**: None identified.

5.4 Landscape and Visual Impact Operational Phase

5.4.1 **Positive:** None identified.

5.4.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

5.4.3 **Negative:** The Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) concludes that the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold (RVAT) would not be breached for any of the 6 individual properties, or 2 groups of properties included within the assessment. However, having reviewed the RVAA for No. 10 New Bridge Lane and the development proposals it is considered that the RVAT would be breached for this property. The breaching of the threshold for what is considered an acceptable impact on the residents of a property, and the significant impact that the proposed development would have, therefore calls into question the overall acceptability of the scheme.

5.4.4 The Bungalow at 10 New Bridge Lane is located 30m south of the boundary of the EfW CHP Facility Site and approximately 190m south of the chimneys and the main building. New Bridge Lane currently provides access to this dwelling and would be redeveloped to provide access to the EFW CHP Facility with the access located almost immediately adjacent to the access into The Bungalow.

5.4.5 The RVAA sets out an accurate description of this property, and its juxtaposition with the site and the proposed EFW CHP Facility. This includes the following description of the predicted change in view as a consequence of the development:

> *"With a minimum separation distance of 190m, the southern elevation of the operational main building of the EfW CHP Facility would be the principal visual element in residents' northern views from windows in the northern elevation (likely to be bedrooms as opposed to principal rooms as defined in GLVIA3), the main entrance, driveway, and front garden.*
>
> *As well as the 90m high chimneys, the southern elevation would comprise the upper section of the boiler house (up to 52m high). To the right-hand side of the main building of the EfW CHP Facility there would be at least partial views of the 132kV switching compound, water treatment plant and turbine hall.*
>
> *A proportion of the intervening area beyond New Bridge Lane would be hardstanding used for the parking and circulation of the delivery vehicles using the main entrance off New Bridge Lane and the section of New Bridge Lane to the north of the dwelling would be screened by the proposed 3m tall acoustic fence, replacing the existing low timber fence along the curtilage of the property.*
>
> *As set out in Appendix 3A: Outline Lighting Strategy (Volume 6.4) these facilities would be subject to operational and security lighting requirements whilst generating increased levels of movement compared with the baseline."*

5.4.6 The LVIA concluded that for this Receptor (High Sensitivity) would experience a High magnitude of change resulting in a Major effect that is Significant. When considering effects upon the Residential Visual Amenity the RVAA states that:

> *"The combined scale, height, and mass of the operational components of the main and ancillary buildings at the operational EfW CHP Facility combined with the vehicular movement in the relatively open, closer southern part of the EfW CHP Facility Site and the closest subsection of New Bridge Lane would dominate all northern views available from within the property and its driveway and curtilage."*

and that:

> *"Their effect would be exacerbated by the openness of the view (following partial removal of intervening mature poplars and understorey scrub at the commencement of the construction phase) and movement of delivery vehicles using the main entrance off New Bridge Lane and the section of New Bridge Lane to the north of the dwelling would be partially screened by the proposed 3m high acoustic fence along the northern boundary of the property curtilage."*

5.4.7 It is considered that the proximity of the EfW CHP Facility, particularly the Boiler House and Chimneys, coupled with the intensification of vehicular movement along New Bridge Lane

(including the additional lighting required alongside the entrance) would breach the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold (RVAT) by turning Number 10. New Bridge Lane into an unsatisfactory place to live.

5.4.8 The proximity, orientation, and outlook of this dwelling to the main entrance is also concerning. Occupants of Number 10. would have direct views from windows in the northern elevation of the property and oblique views from the north-western elevation, which contains the main entrance to the dwelling. Occupants coming in and out of the dwelling on a daily basis would step out of the property and be immediately presented with the EFW CHP Facility, as well as HGV lorries traveling along New Bridge Lane immediately outside of the gateway to the property. To mitigate noise associated with vehicle movement, a 3m high acoustic fence is required to be constructed as part of the DCO within the property of Number 10. This in itself would form a tall barrier along the northern boundary of the property with New Bridge Lane, enclosing the northern curtilage. However, it is important to note, that due to the height of the lorries these would still be visible above this fence.

5.4.9 As such the proximity of the passing HGVs to the dwelling (the house is just 30m south of the DCO boundary) in combination with the lighting, fencing etc surrounding the main entrance to the EFW CHP Facility are likely to be regarded as overly intrusive.

5.4.10 The RVAA recognises the severity of the change to the front of the dwelling as a result of the development and goes as far as to suggest that the development would alter the manner in which the property would be used:

> *"However, its extent, height, and scale, considering the slender design of the chimneys, would dominate northern views and possibly influence the manner in which the northern, front portion of the garden would be used."*

5.4.11 In reaching the conclusion that the RVAT is not breached, the applicant's RVAA relies on the relatively minor offset of this property from the main building (190m) and that the property is not surrounded by the development. However, the RVAA fails to consider the proximity of the dwelling to the main entrance of the facility, It is considered that as a result of the mass, scale, verticality and proximity of the main building (52m in height, 177m in length and 102m in width) and of the 2 chimneys (90m in height with a maximum width of 3.2m) combined with the proximity of the dwelling to the main entrance would continually reinforce (through vehicular movements, security lighting etc) the immediate proximity and presence of the EfW CHP Facility. This in turn would lead to the effects of the development on Residential Visual Amenity being of such a magnitude that it affects the living conditions of occupants.

5.4.12 Although views south from the southern elevation of the dwelling or from the rear garden the EfW CHP Facility would not be visible, given the single storey nature of the dwelling, when occupiers move around in the rear garden, the main building and the chimneys would be seen directly behind it towering above and dwarfing the bungalow reinforcing the proximity of this dwelling to this large industrial site.

5.4.13 **Negative:** Wider landscape and visual impacts: The operational EfW CHP Facility would have an urbanising influence from within a largely rural landscape where there is an absence of other large scale or vertical infrastructure precedents. Its presence would be infrequently emphasised when the plume would be visible.

5.4.14 As demonstrated on the ZTVs potential visibility of the EFW CHP Facility extends across the entirety of the Study Area with the LVIA identifying Significant Major Adverse visual effects extending to distances of up to 2.9km from the site, (Bank/Narrow Drove/Broad Drove). The wide-ranging visibility of the Facility as it is constructed is supported by the photography and photomontage work undertaken by the Applicant which demonstrates visibility of the Boiler Building and Chimneys from locations on the very extent of the Study Area; Viewpoint 28: Welney Wildlife Trust Visitor Centre at 16.12km from the site and Viewpoint 30: Nene Washes NNR Car Park at Eldernell at 16.24km from site

5.4.15 The LVIA concludes that there would be no change to the level of effect at Operation Year 15 in comparison with Operation Year 1, this is driven by the lack of any mitigation measures to provide any real-world mitigation of effects arising from the scale, mass, and visual prominence of the EfW CHP Facility within the surrounding landscape. As such it is considered that the comments as set out above for the construction phase are applicable to the operational phase and are not repeated here.

5.4.16 An additional consideration is that during the operation phase the plume (when visible) would be an added detractor associated with the development. The Applicants have identified parameters for the plume, which is anticipated to be a height of 69m above the chimneys with a maximum potential length of 582m and visible for 7.2% of a year. This figure covers daytime and night-time hours. Given the urban location of the proposed EfW CHP Facility it is worth noting that during night-time hours should the plume be visible, it would also likely reflect the ambient light spill from the urban area of Wisbech below, illuminating the plume, making it apparent above the EfW CHP Facility and highlighting the presence of the facility from within the surrounding landscape intensifying its prominence.

5.4.17 The operational EfW CHP Facility would be visible from locations across the entirety of the study area. This wide-ranging visibility of the EFW CHP Facility is supported by the photography and photomontage work undertaken by the Applicant which demonstrates visibility of the Boiler Building and Chimneys from locations on the very extent of the Study Area; Viewpoint 28: Welney Wildlife Trust Visitor Centre at 16.12km from the site and Viewpoint 30: Nene Washes NNR Car Park at Eldernell at 16.24km from site. By virtue of its scale, mass and verticality, the EfW CHP Facility would have an urbanising influence across what is a largely rural landscape where there is an absence of other large scale or vertical infrastructure precedents. When present the EfW CHP Facility would be emphasised by the plume.

5.4.18 For residential receptors within the settlement (the LVIA identifies a group of 10 communities across the urban area of Wisbech including the pupils and staff at Thomas Clarkson Academy), the surrounding industrial, commercial, and retail built development in the Wisbech Industrial Estate provides some context to the development and to some extent provides screening. However, As recognised within the LVIA at 9.9.55, there would be opportunities for views, (even if limited to “a couple of streets” from the individual areas of Wisbech included within the assessment) from within the settlement itself, demonstrating the substantial visibility of the EFW CHP Facility.

5.4.19 As people live within and move throughout this flat open landscape, there would be continuous opportunities for direct views of the upper sections of the main buildings and the chimneys of the EFW CHP Facility, constantly indicating the presence of Wisbech and this industrial elements within this otherwise overwhelmingly rural landscape.

5.4.20 **Mitigations:** The Proposals include a series of Embedded mitigation measures, including:

- The design and colour of the cladding used on the buildings.
- Use of bellows that would be a maximum of 1.7m above ground level where located to the rear of residential properties.
- The planting of trees, woodland, and hedgerows in the southern area of the EfW CHP Facility Site.

5.4.21 **Mitigations:** Design and Colour of Cladding: The Applicants state that the architectural design of the EFW buildings has sought to minimise overall scale, height, and massing within the functional requirements of the EfW CHP Facility. The effort to lower the height of the boiler house building from 55m to 52m is welcomed, however the overall scale and mass of the proposals cannot be understated, with the final dimensions of the main buildings and chimneys still substantial.

5.4.22 The buildings with the EfW CHP Facility would be clad using a three coloured banding approach, using shades of grey that respond to the surrounding buildings on the industrial estate. Lower-level building elevations will be darker grey to create the effect of a unifying plinth throughout the site. Above the lower-level building elevations, there will be a gradation through a mid-grey for medium level building elevations to a light grey for the boiler house building.

5.4.23 At 52m tall and with its large mass, the Boiler House (along with the chimneys) would likely be the more visible element of the EfW CHP Facility, with views of the lower levels of the Facility more restricted. To help create additional visual interest on the higher parts of the EfW CHP Facility, the Applicant has included for the use of kinetic cladding on the upper sections of the Boiler House. Kinetic cladding can create shapes and patterns through the design and movement from the wind. The use of Kinetic panels would help provide a consistency with the chosen colour palette and shades but also produce a contrasting texture on the Boiler House to the other buildings.

5.4.24 The intention behind the three banded cladding approach and the use of the kinetic panels is to help minimise the overall visual bulk of the buildings and to create cohesion across the various building elements. However, as demonstrated by the photomontages, given the overall scale and mass of the main buildings and chimneys, even at distances of 3km from the site the upper sections of the main building are clearly visible. Photowires have been produced for viewpoints within the wider landscape, but it is likely that despite the use of recessive colours and kinetic panelling, the main building and chimneys would be visually apparent.

5.4.25 **Mitigations:** Maximum Height of CHP Connection Bellows: The CHP Connection consists of a pipe to export steam and one to return the condensate (water) to the EfW CHP Facility, electrical and data cables can also be accommodated. The steam pipe would be located on a steel structure approximately 1.6m to 1.7m in height. At the point at which it would cross Weasenham Lane it would be fixed to a pipe bridge measuring approximately 25m in length. The pipe bridge would have an approximate height of 7m, with a 5.5m clearance from the highway. Where the CHP Connection would be located to the rear of residential properties (properties on Oldfield Lane/Hillburn Road/Kingsley Avenue/Victory Road) the design has been amended from (up to) 6.7m high expansion loops to bellows that would be a maximum of 1.7m above ground level. This change is welcomed and would lead to a reduced impact upon the visual amenity experienced the nearby residential properties.

5.4.26 **Mitigations:** Landscaping: Figure 3.14 Outline Landscape and Ecology Strategy (Volume 6.3) illustrates the locations of the proposed native planting that will be provided within the operational EfW CHP Facility Site. This landscape planting includes native shrub mix; native hedgerow with trees; native wet woodland, native species rich grassland, brown roof, and green walls. The full details of the final scheme will be based on the Outline Landscape and Ecology Strategy and would be subject to a DCO Requirement.

5.4.27 It is appropriately acknowledged within the LVIA that planting would take several years to become established. However, it is important to note that the LVIA does not rely upon the maturity of the proposed planting in assessing impacts and their effects relevant to Receptors at Year 15 of Operation. Furthermore, the LVIA acknowledges that the landscape mitigation planting (even upon reaching maturity after Year 15), would not attain sufficient height to provide any screening of the upper section of the boiler house building or the chimneys of the EfW CHP Facility and that as such there would be no variation in the assessments for any of the residential or community visual Receptor groups between Year 1 and Year 15.

5.4.28 At the point at which the landscape mitigation is established, the trees and wet woodland would only partly screen ground and lower-level components and activities in the views of a small number of community visual Receptors located to the south of the EfW CHP Facility Site. The assessment also shows that the principal contribution to the impacts that these visual Receptors would sustain would be from the presence of the upper parts of the main building and the chimneys as opposed to the lower components and ground level activities with effects at Year 15 (once the landscaping has established) being consistent as those identified at Year 1 of Operation.

5.4.29 In essence, the scale and mass of the proposals results in the landscape mitigation not providing any mitigation of the impacts and effects associated with the development.

5.4.30 The size of the area needed for the built form for the EfW CHP Facility constrains the space available for landscaping within the site itself. The Proposed Development seeks to provide an overall biodiversity enhancement by delivering a positive BNG. Given the land constraints within the site, only a proportion of BNG would be able to be delivered in-situ and a proportion of ex situ contributions would be required which would need to be achieved through off-setting via collaboration with independent organisations.

5.5 Landscape Impact Decommissioning Phase

5.5.1 **Positive**: Following decommissioning of the EFW CHP Facility, the adverse landscape and visual effects on the character of the surrounding landscape and townscape associated with the proposals would no longer be present.

5.5.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

5.5.3 **Negative:** The landscape and visual effects associated with the decommissioning phase are anticipated to be of a similar level to those identified for the construction phase works. However, decommissioning is anticipated to take a period of one year (see Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development, Section 3.11: Decommissioning (Volume 6.2), as opposed to the 3 years (36 months) required for construction. Despite effects occurring over

a shorter period of time, the likely significance of effects relating to the construction phase assessment is applicable to the decommissioning phase.

5.5.4 **Mitigations:** None identified.

Historic Environment (ES Chapter 10)

6.1 Policy Context

6.1.1 **Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policy 21: The Historic Environment**

The Councils recognise the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets (and their setting); the wider social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and the opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

As such, all mineral and waste management proposals will be subject to the policy requirements set out in the NPPF, including striking an appropriate balance between harm and public benefit, but, as a first principle, development should avoid harm on the historic environment.

To assist decision makers, all development proposals that would directly affect any heritage asset and/or its setting (whether designated or non-designated), must be accompanied by a Heritage Statement which, as a minimum, should:

(a) describe and assess the significance of the asset and/or its setting to determine its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest;

(b) identify the impact of the development on the special character of the asset (including any cumulative impacts); and

(c) provide clear and convincing justification for any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting).

The level of detail in the Heritage Statement should be proportionate to the asset's significance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance and/or setting.

Where appropriate, and particularly for minerals development proposals, the Heritage Statement must also consider:

(d) the hydrological management of the site and the potential effects that variations in the water table or water flow patterns may have on known or potential archaeological remains. This assessment may be required to address an area beyond the planning application boundary; and

(e) the potential for palaeolithic or later archaeology at depth, possibly making use of, where appropriate, a deposit model looking at the characteristics and distribution of deposits and natural landforms across the site and the likely potential for archaeology of all periods.

6.2 Construction Phase Impacts

6.2.1 **Positive:** None identified.

6.2.2 **Neutral:** There are no scheduled monuments in Cambridgeshire that will be directly or negatively affected by the scheme. The Councils are pleased to see that new land take for the Grid Connection cable route will be limited, as the route has now largely moved to being in the verge of the A47 where archaeological work has already taken place, thereby eliminating the need for archaeological evaluation and mitigation schemes.

6.2.3 **Negative**: Construction phase will be temporary so no impacts, over and above impacts relating to the operational phase have been identified.

6.2.4 **Mitigations:** As explained in 7.3 of CCC and FDC's RR, the Councils consider that any Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeology must be led by a brief prepared by CCC's Historic Environment Team to ensure that the county's archaeological priorities and requirements are met, which should be responded to by the appointed archaeological contractor.

6.2.5 The Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Volume 7.12) contains a section for the Historic Environment at 5.9. For this scheme, it is satisfactory but requires an additional note to ground crews in the event of discovering human remains as the treatment of human remains is protected by law, specifically the Burial Act of 1857 and the disused Burial Grounds Act of 1884 (amended 1981).

6.2.6 With reference to section 7.4 of the RR, monitoring and recording of the mixed freshwater and marine deposit sequence should be undertaken with the objective of seeking incipient soils indicative of drier land conditions able to host human activity and by researching the surfaces of roddonised prehistoric river channels. Therefore, geoarchaeological boreholes should be included in a mitigation strategy within the CEMP.

6.3 Operational Phase Impacts

6.3.1 **Positive:** None Identified

6.3.2 **Neutral:** None identified

6.3.3 **Negative:** Whilst the proposed development is unlikely to impact directly on the various heritage assets that are concentrated in and around Wisbech Town Centre, it is considered that the presence of the facility will represent a detractor for visitors to the town. The form of the development is purely function driven and no attempt has been made to make its appearance more attractive from an architectural point of view. Whilst it is accepted that the area is already industrial in appearance, the scale of the proposed development means that its presence will be far more obvious.

6.3.4 In his 'Buildings of England[33]' Pevsner describes Wisbech and the North and South Brinks as follows "*Wisbech is one of the most attractive towns of east Anglia*". The District Council and partners have run a number of initiatives that have their foundation on making the most of the quality of the buildings to lift and regenerate the town. The construction of a large and

[33] Pevsner, Nikolaus. Buildings of England, Penguin / Yale University Press 1983

unsympathetically designed structure at the entrance of the town is likely to act as a barrier to people visiting the town and experiencing its quality of place.

6.3.5 Although there may only be glimpsed views of the highest parts of the facility from the town centre, it will be highly visible from every entrance route in to Wisbech. Visitors will be aware of the presence which could, to an extent, detract from their enjoyment of the Georgian character of the central area.

6.3.6 **Mitigation**: None identified.

6.4 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

6.4.1 **Positive**: Following decommissioning the detrimental effect that the presence of the facility will have on the town would be removed.

6.4.2 **Neutral**: None Identified.

6.4.3 **Negative**: None identified.

6.4.4 **Mitigations**: None identified.

Biodiversity (ES Chapter 11)

7.1 Summary

7.1.1 The Applicant has engaged with the Councils over the last few years regarding this development proposal. Ecology officers are generally pleased with the quality of the survey work and assessment that has been undertaken, along with design choices and embedded mitigation that has reduced the level of impact of the scheme on biodiversity. As well as a proposed suite of further details to be secured as part of the draft DCO (requirements).

7.1.2 However, there are some outstanding issues:

- Lack of compensatory habitat for Water Vole (and incomplete survey work);
- Lack of assessment for open mosaic habitat (priority habitat);
- Net loss in biodiversity value; and,
- Lack of information and assessment of decommissioning works.

7.1.3 The Councils seek further information relating to Water Vole survey work and potential presence of Open Mosaic Habitat (priority habitat).

7.1.4 The Councils seek an update to the Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [APP-098] (LEMP) to provide compensatory habitat for water vole. If this is not possible, this issue should be addressed through planning requirements / obligations.

7.1.5 The Councils are pleased that biodiversity net gain will be addressed through planning requirements for a Biodiversity Strategy, however, further details are needed to ensure it will be achieved. The submission of an Outline Biodiversity Strategy is also sought to understand what this will contain.

7.1.6 Finally, the Councils are concerned regarding the lack of information about the decommissioning phase. We seek the submission of an Outline Decommissioning Environment Management Plan to help address our concerns, along with a commitment to the retention and maintenance of biodiversity mitigation / enhancement created during the construction / operational phases, as well as any mitigation identified for the decommissioning phase.

7.2 Policy Context

7.2.1 In Cambridgeshire, biodiversity policies are included within FLP, EFLP and MWLP.

FLP (adopted May 2014):

7.2.2 The FLP recognises the importance of biodiversity present within the district. An objective of the plan is to avoid damage to designated sties and protected species and maintain / enhance the geographical range, amount and viability of habitats and species (para 2.4.2). This is primarily covered by LP19, but also referenced within policies LP16 and LP14.

7.2.3 Policy LP19 seeks to protect and enhance sites designated for their international, national, or local importance for biodiversity. It also states that permission will be refused *"for development that would cause demonstrable harm to a protected habitat or species, unless the need for and public benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm and mitigation and/or compensation measures can be secured to offset the harm and achieve, where possible, a net gain for biodiversity".* It also promotes preservation, restoration and re-

creation of priority habitat and species and *"ensure opportunities are taken to incorporate beneficial features for biodiversity in new developments"*.

7.2.4 Policy LP16 (page 72) states that all new development… *"will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the proposal meets all of the following relevant criteria…. (b) protects and enhances biodiversity on and surrounding the proposal site, taking into account locally designated sites and the special protection given to internationally and nationally designated sites, in accordance with Policy LP19; (c) retains and incorporates natural and historic features of the site such as trees, hedgerows, field patterns, drains and water bodies."*

7.2.5 Policy LP14 (page 65) states that renewable energy proposals will be "*assessed both individually and cumulatively on their merits taking account of the following factors*" including *"biodiversity considerations".*

EFLP 2021-2040 – Draft Local Plan Consultation (August 2022)

7.2.6 The EFLP expands on protection and enhancement of biodiversity within policies LP24 and LP25, and is also linked to LP6 and LP7, whilst the emerging plan does not carry much weight in the planning balance at this point, it is noted because the new plan is likely to be adopted within the period that this proposal, if given consent, is operational.

7.2.7 Policy LP24 sets out measures to protect international, national, and local sites of biodiversity interest, Goose and Swan Functional Land Impact Risk Zone and Habitats and Species of Principal Importance. All development is also required to:

- conserve and enhance the network of habitats, species, and sites (statutory and non-statutory)
- avoid negative impacts on biodiversity
- deliver net gain in biodiversity
- protect and enhance the aquatic environment within / adjoining the site

7.2.8 Policy LP25 require all development proposals to deliver a "minimum 10% biodiversity net gain", which should follow the mitigation hierarchy.

7.2.9 LP7 policy requires all development to *"incorporate and retain as far as possible existing natural features including hedgerows, trees, and ponds particularly where these features offer a valuable habitat to support biodiversity"*.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (adopted July 2021)

7.2.10 Policy 20 of the MWLP requires all development proposals to:

- *conserve and enhance the network of geodiversity, habitats, species and sites (both statutory and non-statutory)*
- *"deliver a measurable net gain in biodiversity, proportionate to the scale of development proposed, by creating, restoring and enhancing habitats and enhancing them for the benefit of species"*
- where adverse impacts are unavoidable, they must be adequately and proportionately mitigated. *"If full mitigation cannot be provided, compensation will be required as a last resort where there is no alternative".*

7.3 Construction Phase Impacts

7.3.1 **Positive:** None identified.

7.3.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

7.3.3 **Negative:** Nene Washes SAC/SPA/SSSI and Ouse Washes Ramsar/SAC/SPA/SSSI
The potential impact for vehicle emissions during the construction phase could lead to negative effects on supporting habitats within the Nene Washes SAC/SPA/SSSI and Ouse Washes Ramsar/SAC/SPA/SSSI. The Councils are satisfied this minor effect will not result in a detectable change in the integrity of these wildlife designations.

7.3.4 **Negative:** River Nene County Wildlife Site. The ES has identified that emissions during the construction phase will have an adverse effect on the habitats of the River Nene County Wildlife Site, but it would not result in a detectable change in the integrity of this wildlife designation. Although the Councils are satisfied this effect will be Not Significant, there will still be an impact.

7.3.5 **Negative:** Priority habitat – Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land - Chapter 11: Biodiversity [AS-008] (pages 11-117 to 11-118) of the Environmental Statement identifies the loss of 0.59 hectares of scrub within the CHP Connector Corridor during construction (0.43ha permanent).

7.3.6 The author describes the scrub along the CHP Connection Corridor as *"interspersed with areas of open ephemeral/short-perennial vegetation and patchy grassland associated with the track bed of the disused March to Wisbech Railway"* (paragraph 11.9.82, page 11-117). This appears to describe the Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land, which is a mosaic of different habitats on brownfield sites, rather than scrub.

7.3.7 Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land is a habitat of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and therefore a priority habitat. The Councils are concerned there may be a permanent loss of this priority habitat and therefore seek further clarification from the Applicant if the "scrub" habitat along the CHP corridor meets the criteria for this priority habitat.

7.3.8 If Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land is confirmed within the site, the Councils seek that any unmitigated losses on this habitat be addressed through an amendment to the Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [APP-098]. If this is not possible, the Council seeks this be sought by a requirement for off-site compensation, in accordance with NPS EN-1, which states that *"IPC should ensure that these species and habitats are protected from the adverse effects of development by using requirements or planning obligations" (paragraph 5.3.17).*

7.3.9 **Negative:** Bats - Chapter 11: Biodiversity (pages 11-123 to 11-125) [AS-008] identifies potential adverse effects on bats due unavoidable temporary and permanent loss of suitable habitat (e.g. shrub and hedgerows). It is proposed that these effects have been minimised through scheme design and compensated through the re-instatement of temporarily lost habitat and proposed habitat creation, as set out in the Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [APP-098]. In addition, the Outline CEMP [APP-103] includes measures to protect bats during construction, including pre-commencement surveys.

7.3.10 Chapter 11: Biodiversity (pages 11-123 to 11-125) [APP-038] identifies potential adverse effects on bats due noise / vibration / lighting associated with construction and possibly the operational phases. The assessment proposes embedded mitigation in the form of protection of retained habitats, as set out in the Outline CEMP [APP-103] and sensitive lighting design, as set out in the Outline Lighting Strategy [APP-071].

7.3.11 The Councils are satisfied these effects will be Not Significant, subject to the production and implementation of detailed CEMP, detailed Landscape and Ecology Management Plan and detailed Lighting Scheme. These will be secured through DCO requirements 5, 10 and 18 [APP-013].

7.3.12 **Negative:** Water Vole - The Councils are concerned that the survey work for Water Vole is incomplete. The ditches along the majority of the Grid Connection along the A47 have not been surveyed and therefore, it is not possible to determine the level of impact to Water Vole. It is noted that *"these ditches only became included in the 100m ditch area of search following confirmation of the Order limits that occurred after the end of the water vole survey period in 2021"* (paragraph 11.9.141, page 11-127 [AS-008]). The Councils consider this is not a reasonable explanation for lack of survey effort, given the Applicant has had an opportunity to complete the additional surveys in 2022. Therefore, the Council ask for these surveys to be completed during the 2023 survey season, prior to the conclusion of the examination period.

7.3.13 Chapter 11: Biodiversity (pages 11-127 to 11-129) [AS-008] identifies loss of sub-optimal water vole habitat as a result of permanent and temporary works to ditches D24 / D26, including foraging grounds and a possible burrow (on D24). The Councils agree that the low population of Water Vole found on D24 will be sensitive to loss of habitat within the territories (paragraph 11.9.152, page 129). There is also the potential presence of water vole on ditch D8, which will also be affected (temporarily) by the works.

7.3.14 The Councils consider the measures to protect Water Voles at section 4.7 of the CEMP [APP-103] are inadequate. The Councils would expect the CEMP to clearly set out a method statement for dealing with ditches supporting Water Vole (e.g. D24/D26/D8). This should include methodology for displacement / translocation works, and requirement for the creation of mitigation/ compensation habitat prior to any works to the ditches.

7.3.15 The Outline LEMP (paragraph 3.2.25, page 17 [APP-098]) states that an objective of the Sustainable Urban Drainage will be *"to create a range of wetland features to encourage species such as amphibians, aquatic invertebrates, and water voles there is cursory mention of to water voles."* However, the Councils are concerned there is no specific provision to provide mitigation / compensation for loss of Water Vole habitat within the Outline LEMP. This scheme will result in displacement of individual Water Voles into the surrounding ditches, which are also sub-optimal for Water Vole and unlikely to provide sufficient resources to support additional Water Vole. Therefore, the Councils consider that the scheme is likely to result in a residual adverse effect on Water Vole.

7.3.16 Water Vole is a protected species and also a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England (priority habitat). Therefore, the Councils seek that the unmitigated losses on this species be addressed through the revision of the proposed Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [APP-098].

7.3.17 If this is not possible, the Councils seek that this addressed through requirements, in accordance with NPS EN-1, which states that *"IPC should ensure that these species* [priority species] *and habitats are protected from the adverse effects of development by using requirements or planning obligations" (paragraph 5.3.17).*

7.3.18 **Negative:** Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) - The BNG assessment uses a calculation of habitat losses and gains as a proxy to demonstrate whether a scheme will deliver measurable net gain in biodiversity value.

7.3.19 The Councils welcome the submission of a BNG Assessment [AS-009] by the Applicant, which confirms the scheme will result in the net loss in biodiversity value for all three categories of habitat – 10% loss of area-based units, 21.6% loss of linear-based habitats (e.g. hedgerows and lines of trees) and 11.8% loss of river units (e.g. wet ditches) (pages 11M1).

7.3.20 The scheme will therefore result in measurable loss of overall biodiversity value. This does not accord with Policy LP16 of the FLP which states all new development will only be permitted if it *"protected and biodiversity on and surrounding the proposal site".* It also does not accord with policy 20 of the MWLP, which requires all development to deliver measurable biodiversity net gain proportionate to the scheme of the development. This should be a minimum of 10% BNG, in accordance with policy LP25 of EFLP.

7.3.21 The Councils therefore welcome the Applicant's proposal to address this matter in the draft Development Consent Order [APP-013] through the provision of requirement 6 – Biodiversity Net Gain. It is important to note that given the land constraints within the site, only a proportion of BNG would be able to be delivered in-situ by the Applicant. Due to the limited extent of the Applicant's landholdings a proportion of ex situ contributions would be required to meet positive BNG. This would need to be achieved through off-setting via collaboration with independent organisations. The Councils seek that an Outline BNG Strategy be submitted to the examination to demonstrate how this will be achieved.

7.3.22 The Outline BNG Strategy needs to demonstrate how on-site and off-site measures will enable deliver of Biodiversity Net Gain. This should seek to deliver a minimum of 10% BNG in accordance with emerging policy LP25 of EFLP. The Outline BNG Strategy should outline (but not limited to) the following:

i) A hierarchical approach to BNG focussing first on maximising on-site BNG, second delivering off-site BNG at a site(s) of strategic biodiversity importance, and third delivering off-site BNG locally to the application site;

ii) Methodology for site selection, appraisal and how existing biodiversity features will be protected on receptor site(s);

ii) Full details of the respective on and off-site BNG requirements and proposals resulting from the loss of habitats on the development site utilising the latest appropriate DEFRA metric;

iii) Identification of the existing habitats and their condition on-site and within receptor site(s);

iv) Habitat enhancement and creation proposals on the application site and /or receptor site(s) utilising the latest appropriate DEFRA metric;

v) An implementation, management, and monitoring plan (including identified responsible bodies) for the operational and decommissioning phases for on and off-site proposals as appropriate (for a minimum of 30 years)

vi) Monitoring data shall be submitted to the local planning authority in accordance with the latest DEFRA guidance and the agree monitoring period / intervals (criterion v).

vii) How BNG measures will be secured beyond the lifetime of the development (in-perpetuity).

7.3.23 The Councils are also concerned that the wording of requirement 6 is insufficient to ensure delivery of net gain in biodiversity value. The requirement should set a minimum level of BNG to be achieved (e.g. 10%). It should also include a minimum of 30 years maintenance period, in line with paragraph 5.4.22 of the Revised (draft) National Policy Statement for Energy 2021.

7.3.24 If the Applicant supplies an Outline BNG Strategy, as requested in the above paragraph, we suggest that wording of draft Requirement 6 [APP-013] is amended to:

"6. No part of the authorised development, including vegetation removal, may commence until a biodiversity net gain strategy has been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority, in consultation with the relevant statutory nature conservation body. The written details submitted for approval must be substantially in accordance with the outline BNG strategy and will secure a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. Monitoring data shall be submitted to the local planning authority in accordance at the monitoring period / intervals set out in the approve BNG Strategy."

7.3.25 If the Applicant does not supply an Outline BNG Strategy, as requested in the above paragraph, we suggest the wording of draft Requirement 6 [APP-013] is amended to incorporate a summarised version of the information the Councils have identified as being needed to be detailed within the Outline BNG Strategy:

"6. No part of the authorised development, including vegetation removal, may commence until a biodiversity net gain strategy has been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority, in consultation with the relevant statutory nature conservation body. The BNG Strategy much include details of –

a. How the strategy will secure a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain (based on the latest Defra metric) during the operation and decommissioning phase of authorised development

b. On and off-site BNG requirements and proposals (including baseline conditions) and habitat enhancement and creation proposals

c. An implementation, management, and monitoring plan for during the operational and decommissioning phases.

d. How BNG measures will be secured beyond the lifetime of the development

e. Monitoring data shall be submitted to the local planning authority in accordance with the latest DEFRA guidance and the agree monitoring period / intervals (criterion iii)."

7.3.26 **Mitigations:** The scheme has embedded biodiversity mitigation within the Outline CEMP [APP-103], Outline LEMP [APP-098] and the Outline Lighting Strategy [APP-071]. It will be

important that further details of these mitigation measures be secured through draft DCO requirements 4 (Biodiversity and landscape mitigation), 5 (Landscape and ecology management plan), 6 (Biodiversity net gain) and 10 (Construction environmental management plan), 18 (Lighting strategy) [APP-013]. The Councils consider the proposed development provides insufficient mitigation to address the loss of biodiversity value (BNG) and adverse impact on water vole, hedgerows, and possibly open mosaic habitat. As discussed above, the Councils consider the scheme should be updated, including the Outline LEMP, to address these matters. If they are not resolved, compensation measures should be sought.

7.4 Operational Phase Impacts

7.4.1 **Positive:** None identified.

7.4.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

7.4.3 **Negative:** Nene Washes SAC/SPA/Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ouse Washes Ramsar/SAC/SPA/SSSI. The potential impact for emissions (vehicle emissions/chimney emissions) during operational phase to lead to negative effects on supporting habitats within the Nene Washes SAC/SPA/SSSI and Ouse Washes Ramsar/SAC/SPA/SSSI are discussed within Chapter 8: Air Quality [APP-035] and Chapter 11: Biodiversity [AS-008] of the ES and the Habitats Regulations Assessment No Significant Effects Report [AS-007] but it would not result in a detectable change in the integrity of these wildlife designations. The Councils are satisfied this effect will be Not Significant.

7.4.4 **Negative:** River Nene County Wildlife Site. The Chapter 8: Air Quality [APP-035] and Chapter 11: Biodiversity (pages 11-115 to 11-117) [AS-008] of the ES have identified that emissions during the operational phase (vehicle emissions/chimney emissions) will have an adverse effect on the habitats of the River Nene County Wildlife Site, but it would not result in a detectable change in the integrity of this wildlife designation. The Councils are satisfied this effect will be Not Significant.

7.4.5 **Negative:** Priority habitat – Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land. Chapter 11: Biodiversity [AS-008] (pages 11-117 to 11-118) of the Environmental Statement identifies the permanent loss of 0.43 hectares of scrub within the CHP Connector Corridor.

7.4.6 The author describes the scrub along the CHP Connection Corridor as *"interspersed with areas of open ephemeral/short-perennial vegetation and patchy grassland associated with the track bed of the disused March to Wisbech Railway"* (paragraph 11.9.82, page 11-117). The area is also identified as *"scattered plants of bee orchid (one plant) and common broomrape (three plants) were recorded in more open areas of habitat at the north of the CHP Connection Corridor"* (paragraph 11.5.18 [AS-008]). The Councils therefore consider the attribution of this land as scrub habitat is inaccurate, instead, the habitat appears to better fit the category of Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land.

7.4.7 Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land is a habitat of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England (priority habitat). The Councils are concerned there may be a permanent loss of this priority habitat and therefore seek further clarification

from the Applicant if the “scrub” habitat along the CHP corridor meets the criteria for this priority habitat.

7.4.8 If Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land is confirmed within the site, the Councils seek that any unmitigated losses on this habitat be addressed through an amendment to the Outline LEMP [APP-098]. If this is not possible the Council seeks this be sought by a requirement for off-site compensation, in accordance with NPS EN-1, which states that *“IPC should ensure that these species and habitats are protected from the adverse effects of development by using requirements or planning obligations” (paragraph 5.3.17).*

7.4.9 **Negative:** Bats - Chapter 11: Biodiversity (pages 11-123 to 11-125) [AS-008] identifies potential adverse effects on bats due unavoidable permanent loss of suitable habitat (e.g. shrub and hedgerows) for bats. It is proposed that these effects have been minimised through scheme design and compensated through the re-instatement of temporarily lost habitat and proposed habitat creation, as set out in the Outline LEMP [APP-098].

7.4.10 Chapter 11: Biodiversity (pages 11-123 to 11-125) [APP-038] identifies potential adverse effects on bats due noise / vibration / lighting associated with possibly the operational phases. The assessment proposes embedded mitigation in the form of a sensitive lighting design, as set out in the Outline Lighting Strategy [APP-071].

7.4.11 The Councils are satisfied these effects will be Not Significant, providing that the production and implementation of detailed Landscape and Ecology Management Plan and detailed Lighting Scheme are secured through a suitably worded DCO requirements/obligations.

7.4.12 **Negative:** Water Vole - Chapter 11: Biodiversity (pages 11-127 to 11-129) [AS-008] identifies loss of sub-optimal water vole habitat as a result of permanent works to ditches D24 / D26, including foraging grounds and a possible burrow (on D24). The Councils agree that the low population of water vole found on D24 will be sensitive to loss of habitat within the territories (paragraph 11.9.152, page 129). Culverting works to D8 also have the potential to impact Water Vole.

7.4.13 The Outline LEMP (paragraph 3.2.25, page 17 [APP-098]) states that an objective of the Sustainable Urban Drainage will be *“to create a range of wetland features to encourage species such as amphibians, aquatic invertebrates, and water voles there is cursory mention of to water voles.”* However, the Councils are concerned there is no specific provision to provide mitigation / compensation for loss of Water Vole habitat within the Outline LEMP. This scheme will result in displacement of individual Water Voles into the surrounding ditches, which are also sub-optimal for Water Vole and unlikely to provide sufficient resources to support additional Water Vole. Therefore, the Councils consider that the scheme is likely to result in a residual adverse effect on Water Vole.

7.4.14 Water Vole is a protected species and also a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England (priority habitat). Therefore, the Council request that unmitigated losses on this species be addressed through the revision of the proposed Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [APP-098]. If this is not possible, the Councils seek it is addressed through requirements, in accordance with NPS EN-1, which states that *“IPC should ensure that these species* [priority species] *and habitats are protected from the adverse effects of development by using requirements or planning obligations” (paragraph 5.3.17).*

7.4.15 **Negative:** Biodiversity Net Gain -The BNG assessment uses a calculation of habitat losses and gains as a proxy to demonstrate whether a scheme will deliver measurable net gain in biodiversity value.

7.4.16 The Councils welcome the submission of a BNG Assessment [AS-009] by the Applicant, which confirms the scheme will result in the net loss in biodiversity value for all three categories of habitat – 56% loss of area-based units, 41% loss of linear-based habitats (e.g. hedgerows and lines of trees) and 15% loss of river units (e.g. wet ditches) (pages 11M41, 11M43 and 11M45).

7.4.17 The scheme will therefore result in measurable loss of overall biodiversity value. This does not accord with Policy LP16 of the FLP which states all new development will only be permitted if it *"protected and biodiversity on and surrounding the proposal site".* It also does not accord with policy 20 of the MWLP, which requires all development to deliver measurable biodiversity net gain proportionate to the scheme of the development (e.g. 10% BNG).

7.4.18 The Councils therefore welcome the Applicant's proposal to address this matter in the draft Development Consent Order [APP-013] through the provision of requirement 6 – Biodiversity Net Gain. However, the Councils also seek that an Outline BNG strategy be submitted to the examination to demonstrate how this will be achieved.

7.4.19 The Councils are also concerned that the wording of requirement 6 is insufficient to ensure delivery of net gain in biodiversity value. The requirement should set a minimum level of BNG to be achieved (e.g. 10%). It should also include a minimum of 30 years maintenance period, in line with paragraph 5.4.22 of the Revised (draft) National Policy Statement for Energy 2021.

7.4.20 **Mitigations:** The scheme has embedded biodiversity mitigation within the Outline LEMP [APP-097] and the Outline Lighting Strategy [APP-071]. It will be important that further details of these mitigation measures be secured through draft DCO requirements 4 (Biodiversity and landscape mitigation), 5 (Landscape and ecology management plan), 6 (Biodiversity net gain) and 10 (Construction environmental management plan), 18 (Lighting strategy) [APP-013]. However, the Council considered the proposed development provides insufficient mitigation to address the loss of biodiversity value (BNG) and adverse impact on water vole, hedgerows, and possibly open mosaic habitat. As discussed above, the Councils consider the scheme should be updated, including the Outline LEMP, to address these matters. If they are not resolved, compensation measures should be sought.

7.5 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

7.5.1 **Positive:** None identified.

7.5.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

7.5.3 **Negative:** Chapter 11: Biodiversity (pages 11-138 to 11-13) [AS-008] states that *"the environmental effects associated with the decommissioning phase are expected to be of a similar level to those reported for the construction phase works".* However, no further details have been provided and therefore the anticipated level of impact on biodiversity cannot be determined.

7.5.4 If the level of impact is similar to the construction phase works, we would expect similar embedded biodiversity mitigation (as discussed in “Construction Phase Impacts” above) included the production of a CEMP, Lighting Strategy, Landscape and Ecology Management Plan and BNG. However, none of these documents cover the decommissioning phase. Therefore currently, there are no measures to provide biodiversity during decommissioning and as such, the Councils are concerned there will be adverse impacts on all the receptors identified in the “Construction Phase Impacts” identified above, including wildlife sites, priority habitats (e.g. hedgerows), priority species (e.g. water vole and bats) and loss of biodiversity value.

7.5.5 The Councils note that details for decommissioning are to be left to requirement 25, with the production of a Decommissioning Environment Management Plan. However, the Councils seek that an Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan be submitted to the examination to outline how biodiversity will be protected during decommissioning (and address the concerns above).

7.5.6 The Councils are also concerned that all biodiversity mitigation, compensation, or enhancement proposed within for the construction / operational phase will be removed because Requirement 25 (decommissioning) states that the decommissioning plan will include Works 2B, which includes *“(g) hard and soft landscaping; and (h) biodiversity enhancement measures and environmental mitigation measures”.* Of particular concern is the loss of species-rich habitats (e.g. grassland and hedgerows) and species associated with these established habitats, including bats. The Councils seek the retention and management of Works 2B(h) as part of the Decommissioning Plan.

7.5.7 The Councils also seek that requirement 25 be amended to include the production of a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan and management of the habitats in perpetuity, or at the very least until they have reached target condition.

7.5.8 **Mitigations:** As set out above, the absence of an Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan means that the proposed mitigation measures are unclear. We would expect the DEMP to adopt similar mitigation measures for biodiversity as to the CEMP. However, more measures may be required (should any new biodiversity feature be identified prior to decommissioning). A LEMP may be required to address any habitat losses.

7.6 Requirements and Obligations

7.6.1 The Councils welcome the inclusion of draft DCO requirements 4 (Biodiversity and landscape mitigation), 5 (Landscape and ecology management plan), 6 (Biodiversity net gain) and 10 (Construction environmental management plan), 18 (Lighting strategy). The Councils wish to see Requirements 4, 6, 10 and 18 clarified to ensure their full effectiveness. The Councils will provide further comments on this matter at the appropriate Issue Specific Hearing.

Hydrology (ES Chapter 12)

8.1 Summary

8.1.1 The Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) has reviewed and discussed the whole scheme with the Applicant and drainage consultants. Surface water needs to be carefully managed from the site, to ensure that the proposals do not have adverse implications on the surrounding drainage networks and to mitigate any increased risks of flooding from the site.

8.1.2 The general principles of surface water management have been covered, however, this is to be confirmed with the detail to come through with the requirements under the DCO application.

8.2 Policy Context

8.2.1 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan - Policy 22: Flood and Water Management**

Mineral and waste management development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated (potentially through a detailed hydrogeological assessment) that there would be no significant adverse impact on:

(a) the quantity and quality of surface or groundwater resources;

(b) the quantity and quality of water abstraction currently enjoyed by abstractors unless acceptable alternative provision is made; and

(c) the flow of groundwater at or in the vicinity of the site;

Development located on sites in areas known to be at risk from any form of flooding will only be permitted following:

(d) the successful completion of a sequential test (if necessary) and an exception test if required, with both tests applying climate change allowances to define flood risks;

(e) the submission, where appropriate (as defined by national policy), of a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, setting out appropriate flood risk that:

i. defines the flood zones in relation to the proposal;

ii. demonstrates the impacts of climate change on the flood zones, over the lifetime of the development;

iii. demonstrates that a sequential approach has been taken to the design of the layout of the proposal, placing those aspects of the development most sensitive to the impacts of flooding in the area of lowest flood risk;

iv. demonstrates that appropriate mitigation measures have been incorporated into the development so that there will be no negative off-site impacts to people and property and that the users will be safe for the lifetime of the development; and

v. demonstrates that all reasonable actions have been taken to contribute to the overall reduction of flood risk.

(f) the consideration of any necessary ongoing maintenance, management of mitigation measures and adoption and that any relevant agreements are in place; and

(g) where built development is proposed, the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) wherever feasible into the proposals.

All proposed development will be required to incorporate adequate water pollution control and monitoring measures.

Proposals should also have due regard to the latest policies and guidance in the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD and the Peterborough Flood and Water Management SPD (or their successors).

8.2.2 **Fenland Local Plan (2014) Policy - Policy LP14 part B**

The granting or refusal of planning permission on sites will be informed by:

4 Fenland Detailed Stage 2a Water Cycle Study [2011]
5 Fenland Level 1 SFRA (District Wide) [2011]
6 Fenland Level 2 SFRA (Wisbech) [2012]
7 Cambridgeshire Surface Water Management Plan [2011]
8 Middle Level Strategic Study [2004]
9 Any subsequent additional or updated SFRAs, Surface Water Management Plans, Catchment Studies, and Water Cycle Studies
10 Any national advice in force at the time

All development proposals should adopt a sequential approach to flood risk from all forms of flooding. Development in areas known to be at risk from any form of flooding will only be permitted following:

a) the successful completion of a sequential test (if necessary), having regard to actual and residual flood risk
b) an exception test (if necessary),
c) the suitable demonstration of meeting an identified need, and
d) through the submission of a site-specific flood risk assessment, demonstrating appropriate flood risk management and safety measures and a positive approach to reducing flood risk overall, and without reliance on emergency services.

In addition to the requirements of the NPPF and associated technical guide, all applications for relevant developments must include a drainage strategy to demonstrate that:

a) suitable consideration has been given to surface water drainage;
b) appropriate arrangements for attenuating surface water run-off can be accommodated within the site; and
c) issues of ownership and maintenance are addressed. For foul drainage private infrastructure managed by residents' groups or management companies should be avoided.

The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) will be required to ensure that runoff from the site (post development) is to Greenfield runoff rates for all previously undeveloped sites and for developed sites (where feasible). This should include sufficient area within the site to accommodate SuDS for the short-term management of surface water drainage and where

appropriate link to green / blue infrastructure to exploit opportunities for biodiversity, environmental, heritage, social and recreational enhancement and value. Schemes should complement the aims of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy but should be retained and maintained primarily for the purpose for which they were designed, whilst being sensitive to the multi–functional benefits they can provide.

The most appropriate SuDS techniques should be used depending on the particular circumstances of the site and area. Consideration should be given to the facility to be used, what is trying to be achieved, and the nature of water level management in the area.

The discharge of surface water from developments should be designed to contribute to an improvement in water quality in the receiving water course or aquifer in accordance with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

All proposals should have regard to the guidance and byelaws of the relevant Internal Drainage Board, including, where appropriate the Middle Level Strategic Study and should help achieve the flood management goals from the River Nene and Great Ouse Catchment Flood Management Plans.

A Supplementary Planning Document informed by up-to-date national and local evidence and to be adopted in 2014 will be used to further assess planning applications on flood risk and drainage matters.

8.2.3 **Other Relevant Documents**

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD Chapter 6 (adopted by Fenland), or any subsequent version[34].

Surface Water Planning Guidance Document for Developers.[35]

8.3 Construction Phase Impacts

8.3.1 **Positive:** None identified.

8.3.2 **Neutral**: Water quality:
It is acknowledged that details in a CEMP have been provided, but it must be ensured that the risks around the quality of water leaving the site are suitably mitigated. Construction activity can generate high levels of pollution in the forms of sedimentation and risks associated from the storage of potentially hazardous liquids and fuels stored on site, which can be of a great concern if these were to be discharged into the watercourses. It must be ensured that the details under any CEMP requirements are strictly adhered to for surface water to be suitably mitigated during construction.

8.3.3 **Negative:** Groundwater pumps from deep excavations:
The proposals are to pump water out from deep excavations and store this on the site to discharge gradually into the surrounding watercourse network. The volume of storage for these groundwater attenuation structures is assumed and not accurately calculated. This

[34] https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Cambridgeshire-Flood-and-Water-Supplementary-Planning-Document.pdf
[35] https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Surface-Water-Planning-Guidance-June-2021.pdf

could lead to an exceedance of the proposed attenuation structures, which could lead to flooding on site. As this is during construction, this could lead to high levels of pollutants being washed off the surface of the site and into the surrounding watercourse networks, having an adverse impact on the water quality.

It is also not clear how this water will be disposed from the site. If this is to be discharged into the surrounding watercourse network, it must be set at a suitable rate, agreed with the IDB, to ensure that the water will not put strain on the surrounding watercourse network.

8.3.4 **Negative:** Works to watercourses:
Any works to watercourses, such as culverting, will reduce the capacity of the drain for the conveyance of water and can lead to water backing up in the ditch network upstream. The culverting of watercourses also impedes maintenance access and inspection ability of watercourses. This could prohibit ease of access for maintenance, or issues with a culvert may not be apparent until the structure has failed.

8.3.5 **Mitigations**: Groundwater pumps from deep excavations:
Careful management of the system must be ensured at all times, to mitigate the risk of inundating the groundwater storage structures. If this is appropriately sized and managed then the risks around the structures failing and polluting adjacent watercourses would be mitigated appropriately.

8.3.6 **Mitigations**: Works to watercourses
These should only be carried out where necessary and subject to consent from any approving body. The Applicant must ensure that any works to the watercourses are designed appropriately, and rigorous maintenance schedules are set up to ensure that they continue to function for the lifetime of the works.

8.4 Operational Phase Impacts

8.4.1 **Positive:** None identified.

8.4.2 **Neutral**: Pollution Control
It is not clear the exact range and location of all SuDS features proposed across the site and how these will be incorporated within the scheme. All water must be suitably treated in line with the simple index approach, with as much water managed through SuDS features as possible. Where this isn't feasible, suitable justification must be provided, and a suitable alternative proposed. If water is not managed properly, this could lead to high levels of pollution entering the surrounding watercourse networks, having an adverse effect on any biodiversity or abstraction.

8.4.3 **Negative**: Climate change allowances
It is not clear if climate change has been suitably applied to the hydraulic calculations and design of the network. If climate change allowances are not suitably applied to the modelling of the system, this may compromise the future proofing and integrity of the proposed surface water system over the lifetime of the development. The climate change allowances are

incorporated to future proof and ensure that the system can manage runoff into the future with the expected increased rainfall due to climate change.

8.4.4 **Negative**: Small diameter flow controls
Information has not been provided with relation to the diameter of flow controls. This must be carefully considered as part of the design as the proposals come through. If flow controls are too small in diameter, then they can lead to an increased risk of blockage, in turn increasing the risk of flooding to surrounding land or property.

8.4.5 **Negative**: Pumping of surface water
The LLFA is not supportive of the use of pumps due to the residual risk they pose in the event of system failure. The requirement of the use of pumps is not fully understood at this point, and every effort should be made to avoid the use where necessary.

8.4.6 **Mitigations:** Climate change allowances

Ensure that the correct climate change allowances are utilised within the hydraulic calculations for the lifetime of the development. This will ensure that the system is being designed to function with capacity for this expected increase in rainfall.

8.4.7 **Mitigations:** Small diameter flow controls
Ensuring flow controls are designed in line with standard best practice and suitable filtration of water is proposed to reduce the risks of litter and debris entering the network. Increased maintenance activity will only mitigate this risk to a certain extent and cannot be relied on as the sole mitigation for small diameter controls.

8.4.8 **Mitigations:** Pumping of surface water
Keeping water on the surface where possible. Where this is not possible, amending ground levels to permit gravity outfall could be an option for reduction in requirements for pumps. However, if they are required, the residual risk of the pumps must be investigated, assuming the pumps and all back up pumps were to fail.

8.5 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

8.5.1 **Positive**: Reinstatement opportunities
The decommissioning of a site like this could be an opportunity for reinstating this area as a place that water can drain naturally. This could provide some other wider betterments to general flood risk issues.

8.5.2 **Positive:** Removal of structures in watercourses
The decommissioning of the site will cease the purpose of culverts for site accesses. This would permit the removal of the structures and ensure that the watercourses can flow freely.

8.5.3 **Neutral:** none identified.

8.5.4 **Negative:** Risks of polluted ground
It must be ensured that the ground is not highly polluted as this could leach into groundwaters or be washed from the surfaces.

8.5.5 **Mitigations:** Risks of polluted ground

Ensuring that the ground is not fully of contaminants and removing these contaminants where required.

8.6 Requirements and Obligations

8.6.1 *8 - (1) No part of Work No. 1, 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 4A, 4B, 6A, 6B and 9 may commence until written details of the drainage strategy for that Work No. has been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority in consultation with Anglian Water in respect of any discharge to a public sewer. The written details submitted for approval must be substantially in accordance with the outline drainage strategy.*

(2) The drainage strategy must be implemented as approved under subparagraph (1)

8.6.2 Noted that the details of all the drainage information is to be left for the requirement. Whilst the concepts are fine for some parts of the sites surface water management strategy, the surface water system must be designed appropriately and not all left until the detailed design under the requirement. The LLFA accepts some principles, but more work needs to be carried out at this point to ensure that the system is appropriately designed, and all surfaces are being suitably treated.

Climate Change (ES Chapter 14)

9.1 Summary

9.1.1 The proposed facility is envisioned to be of a regional scale, sourcing waste from the East of England and the East Midlands. Planning for climate change and minimising Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions should be key considerations in any decision.

9.1.2 Although this is a report covering local impacts, and climate change will inevitably have a local effect, the proper focus must be on the overall impact of the scheme as a contributor to overall climate change. The focus of this chapter therefore is to understand the net GHG emissions when comparing the effects of the development with the effects of no development (insofar as they can be discerned at this time).

9.1.3 The total GHG emissions from the proposed plant are likely to be very large. Although the receptor for GHG emissions is the global climate, the impacts of climate change are severe and will certainly be felt locally as well as globally. Indeed, climate change is already happening; global and UK average land temperatures have risen by around 1.2°C since the 1850-1900 period, UK sea levels have risen by 16cm since 1900, and episodes of extreme heat are becoming more frequent[36]. The extent of further climate change will depend on future emissions of GHGs.

9.1.4 At this point in the process, the exercise is not to discern whether the GHG emissions are to be judged as Significant or Not Significant for environmental assessment purposes. The task is to discern the extent, if any, to which the emissions with the development are less than those from no development. This is the only basis upon which the proper weight to be attributed in a planning balance to any alleged benefit can be assessed.

9.1.5 The Councils suggest that the benefit in those terms has been overstated by the Applicant and indeed may not exist at all, and is, at best, highly uncertain.

9.2 Policy Context

9.2.1 The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report (AR6)[37] confirms that there is “unequivocal” scientific consensus that human-induced climate change is already happening and will continue to increase. Limiting this requires deep reductions in GHG emissions. The Paris Agreement reached by the United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference in 2015 (COP21), is an international treaty signed by 194 parties[38], which sets the goal to “*substantially reduce global greenhouse gas emissions to limit the global temperature increase in this century to 2 degrees Celsius while pursuing efforts to limit the increase even further to 1.5 degrees*”. To keep global warming to no more than 1.5°C, GHG emissions need to be reduced by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050.

[36] [redacted]

[38] 193 States plus the European Union

9.2.2 The Climate Change Act 2008 commits the UK to reducing its GHG emissions to net zero by 2050. Following this, legally binding five-yearly carbon budgets have been established, each of which requires lower total emissions than the previous period.

9.2.3 Cambridgeshire County Council have declared in their updated Climate Change and Environment Strategy (published February 2022) an ambition for the county of Cambridgeshire to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2045.

9.2.4 Waste management was responsible for approximately 378,700 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) of GHG emissions across the Cambridgeshire area in 2020[39], which was 6% of all GHG emissions from the county.

9.2.5 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2021 - Policy 1 Sustainable Development and Climate Change - states that development proposals will be assessed as to whether they move toward sustainable solutions; that they should take a proactive approach to mitigating climate change and sets out criteria against how this could be achieved.

9.3 Construction Phase Impacts

9.3.1 **Positive:** None Identified.

9.3.2 **Neutral:** None identified

9.3.3 **Negative:** Embodied carbon from construction of the proposed plant is a large source of GHG emissions, estimated by the Applicant at over 48,000 tonnes CO_2e[40]. This is likely to occur in the years 2023-2026, which falls within the fourth carbon budget period (2023-2027). None of these emissions would occur without the development.

9.3.4 **Mitigations:** Consideration should be given to minimising use of high-carbon materials such as concrete, steel etc, and use of low carbon construction methods and materials, such as more use of recycled/reclaimed materials, electrical plant/tools, and locally sourced items.

Checks will also need to be made, prior to construction, that the final design either matches or improves on the bill of materials used for estimating emissions from construction. The emissions from construction transport can also be updated when the supplier locations and transport distances of materials are known.

9.4 Operational Phase Impacts

9.4.1 **Positive:** None identified.

9.4.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

[39] Source: BEIS, 2022. UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics: 2005-2020

[40] Environmental Statement EN010110-000458 Vol 6.2 ES Chapter 14, paragraph 14.9.8.

9.4.3 **Negative:** Summary of negative impacts from the operational phase

GHG emissions from operation of the proposed plant are very high, estimated by the Applicant at over 280,000 tonnes CO_2e per year, or over 11 million tonnes CO_2e over the 40-year lifetime[41]. The vast majority of these emissions are CO_2 released from burning the fossil carbon content of the waste (such as plastics). This annual figure is higher than the total emissions from landfill in Cambridgeshire in 2020.

9.4.4 In the Environmental Statement (ES), the Applicant claims that the 'without development' scenario is that all the waste will go to landfill and seeks to compare the anticipated emissions from the development with the scenario where all the waste goes to landfill, and claims that this will save 2,570.8 kilotonnes (kt)[42] CO_2e of GHG emissions[43].

The Councils have four basic objections to that calculation.

1. The calculation is fundamentally dependent on the composition of the waste burned in the incinerator. However, the composition of waste is unknown and variable. In general, fossil carbon waste (such as plastics) doesn't generate any GHG emissions in landfill, but does lead to high emissions if burned. By contrast, biogenic carbon waste (such as paper, food, and garden waste) generates high emissions if landfilled, (as it breaks down into methane), but fewer emissions if burned (as the combustion process converts methane to carbon dioxide). Accordingly, the extent of GHG emissions from the proposed development, when compared to landfilling, is entirely dependent on what the mix of those two different components would be, over the lifetime of the scheme. The Applicant's calculations on this matter bring with them such a degree of uncertainty that the claimed benefits cannot properly be relied on.

2. The benefits claimed are dependent on an assumption that the electricity generated by the development will displace electricity generated for the grid by the mix of generation sources in the UK from 2020-21 (which includes a proportion of fossil-fuel burning sources, primarily gas). Leaving aside the fact that this assumption is somewhat at odds with the notion of producing an overall increase in energy generation, the calculations as to the overall composition of the electricity generation sources do not properly reflect the likely decreasing carbon intensity of those sources over the lifetime of the scheme. When better assumptions are made as these matters, the Applicant themselves accept that the net benefit reduces from 2,570.80 kt CO_2e to 413.71 ktCO_2e. That represents only a 3.6% net reduction from the Applicant's stated baseline scenario.

3. All the Applicant's calculations are performed against a baseline of all the waste going to landfill in the 'without development' scenario, *for the entire 40 years of operation*. This is a highly questionable assumption, not only because of the UK Government policy to achieve a 65% recycling for municipal solid waste by 2035, but also because there are several other possible scenarios of what could happen without the proposed development.

[41] EN010110-000458 Vol 6.2 ES Chapter 14, Table 14.31
[42] kt = 1,000 tonnes
[43] Environmental Statement EN010110-000458 Vol 6.2 ES Chapter 14. Table 14.31, Net change in GHG emissions

4. In the absence of a definitive commitment to install and operate Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) at the site, the scheme will continue to contribute GHGs to the atmosphere in a way which is not consistent with a trajectory towards net zero by 2050.

9.4.5 **Negative:** Composition of waste. Appendix 14B of the ES states that the "GHG assessment methodology for stack emissions is based on the Carbon Assessment carried out by the Carbon Trust for the Cory Riverside Energy from Waste (EfW) Facility". However, the actual emissions of the proposed plant could vary a lot, depending mainly on the particular composition of the waste material.

9.4.6 The waste composition data used by the Applicant for estimating emissions was based on residual waste composition from Waste Resources and Action Programme's (WRAP) national survey of municipal waste for England in 2017. This is an average of waste data analysed from a number of waste samples from local authorities across England. However, this average data masks the large variation in waste composition that occurs in different places (and at different times) due to a number of factors including differing waste collection arrangements, housing types and socio-economic status.

9.4.7 The composition of the waste is the deciding factor as to which disposal method is lower carbon. In general, fossil carbon waste (such as plastics) generates fewer GHG emissions (actually none) if landfilled, but high emissions if burned. In contrast, biogenic carbon waste (such as paper, food, and garden waste) generates high emissions if landfilled (as it emits methane) but fewer emissions if burned (by converting methane to CO_2).

9.4.8 The Applicant's own sensitivity analysis (appendix 14C) has considered two alternative cases for waste composition; one in which all recyclable materials (paper, card, plastics, glass, metals, food, garden, wood, and textiles) are reduced by 20%, and another in which food and plastics are reduced by 90%. However, by simultaneously reducing both food waste (which contains biogenic carbon) and plastics waste (which contains fossil carbon) by the same percentage, the sensitivity analysis has failed to consider the separate impacts of reducing *either* the biogenic carbon content *or* the fossil carbon content.

9.4.9 To test the impact of alternative waste composition scenarios, Cambridgeshire County Council's Carbon and Energy Manager used the waste carbon calculator tool developed through the recent Local Government Association's Net Zero Innovation Project (a collaboration between Cambridgeshire County Council and University College London)[44]. Six different waste composition scenarios were examined: the three scenarios presented by the Applicant (baseline plus two alternatives) as well as Cambridgeshire's current residual waste composition, and two further alternatives; one for reduced plastics and one for reduced food and garden waste. The tool uses the IPCC guidelines (Methane Commitment methodology for landfill), and the 'continuous incineration, stoker' option was selected for EfW. Other fuel use was ignored for this purpose. The results gave higher emissions figures for EfW than those calculated by the Applicant for the baseline scenario. They also showed that landfilling would produce lower GHG emissions in four out of the six scenarios, with EfW producing

[44] [redacted]

lower emissions in two scenarios. The results of these calculations can be seen in the graph below.

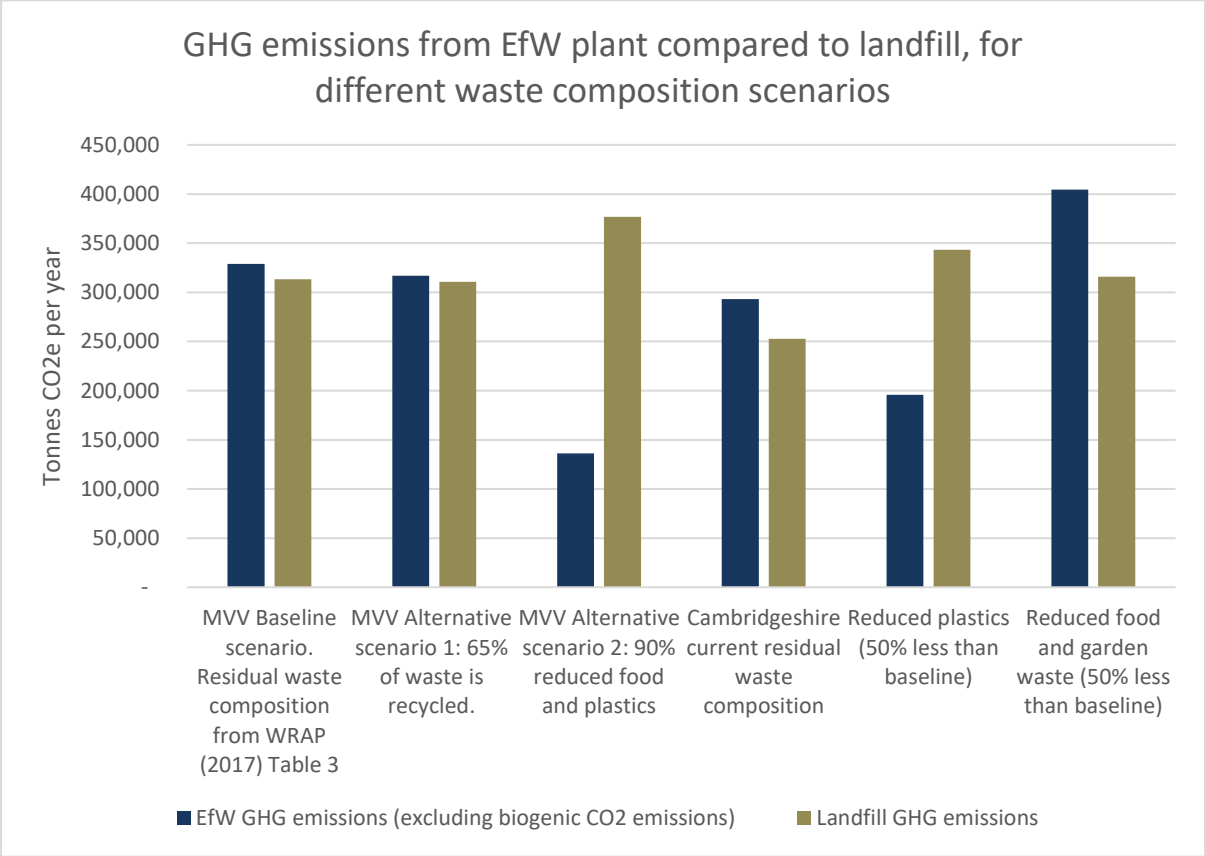

Figure 2 GHG emissions comparison

9.4.10 This shows that EfW is not always lower carbon than landfill, and also that the scale of GHG emissions varies hugely depending on the composition of the waste. The estimated emissions of ~11 million tCO_2e over 40 years could range from as little as 5 million tCO_2e to as much as 16 million tCO_2e, depending on the composition of waste.

9.4.11 It is also worth noting that should the composition of the waste differ, the quantity (tonnage) of waste required to keep the proposed plant operational could also change. This is because a lower calorific value of the waste would mean that a larger quantity of waste would be required in order to retain the same output of energy.

9.4.12 CO_2 from biogenic carbon has been excluded from the total emissions figures, in line with common GHG emissions accounting practice, on the basis that these emissions are regarded as 'carbon neutral', because the CO_2 released would be equivalent to the amount absorbed during the material's growth phase. Nonetheless, it is important to note that CO_2 emissions from combustion of biogenic carbon would still occur, and that CO_2 released by combustion would be emitted to the atmosphere at a faster rate than that which would occur through natural decomposition. If this biogenic CO_2 was taken into account, the emissions from EfW would be even higher.

9.4.13 **Negative:** Avoided emissions from electricity generation. Whilst there may be a small benefit of avoided GHG emissions from electricity generation, as electricity will be generated from burning the waste, instead of the typical mix of generation sources from the UK grid (which

includes a proportion of fossil-fuel burning sources, primarily gas), the size of this benefit will gradually reduce each year, as the UK electricity grid is forecast to decarbonise over time.

9.4.14 The figure used by the Applicant in their Environmental Statement for avoided GHG emissions from energy generation is incorrect, as these calculations have used a single constant carbon intensity of UK electricity for the entire 40-year period, which will never be the case, as it ignores the forecast decarbonisation of the UK electricity grid over time. These forecasts are published by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

9.4.15 When the forecast decarbonisation of the UK electricity grid over the proposed lifetime of the plant operation (2026 to 2066) is taken into account, the carbon impact of the proposed development is much worse – by more than 2.8 million tonnes CO_2e, compared to the figure originally claimed in the ES. The implications of this error have been discussed by the Applicant in their "Technical Note. Climate Change – Response to CCC Comments. Appendix A – Grid mix decarbonisation," issued to Cambridgeshire County Council in November 2022. This shows that the amount of GHG emissions offset by electricity generation from the proposed plant (based on the Treasury Green Book data table 1, forecast of electricity grid carbon intensity from 2026 to 2065, on a grid-average, generation-based basis), would be only 326 kt CO_2e in total over 40 years. This compares to 3,203 ktCO_2e claimed in the Applicant's original Environmental Statement, meaning this benefit is likely to be nearly ten times smaller than originally claimed.

9.4.16 The impact of this error on the overall difference in GHG emissions over the 40-year lifetime between the 'with development and 'without development' scenarios is thereby reduced to only 413 ktCO_2e (according to the Applicant), which is only a 3.6% difference, or an average of 10 ktCO_2e per year. This very small difference is far less than the value of the uncertainty in emissions due to variable waste composition.

9.4.17 **Negative:** Baseline 'without development' scenario. The baseline scenario set out by the Applicant 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. However, this is at best, unknown, and at worst, very unlikely, due to the UK and local waste strategies. Alternatives include reducing the overall volume of waste produced, through circular economy principles and behavioural change, increasing the proportion of residual waste that is recycled or composted, use of Mechanical-Biological Treatment (MBT), and increased capture rates of landfill gas.

9.4.18 The vast majority of emissions in the Applicant's 'without development' scenario are stated to be from methane from landfill, although it is unknown whether this would continue for the all of the waste for all of the 40 years. Furthermore, even if the waste did all go to landfill, the calculation of these emissions is imprecise and actual emissions from landfill could also vary enormously depending on the biogenic carbon content of the waste composition, as well as how the particular landfill sites are managed (for example, the lining and cap construction and the proportion of landfill gas that is captured and flared). This total should therefore be treated with caution and must be regarded as uncertain.

9.4.19 **Negative:** Carbon Capture and Storage. The scale of emissions is huge, in both scenarios presented by the Applicant, with and without the proposal being built. The main source of

emissions from either waste disposal method (landfill or incineration) are estimated by the Applicant to be in the same ballpark of around 11 million tonnes CO_2e over 40 years. The operational phase is predicted by the Applicant to occur over 40 years from 2026 to 2066. The impacts of these emissions would therefore be spread over the fourth, fifth, sixth and subsequent future carbon budgets once set.

9.4.20 These emissions, which extend way beyond the legally binding net zero deadline of 2050, will inevitably be released to the atmosphere, and contribute to further climate change, unless they are captured at source. The only way that a EfW plant could be compatible with net zero emissions is to install and operate CCS from day one of operation. Setting aside an area for future development of CCS is insufficient as it does not guarantee when or if CCS will become operational.

9.4.21 **Negative:** Conclusion regarding negative impacts from the operational phase
The assumptions made regarding the composition of the waste can very easily tip the balance as to which disposal method is the lowest carbon. For that reason, alongside the uncertainty of emissions from the baseline 'without development' scenario, and the correction to the figures for avoided emissions from electricity generation, there is now very little difference in the scale of likely emissions between the two scenarios set out by the Applicant, of with and without the proposal being built. This means that it must be regarded as uncertain whether or not the proposed development will lead to lower carbon emissions than alternative waste treatment scenarios without the development.

9.4.22 Comment on ES Significance: The Applicant's Environmental Statement refers to the latest Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) guidance, which states that: "*GHG emissions have a combined environmental effect that is approaching a scientifically defined environmental limit, as such any GHG emissions or reductions from a project might be considered to be significant… The crux of significance therefore is not whether a project emits GHG emissions, nor even the magnitude of GHG emissions alone, but whether it contributes to reducing GHG emissions relative to a comparable baseline consistent with a trajectory towards net zero by 2050*". However, it is not clear how the proposed development, as it stands, could be consistent with a trajectory towards net zero by 2050 or a 1.5 degrees warming scenario.

9.4.23 In any case, the significance of carbon emissions should not be decided by whether these are lower than an alternative landfill scenario, but by whether emissions align with a net zero trajectory. Council Officers do not agree with the conclusion that the Proposed Development will have a 'beneficial Significant effect'. The IEMA guidance states that "*Only projects that actively reverse (rather than only reduce) the risk of severe climate change can be judged as having a beneficial effect.*"

9.4.24 **Mitigations:** Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) has not been included in the proposal. CCS is probably necessary in order for the proposal to be compatible with a Net Zero pathway. In addition, the export of heat (as well as electricity) would increase the benefit from avoided emissions.

9.5 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

9.5.1 **Positive:** None identified.

9.5.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

9.5.3 **Negative:** GHG emissions from the decommissioning phase are estimated by the Applicant to be the same as those from the construction phase. It is therefore unknown what the scale of emissions from this phase will be, although there is bound to be some impact.

9.5.4 **Mitigations:** Consideration should be given to use of electric vehicles, plant and machinery, and selection of the lowest carbon option for disposal of waste materials from the deconstruction of the site, following the waste hierarchy.

Socio-Economics (ES Chapter 15)

10.1 Policy Context

10.1.1 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan:**

Whilst there are no specific policies in the MWLP directly addressing socioeconomics, Objective 6 of the MWLP is to "Support sustainable economic growth and the delivery of opportunities," and it seeks to achieve this through the enabling of adequate waste management and minerals development.

10.2 Construction Phase Impacts

10.2.1 **Positive:** It is accepted that this phase will potentially bring some employment opportunities for local people and that local businesses will benefit from additional trade. The commitment to use as local labour as possible and as local suppliers as possible is welcomed.

10.2.2 **Neutral:** The scale of the potential benefits to the local economy are uncertain.

10.2.3 **Negative:** The proposed scheme has resulted in a degree of stymying of new development in the area due to the risk of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) (this includes land owned by Fenland District Council) and the disruption and inconvenience that the construction phase will bring to the local area. The construction phase will impact on local businesses (particularly those on Algores Way) as a result of increased traffic, noise, vibration, and dust. This may impact on their ability to operate as normal and may impact negatively on their business expansion plans.

10.2.4 **Mitigations:** None identified.

10.3 Operational Phase Impacts

10.3.1 **Positive:** It is recognised that the proposed development will result in some long-term employment opportunities locally. The stated commitment to source local labour and train and develop the workforce is welcomed.

10.3.2 **Neutral:** The scale of the potential benefits to the local economy / employment market are uncertain and modest in scale.

10.3.4 **Negative:** It is understood that a number of local businesses operating within close proximity to the proposed site have raised concerns that the noise emissions from the site and the impact of the development on air quality will affect the ability of companies involved in food production to meet the required health and safety standards for their industry and therefore the businesses will have to close.

10.3.5 **Mitigations:** None identified.

10.4 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

10.4.1 **Positive:** It is accepted that this phase will bring some employment opportunities for local people and that local businesses will benefit from additional trade. The removal of the

development would alleviate local concerns about the detrimental impact of the facility on food businesses operating in the vicinity.

10.4.2 **Neutral:** The scale of the benefits to the local economy are uncertain.

10.4.3 **Negative:** The decommissioning phase will impact on local businesses as a result of noise, vibration, and dust. This may impact on their ability to operate as normal and may impact negatively on their business expansion plans.

10.4.4 **Mitigations:** None identified.

Health (ES Chapter 16)

11.1 Policy Context

11.1.1 The current advice on possible health effects from Energy from Waste Facilities as stated by the Health Protection Agency (now UK Health Security Agency) conclude that "*Modern, well manages incinerators make only a small contribution to local concentrations of air pollutants. It is possible that such small additions could have an impact on health but such effects, if they exist are likely to be very small and not detectable*."

11.1.2 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan - Policy 18: Amenity Considerations

> … *New development must not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of existing occupiers of any land or property, including: (a) risk of harm to human health or safety; …*

11.2 Construction Phase Impacts

11.2.1 **Positive:** None identified.

11.2.2 **Neutral:** None identified.

11.2.3 **Negative:** Outline Construction Transport Management Plan - The compliance measures that need to be in place to ensure that pre-EURO V vehicles do not enter the site during construction are not clearly set out and further details of any penalty system that will be in place to ensure compliance by contractors and sub-contractors should be provided.

11.3 Operational Phase Impacts

11.3.1 **Positive:** Public Health welcome the inclusion of an HGV Access Strategy and the statement in (paragraph 7.4.13) in regard to HGV emissions that "*All road-based vehicles used in for construction will be to a EURO standard V class or better"*.

11.3.2 We welcome the inclusion of an Information pack and communication pack for all contractors involved in the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases.

11.3.3 Public Health welcome the proposal to set up a liaison committee and employ a community liaison officer, although there is uncertainty about how long this community liaison officer post will be in place. However, it is essential that the appointment of such an officer takes place prior to the final commissioning to ensure that local residents and businesses have a point of contact from date of issue of the DCO.

11.3.4 Public Health welcome inclusion of an employment and skills strategy, particularly if it can address some of the health impacts due to unemployment in the local area as employment status and well-paid employment are key determinant of health outcomes and health inequality.

11.3.5 Public Health welcome the Outline Community Benefits Strategy and the proposed approach.

11.3.6 **Neutral:** None Identified.

11.3.7 **Negative:** The proposed operating hours of the plant of 07.00 to 20.00 are long and may generate Mental Health impacts on local residents. The hours of operation have not been assessed as a health impact and consideration of this should have been included in the application.

11.3.8 Outline Construction Transport Management Plan: The compliance measures that needed to be in place to ensure pre-EURO V vehicles do not enter the site during operation are not clear. For example, expansion on (Parra 8.2.5) with further details of any penalty system that will be in place to ensure compliance by contractors and sub- contractors.

11.3.9 **Mitigations:** Should consent be granted Public Health would seek discussion with the Applicant and consideration by the ExA on how health benefits can be included and secured in the criteria for assessing applications for sponsorship proposals. The ExA is asked to consider securing this commitment as part of the DCO, should consent be granted.

11.3.10 Public Health would welcome a discussion with the applicant on how health benefits from the Outline Community Benefits Strategy can be included in the criteria for assessing application as part of the sponsorship proposals.

11.4 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

11.4.1 **Positive**: None identified.

11.4.2 **Neutral**: None identified.

11.4.3 **Negative:** The Applicant has not adequately assessed the health impacts during decommissioning which will not be the same as construction impacts. There will be additional impacts due to decommissioning the combustion equipment which may or may not pose a risk to human health.

11.4.4 **Mitigations**: More information is needed from the Applicant to justify the position that there are no health impacts during decommissioning.

Major Accidents and Disasters (ES Chapter 17)

12.1 Policy Context

12.1.1 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan - Policy 18: Amenity Considerations**

… New development must not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of existing occupiers of any land or property, including: (a) risk of harm to human health or safety; …

12.2 Construction Phase Impacts

12.2.1 **Positive**: None identified.

12.2.2 **Neutral**: None identified.

12.2.3 **Negative**: None identified.

12.2.4 **Mitigations**: None identified.

12.3 Operation Phase Impacts

12.3.1 **Positive**: None identified.

12.3.2 **Neutral**: None identified.

12.3.4 **Negative**: Within the proposals there is an acknowledgement of the potential of a residual risk of flooding, during a breach of the raised tidal defences protecting the area, or a severe flood event that exceeds the flood management design standard.

12.3.5 **Mitigations**: The preparation and implementation of an Emergency Flood Response Plan is proposed for the operational phase of the facility to address the residual risk of tidal flooding. Cambridgeshire County Council Emergency Planning Team endorses this proposal to develop an Operational Flood Emergency Management Plan for the site, to be developed in cooperation with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (CPLRF). Once completed, the operator should undertake training, testing and validation of the plan with partners to ensure that the arrangements are effective. The operator would be expected to put in place an appropriate programme to periodically review, amend and update the arrangements, including liaison and validation with the CPLRF.

12.4 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

12.4.1 **Positive**: None identified.

12.4.2 **Neutral**: None identified.

12.4.3 **Negative**: None identified.

12.4.4 **Mitigations**: None identified.

Waste Policy matters, including Waste Availability and Composition

13.1 Summary

13.1.1 The proposed facility will be able to manage 625kt of non-hazardous combustible and will produce 60MWe (of which 6MWe will be consumed by the plant) of electrical power, and 55 MWth of available steam for export. The Councils are particularly concerned that the proposal will result in a concentration overprovision of recovery capacity within a relatively small area, which is not compliant with Policies 1, 3 and 4 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021) (MWLP). The Councils consider that this overprovision of capacity will undermine the deliverability and effectiveness of the Waste Local Plan in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, and nearby waste planning authority areas.

13.1.2 The Councils are also concerned that the proximity principle, that waste should generally be disposed of as near to its place of origin as possible will not be adhered to.

13.2 Policy Context

13.2.1 The following policies of the MWLP are relevant to the waste element of the proposal and should be given due consideration in the determination of this DCO:

- Policy 1: Sustainable Development and Climate Change (insofar relating to moving waste up the waste hierarchy)
- Policy 3: Waste Management Needs
- Policy 4: Providing for Waste Management
- Policy 19: Restoration and Aftercare

13.2.2 **Policy 1: Sustainable Development and Climate Change (in relation to moving waste up the waste hierarchy)**

Mineral and waste management proposals will be assessed against the overarching principle of whether the proposal would play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions. In undertaking that assessment, account will be taken of local circumstances such as the character, needs, constraints and opportunities of the plan area. Proposals which are not consistent with this principle will be refused.

Proposals should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Proposals which ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts will be supported.

Proposals, including operational practices and restoration proposals, must take account of climate change for the lifetime of the development (including the lifetime of its restoration scheme, where applicable). This will be through measures to minimise greenhouse gas emissions, and measures to ensure adaptation to future climate changes.

Proposals should, to a degree which is proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme, set out how this will be achieved, such as: …

(d) for waste management proposals, (i) how the principles of the waste hierarchy have been considered and addressed; and (ii) broadly quantifying the reduction in carbon dioxide and other relevant greenhouse gases e.g. methane, that should be achieved as part of the proposal, and how this will be monitored and addressed in future.

13.2.3 **Policy 3: Waste Management Needs**

The Waste Planning Authorities will seek to achieve net self-sufficiency in relation to the management of wastes arising from within the plan area, plus additional provision until 2026 in order to accommodate needs arising from London (specifically regarding non-apportioned household and commercial & industrial waste).

The following sets out the present capacity gap (indicated by a '-' figure) or surplus (indicated by a '+' figure). Figures in brackets in the 'existing capacity' rows indicate permitted capacity that is not yet operational but is considered likely to come online and contribute towards the waste management capacity within the plan period. Figures in brackets in the 'capacity gap' rows indicate the adjusted capacity gap (or surplus) that would result if permitted but not yet operational capacity becomes operational.

			Indicative total waste management capacity needs					
			2017	2017	2021	2026	2031	2036
Non-hazardous waste management – Recovery (million tonnes per annum)								
Preparing for re-use and recycling	Materials recycling (Mixed - Municipal, C&I)	Forecast arisings	0.613	0.662	0.696	0.754	0.806	0.852
		Existing capacity	0.670	0.746	0.734	0.732	0.732	0.732
		Capacity gap	+0.056	+0.084	+0.038	-0.022	-0.074	-0.120
	Composting (Mixed -Municipal, C&I)	Forecast arisings	0.169	0.199	0.207	0.225	0.240	0.249
		Existing capacity	0.332	0.324	0.349	0.349	0.349	0.349
		Capacity gap	+0.163	+0.124	+0.142	+0.124	+0.109	+0.100
	Inert recycling (CD&E)	Forecast arisings	0.056	0.087	0.066	0.067	0.068	0.068
		Existing capacity	0.149	0.184	0.435 (0.190)	0.410 (0.190)	0.410 (0.190)	0.410 (0.190)
		Capacity gap	+0.093	+0.097	+0.370 (+0.560)	+0.343 (+0.533)	+0.342 (+0.532)	+0.342 (+0.532)
Other recovery	Treatment and energy recovery processes* (Mixed - Municipal, C&I)	Forecast arisings	0.156	0.160	0.226	0.314	0.393	0.416
		Existing capacity	0.295	0.327	0.349 (0.035)	0.337 (0.575)	0.337 (0.575)	0.337 (0.575)
		Capacity gap	+0.139	+0.166	+0.124 (+0.159)	+0.023 (+0.598)	-0.057 (+0.518)	-0.080 (+0.495)
	Energy recovery (CD&E wood waste)	Forecast arisings	0.001	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
		Existing capacity	0	0	0	0 (0.048)	0 (0.048)	0 (0.048)
		Capacity gap	-0.001	-0.001	-0.002	-0.002 (+0.046)	-0.002 +0.046)	-0.002 (+0.046)

	Soil treatment (CD&E)	Forecast arisings	0.084	0.112	0.095	0.097	0.099	0.099
		Existing capacity	0.147	0.278	0.315	0.315	0.315	0.315
		Capacity gap	+0.062	+0.166	+0.220	+0.217	+0.216	+0.216

* Treatment and energy recovery processes refers to Anaerobic Digestion (AD), Energy from Waste (EfW) and other physical/chemical treatment processes.

			Indicative total waste management capacity 2016-2036		
			Total need	Estimated void space	Balance
Other recovery	CD&E	Inert recovery**	16.063	13.954	-2.109
	CD&E	Inert landfill**	3.856	1.932	-1.924
Disposal	Mixed - Municipal, C&I	Non-hazardous landfill (including SNRHW)	11.187	12.466	+1.278
		Non-hazardous landfill	10.817	8.525	-2.291
		Non-hazardous (SNRHW) landfill	0.371	3.940	+3.569

***Inert recovery and landfill have a total indicative need of 19.919Mt over the plan period, with an estimated remaining void space of 15.886Mt (around 90% of which is associated with the restoration of mineral extraction sites), leaving a deficit of 4.033Mt. This deficit is able to be accommodated however through void space created from mineral extraction operations that are or will be permitted over the plan period.*

The net capacity figures in the table above are not ceilings for recycling, treatment or recovery of waste. As such, proposals will, in principle (and provided they are in accordance with Policy 4: Providing for Waste Management), be supported if any of the following scenarios apply:

(a) it would assist in closing a gap identified in the table, provided such a gap has not already been demonstrably closed; or

(b) it would assist in closing a new gap identified in the future, with such identification to be set out in the annual monitoring of the Plan; or

(c) it moves waste capacity already identified in the above table up the waste hierarchy.

13.2.4 **Policy 4: Providing for Waste Management**

Across the plan area, existing and committed waste sites meet the majority of identified needs as set out in Policy 3, with the present forecast capacity gap over the plan period being less than substantial. As such, the strategy of this plan is not to make specific allocations for new waste sites. Instead this policy sets out a broad spatial strategy for the location of new waste management development; and criteria which will direct proposals to suitable sites, consistent with the spatial strategy.

In line with Objective 2 of this Plan, the Councils aim to actively encourage, and will in principle support the sustainable management of waste, which includes encouraging waste to move as far up the waste hierarchy as possible, whilst also ensuring net self-sufficiency over the Plan area. In order to ensure this aim can be met, waste management proposals must demonstrably contribute towards sustainable waste management, by moving waste up the waste hierarchy; and proposals for disposal must demonstrate that the waste has been pre-treated and cannot practicably be recycled. Proposals which do not comply with this spatial strategy for waste management development must also demonstrate the quantitative need for the development.

Unless otherwise supported by policy provision under one of the sub-headings in the second half of this Policy, the locational strategy of this Plan is that new or extended waste management facilities should be located within the settlement boundary of the existing or planned main urban areas of: Cambourne, Cambridge, Chatteris, Ely, Huntingdon, Littleport, March, Northstowe, Peterborough, Ramsey, Soham, St. Ives, St. Neots, Waterbeach New Town, Whittlesey or Wisbech.*

Where the proposed use and operations are potentially suitable within an urban setting (with suitability predominantly determined by applying policies in the Development Plan), then proposals should first consider the use of either:

(a) employment areas (as identified in the Development Plan as being suitable for industrial and storage or distribution type uses) within the settlement boundary of the above identified urban areas; or

(b) *any 'strategic' employment areas over 10ha (as identified in the Development Plan as being suitable for industrial and storage or distribution type uses), which might not necessarily be located at one of the above identified urban areas*.

Where such sites are demonstrated not to be available or suitable, using a proportionate amount of evidence, then support will be given, in principle, to locating facilities on other suitable sites within the urban areas identified above; or on the edge of them where it is demonstrated that the development is compatible with surrounding uses (including the physical size and throughput of the proposed development); and where there is a relationship with the settlement by virtue of landscape, design of the facility, and highway access. In applying these provisions, proposals should prioritise, and substantial weight will be given to, the use of suitable brownfield land within the above identified urban areas.

New waste management proposals that are unable to demonstrate benefits of co-location under part 2 of this policy, that are within the planning permission boundary of existing waste management sites (i.e. where extensions to the site area is not required) that already operate outside of the main settlements identified in the locational criteria above will, in principle, be supported. Each case will be considered on its own merits and will be assessed against all the policies within the Development Plan. For the avoidance of doubt, proposals for Water Recycling Centres will be considered under the provisions of Policy 11, rather than this Policy.

...

**a 'settlement boundary' is that which is defined on the relevant Policies Map for the area (e.g. a village envelope or urban area boundary). If no such boundary is identified on the Policies Map, it will constitute the edge*

of the built form of the settlement or, should an edge be defined in words (rather than map form) in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan, then that definition will be used in that local area.

13.2.5 **Policy 16: Consultation Areas**

Consultation Areas (CAs) are identified on the Policies Map, as a buffer around Mineral Allocation Areas (MAAs), Mineral Development Areas (MDAs), Waste Management Areas (WMAs), …

Development within a CA will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the development will:

(a) not prejudice the existing or future use of the area (i.e. the MAA, MDA, WMA, TIA or WRA) for which the CA has been designated; and

(b) not result in unacceptable amenity issues or adverse impacts to human health for the occupiers or users of such new development, due to the ongoing or future use of the area for which the CA has been designated.*

13.2.6 **Policy 19: Restoration and Aftercare**

All mineral extraction related proposals, and all waste management proposals which are likely to be temporary in nature, must be accompanied by a restoration and aftercare scheme proposal, secured if necessary by a legal agreement.

Such a proposal must, where appropriate:

(a) set out a phasing schedule so as to restore available parts of the site to a beneficial afteruse as soon as is reasonably practicable to do so, and to restore the whole of the site within an agreed timeframe. Only in exceptional circumstances, such as where the afteruse is a reservoir or on very small sites where phasing is not practical, will a non-phased scheme be approved;

(b) reflect strategic and local objectives for countryside enhancement and green infrastructure, including those set out in relevant Local Plans and Green Infrastructure Strategies, in the Local Nature Partnerships vision and strategic proposals, as well as any applicable wider Development Plan objectives;

(c) contribute, if feasible, to identified flood risk management and water storage needs (including helping to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere) or water supply objectives and incorporate these within the restoration scheme;

(d) demonstrate net biodiversity gain through the promotion, preservation, restoration and recreation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets;

(e) protect geodiversity and improve educational opportunities by incorporating this element within the restoration scheme, by leaving important geological faces exposed and retaining access to them; and

(f) incorporate within the restoration scheme amenity uses, such as formal and informal sport, navigation, and recreation uses.

Where it is determined that restoring the land to agricultural use is the most suitable option (in whole or part), then the land must be restored to the same or better agricultural land quality as it was pre-development.

In the case of mineral workings, restoration schemes which will contribute to addressing or adapting to climate change will, in principle, be supported e.g. through flood water storage; through biodiversity proposals which create habitats that enhance ecological networks (and thus assist species to adapt to climate change); and/or through living carbon sinks.

Any site-specific restoration and after-care requirements are set out in Policy 2: Providing for Mineral Extraction. Where there is a conflict between this policy and Policy 2, then the provisions of Policy 2 take precedence.

13.3 Construction Phase Impacts

13.3.1 **Positive:** None Identified.

13.3.2 **Neutral**: Waste generation during construction. Construction will involve an element of waste generation, but it is in the developer's interest to minimise, reuse, recycle and recover materials, and this should be addressed through the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

13.3.3 **Neutral:** Replacement of waste management capacity and effect on nearby safeguarded Waste Management Area. The proposed site is located on top of the Algores Way Waste Management Area (WMA), and within the Consultation Area for the Wisbech Household Recycling Centre WMA as identified on the MWLP Policies Map. The proposed development will replace the Algores Way site, which is currently a waste management site handling construction, demolition and excavation waste, and recycled aggregates. In capacity terms, the proposal will result in the loss of this site, but it will be replaced with a facility managing a different type of waste with a significantly increased capacity. The proposed development is unlikely to affect the Wisbech Household Recycling Centre. In this context, the Council is content that the proposed development meets criteria (c) of Policy 16: Consultation Areas, and the proposal is compliant with Policy 16 as a whole.

13.3.4 **Negative:** None Identified.

13.3.5 **Mitigations:** None identified.

13.4 Operational Phase Impacts

13.4.1 **Positive:** As noted in paragraph 14.4 of the RR, if the facility can meet the efficiency requirements to be considered an R1 class and therefore, be considered a recovery facility as opposed to a disposal facility, then it could potentially enable the recovery of 238kt of waste that is currently disposed of to landfill in Cambridgeshire, and up to 625ktpa from a wider regional area.

13.4.2 **Neutral:** None Identified.

13.4.3 **Negative:** Deliverability of Recovery Capacity in other Waste Planning Authority Areas. The operation of the facility is likely to affect the deliverability of Waste Local Plans outside of Cambridgeshire in those Waste Planning Authority Areas from which waste would be sourced. If either this proposal and / or the already permitted PREL Energy Park / Peterborough Green Energy Project[45] (PGEL) are constructed this would result in 1.2mt of recovery capacity in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough areas, either of which is sufficient to accommodate the residual waste of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough several times over.

13.4.4 Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council are both signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Waste Planning Authorities of the East of England (March 2019), which seeks to provide for net self-sufficiency in waste management capacity. This means that the signatories can plan in confidence that they only are required to meet the need of their area, unless it has been explicitly raised by another authority; and that by planning to provide for the needs of only that area, there is an appropriate distribution of waste management facilities in locations proximate to the waste arisings. An over provision in one area is likely to result in other areas being unable to meet the requirement to provide for net self-sufficiency, as this capacity will already exist elsewhere.

13.4.5 Given the current state of strategic planning, other areas will be able to see that there is over provision in a nearby area, but they will have no certainty as to if that capacity is available to their plan area. Consequently, they will still need to provide suitable alternative recovery capacity withing their plan areas, but viability and deliverability will be undermined by the uncertainty caused by this proposal. Ultimately, this undermines the Local Plan led system and the confidence that is placed in it by local communities.

13.4.6 **Negative:** Uncertainty for two communities. If this proposal is consented, then there will be consent for two large facilities (this proposed facility and PREL / PGEL) providing 1.2mt of capacity within a relatively small geographic area. Whichever facility is constructed first is likely to impact on and reduce the viability of the other. This will result in uncertainty for the communities of Wisbech and Peterborough, neither of which will know if one, both or neither of these facilities will be constructed. It should be noted the PREL / PGEL consent has been technically implemented, so there is no date on which that consent will expire.

13.4.7 **Negative:** Disposal of Air Pollution Control, Bottom Ash and Metal Slag. The EfW will produce Air Pollution Control (APC) residue and bottom-ash which includes metal slag. APC residue of the facility will require disposal at an appropriate landfill. There is the potential to recycle the bottom ash, but it would need to be transported by road to another facility. Associated impacts with the incineration and transport of waste, such as traffic, amenity, and climate change, are set out under the other sections of this document.

13.4.8 **Negative:** Minimum amount of waste required for operation. The current documentation in the application submission does not set out the minimum amount of waste required for the facility to operate. This information is important in order to be able to understand whether there is likely to be insufficient waste to power the power plant in the future. Impact of insufficient fuel is, therefore, uncertain, and potentially negative as the operator may have to source waste that could potentially be recycled.

[45] See paragraphs 14.8 and 14.9 of the Councils' RR.

13.4.9 **Negative:** Query of R1 Status. Paragraph 2.2.5 of the Waste Fuel Availability Assessment [APP-094] states that for energy generation to be considered as waste treatment (rather than disposal) it must achieve a minimum level of energy recovery efficiency, as specified in the revised Waste Framework Directive (rWFD). There is a footnote to this paragraph stating that the Proposed Development will be designed to meet the relevant energy recovery co-efficient (i.e. R1 of 0.65). However, the Council has been unable to identify the documentation detailing how this will be achieved and if it requires both heat and power recovery to be operating to achieve the required energy recovery co-efficient. If the Proposed Development cannot achieve the required level of energy recovery efficiency, it will be regarded as a waste disposal operation under the rWFD, and not a recovery operation. The impact of a facility considered as a disposal facility would not be moving waste up the waste hierarchy and would therefore have a potentially significant negative impact on the ability to move waste up the hierarchy.

13.4.10 **Negative:** Moving Waste up the Waste Hierarchy and Compliance with Policies 3 and 4 of the MWLP / Waste Availability and effect on MWLPs. Both Policy 3 and Policy 4 of the MWLP require that any proposed facilities maximise the waste being moved up the waste hierarchy. The distance that waste is likely to travel to the proposed facility is currently unknown, and there is no certainty as to the maximum distance that it could be brought in from. The impact of this is likely to be seen in relation to the climate change, traffic, and the sustainable management of waste. The further distance travelled and the larger the quantity of waste will result in increasingly negative impacts. Owing to the facility operating on a regional scale, any locally positive effect on moving waste up the waste hierarchy is likely to be outweighed by the distances that waste will need to travel to fuel the constant operation of the facility.

13.4.11 There is a tension in the project between seeking to reduce the distance that waste travels by sourcing waste that could be managed further up the waste hierarchy and / or bringing in waste over longer distances that is only suitable for recovery.

13.4.12 **Negative:** Spatial distribution of waste. The proposed facility will require waste as fuel. The Applicant has defined the “in-scope waste” in the Waste Fuel Assessment (WFA) as waste being suitable fuel for the facility and specifically relates to waste being sent to landfill within four specific European Waste Codes in their study area; which broadly translate to black-bag waste, both household and commercial, that is currently being sent to landfill. This includes waste that may have been processed into refuse derived fuel as well.

13.4.13 The map below illustrates the location of the in-scope waste being sent to landfill, as listed in the second column of Table 4.4 of the WFA. It has been prepared using the Environment Agency’s Waste Data Interrogator 2018, which is the same information the WFA is based on.

13.4.14 This map does not depict the 1,507 tonnes attributed to Waste Planning Authority (WPA) not codeable (Bedfordshire), or the 100,539 tonnes attributed to WPA not codeable (East of England), neither of which appear in Table 4.4 of the WFA. However, it does include tonnages for Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea which were, (albeit stated to the contrary in Table 4.4,) not included in the Essex tonnage.

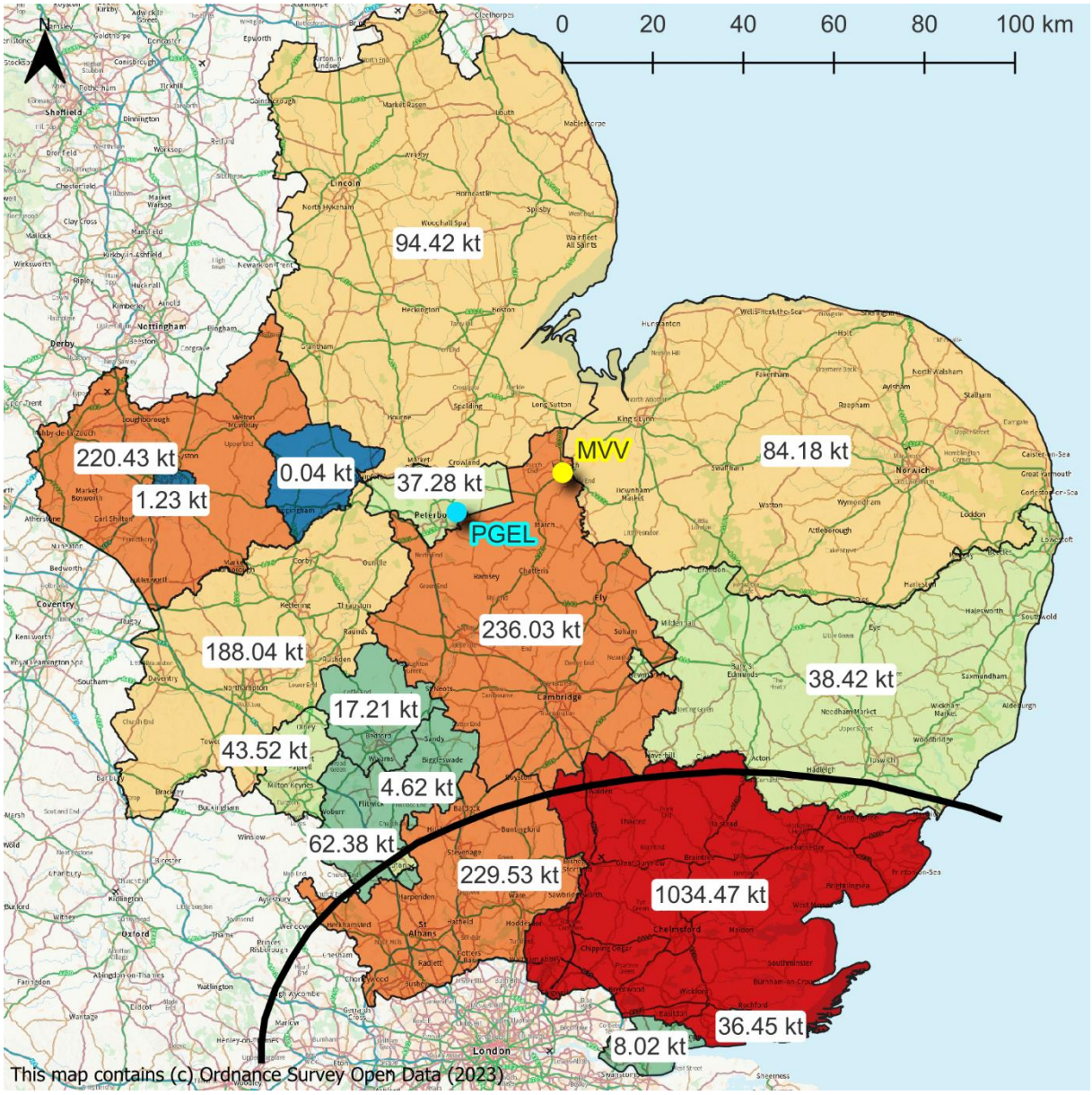

Figure 3 Illustration of WFA Table4.4 waste disposed to non-hazardous landfill by Waste Planning Authority Area (Data Source: Environment Agency's Waste Data Interrogator 2018)

Data Values: Essex: 1034.47kt; Cambridgeshire: 236.03kt; Hertfordshire: 229.53kt; Leicestershire: 220.43kt; Northamptonshire: 188.04kt; Lincolnshire: 94.42kt; Norfolk: 84.18kt; Luton: 62.38kt; Milton Keynes: 43.52kt; Suffolk: 38.42kt; Peterborough: 37.28kt; Southend-on-Sea: 36.45kt; Bedford: 17.21kt; Thurrock: 8.02kt; Central Bedfordshire: 4.62kt; Leicester City: 1.23kt; Rutland: 0.04kt;

13.4.15 As is illustrated above, the main concentration of waste that would be available to feed the facility is located to the south of Cambridgeshire.

13.4.16 Of the 2,292 kilo-tonnes[46] of waste depicted on the map above (out of a total of 2,438kt), over half (1,264kt) arises from Essex (1034.47kt) and Hertfordshire (229.53), with an additional 36.45kt and 8.02kt arising in Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea respectively. Other

[46] 1Kilo-tonne = 1,000 tonnes.

large concentrations are Cambridgeshire (236.03kt) itself and in Leicestershire (220.43kt) and Northamptonshire (188.04kt) to the west.

13.4.17 If PGEL / PREL (an EfW facility that has consent for the importation of 595ktpa of waste) and the proposed development were both operational, they would together provide 1.2 million tonnes of capacity, both sourcing waste from the area identified above. As can be seen from the distribution of waste, there is only just sufficient waste outside of Essex and Hertfordshire to fuel both plants.

13.4.18 In relation to the distribution of waste, it is understandable that where there are areas with smaller tonnages they be required to travel further to be managed; the larger tonnages of waste arising from Essex, Hertfordshire and Leicestershire would be traveling long distances to be managed. Particularly given that Leicestershire does not share a border with Cambridgeshire, and whilst Essex, Hertfordshire and Northamptonshire do, meaning those Counties located to the south of the County would need to travel the length of Cambridgeshire to reach the facility. Whilst the County of Northamptonshire is closer at its farthest point from the facility, it is still located over 100km away. If this proposed facility were to be permitted so close to PGEL, it would result in the waste required to feed the facility traveling longer distances than if it was located closer to those waste arisings.

13.4.19 Furthermore, if other recovery facilities are developed during the lifetime of the facility, it would result in this EfW having to source waste from further afield. This would result in the movement of waste over ever increasing distances, which in turn would have negative impacts including climate change, traffic, and the sustainable use of resources. Smaller, more localised facilities would result in a more sustainable outcome.

13.4.20 **Negative:** No certainty of local waste management provision. Owing to this being a commercial facility, any waste received will be because of commercial agreements or contracts. There is therefore no certainty that this proposed facility will receive waste from the local area or be able to receive that waste, if the need arose. Waste operators often prefer to use their own facilities and transport waste over longer distances rather than sending waste to a rivals' facility which may be closer in distance. Given the scale of the facility, its operation would likely entail the transporting of waste over significant distances.

13.4.21 **Negative:** Updated Government Waste Minimisation Targets. In January 2023, the Government published its Environmental Improvement Plan[47] which has a target is to reduce residual waste (excluding major mineral wastes) kg per capita by 50% by 2042 (from 2019 levels). This, in combination with the Government's Circular Economy Package[48] (which sets a target to recycle 65% of municipal waste by 2035), has the potential to affect the waste available to fuel the proposed facility. It is acknowledged that this will not result in a direct 50% reduction in fuel available, owing to population growth and the facility only using certain types of waste. However, if both targets are be achieved, it is likely that there will be a reduction in available waste. Consequently, the facility will need to source its fuel from further afield.

13.4.22 Additionally, if constructed, this facility may potentially receive waste which was previously sent to other recovery facilities, which may affect their ability to operate. This issue may not

[47] Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (page 147)
[48] Circular Economy Package policy statement - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

immediately present itself, but in the longer term should additional facilities be consented, or there be a reduction in available fuel, this situation could potentially arise.

13.4.23 **Negative:** Distribution of Recovery Facilities. For the most sustainable outcome, a network of waste recovery facilities distributed evenly is more likely to result in lower distances of travel overall. Concentrating so much waste recovery capacity, whether it be from PGEL / PREL and / or MVV is not seen as a sustainable option and is therefore contrary to MWLP Policy 1 which opens:

> *"Mineral and waste management proposals will be assessed against the overarching principle of whether the proposal would play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions. In undertaking that assessment, account will be taken of local circumstances such as the character, needs, constraints and opportunities of the plan area. Proposals which are not consistent with this principle will be refused…"*

13.4.24 **Negative:** Compatibility with surrounding land uses (Use Class E). The surrounding industrial estate appears, from a desktop survey, to include buildings that could be considered to fall within Use Class E (Commercial, Business and Service) such as retail, medical and health services, and creche, day nursery and day centres. Planning permission is not required to change between uses within the same Use Class. The Councils have requested that the applicant undertake a land use survey to ascertain whether there are any uses within Use Class E which are sensitive to being in close proximity to an EFW, and explain how any land use conflict would be resolved, if a sensitive activity was established near the facility after its construction.

13.5 Decommissioning Phase Impacts

13.5.1 **Positive:** Decommissioning of the site would enable the use of the site for other uses, (see Negative below).

13.5.2 **Neutral:** None Identified.

13.5.3 **Negative:** It is difficult to anticipate the exact nature of the effects associated with decommissioning - it will depend on the form of decommissioning that is taking place, how much of the facility is being recommissioned at that time, repurposed, or being demolished in its entirety, and what is proposed to replace it. Therefore, the decontamination of the site and management of waste generated from decommissioning would require consideration at that time.

13.5.4 MWLP Policy 19: Restoration and Aftercare contains a number of requirements. All mineral extraction related proposals, and all waste management proposals which are likely to be temporary in nature, must be accompanied by a restoration and aftercare scheme proposal, secured, if necessary, by a legal agreement. And, where appropriate must meet criteria (a) – (f). Of those, the following criteria are considered to be particularly relevant for the decommissioning of the proposed facility:

> *(a) set out a phasing schedule so as to restore available parts of the site to a beneficial afteruse as soon as is reasonably practicable to do so, and*

to restore the whole of the site within an agreed timeframe. Only in exceptional circumstances, such as where the afteruse is a reservoir or on very small sites where phasing is not practical, will a non-phased scheme be approved;

(b) reflect strategic and local objectives for countryside enhancement and green infrastructure, including those set out in relevant Local Plans and Green Infrastructure Strategies, in the Local Nature Partnerships vision and strategic proposals, as well as any applicable wider Development Plan objectives;

(d) demonstrate net biodiversity gain through the promotion, preservation, restoration and recreation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets;

13.5.5 The following criteria do not appear to be relevant at this time, but due consideration should be given to them when the Decommissioning Plan is prepared:

(*c) contribute, if feasible, to identified flood risk management and water storage needs (including helping to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere) or water supply objectives and incorporate these within the restoration scheme;*

(e) protect geodiversity and improve educational opportunities by incorporating this element within the restoration scheme, by leaving important geological faces exposed and retaining access to them; and

(f) incorporate within the restoration scheme amenity uses, such as formal and informal sport, navigation, and recreation uses.

13.5.6 The Councils recognise that with decommissioning not anticipated until the end of the life of the facility, it is not possible to anticipate the wording of future planning policy. However, the requirement as drafted do not refer to national or local policy. This is likely to result in an unsatisfactory restoration without alteration.

Cumulative Impacts (ES Chapter 18)

14.1 Summary

14.1.1 In drafting this LIR, the Councils have considered each of the potential impacts of the proposed development on an individual basis, along with whether the proposed mitigations are sufficient to address them. It should be noted that where there is reference in this LIR to impacts being classed as 'Not Significant', this is a technical classification based on set environmental criteria and whilst this categorisation is relevant in relation to the ES, it does not mean that the impacts do not exist or should be discounted.

14.1.2 It is considered that some of the significant impacts that are detailed throughout the LIR are unable to be suitably and sufficiently addressed by the mitigations as currently set out in the application submission and the draft DCO, in particular those relating to the impacts in climate change, landscape and visual, waste needs, the waste hierarchy, and local waste policy.

14.1.3 Furthermore, as noted in sections 3, 4, 5, and 15 of the Councils' RR, although the cumulative assessment within the Applicant's ES has considered the key issues, concerns have been raised regarding the traffic and transport and air quality assessments as they do not accurately assess the potential impact on the TCA, the proposed Free School site or wider school sites.

14.1.4 Although the consideration of each impact, at each stage of the project, was necessary in order to provide the ExA with sufficient detail, it is important to emphasise that whilst some of the impacts detailed may appear be unobjectionable, these are not independent standalone issues but impacts that will take place simultaneously and will be felt cumulatively. Therefore, the ExA is requested to have regard to the cumulative impact of the proposed development on air quality, noise and vibration, traffic and transport, landscape and visual, climate change, and health, at each phase of the proposed development and should consent be granted ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are secured in the DCO.

14.1.5 **Mitigations:** The Councils have set out in this LIR the specific impacts and mitigations that would be required to address them, should the ExA grant consent for the facility. In addition to the mitigations detailed above, the Councils wish to highlight the resource necessary to properly consider, consult, and respond to the submissions from the applicant relating to the requirements, should the DCO be granted. Moreover, the ongoing monitoring of the site, throughout each of the phases (construction, operation, and decommissioning) will be a key matter of local concern and therefore, the Councils would request that the ExA provides a mechanism within the DCO for the application of fees to ensure that the applicant can be charged fees to allow for the proactive monitoring of the site to ensure compliance with the requirements.

Annexes

Annex 1 – Economic and Social Background Context

1.1 Economic background

1.1.1 The ONS 2021 Census data and area profiling tool can be used to summarise the economic background of Wisbech[49].

Socio Economic Classification

1.1.2 Census 2021[50] uses the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification system to classify the population by their employment relations and conditions of their occupations. Figure 3 below shows the percentage of Wisbech residents in each socio-economic classification, compared to the England average.

1. Compared to England as a whole, a lower proportion of Wisbech residents aged 16+ are in managerial or professional occupations (17% in Wisbech compared to 33% in England as a whole).

2. A much higher proportion of Wisbech residents Aged 16+ are in 'Routine Occupations' (30% in Wisbech compared to 12% as a whole). These are positions which have a basic labour contract and are engaged in 'routine occupations'.

3. A higher proportion of Wisbech residents have never worked or are long-term unemployed compared to England as a whole (10.8% in Wisbech compared to 8.5% in England as a whole).

[redacted]

[50] *Census 2021 took place during a period of rapid change. The labour market data reflect a situation when many more people than at the time of the 2011 Census were working from home or on furlough*

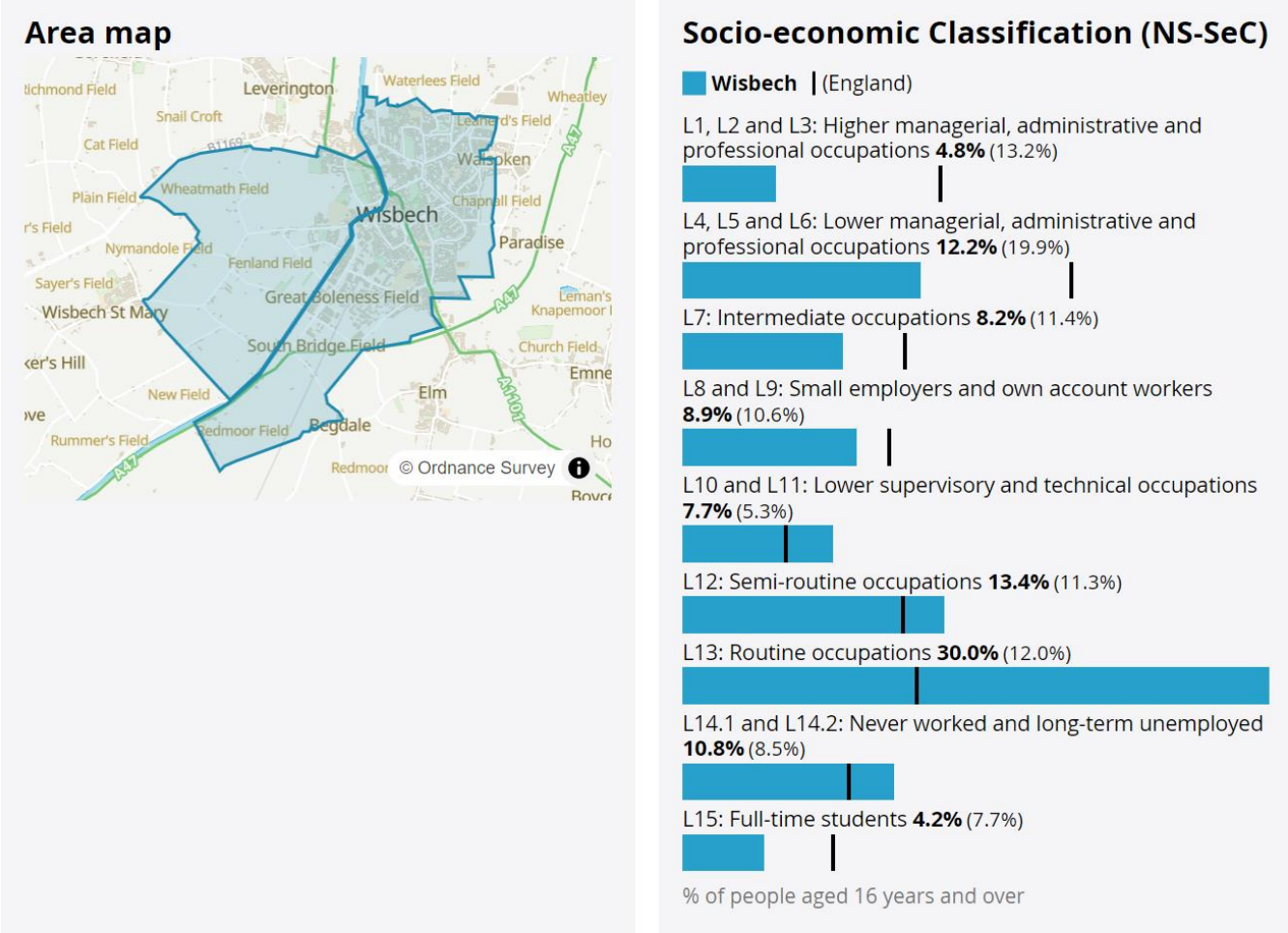

Figure 4 Socio Economic classification of Wisbech

Economic activity

1.1.3 Economic activity status explains the percentage of people 16 and over in employment, looking for work, waiting to start a job, or economically inactive.

1.1.4 The definition of Economically Inactive is: Those who have not sought work in the last four weeks and/or are not available to start work in the next two weeks. Reasons for being economically inactive could include being a full-time student, having caring responsibilities, being sick and/or disabled or being retired.

1.1.5 In Wisbech, 40.1% of residents are 'economically inactive' (compared to 39.1% in England), 56.5% of residents are 'economically active: in employment' (compared to 57.4% in England), and 3.4% were 'economically active: unemployed' (compared to 3.5% in England).

1.1.6 Employment History illustrates the employment history of people aged 16 and over in Wisbech who are not currently working, as shown in Figure 4 below. Of the percentage of people who were 'not in employment', 11% of these had worked in the last 12 months, which is lower than the England percentage (13.2%), and 28.2% had never worked, which is higher than the England percentage (25.6%).

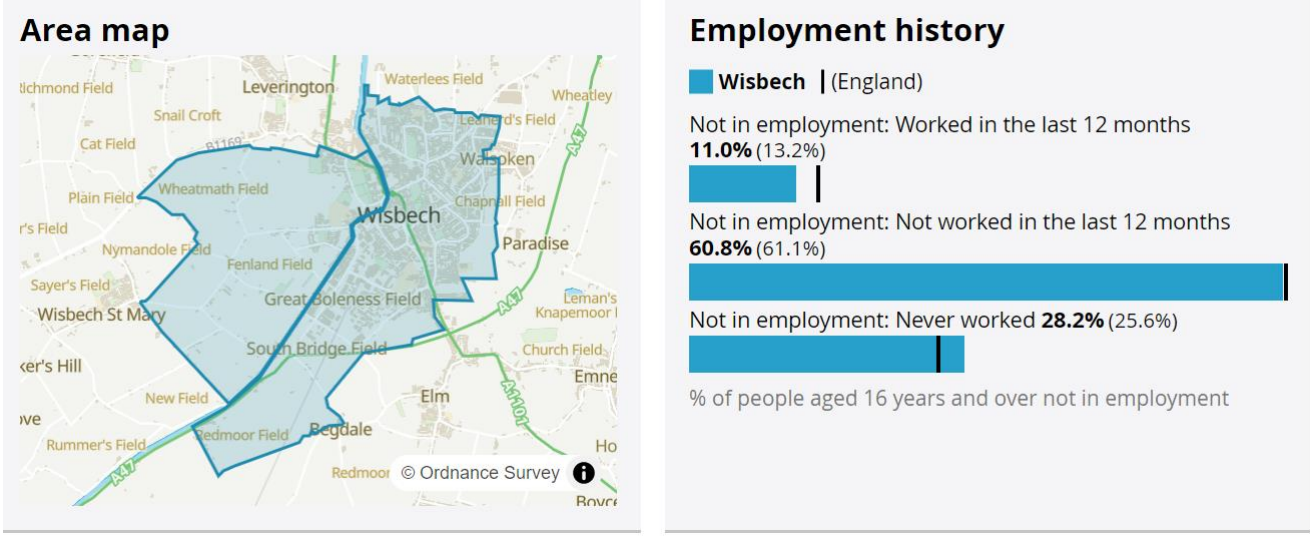

Figure 5 Employment history in Wisbech

1.2 Social and Demographic

1.2.1 The proposed DCO sits within the **Medworth Ward** of Wisbech.
In 2021 it was estimated that there were 2,800 people living in the ward, with a higher proportion of young children (under 5 years), younger adults (25-44 years) and older people (75+ years) compared to both Wisbech and Fenland. It is forecast that the population in the ward will increase by 8.6% (240 people) over the next 5 years, followed by a 1.3% decrease in the subsequent 5 years to 2031. Population density is higher in Medworth when compared to Fenland, at treble the rate, but Wisbech has double the population density of Medworth. Life expectancy in males is low in Medworth (69 years) compared to Fenland (78 years) and is similar in females (81 years); a gap of 12 years between sexes.

1.2.2 Medworth is more relatively deprived than Fenland as a whole and has similar deprivation levels to Wisbech in terms of income deprivation of the total population, children and older people. It is estimated that a quarter of households in Medworth are fuel deprived, higher than the average for Wisbech (17%). More recent census data are yet to be released, but in 2011 Medworth had a significantly high proportion of older people living alone compared to Wisbech, as well as a higher proportion of overcrowded households. Unemployment, both overall and long-term, is relatively high in Medworth, at double the rate of Fenland and treble the rate of Cambridgeshire.

1.2.3 Birth rates are higher in Medworth, with a similar proportion of low-birth-weight babies, compared to Wisbech. Levels of childhood excess weight (overweight and obesity) in Medworth are similar to those in Fenland, with around a quarter of Reception pupils recorded as having excess weight and almost four in ten Year 6 pupils. Modelled estimates of smoking prevalence in 15 years olds are lower in Medworth than both Wisbech and Fenland. In Fenland, secondary school pupils reported less favourable healthy behaviours compared to the Cambridgeshire average for some indicators including being less active, eating less fruit and vegetables, and consumption of alcohol. They are also more likely to be around someone who smokes. Pupils in Fenland score lower on aspects of well-being, life satisfaction, and resilience than the county average

1.2.4 Self-reported limiting long-term health conditions and morbidity were significantly higher in Medworth compared to Wisbech in 2011. Prevalence of asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and depression varies by practice across Wisbech, with one of the practices in close proximity to Medworth, having significantly high prevalence rates compared to the average for Wisbech.

1.2.5 Incidence of cancer (overall, breast, colorectal, lung and prostate) in Medworth does not differ significantly to England. However, the area does have high emergency hospital rates and mortality rates. Medworth has significantly high emergency hospital admissions for all causes, coronary heart disease, strokes, myocardial infarctions and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease compared to England, as well as high emergency admissions for intentional self-harm, injuries in under 15 year olds and alcohol attributable admissions. At Primary Care Network (PCN) level Wisbech has a significantly high emergency respiratory rate compared to the north of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, with one of the practices within the PCN having a high rate compared to the overall PCN.

1.2.6 Medworth has a statistically higher number of deaths from all causes, all circulatory disease and coronary heart disease than expected when compared to England, as well as significantly high premature mortality (under 75 years) rates for all causes, circulatory disease and diseases considered preventable.

1.2.7 **The town of Wisbech** has statistically significantly high proportions of people living in income deprivation, child poverty and older people poverty compared to Fenland. In 2011 There are a significantly high proportion of older people living alone, as well as overcrowded households compared to Fenland. Around 17% of households in Wisbech were in fuel poverty in 2020 compared to 15% in Fenland. Wisbech has a high level of population density compared to Fenland and Cambridgeshire.

1.2.8 Around a fifth of Wisbech residents reported long-term health conditions and morbidity in the 2011 Census, a similar proportion to Fenland. Wisbech has a higher live birth rate than Fenland, with the proportion of low birth weight births being statistically similar. Modelled estimates suggest that smoking prevalence at aged 15 years in Wisbech is lower than the estimates for Fenland.

1.2.9 Wisbech has higher emergency hospital admissions than expected for all causes, coronary heart disease, stroke, heart attacks and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and has higher emergency hospital admissions than expected for emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm, hip fractures in older people and alcohol attributable conditions. Incidence of lung cancer is statistically higher than to England, with more registrations than expected given the demographics of the area

1.2.10 Wisbech has a statistically higher number of deaths in people aged under 75 years from all causes, cancer, circulatory disease and diseases considered preventable than expected when compared to England, and has a statistically higher number of deaths from all causes, all cancer, all circulatory disease and respiratory disease than expected when compared to England

1.2.11 The ward of Medworth is within close proximity to the three GP practices in Wisbech, as listed below. There are 4 practices in Wisbech Primary Care Network (PCN). Clarkson and Trinity have significantly higher emergency hospital admissions compared to Wisbech PCN, with the PCN having a high rate compared to the North Accountable Business Unit (ABU –

geographic area for the North ABU covers Peterborough, Fenland, and Huntingdonshire Council areas). In 2021/22 there were 671 emergency respiratory admissions to hospital from the three closest practices to Medworth. Trinity Surgery has a significantly high respiratory disease emergency admission rate compared to the Wisbech PCN rate. Clarkson and Trinity practices have significantly high rates compared to the North ABU. The prevalence of asthma, COPD and depression in Clarkson Surgery are significantly higher than the average for Wisbech PCN. Wisbech PCN has a significantly higher prevalence of COPD compared to the North ABU.

Annex 2 – Local Policy

1.1 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) 2021

1.1.1 The current development framework for minerals and waste development in Cambridgeshire is the MWLP, adopted in July 2021. The document provides a spatial strategy for minerals and waste development in the county and contains policies governing decisions about applications for planning permission. The MWLP also contains policies affecting other kinds of development to the extent to which they affect safeguarded minerals and waste development or potential minerals reserves.

1.1.2 The MWLP policies that are relevant to the consideration of the impact and acceptability of the proposed Medworth CHP development are:

Policy 1	Sustainable Development and Climate Change
Policy 3	Waste Management Needs
Policy 4	Providing for Waste Management
Policy 17	Design
Policy 18	Amenity Considerations
Policy 19	Restoration and Aftercare
Policy 20	Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy 21	The Historic Environment
Policy 22	Flood and Water Management
Policy 23	Traffic, Highways and Rights of Way

1.2 Fenland Local Plan (FLP) 2014

1.2.1 The FLP, which was adopted in 2014, contains the policies and broad locations for the growth and regeneration of Fenland. The FLP provides a vision for what Fenland could be like in 2031 and contains objectives explaining what is trying to be achieved along with a set of policies setting out what and how much development should take place.

1.2.2 The Fenland Local Plan:

- is underpinned by a desire to strengthen the health and wellbeing of Fenland's residents;
- is aiming to build 11,000 new homes between now and 2031, with large new housing areas on the edge of Wisbech, March, Chatteris and Whittlesey;
- provides new land to attract new businesses and jobs;
- sets out policies to ensure development is of high quality, sustainable and meets the needs of everyone; and,
- sets out policies to ensure all the infrastructure, such as play areas, new schools and upgraded sewerage disposal, are provided at the same time as the new homes.

1.2.3 The Polices of the FLP that are relevant to the impact of the proposed development are:

LP1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
LP2	Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents
LP3	Spatial Strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy, and the Countryside

LP6 Employment, Tourism, Community Facilities and Retail
LP14 Responding to Climate Change and Managing the Risk of Flooding in Fenland
LP16 Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments Across the District
LP18 The Historic Environment
LP19 The Natural Environment