



Strategic Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee held at The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD on Tuesday 15 August 2023 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Kevin Parker (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ann Addison
Councillor Alan Chantler
Councillor Rosie Herring
Councillor Rosie Humphreys
Councillor Charles Manners
Councillor Ken Pritchard
Councillor Danielle Stone

Substitute Members:

Councillor Stephen Clarke

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Maggie Clubley
Councillor André González De Savage
Councillor David James
Councillor Bob Purser
Councillor Cathrine Russell

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Jonathan Harris
Shaun Robson, Development Management Manager - Northampton Area
Nicky Scaife, Development Management Team Leader
Chris Burton, Principal Planning Policy Officer
Katherine Hall, Head of Legal (Place)
Jeverly Findlay, Committee Officer
Ed Bostock, Democratic Services Officer

134. **Declarations of Interest**

None advised.

135. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee of 18 July 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

136. **Chair's Announcements**

None advised.

137. **WNS/2022/2402/EIA Land South of East Lodge Farm, Quinton Road, Courteenhall**

The Planning Officer presented the report to the Committee. The application sought approval for the construction and operation of an Anaerobic Digestion facility and associated infrastructure and landscape planting. The application was supported by an Environmental Statement. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained several corrections to the report. A further condition would be added, with consent from the applicant, regarding a 30-year remedial strategy, where the land would be restored after 30 years, or a fresh application would be welcomed by the applicant.

In response to Members questions the Planning Officer advised:

- Regarding a query around fire safety, it was explained that the Environment Agency (EA) would consider any potential impacts, including safety, within their permitting scheme.
- A condition was included that required the submission of a primary routing plan to be submitted to the Council which would be provided to all of the applicant's contractors to show which routes they should use; they were proposed to be mainly through fields to the south of the M1 (Highways comments were contained in the report; the applicant originally asked for a Section 106 Agreement but were happy with Condition 14).
- Fire plans and risk assessments were a requirement of the EA for permits and they would only be granted when the EA were satisfied. Further works would need to be undertaken if a permit was not granted.
- A condition was proposed which related to odors; this was dealt with by the EA permitting scheme also.
- There were no approximate figures for current HGV movements, but it was noted that the Highways department has not raised an objection to the application.
- The site would offer 5 full-time equivalent jobs once operational, and 100 jobs during construction.

Alister Veitch, the applicant addressed the Committee in support of the application and commented that the application supported the Council's net zero target. The silos would be filled with mainly locally-sourced waste products. The use of biomethane compared to fossil fuel gas and the capture of carbon dioxide through the anaerobic digestion process would save 31,230 tons of carbon dioxide annually. Digestaid also improved soil and was less carbon-intensive than synthetic fertiliser. Mr Veitch added that no objections had been received from members of the public.

In response to members questions Mr Veitch added:

- There would be storage onsite for materials but this would be in sheds and odour-controlled.
- The site included a dirty water containment zone and sent to the digestors.

- Gas from the site would not be pumped directly into the national network as the local National Grid could not facilitate the amount of gas that would be produced at this site.
- All proposed routes were advertised during the consultation stage.
- The anaerobic digestion process was expensive; a large site was needed to capture as much carbon as the applicant intended to.
- The product would be transported to a capture hub in Banbury (other sites were also available). All rules would be followed, and all regulations complied with.

Members then debated the application and made the following comments:

- Green technology was welcomed but there were concerns around the sense of proportion regarding arable lands, and the need to be working smarter with Highways for better resolutions for vehicle movements.
- It was important that the traffic management plan was as robust as possible to allay the concerns of interested parties.

Councillor Chantler proposed that the application be approved. The proposition was seconded by Councillor Pritchard. The vote was declared carried with 8 voting in favour and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED:

That the Assistant Director for Planning and Development be given delegated powers to grant permission for the development subject to conditions including the additional condition regarding a 30-year remedial strategy, where the land would be restored after 30 years and the satisfactory resolution of drainage/flood and ecology.

138. **Urgent Business**

None advised.

The meeting closed at 3.11 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____