



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Planning Committee

9 January 2025



S24/0568

Proposal:	Erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.
Location:	Development East of Sewstern Industrial Estate, South of Sewstern Road, Gunby, Lincolnshire NG33 5RD
Applicant:	Ironstone Energy Limited
Agent:	Mr Sam Salt, Heatons
Application Type:	Full Planning Permission with EIA
Reason for Referral to Committee:	Called in by Ward Councillor David Bellamy citing the following matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport issues and transport planning issues • Environmental issues regarding odour, noise, light, water / traffic noise 24/7 • Not appropriate location for development in open countryside plus having to construct a road across open countryside • Employment sites and appropriate location for industrial complex
Key Issues:	Character and Appearance Residential Amenities Transport Impact
Technical Documents:	Design and Access Statement (Heatons) Mineral Resource Assessment (Heatons) Ground Investigation report (AF Howland) Statement of Community Involvement (Heatons) Arboricultural Planning Statement (ADAS) Geophysical Survey (Archaeological Project Services) Greenhouse Gas Report (Future Biogas) Non-Technical Summary: Planning and Environmental Statement (Heatons, Rev A) Environmental Statement Chapters 1 to 5 (including Planning Statement) (Heatons, Rev A) Transport Statement / Chapter 6 (Northern Transport Planning) Noise Assessment / Chapter 7 (Sharps Redmore) Air Quality and Odour Environmental Impact Assessment / Chapter 8 (Redmore Environmental)

	<p>Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy / Chapter 9 (Plandescil Consulting Engineers)</p> <p>Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment / Chapter 10 (Broome Lynne)</p> <p>Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Report / Chapter 11 (Heatons)</p> <p>Heritage Impact Assessment / Chapter 12 (Archaeological Project Services)</p> <p>Agricultural Quality of Land report / Chapter 13 (Land Research Associates, Rev B)</p>
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Report Author

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Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
Growth	Regulatory	Isaac Newton

Reviewed by:	Adam Murray, Principal Development Management Planner	18 December 2024
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Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions



Key



Application
Boundary



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The application site comprises an area of approximately 7.1 hectares of land situated to the south of Sewstern Road and southeast of the Sewstern Industrial Estate.

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of a new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. The AD plant would be fed by energy crops (maize, grass, rye) provided by the Buckminster Estate and neighbouring farms within a 10–15-mile radius. The site would produce an estimated 150 Gigawatt-Hour per year (GWh/yr) of gas which is enough to serve approximately 13,000 homes.

It is the Case Officer's assessment that sufficient evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development would be a rural diversification project for the operations and farms of the Buckminster Estate and farms within the AD plant catchment, albeit with the construction of an AD plant. The proposal would additionally be for renewable energy generation meeting Policy RE1. This is a significant public benefit, which Officer's would attribute significant weight.

The proposed development would result in a degree of impact on the landscape character of the area and would be visible to neighbouring dwellings and from the public highway. The AD plant consists of a number of buildings for the processing of the materials, which would represent an incongruous feature in the landscape and thus causing harm. However, this could be reduced through the proposed mitigation submitted, including the landscaping and planting scheme. The SKDC Design Officer commented that the Design and Access statement should have demonstrated more clearly how the design responds to the site context and provide further details on building colours and landscaping. This information has not been provided, but it is the Case Officer's assessment that this could be addressed through the imposition of an appropriate planning condition for a detailed specification of materials for the AD plant, should planning permission be granted. Nonetheless, the application would still result in a moderate adverse impact on the landscape character, contrary to Policies EN1 (Landscape Character) and DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, Appendix 3 Criteria 1, and Section 12 of the NPPF.

The development would achieve the statutory requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain onsite. It is the Case Officer's assessment that the improved ecology and gain in BNG would be of benefit to the site.

The impacts that could result from the AD plant include heritage, noise, odour, ecology, drainage, and traffic. The applicant provided supporting documentation for each of the potential impacts and concluded that there would not be any significant adverse impacts. There were no objections raised by the following statutory consultees; Lincolnshire County Council Highways, Anglian Water, Environmental Protection, Cadent Gas, Natural England, Leicestershire County Council Highways, and the SKDC Conservation Officer, and the objection from the Environment Agency was removed following additional information.

It is the Case Officer's assessment that the biogas generated by the proposed development would contribute towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and this is a significant benefit, attributing significant weight to this as well as the growing of crops for the AD plant, and job creation with limited weight.

Taking all the above into account, it is the Case Officer's assessment that the application scheme accords with the adopted Development Plan as a whole, and the material considerations in this case also weigh in favour of granting planning permission.

Therefore, the Planning Committee are recommended to authorise **the Assistant Director – Planning and Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions.**

1 Description of Site

- 1.1 The site is situated to the south of Sewstern Road and southeast of the Sewstern Industrial Estate. The site is broadly rectangular and approximately 7.1 hectares. There is no existing access to the site. The nearest village is the village of Gunby to the east (1.1km), and there is also the village of Sewstern to the west (1.2km), Stainby to the northeast (1.6km), Buckminster to the northwest (2.5km), and North Witham to the east (2.5km).
- 1.2 The application site is an undeveloped agricultural field, surrounded by open countryside with further agricultural fields to the north, east, and south, and a small area of mature woodland to the west on the opposite side of the former railway. To the northwest of the site is the Sewstern Industrial Estate which is occupied by various commercial and industrial uses. The neighbouring authority of Melton Borough Council in Leicestershire is 670m to the west of the site, and Rutland County Council is 2.7km to the south of the site.
- 1.3 The proposed development site lies outside of the main built-up area of any defined settlement within the District and, therefore, falls to be defined as being located within the Open Countryside. The site is identified as being within Flood Zone 1, however a small part of the site proposed for access is identified as being at high risk of surface water flooding. Furthermore, the Natural England Provisional Agricultural Land Classification Maps identify the site as being Grade 3 agricultural land value; and the site also falls within a Minerals Safeguarding Area (limestone) as designated in the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Adopted June 2016). The site is located within the Kesteven Uplands Character Area (South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment, 2007).

2 Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal seeks full planning permission for the erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of a new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. The site is located to enable the biomethane produced at the plant to be directly injected into the national gas grid.
- 2.2 AD is a method of renewable energy production whereby organic materials are broken down to produce biogas. This process takes place in an enclosed environment in the absence of oxygen. The biogas generated will be mixed, cleaned and injected directly into the national gas grid. The site would produce an estimated 150 Gigawatt-Hour per year (GWh/yr) of gas which is enough to serve approximately 13,000 homes. The process produces two by-products: CO₂ and digestate. There would be approximately 20,000t/yr of liquified CO₂. Digestate can be used as an organic fertiliser. The CO₂ would be captured and stored beneath the North Sea.
- 2.3 The AD plant would be fed by energy crops (maize, grass, rye) provided by the Buckminster Estate and neighbouring farms within a 10–15-mile radius. The Buckminster Estate would provide 50,000 tonnes of crops annually. The AD plant would require 130,000 tonnes per annum of energy crops, and this would be stored within silage clamps on the site. There will be additional silage clamps at satellite locations within 10-15 miles of the plant (to be determined via a further planning application). Digestate will be stored in an on-site lagoon with surplus stored at the satellite locations.
- 2.4 The AD plant would consist of the following:

- Five digester tanks; three primary, one secondary, and one tertiary
- Digestate storage lagoon
- Four Silage Clamps (35m x 110m; 35m x 100m; 35m x 90m; 35m x 90m)
- Six Feed hoppers (4.25m high)
- Tanks;
 - Three Fermenter (26.5m diameter x 11m high)
 - Tow post fermenter (32.5m diameter x 19m high)
 - oxygen (9m high)
 - carbon (6.3m high)
 - propane (2.75m high)
 - surface water (5m high)
 - transfer / reception (3m high)
- Boiler system
- Flare (9m high)
- Site office 12m x 20m providing 240sqm
- Storage building 15m x 22m providing 330sqm
- Upgrader and CO2 Liquification System building 30m x 40m providing 1,200sqm
- Weighbridge and cabin
- Car parking area with provision for 6 vehicles.

2.5 The digestate storage lagoon, surface water lagoon and reed bed would occupy the north of the site. The east of the site would see four 3500m² silage clamps erected. The west of the site would house all of the mechanical and critical functional elements on a concrete bund, including the fermenter and post fermenter tanks, the feed hoppers, the oxygen, carbon, ferric chloride and propane tanks, along with the boiler system.

Landscaping

2.6 There would also be associated landscaping including a concrete containment bund and tarmac, tarmac access road, a BNG area located to the north of the site, and tree planting on the north, east and south site boundaries.

Hours of Operation

2.7 The AD plant would result in the creation of 8 full time jobs. The plant would be an automated operation and would operate 24 hours a day except during maintenance periods.

2.8 The delivery of crops will occur between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00, seven days a week. The members of staff will be onsite between 07:00 and 19:00, and the site will be monitored remotely outside of the staffed hours. The exception to this is when the crops are harvested September and October when the delivery of the crops will occur between the hours of 07:00 and 21:00, seven days a week.

3 Planning History

3.1 No relevant planning history.

4 Relevant Planning Policies & Documents

4.1 SKDC Local Plan 2011 – 2036 (Adopted January 2020)

Policy SD1 – The Principles of Sustainable Development in South Kesteven

Policy SP1 – Spatial Strategy

Policy SP2 – Settlement Hierarchy

Policy SP5 – Development in the Open Countryside

Policy EN1 – Landscape Character

Policy EN2 – Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy EN3 – Green infrastructure

Policy EN4 – Pollution Control

Policy EN5 – Water Environment and Flood Risk Management

Policy EN6 – The Historic Environment

Policy DE1 – Promoting Good Quality Design

Policy RE1 – Renewable Energy Generation

Policy ID1 – Infrastructure for Growth

Policy ID2 – Transport and Strategic Transport Infrastructure

Local Plan Appendix 3 Renewable Energy

Colsterworth and District Neighbourhood Plan (2016-2026)

Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (Adopted 2016)

- Policy M11: Safeguarding of Minerals Resources

Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven (Adopted November 2021)

Renewable Energy Appendix 3 (January 2020)

4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Updated December 2024)

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

4.3 National Policy Statement for Energy (EN1) (November 2023)

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy (EN-3) (November 2023)

5 Representations Received

5.1 Lincolnshire County Council - Highways

No objections.

The application site falls between Sewstern and Gunby and the proposed access road joins the B676 to the west of Colsterworth and the A1. The site is to be located adjacent to an existing industrial estate. The site will be accessed via a private access road, currently serving Brooks Brothers Timber Yard. The access road will cross Sewstern Road, which has a 7.5t weight limit. The applicant has provided detail of how traffic will be controlled when crossing this road, which has satisfied safety concerns of this crossing point.

The Transport Statement has confirmed that there will be between 6-7 staff working at the site once it has been constructed, they will arrive/depart at various times throughout the day. Materials to be processed at the site will generate HGV movements, during the harvest period the site could see a total of 63 daily two-way HGV movements, outside of the harvest period it is expected there will be 17 daily two-way movements. In addition to these movements, the output of material could see another 11 daily two-way movements. The majority of these movements are from nearby land farmed by Buckminster Estate. Compared to the Annual Average Daily Traffic movements, the proposals are not seen to have a severe impact on the road network.

Having given due regard to the appropriate local and national planning policy guidance (in particular the National Planning Policy Framework), Lincolnshire County Council (as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority) has concluded that the proposed development would not be expected to have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact upon the local highway network or increase surface water flood risk and therefore does not wish to object to this planning application.

Full response appended to this Committee Paper.

5.2 Anglian Water

No comments.

'Thank you for your consultation. Having reviewed the development, it falls out of our Statutory sewage boundary. We therefore have no comments'.

5.3 Environmental Protection

No objection.

'Reference your memorandum dated 2nd May 2024; Environmental Protection has reviewed the documents in respect of the above application and has the following comments to make.

The AD plant would be fed by energy crops only (maize, grass, rye, etc) with the development neither designed nor adaptable to process any form of waste. The proposed facility operating with only crops grown specifically for digestion would not require to be permitted by the Environment Agency.

In review of the environmental assessment completed for the proposed development Environmental protection accept the results and conclusions of the noise impact assessment and the Odour and Air Quality impact reports.

In protection of air quality and mitigating odours the following mitigating measures, as stating in the impact report shall be implemented

- *A 5m tall stack to effectively disperse combustion emissions from the biogas boiler;*
- *Covering of feedstocks, with the exception of the working clamp face, to control odour emissions; and,*
- *Covering of the digestate lagoon to control odour emissions.*

Environmental Protection would recommend that the AD facility produce an odour management plan for the operation of the AD facility. The plan should be submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

Environmental Protection would recommend that the AD facility produce a noise management plan for the operation of the AD facility. The plan should be submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

Environmental Protection would recommend that the applicant produced a containment assessment for the facility to include all tanks, surface run-off and digest containment and that the assessment is submitted to the local planning authority for approval’.

5.4 Cadent Gas

No objection.

‘Regarding planning application S24/0568 at site location ‘Development East Of Sewstern Industrial Estate South Of, Sewstern Road, Gunby, Lincolnshire, NG33 5RD’ there are no National Gas assets affected in this area’.

5.5 Natural England

No objection.

‘Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

Natural England’s generic advice on other natural environment issues is set out at Annex’.

5.6 Heritage Lincolnshire

No objection, subject to conditions.

Archaeological background:

The proposed development lies within a landscape of some archaeological potential. To the north cropmarks indicative of possible prehistoric origin have been plotted. To the south-east are cropmarks of a possible enclosure of prehistoric date. The Historic Environment Record contains records which indicate that the origins of nearby villages such as Gunby and Stainby lie in the late Saxon or medieval periods.

Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement submitted in support of the application comprises a desk-based assessment of the archaeological potential of the site, reviewing known archaeological remains located within a 1km assessment area. Insufficient evidence (baseline conditions) is available to make an informed assessment of the potential effects of the proposed development on any archaeological remains which may be present at the site. Therefore, an archaeological evaluation is required to determine the presence, character, date and significance of any remains which may be impacted by the proposal. The archaeological programme of works should include geophysical survey and trial trenching. The results of the evaluation will inform the assessment effects, and any mitigation strategy required.

Recommendation: It is recommended that further information be provided in order to make an assessment of the likely impact of the proposals on any buried archaeological remains and the setting of the heritage assets.

It is considered that the site offers a potential for archaeological remains to be present based on the extent and type of remains recorded in the vicinity. Insufficient information is available at present with which to make any reliable observation regarding the impact of this development upon any archaeological remains.

Therefore, an archaeological evaluation will be required to determine the presence, character and date of any archaeological deposits present at the site. This evaluation should initially consist of geophysical survey followed by trial trenching and should be undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation.

5.7 **Leicestershire County Council - Highways**

No objection.

The County Council has provided detailed comments, to summarise:

- The application site is within SKDC and Lincolnshire County Council highways jurisdiction - No comment to make on the access arrangements.
- The worst-case scenario in terms of trip generation would be 14 two-way trips; 7 members of staff arriving and departing in separate cars.
- During the harvest period there will be 50,000t an additional 22.9 HGV movements per day, equating to 46 two-way trips per day.
- The 80,000t of material stored in satellite hubs will result in 8.5 HGV movements per day, equating to 17 two-way trips per day.
- The worst-case scenario in terms of harvest trip generation would be 64 two-way HGV trips during the harvest period. During the non-harvest period there would be 17 two-way HGV trips.
- The site would generate 24,000t of carbon dioxide and would result in 7 two-way trips per day.
- The site would generate a further 11,000t liquid biofertilizer and 4,000t solid biofertilizer and would result in 4 two-way trips per day.

The development would generate a total of 50 two-way HGV trips during the harvest period on the Leicestershire highway network. During the non-harvest period the development would generate a total of 21 two-way HGV trips.

The highways authority has noted that not all HGV movements would be carried out during the AM and PM peak periods and the HGV will utilise the B676. Concluding that

‘The number of HGVs associated with this development are negligible when compared against the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). Therefore, it is not considered that the proposed will have a severe impact on the local highway network, in accordance with Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)’.

Full response appended to this Committee Paper.

5.8 **Environment Agency**

We have reviewed the proposed drainage plan [Revision D, dated 12 June 2024] and consider that it satisfactorily addresses our earlier concerns.

5.9 **Historic England**

No comments.

5.10 **Melton Borough Council**

No comments to make, however we recommend that the Parish Council’s within Melton and close proximity are consulted.

5.11 **CPRE Rutland**

Initial Consultation May 2024

Objection.

‘I write on behalf the charity’s membership in Lincolnshire and Rutland to submit strong objections to the above Anaerobic Digester proposal. CPRE the countryside charity in principle endorses such development provided it is of an appropriate scale and in an appropriate location, as well as being supported by a substantial majority of the local community impacted by the development. This is clearly not the case with this proposal.

CPRE notes that all of the impacted parish councils do not support the planning proposal and that there is little evidence of positive resident response from any resident or local business without a pecuniary interest. Indeed there are a statistically significant number of community objectors.

The charity’s objections may categorised as follows:

Such a huge development will have an unacceptable impact on the rural countryside close to the development. It will be highly visible for some distance and of a greater scale than any other in the UK.

As greenfield land in agricultural use, the proposed site is clearly unsuitable for such a large scale development. There is little evidence of researched consideration of better alternative

sites such as brown field land, or those located near main roads, as required by planning policy.

The Project's Transport Impact Assessment appears flawed and fails to acknowledge the likely consequences of a significant increase in numbers of HGVs and other vehicles in that location and beyond, along with the impact on road safety for all road users, not just those who drive cars.

The environmental impact of the projected noise levels and degradation of air quality resulting from the ongoing operations of the AD plant can only be detrimental to the quality of life likely to be created for local residents.

This proposal is simply about profit and will not be benefitting the local community in any way as the gas produced is for industry elsewhere in the country. Furthermore, the need for such significant amounts of feedstock, in no way supports UK farms or UK food security.

CPRE therefore urges members of the SKDC Planning Committee to refuse this application'.

5.12 **Colsterworth and District Parish Council**

Initial Consultation May 2024

Objection.

The Parish Council has provided detailed comments, to summarise:

- Affects the whole Parish including Stainby, Gunby, North Witham, Lobthorpe, Colsterworth and Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth.
- Concerned at number of omissions and inconsistencies and reliance on desktop modelling.

Highways Impact

- Does not comply with Policy ID2. Impact on road network and transport infrastructure with vehicles using the A1, and this is not include in the Transport Statement. Also, not clear whether crops and digestate will be transported on the B6403 or A151.
- No Traffic Management Plan provided.
- No information has been provided regarding the external storage areas.
- Would like an enforcement plan to prevent vehicles diverting through the villages in the event of the A1 being closed.
- Application should be referred to Highways England.
- No information provided of the crop sites or the satellite hubs.
- No clarification on the proposed crop rotation, as this will impact the harvest periods and vehicle movements.
- Not clear about the use of tractors and trailers and the movements of these vehicles.
- There are several roads with 7.5t weight limits in place as environmental protection zones. Concern that HGVs would travel through villages.

- Limited traffic site survey.
- Concern about the single access/exit proposed. There are no footways, narrow verges, a bend in the road and the access is within the 60mph.
- Increased safety risk to walkers, cyclists, horse riders and tourists as a result of the HGV increase.
- Reference to different carriageway widths with reference to the Manual for Streets guidance document. Concern about widths, pinch points, passing traffic, visibility and gradients.
- Ambiguous hours of operation.
- At the public consultation the applicant referred to partner arrangements with contracted hauliers. In sufficient information on this with the planning application.

Site and Type of Development

- Do not believe the application meets Policy E7. Not an appropriate scale for the location. It is an industrial scale development in a rural location. The use does not respect the character and appearance of the local landscape, and will impact residential amenities.
- Do not believe the application meets Policy SP5 for development in the countryside.
- Believe the application is industrial and not agricultural.
- Visual impact concerns. Feels the proposed mitigation will not be adequate
- Other AD plants in the area.

Renewable Energy

- No Land Agricultural Survey submitted with the application.
- Requirement for public support.

Biodiversity

- No Tree Survey submitted with the application.

Odour, noise, Pollution

- The meteorological data is not current.
- Concerns that there will be odours like an energy from waste facility in the district.
- Vehicle movements will cause noise.
- Concerns regarding drainage.

S106 Contribution

- £40,000 per annum community fund is noted. Would like further information.

- Expect Highways national and county to request a contribution for road repairs, maintenance and enforcement.
- Query the plans for restoration of the site should the operation cease.

Full response appended to this Committee Paper.

Re-consultation September 2024 – following receipt of additional drawings/information.

Objection.

The Parish Council has provided detailed comments, to summarise:

1. The traffic objections are all still valid
2. The application does not conform with Local Plan Policy SP5, being built in open countryside
3. The planning application clearly has no support from the local community
4. The planning application is still incomplete.

S106 Agreement

Should planning permission be granted, the Parish requests that the S106 agreement includes an assessment of the road network in the vicinity of the development, which includes road safety of pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. The Parish Council seek a contribution which could include the cost of

- Additional vehicle activated signs/speed cameras x3 (B676, Stamford Road Colsterworth, Woolsthorpe Road).
- Review and upgrading of all the road signs; particularly the 7.5t restrictions.
- Review of the road safety issues on the High Street Colsterworth and reported to LCC.

Full response appended to this Committee Paper.

5.13 **SKDC Conservation Officer**

No objection.

The proposed Anaerobic Digestion facility comprises a large parcel of land set between Sewstern and Gunby, and its associated infrastructure, with the principal road leading from Buckminster Road to the proposed site. The site is approximately 7.1ha, covering existing agricultural land. A number of structures are proposed to be built upon the site, with a height of up to 19m. This would be a significant development within the landscape.

This has the potential to impact upon the setting of a number of designated heritage assets within the wider landscape, the closest of which would be the Church of St Peter (NHLE 1147921) and The Old Rectory (NHLE 1062351), adjacent to the access road, and the Church of St Nicholas (NHLE 1147928) and Barn at Glebe Farm (NHLE 1062311) closest to the principal site at just over 1km distance.

A number of further designated heritage assets, ranging from Scheduled Monuments to Grade II listed structures. An Archaeology and Heritage Assessment has been produced by the applicant, investigating the potential impact upon their heritage significance. A potential

intervisibility and impact had been identified for the setting of the Old Rectory (NHLE 1062351), the setting of the Scheduled Monument of the Knights Templar Preceptory at Temple Hill (NHLE 1007688) and the setting of the Buckminster Conservation Area.

The wider landscape comprised undulating agricultural land which wide open views towards the various nucleated settlements. This can be considered to contribute to the wider setting of the heritage assets. The proposed development would present some loss of this agricultural landscape, however this is not considered to result in harm to the setting of the various heritage assets. The greater part of the structures is to be screened with trees. These will take some time to mature, so there would be a temporary visual impact. This is considered to be very minor, however, due to the distance of the principal site and the heritage assets. It is not considered to result in harm to the significance of the heritage assets.

Overall, there is only a minor potential for indirect impact upon the setting of the heritage assets within the wider proximity of the site. This is not considered to cause harm to their setting.

5.14 Rutland County Council - Highways

No comment.

5.15 Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

No comments.

After examining the ecological documents and our own records we find there are no designated sites that are likely to be impacted by the development and nor are there any floral and faunal features of interest identified. We are encouraged to see the applicant has undertaken a BNG assessment and expect a habitat management and monitoring plan be submitted following any planning permission being granted.

5.16 SKDC Tree Officer

There are trees at and around the site. Trees are a material consideration in the planning application process. No arboricultural data is provided with this application. Without a tree survey it is difficult to comment in any detail on the application.

I would recommend that a tree survey and report is carried out in this case which should have regard to the BS5837 (2012) Trees in Relation to Design Demolition and Construction Recommendations. The tree survey should accurately demonstrate the arboricultural constraints at the site which will help guide the layout. A tree constraints plan should be provided.

An arboricultural impact assessment report should also be carried out. It should consider whether the proposal is feasible from an arboricultural perspective and highlight what if any mitigating measures may be required e.g. no-dig surfacing, special foundations, pruning, tree protection fencing etc. New/replacement tree planting data and tree protection methodology and plan should also be provided. The tree protection plan should be to scale and reflect the site layout in the context of the retained trees.

5.17 Councillor Ben Green

Re-consultation June 2024 – following receipt of additional drawings/information.

Objection.

Introduction

I, Cllr Ben Green, voice my fervent objection to the proposed development east of Sewstern Industrial Estate. The gravity of this proposal necessitates its review by the full Planning Committee, acknowledging the widespread implications across our District.

Road Safety and Traffic Impact

The proposed development will unleash a torrent of traffic upon our already strained roads. The application lacks a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan, vital for ensuring the safety and efficiency of our transport infrastructure. The projected 130,000 tonnes of crops and 70,000 tonnes of digestate will result in an estimated 24,080 HGV trips per year, a catastrophic increase for our narrow, restricted roads. The absence of detailed information regarding routes and specific traffic management measures casts a shadow over the feasibility and safety of this proposal.

The B676, a critical artery, is ill-prepared for such an onslaught, with its narrow lanes and lack of footpaths posing a dire threat to pedestrians and cyclists. The proposed access from the B676, situated dangerously close to Stainby's 30mph zone, further exacerbates these concerns. The Planning Authority must ensure a thorough evaluation of the potential hazards this development poses to all road users.

Selection of Site and Nature of Development

The erection of this facility on pristine greenfield land, within the heart of our countryside, violates policies E7 and SP5 of our Local Plan:

- E7, Rural Economy: This policy supports small business schemes that are appropriately scaled and necessary for a rural location, respecting the character and appearance of the landscape and avoiding harm to wildlife and biodiversity. The proposed AD facility, being large-scale and industrial, does not meet these criteria. It fails to respect the local landscape and poses significant risks to the surrounding environment.

- SP5, Development in the Open Countryside: This policy limits development in open countryside to those with an essential need to be located outside existing settlements. The AD facility, with its industrial nature and extensive land requirements, does not constitute a development with such an essential need and should not be sited on greenfield land.

The site selection appears narrowly confined to the vicinity of Gunby and Sewstern, disregarding potential brownfield alternatives. The visual impact will be stark and unmitigated, affecting views from a significant cluster of local villages.

Renewable Energy Generation

While renewable energy is a noble pursuit, this proposal's reliance on purpose grown crops rather than waste undermines its environmental credentials. The absence of a Land Agricultural Survey to determine the grade of land being sacrificed for this facility raises significant concerns about food security and land use policy. The proposal contradicts the principle of sustainability and efficient land use as emphasised in policies E7 and SP5.

Biodiversity

The impact on local wildlife and habitats has not been adequately assessed. The absence of up-to-date meteorological data and comprehensive biodiversity surveys undermines the application's credibility. The Planning Authority must demand rigorous environmental assessments to safeguard our natural heritage, as stipulated in policy E7, which requires avoiding harm to important wildlife and biodiversity.

Smell, Noise, and Pollution

The community's lived experiences of pervasive odours from existing facilities underscore the potential for similar nuisances here. The 24/7 operation of this facility threatens to inundate our peaceful villages with relentless noise, pollution, and light, deteriorating the quality of life for all residents. The drainage and longterm land impact have also not been properly addressed. The proposed development does not align with policy E7's criteria for respecting the character and appearance of the local landscape and avoiding negative impacts on neighbouring uses.

Conclusion

This proposed development, with its significant flaws and detrimental impacts, demands rigorous scrutiny. The lack of detailed plans, the potential devastation to our road network, the threat to our countryside, and the inadequately assessed environmental consequences compel me to reject this application. Let us defend our land, our community, and our future from this ill-conceived endeavour.

5.18 SKDC Design Officer

Re-consultation September 2024 – following receipt of additional drawings/information.

Comments to make:

'Proposals for development are expected to follow The Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven (SPD, 2021). Section 1.5 (p9) of this document sets out a design process that should be followed.

The design process begins with a thorough site and contextual analysis, followed by the next stage that requires applicants to clearly show how this context has been responded to (p22).

It is this response to context stage that requires further clarification – illustrating with plans and diagrams how the LVIA has been responded to – for example through landscape proposals.

“the Council will expect to see how the design of proposals in planning applications have been crafted in response to their context.”

(Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven SPD, 2021 – Chapter 3 introduction)

This approach to designing buildings and new places is also supported by the National Design Guide, with both the Context and Identity chapters making it clear that development proposals should respond positively to local context, character and identity.

“Well-designed new development responds positively to the features of the site itself and the surrounding context beyond the site boundary. It enhances positive qualities and improves negative ones.”

(National Design Guide, 2021 - paragraph 41)

The Design and Access statement should demonstrate more clearly how the design responds to context. Whilst recessive building colours and landscape to soften views are promised – details of these elements are not present or illustrated’.

6 Representations as a Result of Publicity

6.1 This application has been advertised in accordance with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement and 367 letters of representation have been received, with 330 objections and 0 in support of the proposed development. The planning officer has also been made aware that there is an online petition with 1,207 signatures (www.change.org/p/block-industrial-biogas-plant-in-rural-lincolnshire) (on 18th December 2024).

6.2 The points raised can be summarised as follows:

Objection

- Development on a greenfield site, but the proposals are considered industrial and should be accommodated within an industrial estate.
- Effects on the residential amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings / villages e.g. noise, smells.
- Potential impact on the UKs food security of using fields to grow energy crops instead of food crops.
- The AD plant should be smaller and/or located close to or off a motorway or A road.
- No community benefit as the gas will not be used to heat local homes or power local businesses. Reference to Energy UK conference 2024: keynote speech by Ed Miliband.
- Impact on the rural landscape as the site is open countryside and consider the development industrial and not related to agriculture.
- Whether the development consists sustainable / renewable (clean) energy as it involves energy crops and the need to transport these to the site. There is also the CO2 byproduct which is a greenhouse gas.
- Proposals do not include the CO2 from the construction process, access roads etc.
- Proposals do not include the customers new carbon emissions related to biomethane. Reference to The Finch vs Surrey CC supreme court judgement.
- Impact on the local highways network from the proposed HGV movements. Do not want any further HGV movements accessing the villages.
- The local highways network is currently quiet and used by vulnerable road users for walking, walking dogs, bicycles, running, horse riding, children playing.
- Agricultural Land Classification and importance of retaining land for growing food and feed crops.

- Impact on wildlife as the agricultural fields will be replaced with concrete hard standing, structures and a new access road.
- Concerns regarding the safety of the development. Particularly in relation to the risk of fire or explosion. The site is a distance from a fire station.
- Concerns regarding the cumulative impacts of other similar types of the development in the local area. There are two other AD plants within proximity of this site.
- Proposals do not adhere with Local Planning Policy SP5 Development in Open Countryside or E7 Rural Economy.
- Requests for further information. Particularly in relation to the location of the secondary storage clamps.
- Missing information including revised visibility splays drawing at the access junction with the B676. Have all the requirements of the Environmental Statement, Transport Statement, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment been met.
- Highlighting that the resident / local community object to the development and are not in support of the proposals. No letters of support.

7 Evaluation

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Council adopted the South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036 in January 2020, along with Colsterworth and District Neighbourhood Plan (2016-2026) forms the Development Plan for the District, and is the basis of decision-making for the current application.
- 7.2 The Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (Adopted June 2016) also forms the development plan for the District in relation to minerals planning.
- 7.3 In addition, the Local Planning Authority have also adopted a Design Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Adopted November 2021) and this document is a material consideration in the determination of planning application.
- 7.4 The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) ("the Framework") (Published December 2024) and the National Policy Statements for Energy (EN1) and Renewable Energy (EN3) are also a relevant material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Principle of Development

- 7.5 The proposed development is located outside of the main built-up area of an existing settlement within the District; the nearest settlement is the village of Gunby. Therefore, the site falls to be defined as being located within the open countryside.
- 7.6 Policy SP5 is the principal spatial policy for developments in countryside locations, the policy provides exemptions where certain forms of development are considered suitable, including rural diversification projects. The proposed development scheme would involve the diversification of an existing agricultural operations for the Buckminster Estate farming operation and farms within the AD plant catchment. This would therefore be considered a

rural diversification project, albeit with the construction of an AD plant to process the materials, and acceptable within the open countryside location.

7.7 Furthermore, Policy RE1 Renewable Energy Generation provides support for renewable energy projects, which includes anaerobic digestion, provided that:

- a) The proposal does not negatively impact the District's agricultural land asset.
- b) The proposal can demonstrate the support of affected local communities.
- c) The proposal includes details for the transmission of power produced.
- d) The proposal details that all apparatus related to renewable energy production will be removed from the site when power production ceases; and
- e) That the proposal complies with any other relevant Local Plan policy and national planning policy.

7.8 Additionally Renewable Energy Appendix 3 contains a Section on Dry biomass and anaerobic digestion facilities with a series of Criterion outlining the factors that will be taken into consideration when assessing proposals in relation to the surrounding landscape and townscape. Noting the individual impacts of a proposal and the cumulative impacts of the proposal, and that proposals should also meet the relevant criteria in Policies EN1 to 5 of the Local Plan.

7.9 The proposal is for an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility which includes carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. The AD plant would require 130,000 tonnes per annum of energy crops to supply the process. Therefore, this would be a solely purpose grown crop-based AD system using agricultural land for the purpose of growing energy crops and not food producing crops.

7.10 In assessing the application proposals against the specific policy obligations of Policy RE1

- a) This would be a proposal requiring energy crops grown in place of food producing crops. An Agricultural Land Classification Survey has been provided with the application. The site comprises of two fields of grade 3 land and subgrade grade 3b agricultural land. The soil is poorly drained restricting it to autumn sown crops. 97% of the land is subgrade 3b (6.9 hectares) with 3% other land (0.2 hectares), for reference this is the proposed access track. The survey contained in the submitted Agricultural Land Quality report does not include the land required for the access track. To summarise, the proposed development would not result in any loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.
- b) The applicant undertook a public consultation exercise last year which is detailed in the submission. This entailed a 2-day public exhibition event, newsletter maildrop, press release, response to enquiries, site visit. There was also an additional letter to members. However, the proposal has demonstrated limited support (feedback from the exhibition and 10 letters of support contained within the Statement of Community Involvement).

The application has received numerous representations from local residents objecting to the proposal including a petition against the development. There are also objections from Colsterworth and District Parish Council, and Councillor Ben Green. The applicant has sought to respond to concerns raised by local residents with amended plans extending the access road, and a written response. However, further objections were received in response to the applicant's additional information. The council has not received any letters in support of the application.

It is noted that the Inspector's appeal decision for the Folkingham solar development (LPA Ref: S23/0511) concluded that Policy RE1 does not make any distinction between different types of renewable energy schemes and, in the absence of Appendix 3 (Renewable Energy) of the adopted Local Plan making any specific reference to requiring community support for dry biomass and anaerobic digestion facilities development proposals, there is no firm basis for requiring such proposals to demonstrate the support of the local community.

It is concluded that the application does not benefit from the support of the affected local community, however this does not constitute a conflict with Policy RE1(b) in this case.

- c) The proposal includes details of the transmission of the power produced - The site would produce an estimated 150GWh/yr of gas for consumption by approximately 13,000 homes. Biogas generated from the development would be transferred to the National Grid via injection directly into the national gas grid in proximity to the site.
- d) The proposal does not include any details of the decommissioning of the site when the activity ceases, however, the agent has confirmed that the development has an assumed plant life of 30 years which matches the operators lease for the site. The decommissioning would take place following the closure of the site within the following 6 months. A planning condition is recommended to require the submission of a decommissioning scheme prior to the expiry of the temporary planning period.
- e) The proposal complies with SP5 as a rural diversification project. Other relevant local and national planning policies and the prospective impacts of the development are discussed in further detail below.

7.11 In addition, the National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (Published November 2023) is identified as being a material consideration for the determination of planning application relating to energy development. The NPS confirms the Government's commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. It also identifies the need to dramatically increase the amount of low carbon energy generated, and to improve energy security and provide economic opportunities.

7.12 Taking the above into account, it is Officers' assessment that the principle of renewable energy generation development is supported by Policy SD1, SP1 and RE1 of the adopted Local Plan, subject to material considerations. These matters are discussed in further detail below.

7.13 Paragraph 7 of the Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation is clear that in considering planning applications:

- The need for renewable or low carbon energy does not automatically override environmental protections
- Cumulative impacts require particular attention
- Great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their settings.
- Protecting local amenity is an important consideration which should be given proper weight in planning decisions.

7.14 Equally, the NPPF (Updated December 2024) has reinforced the weight that should be given to the benefits of a renewable energy scheme with paragraph 168 stating
‘When determining planning applications for all forms of renewable energy and low carbon energy developments and their associated infrastructure, local planning authorities should:
a) *Not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal’s contribution to a net zero future;...*’

7.15 The relevant material considerations for the proposed development are considered below, using the 7 criteria set out in the Renewable Energy Appendix and other relevant Local Plan Policy.

Effect of the development on agricultural land

7.16 As outlined above, the information provided by the applicant includes the MAFF agricultural grade classification which confirms that the site is not best and most versatile agricultural land. As such, it is not a policy requirement that the applicant need undertake a search or suitable derelict or brownfield sites, and it is not clear whether there were other suitable sites of poorer grade agricultural land available in the local area for the built development.

7.17 The submitted report identifies that the two fields concerned are grade 3 land and subgrade grade 3b agricultural land. The soil is poorly drained restricting it to autumn sown crops. 97% of the land is subgrade 3b (6.9 hectares) with 3% other land (0.2 hectares). The survey contained in the submitted Agricultural Land Quality report does not include the land required for the access track.

7.18 The development will utilise additional agricultural land for the production of the feedstock crop, however this land will remain in an agricultural use, as there is not a differentiation between crops grown for human consumption, animal consumption, or for feeding the operation of an AD plant. The consideration of the impact of the proposed development on agricultural land is therefore limited to the impact on the land to be used for a built form of the AD plant, associated buildings and access. The use of the agricultural land for the production of the feedstock is not a matter of planning control and therefore cannot be given weight in the decision-making process.

7.19 In view of the above, it is the Officer’s assessment that the application proposals would be in accordance with Policy SP1, RE1 and Criteria 7 based on the agricultural land classified as 3b.

Effect of the development on the Character and Appearance of the area

7.20 The site is located within the Kesteven Uplands Character Area (South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment, 2007). The character area is a rolling mixed farmland landscape dissected by the Rivers Witham and West Glen, and is a rural landscape with only a small urban area. The geology is varied with a range of soil types, and the well-drained calcareous loam soils support the cultivation of cereals, oilseeds and root crops. Additionally, the wide road verges and hedgerow trees provide woodland character, and there remains areas of important semi-natural and ancient woodlands.

7.21 The application was accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact which reached the following key conclusions:

- Landscape Sensitivity is considered to be medium/high

- Visual Sensitivity is considered to be medium/high
- Landscape value is considered to be medium
- The overall Landscape Character Sensitivity of the site is considered to be medium/high and overall landscape capacity to be medium/low.

7.22 There would be an impact from construction, and the completed development from the change of land use, buildings and the associated mitigation measures and the impact ranges from minor adverse to moderate adverse. The addition of planting and vegetation would be minor beneficial.

7.23 Despite the proposed mitigation, the visual effects and impacts on the landscape character of the area would remain because of the proposed development with the main impact from the buildings and plant related to the processing of materials. There would be views of the site from neighbouring dwellings and the public highway, albeit softened by the proposed landscaping scheme which can be secured by planning condition.

7.24 The SKDC Design Officer has commented that proposals for development are expected to follow the council's design guidance and follow a design process with proposals responding to the site and its context. There are no illustrating plans or diagrams clarifying how the proposals respond to their context. Furthermore *'The Design and Access Statement should demonstrate more clearly how the design responds to context. Whilst recessive building colours and landscape to soften views are promised – details of these elements are not present of illustrated'*. With the detail provided it is considered that the design does not currently meet the high standards required by the council's design guidance and the planning officer considers that criteria (c) of the Biomass Energy Criterion 3 (Renewable Energy Appendix 3) has not been met. Conversely, the design could be further addressed using the imposition of an appropriate planning condition requiring further design and materials details should planning permission be granted.

7.25 The proposed plant and flare are obtrusive in design terms, introducing prominent features within the local landscape and open countryside. With the topography of the surrounding area, it will be visible and introduce significant large-scale buildings and structures into the local landscape, despite the proposed landscape measures. The site occupies a rural location nonetheless the neighbouring site is industrial, and the plant and flare are designed to meet the requirements of the process that will be undertaken on site. The tallest and most significant elements of the proposal would be the digester and fermenter tanks. They would appear agricultural in design, and viewed in the new context of the Anaerobic Digester plant the design is considered appropriate in terms of size, design and position. Consequently, whilst the development would have an impact on the existing visual appearance of the area, when considered in the context of the AD plant and neighbouring industrial area, the development could be further addressed using the imposition of an appropriate planning condition should planning permission be granted, and with this in mind the planning officer considers that criteria (d) of the Biomass Energy Criterion 3 (Renewable Energy Appendix 3) has been met.

7.26 It is the Officer's assessment that the proposed development would result in a minor to moderate adverse impact on the landscape character and the impacts could be partially mitigated through the proposed landscaping scheme. Therefore, this harm remains contrary to Policies EN1 and DE1 of the adopted Local Plan, Appendix 3 Criteria 1, and Section 12

of the NPPF. This policy conflict falls to be assessed within the overall planning balance discussed below.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 7.27 Policy EN6 (The Historic Environment) is the primary development plan policy through which the Council exercises its statutory responsibilities. This policy states that the Council will seek to protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings in keeping with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, and proposals will be expected to take Conservation Area Appraisals into account, where these have been adopted by the Council. Development that is likely to cause harm to the significance of a heritage asset or its setting will only be granted permission where the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the potential harm.
- 7.28 In connection with the above, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to have special regard for the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings, or any special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Similarly, Section 72 of the Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to give special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.
- 7.29 The proposed development site does not contain any designated built heritage assets but there are a number of designated built heritage assets located within the surrounding area including; the Church of St Peter (NHLE 1147921) and The Old Rectory (NHLE 1062351), adjacent to the access road, and the Church of St Nicholas (NHLE 1147928) and Barn at Glebe Farm (NHLE 1062311) closest to the principal site at just over 1km distance. A number of further designated heritage assets, ranging from Scheduled Monuments to Grade II listed structures.
- 7.30 The proposal was accompanied by an Archaeology and Heritage Assessment which identified potential intervisibility between the setting of the Old Rectory (NHLE 1062351), the setting of the Scheduled Monument of the Knights Templar Preceptory at Temple Hill (NHLE 1007688) and the setting of the Buckminster Conservation Area. There is also the wider landscape setting and wide-open views to the nucleated settlements and wider setting of the heritage assets. The proposed development will be mitigated by proposed tree and vegetation planting, and the impact would be temporary until the trees mature.
- 7.31 The Conservation Officer was consulted and commented that there would temporary and minor impact to the wider setting of the heritage assets whilst the proposed landscaping is growing into an effective screen, but the heritage assets are located a distance from the site. The Officer's conclusion was that overall, there would not be harm to the setting or significance of the neighbouring heritage assets.
- 7.32 Historic England were also consulted and commented that it will be for the local planning authority to set heritage impacts against public benefits, deferring to the Conservation Officer and Heritage Lincolnshire.
- 7.33 It is the Officer's conclusion taking the above into account that there would not be harm on the setting or significance of the heritage assets and the minor potential for indirect harm would be temporary while the mitigation planting established. The proposal would be in accordance with Policy EN6 of the adopted Local Plan, and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Impact on Archaeological Assets

- 7.34 The application is accompanied by an Archaeology and Heritage Assessment and Geophysical Survey reports.
- 7.35 The Geophysical Survey has confirmed that the site has strong magnetic bedrock that has affected the survey data, but there are multiple anomalies on the survey results. The report states that that most of the anomalies are believed to be modern or natural in origin (agricultural, quarrying), but there is one exception. The archaeological feature identified was an area of possible ridge and furrow cultivation at the south of the southern area.
- 7.36 Heritage Lincolnshire (as Local Archaeological Advisors) have been consulted on the application proposals and reviewed the submitted reports, as well as having discussions with the applicant's Archaeology Consultant. The council's archaeological advisor has commented and advised that the site offers a potential for archaeological remains to be present, and advised regarding the need for trial trenching on the site in order to provide an assessment of potential and likely impact of the proposals on any archaeological deposits. The results of the evaluation should inform the archaeological mitigation strategy.
- 7.37 Taking the above into account, the Officer considers that the employment of a suitably worded pre-commencement planning condition would be appropriate in this case and with the condition to protect for any archaeological remains the proposals would accord with the Policies EN6 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF in respect of archaeological matters.

Cumulative Impacts

- 7.38 Utilising the resource the online Biogas Map, developed by the NNFC Ltd, as of March 2023 there are three operational farm fed Anaerobic Digesters located at Honey Pot Farm near North Witham, and Valley House near Lobthorpe, and waste fed Anaerobic Digesters located at PAS Grantham AD near Easton, and Angel Wells Farm near Castle Bytham. It is considered that all are located an acceptable distance from the proposed development site and there would not result in a cumulative impact.
- 7.39 The Officer has also considered the following sites:
- Burton Lane Easton PL/0022/24 – current planning application for the redevelopment and updating of an existing wastewater treatment facility and the installation of an anaerobic digestion plant with capacity to provide 5MW of renewable energy. (Waste fed).
 - Park House Farm EIA/08/23 – this is an application for a Screening Opinion and a reply has been issued by Leicestershire County Council, but a planning application has not been submitted subsequently.
- 7.40 The Burton Lane Easton application has yet to be determined (as of 18th December 2024), and similarly planning permission has not been granted for a proposal at Park House Farm, therefore both applications do not currently represent a committed / allocated development scheme and cannot be considered as cumulative development.

Effect of the development on Biodiversity, Ecology and Trees

- 7.41 The application was supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, a Biodiversity Net Gain report and metric, and an Arboricultural Planning Statement.
- 7.42 The Ecology report confirms that the site is within the Cribbs Lodge Meadow SSSI impact risk zone. There are also three non-statutory designated sites, Local Wildlife sites, located

within 2km of the site. Skillington to Gunby Road Verges, Stainby Warren and North Witham Road Verges. Stainby Warren is also classed as a priority habitat a deciduous woodland. The site itself is managed agricultural land as well as native hedgerow with trees, native hedgerow, hardstanding, non-cereal crop, modified grassland, other neutral grassland and mixed scrub.

- 7.43 There are 67 arboricultural features comprising of 26 individual trees, 25 groups of trees, 12 hedgerows and four woodlands within influencing distance of the development. The arboricultural features are classified as moderate or low quality, with one feature unsuitable for retention. The Arboricultural report confirms that four individual trees and two groups of trees will need to be removed to facilitate the development. There would also be partial removal of two groups of trees and four hedgerows.
- 7.44 The development proposals could be mitigated through various measures including a tree and vegetation planting scheme onsite. The statutory Biodiversity Metric concluded that the proposed development will have an overall 12.21% net gain in habitat units and a 28.64% net gain in hedgerow units. The development will have the following habitats created; trees, other neutral grassland, SuDs, mixed scrub, modified grassland, and hard standing. The development would also retain native hedgerow, hedgerow with trees and other neutral grassland. This is illustrated on the submitted Landscaping Plan. The measures could be conditioned for a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan, which would be required by the statutory biodiversity net gain condition.

Impact on the Residential Amenities

- 7.45 The site is located in proximity to an existing industrial estate and there are a number of villages in the locality, with the closest the village of Gunby 1.1km to the east. The application has been supported by a detailed Landscaping scheme to screen the proposed development to meet criteria (a) and (b) of the Biomass Energy Criterion 3 (Renewable Energy Appendix 3).
- 7.46 It is considered that there is sufficient separation distance between residential dwellings, and the proposed development site, that residential amenity will not be adversely impacted in terms of loss of privacy or loss of light. The potential impacts of noise and light are discussed in further detail below. However, the separation distance is considered to ensure that the proposal is in accordance with Policy DE1.
- 7.47 It is the Officer's assessment that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable adverse impacts on the neighbouring residential dwelling houses or industrial estate, and would not impact on their amenity, in accordance with Local Plan Policy DE1. In relation to potential impacts, conditions are proposed regarding construction management, traffic management, external lighting.

Pollution – Noise, Air Quality and Odours

- 7.48 The proposal was supported by a Noise Assessment and Air Quality and Odour report. The Noise report confirmed that the proposed development would generate potential noise e.g. fixed mechanical plant, onsite activity, HGV movements. There are residential dwelling houses within proximity of the site with the closest between 650m and 700m in the villages of Gunby and Sewstern, and further dwellings in proximity to the proposed new access road. The report contained a noise survey of existing conditions and concluded that although the background noise climate is low/very low the change in road traffic noise would be negligible and the potential noise of the plant and onsite activity would have a low impact on

neighbouring residential dwelling houses as this could be mitigated by the measures proposed in the report.

7.49 In regards to dust and smoke, the Odour report identifies potential air quality impacts from vehicle exhaust emissions and the plant emissions. There is the neighbouring industrial estate and residential dwelling houses nearby, and ecological receptors including roadside verges and the Stainby Warren Woodland. The report contained a survey of the existing conditions and modelling to predict pollutant concentrations at the sensitive locations in proximity. The report proposes mitigation in order to disperse the combustion emissions from the biogas boiler, covering the feedstock and the digestate lagoon to control odour emissions. The report concluded that the road vehicle emissions would be negligible, and there would be similarly negligible increases in relation to the combustion plant emissions, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen deposition and acid deposition but these would be not significant. The report confirms that an odour assessment has been undertaken and the significance of odour impacts is predicted to be negligible.

7.50 The application was supported by a Greenhouse Gas report and the clarification that the site would continuously monitor the GHG emissions and mitigate emissions. There is further information regarding the process, and the greenhouse gas emissions. The crop-based anaerobic digestion utilises crops which absorb atmospheric carbon dioxide CO₂ during growth and following the anaerobic digestion the stored carbon becomes biogas e.g. methane and CO₂. When combustion takes place, the CO₂ is released, and then captured and stored. It is considered that the development would be in accordance with criteria (e), (f) and (g) of the Biomass Energy Criterion 3 (Renewable Energy Appendix 3).

7.51 Information has not been provided regarding the proposed lighting scheme for the development, and as such the development has not met the criteria (h). However, this is something that could be addressed using a planning condition for a detailed lighting scheme, should planning permission be granted.

7.52 The Council's Environmental Protection Team has been consulted on the application and have not raised any objections in relation to noise, dust or odour impacts. The Environmental Health Officer has commented that Environmental Protection accept the results and conclusions of the noise impact assessment and the Odour and Air Quality impact reports. The officer has reviewed the mitigation proposed, and this is acceptable. The officer has however also recommended planning conditions for the following additional plans/assessments;

- an odour management plan,
- a noise management plan and
- a containment assessment which should be submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

The planning officer considers that the imposition of the proposed planning conditions would be necessary and appropriate should planning permission be granted.

7.53 It is the Officer's assessment that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable pollution impacts regarding noise, air quality or odours, and would not impact on the amenity of neighbouring dwelling houses or the industrial estate. This would be in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN4 and Section 15 of the NPPF. In relation to potential impacts, conditions are proposed regarding construction management, traffic management, external lighting.

Access and Highway Impacts

- 7.54 In reference to the criterion, the development access is proposed adjacent to an existing industrial estate and will serve the proposed use and an existing use. The access is in accordance with criteria (a) and not located in a sensitive area.
- 7.55 The proposed development is designed to allow for the proposed HGV movements, with space onsite for receiving the deliveries and then receiving the byproduct before transporting off site. There is an area of proposed parking provision for staff and visitors onsite. A new access road would be provided to service the proposed HGV movements and remove the HGV impact from unsuitable local roads such as Sewstern Road. This will then provide direct connection to the classified highway, the B676 Buckminster Road to the north. Therefore, the proposal is in accordance with criteria (b) and (e) of the Renewable Energy Criterion.
- 7.56 A Construction Statement has not been provided at this stage of consideration; however, this is something that could be addressed using a suitable planning condition should the development be permitted development, in accordance with criteria (c) of the Renewable Energy Criterion.
- 7.57 The planning application was accompanied by a Transport Statement which details the proposed development and its expected trip generations both during the harvest and the non-harvest periods. The Transport Statement confirms that there would be a negligible number of car trips generated in relation to staff working at the site, and the development would generate HGV trips with movements carried out throughout the day. The HGV movements in the AM and PM peak periods would be minimal. The overall numbers of HGV movements 63 daily two-way movements during the harvest period and 17 daily two-way movements during the non-harvest period, with the additional output movements 11 daily two-way movements. This would be negligible when compared against the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) and not considered to have a severe impact on the local road network. The applicant has offered a detailed traffic management plan, and this can be secured via a suitable planning condition should the development be granted.
- 7.58 The local highway authority, Lincolnshire County Council has been consulted on the application and has not raised any objection in relation to the potential impact on local highways. Lincolnshire CC confirmed the numbers of proposed HGV movements leads the Highways and Lead Flood Authority to not consider that the proposal would result in severe impact on highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact on the local highway network, with regard to the NPPF.
- 7.59 With the site's proximity to neighbouring authority Leicestershire, the local highway authority Leicestershire County Council has also been consulted. Leicestershire County Council has also not raised any objection in relation to the potential impact on local highways. Leicestershire CC noted that not all the HGV movements would be carried out during the AM and PM peak periods and that the HGV will utilise the B676. The number of HGVs associated with the development are negligible when compared against the AADT. Leicestershire CC concluded that it is not considered that the proposal will have a severe impact on the local highway network in accordance with Paragraph 115 of the NPPF.
- 7.60 The proposal would therefore be acceptable and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on highway safety in accordance with Local Plan Policy ID2 and Section 9 of the NPPF.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.61 The application was accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy, which confirm that the site is within Flood Zone 1 however as the area exceeds 1 hectare assessment was required. The site also contains areas at higher risk of surface water flooding, and the drainage strategy considers appropriate mitigation measures for addressing drainage concerns through SuDs onsite.
- 7.62 The lead flood authority, Lincolnshire County Council has been consulted on the application and has not raised any objection in relation to drainage proposals for the development. Lincolnshire CC confirm that the infiltration for the site is poor, and that the application has included a variety of SuDs techniques to capture, cleanse, store and discharge surface water at a controlled rate. The development would not increase surface water flood risk as a result of the mitigation and utilisation of SuDs onsite.
- 7.63 The Environment Agency initially objected to the development as the proposal was unable to connect to the mains sewer and the application had not shown how foul drainage would be disposed. The applicant provided an updated drainage plan in response to the Environment Agency's objection. The proposed drainage plan (Revision D, dated 12th June 2024) addressed the Environment Agency's concerns, and the objection was removed. No objections or comments have been raised from Anglian Water
- 7.64 On this basis, it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable from a drainage perspective. The proposal would therefore be acceptable and in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN5 and Section 14 of the NPPF.

Other Matters

Mineral Safeguarding

- 7.65 The planning application was accompanied by a Mineral Resource Assessment.
- 7.66 Lincolnshire County Council has been consulted as the Minerals Planning Authority, and no comments have been received.
- 7.67 The planning officer has reviewed the provided information and considers that the proposal has demonstrated that it would be temporary in nature, and it would be feasible to extract the underlying limestone resource in the future when the site is operational and when the site is decommissioned. Consequently, the proposal would be in accordance with Policy M11 (Safeguarding of Mineral Resources) of the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

8 Crime and Disorder

- 8.1 It is considered that the proposal would not result in any significant crime and disorder implications.

9 Human Rights Implications

- 9.1 Articles 6 (Rights to fair decision making) and Article 8 (Right to private family life and home) of the Human Rights Act have been taken into account in making this recommendation. It is considered that no relevant Article of that act will be breached.

10 Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 10.2 The application proposals seek planning permission for the erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.
- 10.3 The proposal is located within the open countryside and development proposals are limited by Policy SP5 (Development in the Open Countryside) to schemes which have an essential need to be located outside of the existing built form of a settlement. Development for rural diversification projects are considered acceptable in policy such as the development proposal for an AD plant related to the surrounding agricultural use. In addition, Policy RE1 (Renewable Energy Generation) advocates a generally permissive approach to renewable energy schemes, subject to a series of criteria which consider the site-specific impacts associated with a particular proposal. As such, the application proposals are acceptable in principle, subject to material planning considerations.
- 10.4 The site would produce an estimated 150 Gigawatt-Hour per year (GWh/yr) of gas which is enough to serve approximately 13,000 homes. The application proposals would make an important contribution towards meeting the national objectives in respect of reducing greenhouse gas emissions as set out in the Climate Change Act 2019. On a local level, South Kesteven District Council have formally declared a climate emergency, and the published Climate Action Strategy identifies increasing the provision of sustainable forms of energy as a key action for achieving net zero. These are significant benefits associated with the proposals that are afforded significant weight as set-out by the NPPF para 168.
- 10.5 In respect of the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, it is Officer's assessment that the proposed development would result in a degree of impact on the landscape character of the area and for visual receptors neighbouring dwellings and the public highway, as a result of the development of the AD plant and its buildings and plant related to the processing of materials. Whilst these landscape and visual impacts can be reduced through the mitigation proposed in the submitted landscaping and planting scheme, the application proposals would still result in a moderate adverse impact on the landscape character, contrary to Policies EN1 (Landscape Character) and DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, Appendix 3 Criteria 1, and Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 10.6 There would be further impact on ecology, trees and biodiversity as the development is within a SSSI impact risk zone and within 2km of three local wildlife sites, and proposes the removal of several trees and hedgerow to facilitate the development. Nevertheless, the site is a managed agricultural site currently and suitable mitigation is proposed for tree and vegetation planting onsite. The site would achieve the requirements for statutory Biodiversity Net Gain onsite with 12.21% habitat units and 28.64% hedgerow units.
- 10.7 The impacts that could result from the establishment of an AD plant including heritage, noise, odour, ecology, drainage, and traffic were assessed, and the conclusion was that there would not be any significant adverse impacts, with there being an improved situation in relation to ecological impacts and a resultant gain in BNG.

- 10.8 The officer attributes significant weight to the benefits of the biogas generated by the proposed development and the contribution this would make towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It is acknowledged that the development would provide benefit to the local economy through the growing of crops to feed the AD plant, a limited benefit of jobs during the construction of the scheme, and a limited number of local jobs when the plant is operational. This is attributed limited weight.
- 10.9 All other impacts assessed above are considered to be capable of being mitigated to a position of being in accordance with the development plan. NPPF Paragraph 163 is clear that when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should (a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or local carbon energy... and (b) approve the application if its impacts are or can be made acceptable.
- 10.10 Taking all of the above into account, it is the Case Officer's assessment that the application proposals are in accordance with the adopted Development Plan when taken as a whole, albeit there are conflicts identified in relation to the visual impact of the development. In this case, it is Officer's assessment that the balance of material planning considerations would also weigh in favour of granting planning permission.

11 Recommendation

To authorise the Assistant Director-Planning to GRANT planning permission, subject to the proposed schedule of conditions detailed below.

Schedule of Conditions

Time Limit for Commencement

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order that the development is commenced in a timely manner, as set out in Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Temporary Permission Limits

- 2) Written confirmation of the first export date shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority no later than 20 days following the event. The development hereby permitted shall cease on or before the expiry of a 30-year period from the date of the first export of biogas from the anaerobic digester to the national grid network; excluding any biogas exported during initial testing and commissioning.

The land shall thereafter be restored to its former condition in accordance with a scheme of decommissioning work ("Decommissioning Scheme") which shall make provision for the removal of the solar panels and all other associated equipment, and the subsequent restoration of the site. The scheme shall include details of:

- (a) The extent of equipment and foundation removal, and the site restoration to be carried out;
- (b) The management and timing of any works;
- (c) A Traffic Management Plan to address the likely traffic impacts arising during the decommissioning period.

- (d) An Environmental Management Plan to include details of measures to be taken during the decommissioning period to protect wildlife, habitat features and trees on the site.
- (e) The location of any temporary compound and parking areas.
- (f) Full details of the removal of the AD plant and associated buildings, and all associated ground restoration.
- (g) Full details of all other works to the land to all for renewed agricultural production following the removal of structures from the site.
- (h) A programme of implementation.

The Decommissioning Scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no later than 29 years from the date of the first export of biogas and shall be subsequently implemented as approved.

Reason: The proposed development has a 30-year operational period, and to ensure that the site is fully restored to allow for agricultural use, and to maintain the rural landscape character of the area.

Approved Plans

- 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following list of approved plans:
- Site Location Plan, drawing ref. 27729-150 Rev B (received 28/03/24)
 - Proposed Site Layout Plan, drawing ref. 27729-SK10 Rev H (received 03/04/24)
 - Proposed Plant Elevation 1, drawing ref. 27729-050 Rev E (received 02/05/24)
 - Proposed Plant Elevation 2, drawing ref. 27729-051 Rev D (received 02/05/24)
 - Proposed Plant Elevation 3, drawing ref. 27729-052 Rev A (received 02/05/24)
 - Proposed Floor Plans, drawing ref. 27729-600 Rev 0 (received 02/05/24)
 - Proposed Site Sections, drawing ref. 27729-120 Rev G (received 03/04/24)
 - Site Access Road Location, drawing ref. 27729-600 Rev D (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 1, drawing ref. 27729-601 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 2, drawing ref. 27729-602 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 3, drawing ref. 27729-603 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 4, drawing ref. 27729-604 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 5, drawing ref. 27729-605 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 6, drawing ref. 27729-606 Rev D (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 7, drawing ref. 27729-607 Rev C (received 28/03/24)
 - Site Access Road 8, drawing ref. 27729-608 Rev C (received 28/03/24)
 - Site Location Plan Northern Boundary, drawing ref. 27729-152 Rev 0 (received 02/05/24)

- Site Location Plan Southern Boundary, drawing ref. 27729-152 Rev 0 (received 02/05/24)
- Gas Pipeline Indicative Location Plan, drawing ref. 27729-154 Rev 0 (received 02/05/24)
- Site Access Visibility Clearance, drawing ref. 27729-613 Rev C (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 1, drawing ref. 27729-614 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 2, drawing ref. 27729-615 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 3, drawing ref. 27729-616 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 4, drawing ref. 27729-617 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 5, drawing ref. 27729-618 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 6, drawing ref. 27729-619 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Proposed Highway Access Boundary, drawing ref. 27729-SK15 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Junction Line and Sign Works, drawing ref. 27729-620 Rev B (received 18/06/24)
- Proposed Site Plan showing SW Drainage, drawing ref. 27729-805 Rev D (received 13/06/24)
- Fire Hydrant Connection, drawing ref. CT-831.idw (received 12/08/24)

Unless otherwise required by another condition of this permission.

Reason: To define the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.

Before the Development is Commenced

Detailed Design

- 4) Notwithstanding the submitted details, prior to any development above damp-proof course, a detailed specification of materials (including the colour of any render, colourwash or paint) to be used in the external materials of all buildings, plant, CCTV cameras and fencing shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter, the development must be constructed fully in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development, any necessary mitigation measures required by condition references here can be taken into account, and in accordance with Policy DE1 and EN6 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Lighting

- 5) Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of the proposed lighting scheme must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The scheme shall be installed and be operational prior to operation of the development. The scheme shall be retained for the life of the development.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Archaeology

- 6) Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation and an Archaeological Mitigation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details must include:
- a. Details of a programme of trial trenching, which must be first completed and used to inform the mitigation strategy;
 - b. A plan illustrating the location of any archaeological remains on the site;
 - c. Areas which are designated for archaeological monitoring and recording;
 - d. Proposals to ensure that significant archaeological remains are protected or, if appropriate, set out a programme of further archaeological works to ensure that they are recorded in advance of works on site;
 - e. A programme for the implementation of the archaeological mitigation strategy.

Thereafter, all works on site shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Archaeological Mitigation Strategy.

Reason: In order to provide a reasonable opportunity to record the history of the site and in accordance with Policy EN6 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Odour Management Plan

- 7) Before any part of the development is commenced, an Odour Management Plan is required to ensure that odour emissions arising from the development are in line with the levels cited in the application.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of local residents in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Delivery Management Plan

- 8) Before any part of the development is commenced, a Delivery Management Plan is required to ensure the times of deliveries, and that all vehicles are routed an appropriate route to/from the AD plant.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of local residents in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Flood Emergency Plan

- 9) Before any part of the development is commenced, a Flood Emergency Plan covering place of refuge, flood evacuation and safe/escape routes, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The Flood Emergency Plan shall be complied with throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the safety of the users of the development against the risk of flooding in accordance with Policy EN5 of the South Kesteven Local Plan.

Construction Ecological Management Plan

- 10) Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works on site shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details throughout the construction period.

Reason: In the interests of safety and free passage of those using the adjacent public highways.

Operational Environmental Management Plan

- 11) Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, an Operational Environmental Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include all details of the proposed development's operation, including delivery vehicles, routing of delivery vehicles, as well as the specifics of the coverings to feedstock and digestate lagoon to control odour emissions.

Reason: To ensure that the traffic movements and odour emissions arising from the development are in line with the levels in the application and to protect the residential amenity of local residents in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

During the Building Works

Noise during Construction

- 12) To minimise noise impacts on the existing residential dwellings, 'construction work' shall only be carried out between the hours of 7:30 am to 6:00 pm Monday to Friday and 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on a Saturday. Construction work shall not be carried out on Sundays or Public Holidays. The term 'construction work' shall include mobile and fixed plant/machinery, (e.g. generators) radios and the delivery of construction materials.

To minimise the impact of potential noise on the surrounding area, deliveries of construction materials shall only take place between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday and between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm on a Saturday. No deliveries shall take place on a Sunday or Public Holiday.

Reason: To prevent disturbance to the amenities of residents living in the locality and in accordance with Policies EN4 and DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Ecology

- 13) All works on site during the construction period shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations contained within the Ecological Appraisal, including reasonable avoidance measures for protected species.

Reason: In the interests of best ecological practice and in accordance with Policy EN2 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Before the Development is Operational

Noise Management Plan

- 14) Before any part of the development is brought into use, a Noise Management Plan, based on the recommendations contained within the Noise Impact Assessment submitted with the application, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of local residents in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Boundary Treatments

- 15) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied/brought into use, the works to provide the boundary treatments shall have been completed in accordance with the approved boundary treatment scheme.

Reason: To provide a satisfactory appearance to any boundary treatments in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Surface and Foul Water Drainage

- 16) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied/brought into use, the works to provide the surface and foul water drainage shall have been completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory surface and foul water drainage is provided in accordance with Policy EN5 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Landscape Management Plan

- 17) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied/brought into use, a landscape management plan shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include:
- i. long term design objectives,
 - ii. management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas.

Reason: Hard and soft landscaping and tree planting make an important contribution to the development and its assimilation with its surroundings and in accordance with Policies DE1, EN3 and OS1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Landscaping Implementation

- 18) Before the end of the first planting / seeding season following the date when electrical power is first exported ("first export date"), all landscaping works shown on the approved Landscape Mitigation Plan required by condition 6 shall have been carried out in full.

Reason: To mitigate the harm to the rural character caused by the proposal and to secure a biodiversity net gain and in accordance with Policy EN1 (Landscape Character) and Policy EN2 (Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Ongoing Conditions

Noise Mitigation

- 19) The development should operate in accordance with the approved Noise Management Plan required by Condition 14 above.

Reason: To ensure there is appropriate mitigation from the impact of noise from the proposed development in the interests of the residential amenities of futures occupiers of the site.

Replacement Planting

- 20) Within a period of five years from the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, any trees or plants provided as part of the approved soft landscaping scheme, that die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the first planting season following any such loss with a specimen of the same size and species as was approved in condition above unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved designs and in accordance with Policies DE1, EN3 and OS1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Flood Emergency Plan

- 21) The Flood Emergency Plan covering place of refuge, flood evacuation and safe/escape routes, shall be complied with throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the safety of the occupiers and users of the development against the risk of flooding in accordance with Policy EN5 of the South Kesteven Local Plan.

Early Decommissioning

22) In the event that the site ceases to generate biogas for a period of 12 months prior to the cessation of the 30-year period, a scheme of Decommissioning Works ("Early Decommissioning Scheme") shall be submitted no later than 6 months from the end of the 12-month non-biogas generating period to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The early decommissioning scheme shall include the same details required under the Decommissioning Scheme set out in Condition 2 of this permission.

Thereafter, the early decommissioning scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the AD plant continues to generate biogas or is otherwise removed to the benefit of the character and appearance, and agricultural productivity of the District; in accordance with Policy EN1 and RE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Remediation Works

23) All buildings, structures and hardstanding associated with the development, excluding the access track between Buckminster Road and Sewstern Road, shall have been decommissioned and removed from site by 31.06.2055 or within 12 months of the anaerobic digestion facility ceasing operation, whichever is the sooner. The site shall then be regraded to former levels and appropriately restored to agricultural land within 3 months of the removal of the buildings, structures and hardstanding associated with the development.

This would exclude the northern access track as this serves the timber yard as well.

Reason: To ensure that the AD plant is removed once it ceases to generate biogas, and is removed to the benefit of the character and appearance of the local area, in accordance with Policy EN1 and RE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Standard Note(s) to Applicant:

In reaching the decision the Council has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner by determining the application without undue delay. As such it is considered that the decision is in accordance with paras 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informatives

Biodiversity Net Gain Informative

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be South Kesteven District Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered to apply.

Highway Informative 02

In accordance with Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, please be considerate of causing damage to the existing highway during construction and implement mitigation measures as necessary. Should extraordinary expenses be incurred by the Highway Authority in maintaining the highway by reason of damage caused by construction traffic, the Highway Authority may seek to recover these expenses from the developer.

Highway Informative 03

The permitted development requires the formation of a new/amended vehicular access. These works will require approval from the Highway Authority in accordance with Section 184 of the Highways Act. Any traffic management required to undertake works within the highway will be subject to agreement. The access must be constructed in accordance with a current specification issued by the Highway Authority. Any requirement to relocate existing apparatus, underground services, or street furniture because of the installation of an access will be the responsibility, and cost, of the applicant and must be agreed prior to a vehicle access application. The application form, costs and guidance documentation can be found on the Highway Authority's website, accessible via the following link: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/licences-permits/apply-dropped-kerb>.

Highway Informative 04

The road serving the permitted development is approved as a private road which will not be adopted as a Highway Maintainable at the Public Expense (under the Highways Act 1980). As such, the liability for the future maintenance of the road will rest with those who gain access to their property from it.

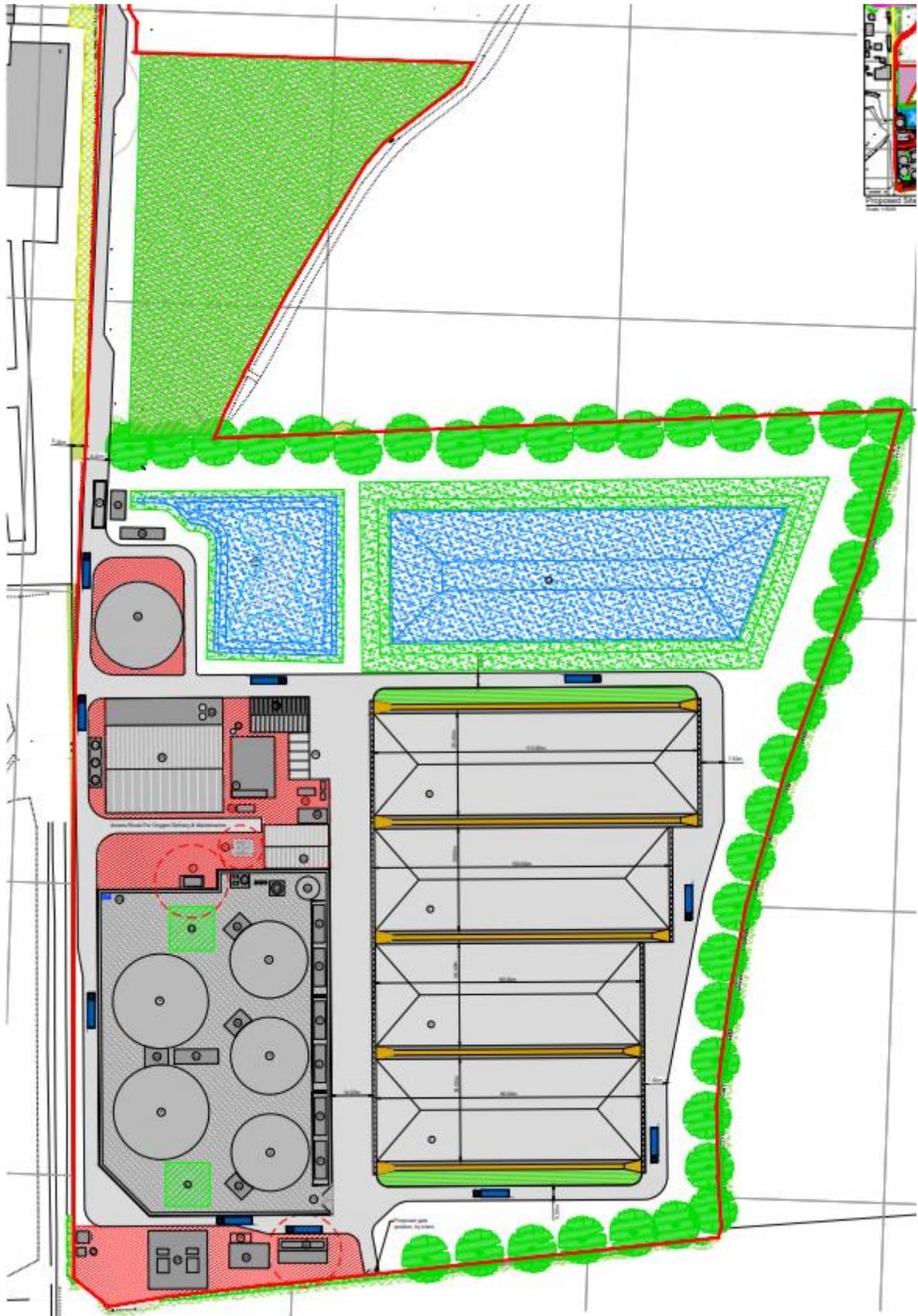
Highway Informative 08

Please contact the Lincolnshire County Council Streetworks and Permitting Team on 01522 782070 to discuss any proposed statutory utility connections, Section 50 licences and any other works which will be required within the public highway in association with the development permitted under this Consent. This will enable Lincolnshire County Council to assist in the coordination and timings of these works. For further guidance please visit the Highway Authority's website via the following link: Traffic Management - <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/traffic-management>

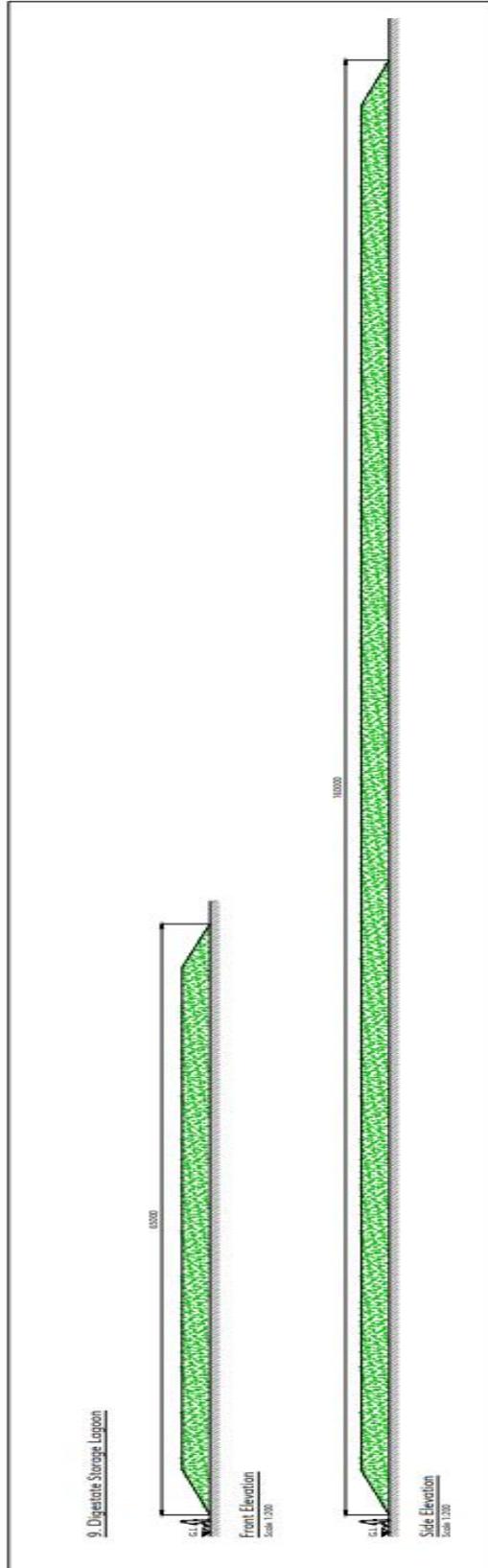
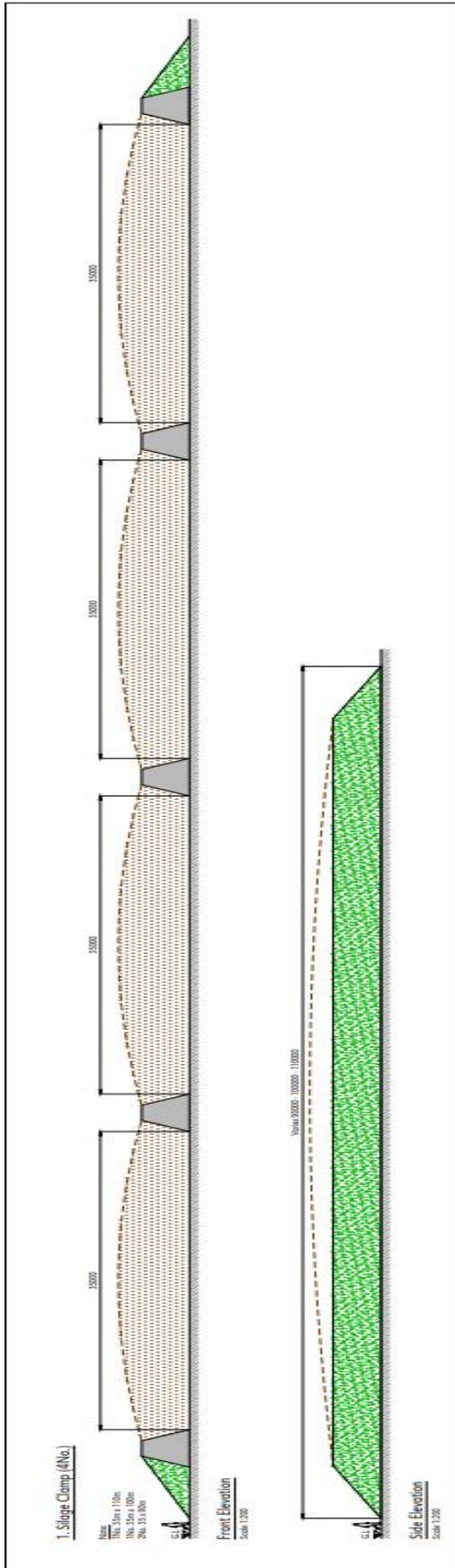
SITE LOCATION PLAN



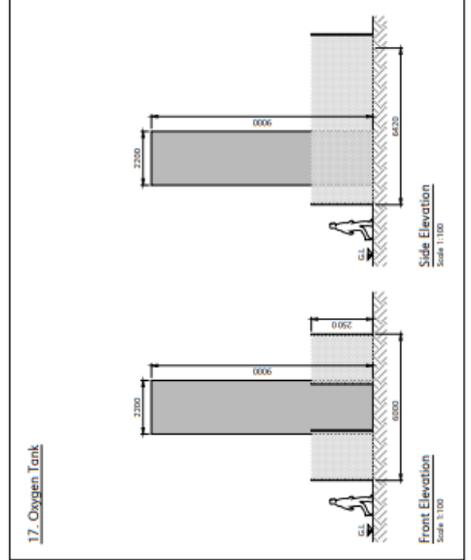
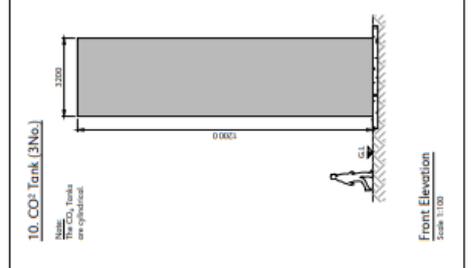
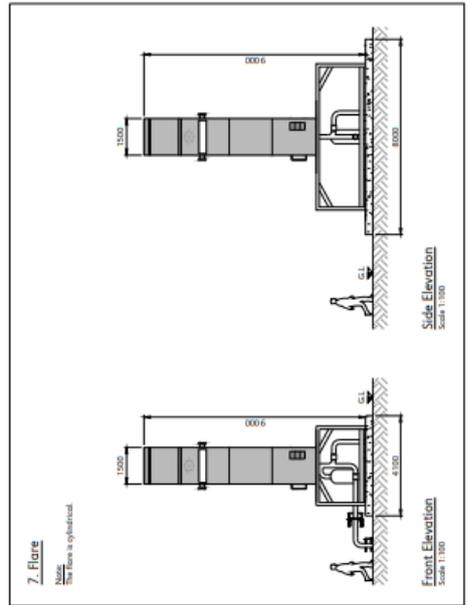
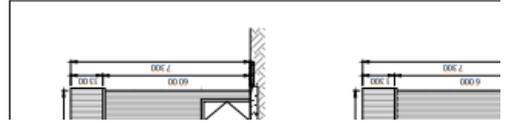
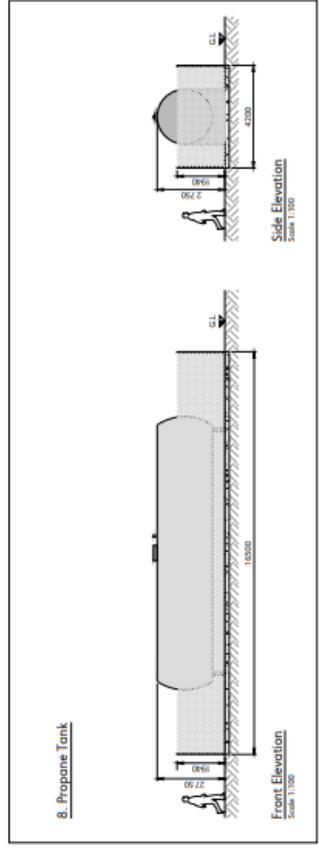
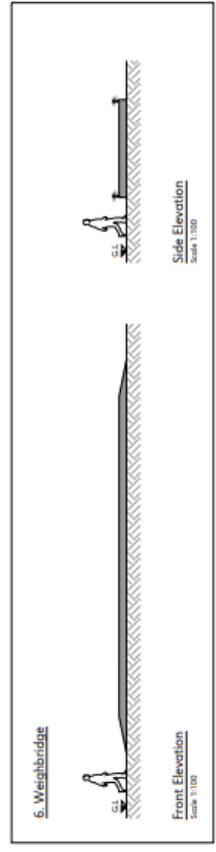
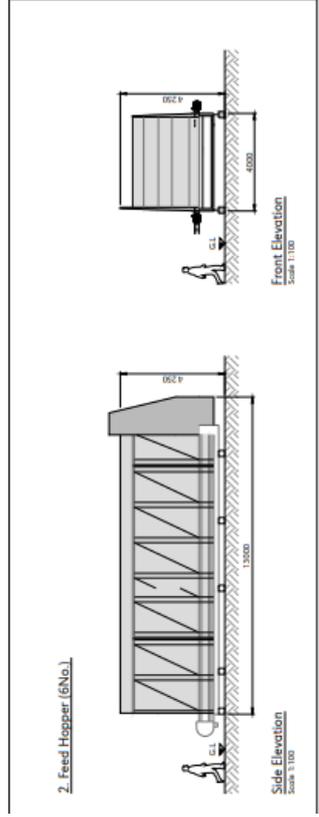
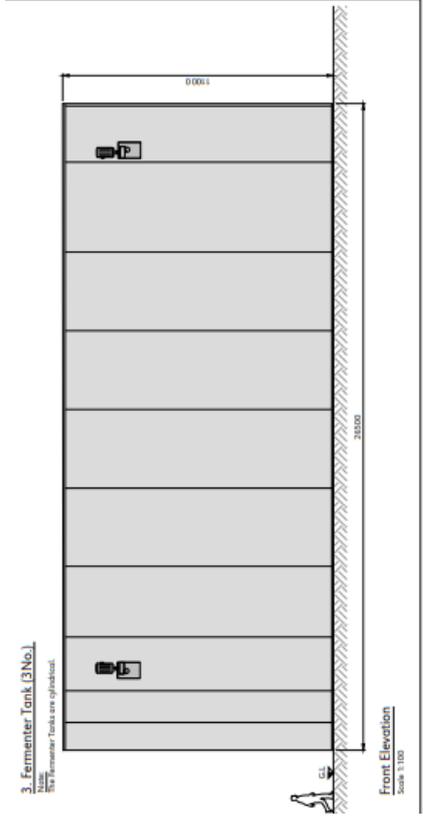
BLOCK PLAN PROPOSED



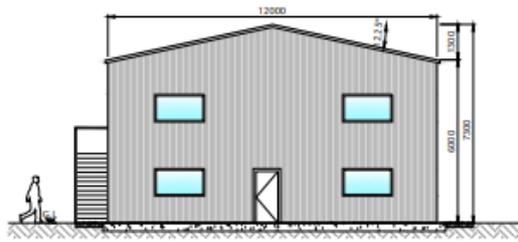
PROPOSED ELEVATIONS



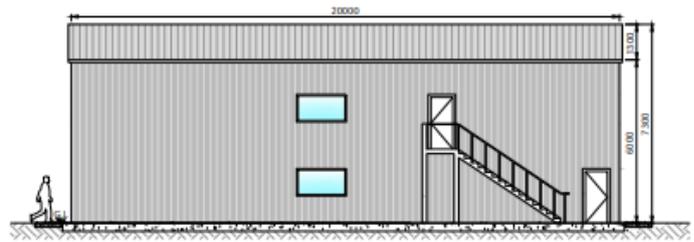
- All units shall be constructed in accordance with applicable building codes and standards.
- Do not scale from this drawing. If dimensions are not clear, ask for clarification.
- Conditions along with the scope of work provided by the client to Proband Ltd. shall be followed.
- Proband Ltd. shall be immediately notified of any suspected omissions or discrepancies to be used in conjunction with all other relevant documents relating to the project.
- Refer to following Proband Ltd drawings:
 - 27729-001 - Proposed Plant Elevations Sheet 2 of 3
 - 27729-002 - Proposed Plant Elevations Sheet 3 of 3



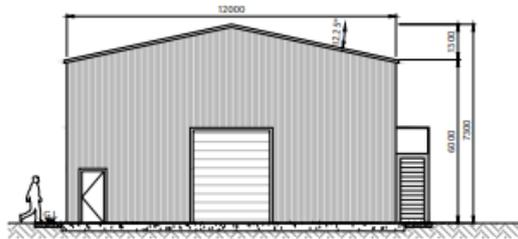
5. Site Office



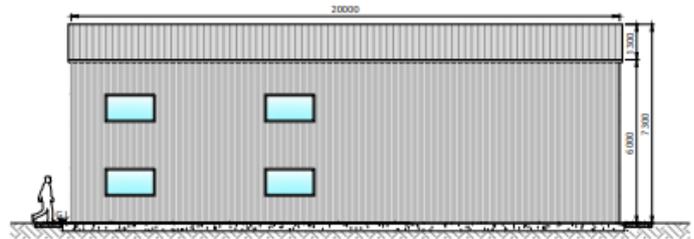
Front Elevation
Scale 1:100



Side Elevation
Scale 1:100

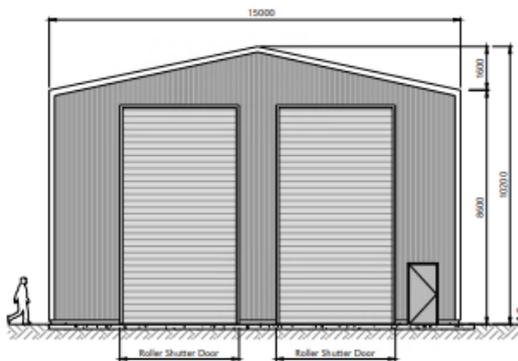


Rear Elevation
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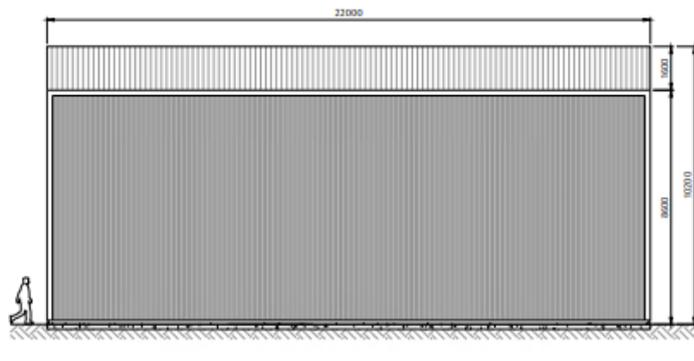


Side Elevation
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15. Storage Building



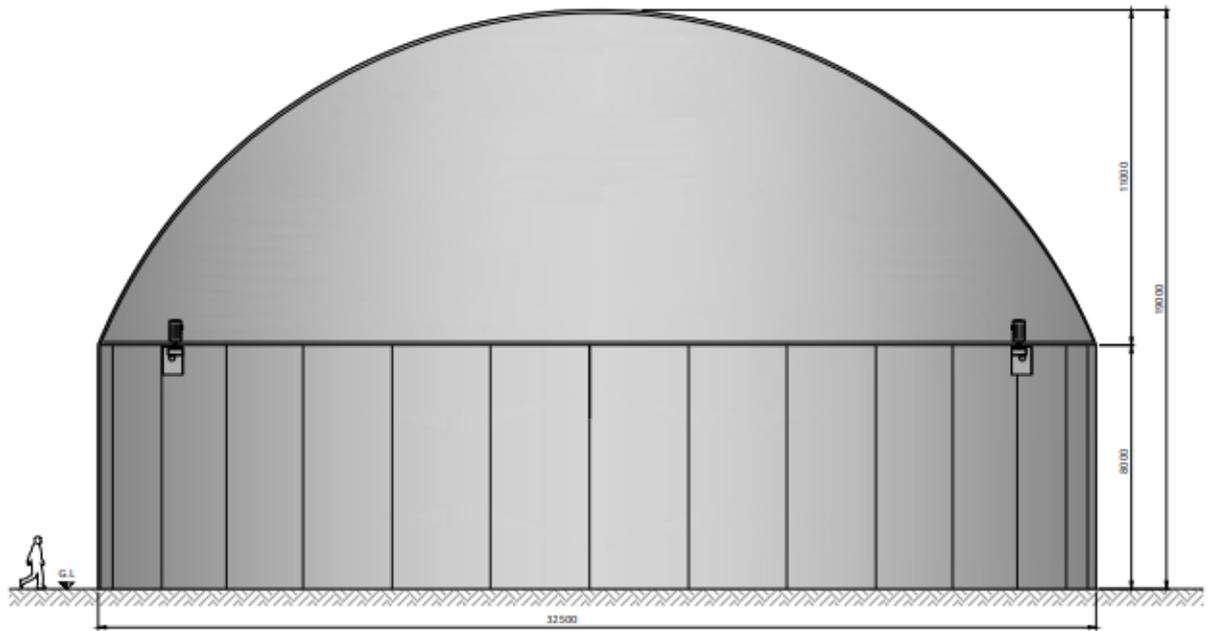
Front Elevation
Scale 1:100



Side Elevation
Scale 1:100

4. Post Fermenter Tank (2No.)

Note:
The Post Fermenter Tanks
are cylindrical.



Front Elevation
Scale 1:100