



Chief Executive
South Kesteven DC

For the Attention of the Planning Committee and Case Officer

Planning Application 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

Officer Recommendation: To review the updated evidence submitted as part of the appeal and the position in defending the appeal

Dear Local Government Colleague,

CPRE the countryside charity writes at the request of a number of constituents concerning the updated evidence on the above matter to be presented to the South Kesteven Planning Committee on Thursday September 25th 2025. It is noted that legal opinion is to be presented to the committee following exclusion of the press and the public, thereby negating any independent evaluation of the opinion to be provided. While understanding the reasoning on this matter provided by officers, the charity is nevertheless concerned about any committee decision on the appeal being influenced without public scrutiny and due consideration of any additional unfettered public or professional opinion on the updated evidence presented by the applicant.

The charity therefore writes to submit to the planning committee its own AI assisted evaluation of the additional evidence (Excluding the confidential legal opinion) presented by the applicant.

1. Executive Summary

The updated appeal submission fails to overcome the substantive objections previously raised by CPRE and others. The proposal remains inappropriate in scale, location, and impact, and is contrary to both local and national planning policy. The Planning Committee is urged to reaffirm its refusal and instruct officers to robustly defend the appeal.

2. Key Grounds for Continued Objection

A. Landscape and Visual Harm

- The revised LVIA underrepresents the industrial scale and visibility of the proposal.
- The site lies within a sensitive landscape (Kesteven Uplands), with no adequate mitigation.
- The proposal conflicts with SKDC Local Plan Policy EN1 and NPPF para 180.

B. Transport and Highway Safety

- HGV movements remain excessive and poorly routed, with unresolved safety concerns.
- Weight restrictions on Sewstern Road are incompatible with proposed access upgrades.
- The proposal still fails to meet NPPF para 115 (severe residual impacts) and para 116 (rural road safety).

C. Environmental and Amenity Impacts

- Carbon capture claims lack independent verification and rely on speculative technology.
- No clear demonstration of environmental net gain or robust mitigation for odour, noise, and air quality.
- Risks to public health and amenity breach NPPF para 98 and Local Plan Policy DE1.

D. Community Engagement and Benefit

- No meaningful local benefit: no direct employment, energy supply, or infrastructure gain.
- Engagement remains superficial and reactive.
- Contravenes SKDC's Statement of Community Involvement.

E. Site Selection and Policy Conflict

- A not sufficiently credible assessment of alternative, more suitable sites.
- The proposal conflicts with multiple policies in the South Kesteven Local Plan, Colsterworth Neighbourhood Plan, and EN-3 (Renewable Energy Infrastructure).
- The original refusal (13 Feb 2025) remains sound and defensible.

3. Recommendation

Given the above shortfalls CPRE recommends that the Planning Committee:

- Reaffirms its refusal of Application S24/0568
- Instructs officers to defend the appeal on the grounds previously stated, supplemented by the updated evidence and policy references above
- Supports continued engagement with affected communities and stakeholders.

The charity would be grateful if this analysis and recommendation could be brought to the attention of the committee.
Thank you.

Ron Simpson

Ron Simpson BEM CFCMI CFCIPD MEd
Chair - CPRE Rutland and Lincolnshire