

1st November 2012



Attn Kristina King
County Planning
Hampshire County Council
Economy, Transport and Environment
Elizabeth II Court West
The Castle
Winchester
SO23 8UD

Dear Kristina King

Application number: 12/02013/HCS, Site reference: WR227, Location: Overton Road, Micheldever Station, SO21 3AP

The construction and operation of an 8 MWE Pyrolysis Advanced Conversion Technology (ACT) plant including a 2 MWE Anaerobic Digestion Plant associated office, visitor centre, with new access road and weighbridge facilities, solar panels, associated landscaping and surface water attenuation features.

The Dever Society is an amenity society for the Hampshire Downs and the Dever Valley, and is a registered charity. The Society's principal objective is to conserve, protect and celebrate the countryside in this part of Hampshire. In particular, it is concerned with the conservation and enhancement of the Hampshire Downs, which comprise the rural heartland of the county. The Downs provide a unique and valued resource for those who visit and enjoy the countryside, as well as forming an essential feature of the agricultural economy of the county.

The Society has a large membership, drawn not only from those who live in the Dever Valley, but also from a wide area of Hampshire and elsewhere in Britain. The Society's principal focus is the protection of this area of the Hampshire Downs from inappropriate development.

The Dever Society objects to this application for the following reasons:

1. The waste facility would represent an unacceptable industrialisation of this rural landscape and community.
2. Micheldever Station is a thriving and growing community, with significant new housing built recently and more in the process of construction, resulting in a population considerably higher than that claimed in the application. There is no industry in the village and it is completely inappropriate for a large industrial plant

THE DEVER SOCIETY

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REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1003093

such as this to be located in such close proximity to residential buildings. We are concerned at the misleading statements in the application that the plant is well removed from the nearest dwellings. This is completely untrue.

3. The applicant proposes to operate the plant twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, with well over one hundred vehicle movements bringing waste to and from the site six and a half days a week along a narrow road from the A303. This will generate massive increases in existing traffic, noise and smells from the waste being transported. Once again, this is inappropriate for a rural community such as Micheldever Station.
4. The site is currently undisturbed and therefore of high value to wildlife. It is designated as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation, and would be damaged irretrievably by this development. Policy CE.9 of the Winchester Local Plan Review states that development likely to harm a SINC will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs the harm to the nature conservation value of the site. 'Need' is always a difficult concept to define, but we would argue that there is no need for the development. It is simply an attempt by Network Rail and Clean Power Properties to gain a financial return. We are also concerned that this development represents yet another threat to a local SINC. In nearby Black Wood (the whole of which is a SINC), the construction of a holiday camp has destroyed the undisturbed nature of the wood. In that case, planners decided that the economic benefits which the applicant claimed for the development outweighed the harm that would be caused to the SINC. It is unacceptable to us that this important local designation should be treated as of little importance in determining planning applications and that economic issues should take precedence.
5. The Dever Society is not an expert on waste technology, but there are significant concerns with the pyrolysis element of the plant, and we do not accept that residents should be exposed to possible dangers that could result. We are also concerned about harmful emissions, which will vary according to the type of waste being burnt and thus are impossible to determine in advance. Anaerobic digesters are inappropriate close to communities because of the smells.

We urge you to refuse permission for this application.

Yours sincerely

Douglas Paterson
Chairman
(via e-mail)