

Anaerobic Digester scheme for Hartley Park Farm
EHDC Ref 22267/016/
HCC Ref: Plan/KS/EH173

Worldham Parish Council unanimously objects to this planning application.

General Observations

1. The project is planned, controlled operated and financed by organizations with no connection at all with Hartley Mauditt. It will be a source of “creeping development”.
2. There is no existing farm waste problem within the immediate area, and so the anaerobic digester will be fed with waste brought in by lorries from outside the area or by arable crop grown to fuel it, rather than food for a growing population. The only gain to the community will be the income from the site rental.
3. The site is very near to the proposed application for a solar farm at Farrington (planning application 54507/001). If both applications are approved, this would create a significant area of development in a very rural area, and would fundamentally change the rural landscape.
4. The siting of an anaerobic digester plant should be near to a major trunk road, such as the A31, and to the source of the waste, to avoid unnecessary lorry movements.

Specific points of objection

5. The Design Access Statement and Visual Impact Appraisal state that there will be a visual impact on the surrounding areas. Both the anaerobic digester and the lagoon will be visible.

The anaerobic digester plant site will:

- Be seen from the B3006, to the north and south of the Hartley Park Farm complex
- Have open view from footpath 1a across the field north of Hartley Park Farm
- Have open views of the south east end of the anaerobic digester plant site from footpath 8
- Have views from the boundary of the South Downs National Park boundary to the south west
- Have distance views across the valley

The lagoon site will:

- Have open views through gaps in the hedgerow from footpath 1a
- Have views of the lagoon site from footpath 1a to the west of the site.

6. The conclusion that “perceptions of the local landscape character will also be enhanced by the proposed planting scheme” is wrong. The landscape character is enhanced by NOT having an anaerobic digester plant.

7. The development of an industrial plant in a rural area is counter to policy (Local Plan, Second Review, IB3 c).

8. Protected Species: The Habitat Suitability Assessment survey of Ponds 1 and 2 recorded a count of 11 Great Crested Newts and the surveyor noted in his report "This pond (1) is at the top of the catchment it may be an important source-pond from which GCN could disperse to other ponds downstream."

9. A badger survey found evidence of 5 badger burrows and badger activity found near to the ADP boundary (the distance from the boundary has been left blank in the report - paragraph 4.3.2)

10 The Ecological Appraisal states "The survey and HBIC records suggest that the Farm is an important site for bird species associated with farmland and thus considered an ecological feature of Parish to Borough-value."

11. Traffic flow is, by the measurement of the consultants to the application, shown to be high for a country road with many blind spots and an average speed of over 50mph; adding at least 50 truck movements to this per day (as well as employee cars and service/support vehicles) will have a further negative impact on road safety on the B3006. The consultants predict that there will be 1 HGV traffic movement every 10 minutes. This is too many for an already over utilized B road.

12 The B3006 is already a dangerous route and this application will make it worse. The applicant has no plans to mitigate this greater danger by, for example, making land available for entry and exit adequate slip lanes.

13. The Worldham Parish Plan has identified that the amount of traffic and speed on the B3006 is of a major concern to the parishioners of Worldham, and any increase in traffic movements can only make the situation worse.

14. The positioning of what may be an odour and effluent producing plant would be environmentally unacceptable to nearby residents especially in Hartley Mauditt, Farrington and West Worldham.

15. The Hampshire Mineral Waste Policy requires that such waste should be sent to as few sites as possible; as permission has already been granted for a site in close proximity to Selborne this policy will be breached.

For the above reasons Worldham Parish Council objects to this planning application.