

DISS TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Sub-Committee held in the **Council Chamber at Diss Corn Hall on Wednesday 20th July 2022 at 6.45pm.**

Present: Councillors:
M. Gingell
K. Murphy (Vice-Chair)
E. Taylor (Chair / ex-officio)
J. Welch

In attendance: Sonya French, Deputy Town Clerk

PL0722/01 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor R. Peaty.
Apologies were not received from S. Olander.

PL0722/02 NOMINATION OF SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVES

There were none.

PL0722/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Councillor Gingell lives in vicinity that will be affected. Councillor Welch lives in vicinity that will be affected.

PL0722/04 MINUTES

It was

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 29th June 2022 were a true record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

PL0722/05 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were none.

PL0722/06 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

PL0722/07 NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MATTERS

Councillors received and commented on planning applications and other development control matters.

App. No	Type	Applicant	Address	Proposal	Response
2022/1108	Full	Deal Farm Biogas Ltd	Kenninghall Road, Bressingham, IP22 2HG	Construction of an Anaerobic Digestion facility (part retrospective), comprising: 1 no. digester/digestate storage tank, silage clamps, liquid and dry feed system; digestate separation, handling and pasteurization, biogas upgrading and mains gas-grid connection; carbon capture, CHP, agricultural building; office buildings, weighbridge, 2 no. covered digestate storage lagoons, and associated plant, vehicular accesses, roads and landscaping (including earth bunds).	RECOMMEND REFUSAL Please see below recommendation from Diss Town Council, also comments from South Norfolk Council MP Richard Bacon.

(Action: Deputy Town Clerk; immediately)

PL0722/8 PLANNING DELEGATION POLICY & PROCEDURE

Members reviewed the new planning policy and procedure which the current Chair of Planning Councillor Taylor. Had written an introduction. It was

RESOLVED: To approve the new Planning Delegation Policy & Procedure.

(Action; Clerk to change numbering and add to Policy booklet; immediately)

PL0722/9 SOUTH NORFOLK PLANNING DECISIONS

Members noted the planning decisions made by the Planning Authority since the last meeting.

PL0722/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that Planning committee meetings will precede scheduled committee dates should applications require committee consideration.

Meeting closed at 19:15 hours.

Councillor E. Taylor
Committee Chairman

Recommendation

That Diss Town Council objects to this application and recommend that South Norfolk Council refuse the application on the following grounds:

- All anaerobic digestion gives off noxious odours from the production of methane gas and the processing of animal and food waste. Even with the best sealed processes, it can only reduce odours by around 70 to 80%. This will affect the quality of life, the health and the environment for those living in the north of the town particularly in the Shelfanger Road and Heywood area of the town.

This is a contravention of the South Norfolk Council Policy DM 3.14 Pollution, health and safety.

- We believe a realistic figure of extra traffic movement in the Diss town boundary even with the revised figures will be 4,000 per year based on the plant size and the data given by the developer and the fact that even NCC Highways have said the developers own figures are understated by up to 50%.

These movements will in particular be along the A1066 Park Road/Victoria Road and the B1077 Denmark Street, Shelfanger Road through to Winfarthing. This will inevitably lead to traffic using the B1077 and the A1066 which the developer describes as "well established links" which will cause even more congestion. This will blight the lives of all those living along these routes especially as there will also be 200 extra homes built on Shelfanger Road as part of the new local plan. This will add further to the current heavy congestion we experience now particularly on Denmark Street and Shelfanger Road which are both narrow in places. This is a contravention of your Policy DM 3.11 Road Safety and free flow of traffic.

- We fully concur with the comments attached below from Richard Bacon MP. It is wrong that large development companies can "game the system" by ignoring planning regulations and then apply retrospectively. It is also wrong that they can ignore planning recommendations to build this type of plant close to residential homes as they have built very close to a grade 2 listed building and a number of other dwellings.

Cllr Eric Taylor
Chair of Planning
Diss Town Council

Details of Comments from South Norfolk MP Richard Bacon.

Anaerobic Digestion Plan at Bressingham – Reference: 2022/1108

Message from South Norfolk MP Richard Bacon

I have been contacted by constituents who are very concerned that the previous application for an Anaerobic Digestion Plan at Bressingham (Reference 2021/2788) has been withdrawn and replaced with a new application (Reference 2022/1108).

A substantial response to the first planning application from more than 340 South Norfolk residents resulted in two robustly worded objections from Norfolk County Council Highways, a Flood Report objection, a Waveney Trust objection, together with due concerns from Natural England, Environmental Health and many more.

It therefore seems acutely unfair that by simply adjusting one obvious factor (that is, a reduction of feedstock going into the plant), the applicant is now allowed to resubmit a free full application and that as a result my constituents have to go through the whole process again – and this for a very big AD plant which has already been substantially constructed, without planning permission. I believe this takes “gaming of the planning process” to a new level and will add to the administrative burdens and costs for South Norfolk Council Tax payers.

This unauthorised AD plant - which I understand is twice the size of the original 2015 consented application – is having a detrimental and unacceptable impact on the local landscape and environment and the rural communities that surround it. The local roads, many of which are very narrow, poorly constructed and which are designated as “Quiet Lanes”, will not cope with the increased traffic, given that there would be large heavy vehicles presenting serious hazards for pedestrians, cyclists, and all other road users.

My understanding is that on the 2nd March 2022 NCC Highways objected to the application and recommended “*refusal without hesitation*”, stating serious concerns for “*other road users, including vulnerable users*”. This objection was reiterated on the 5th May.

Reducing the feedstock allowance in order to reduce traffic movements without enforcing the reduction in size of this construction does not make sense; and if planning consent were granted, it would open up the possibility of “development creep” and a gradual uplift in the throughput of feedstock later on. The consequential growth in traffic movements would thus intensify and exacerbate the current situation on these lanes, potentially leading to hazardous manoeuvres and becoming even more dangerous for local residents. I am sure that maintaining the reduced feedstock limit would also be very difficult and costly for the council to monitor accurately.

My constituents express a genuine sense of unfairness and anger over the roughshod manner in which they feel they have been treated. I believe that a people-centred approach to alternative energy development would make far more sense. ‘If you want development to be a good word, then you have to have good development’. This construction clearly is not that.

Given the scale of objection and local strength of feeling over this unapproved construction I would request the council to refuse the application.

Yours sincerely

Richard Bacon
MP for South Norfolk