

Tabitha Davis

From: Development Control
Sent: 17 July 2015 15:26
To: Planning Enquiries
Subject: FW: F/2015/0767 - Anaerobic Digester Bio-gas Plant, Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill ~[UNCLASSIFIED]~
Attachments: 44_F_2015_0767.pdf

Zoona Choudhary
Technical Assistant
Development & Regeneration Service
Development Management Team
Wokingham Borough Council
PO Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 1WR

Tel: 0118 974 6000
Email: zoona.choudary@wokingham.gov.uk
www.wokingham.gov.uk

This Council introduced Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging on 6th April 2015. Planning applications decided on or after 6th April 2015 may be liable to pay the levy. For more information please visit our website at <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/developers/cil/>

Please note, this email is an opinion of an officer of this council only which is of an advisory nature, and is given without prejudice to any formal decision taken in respect of development of the above site under the Town and Country Planning Act

From: Liz Halson [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 July 2015 14:59
To: David Wetherill; Development Control
Subject: F/2015/0767 - Anaerobic Digester Bio-gas Plant, Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill

F/2015/0767 – Anaerobic Digester Bio-gas Plant, Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill

Dear David

Swallowfield Parish Council has asked me to draw your attention to an article on the BBC Countryfile program broadcast on Sunday 12th July 2015 on how growing crops to feed anaerobic digesters could be a disaster for our soil. The piece starts 6mins 47seconds into the programme.

The Council would urge WBC to investigate the issues raised by this piece.

From the BBC Website

Soil is one of our most precious assets. Farming, food and life itself depend on it. On average 2.2 million tonnes of topsoil are eroded annually in the UK, costing an estimated £45million to the farming industry. So is it time that we learn to love it or lose it? Tom Heap discovers how the very crops farmers are being encouraged to grow could be having a detrimental effect on soil. Maize is a case in point. It's one of the biggest growing crops in the country, used for animal feed and to feed Anaerobic Digesters that create biofuel but according to the Soil Association it could be a disaster for our soil.

Summary from Councillors who watched the programme

There was a very interesting item on the BBC Countryfile programme yesterday about anaerobic digesters and the implications of growing maize and other shallow-rooted crops specifically to be rotted down in digesters. It said that the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) was expressing concern about the practice of growing of maize and similar shallow-rooted crops for use in digesters because they have the effect of impoverishing the soil and making it susceptible to erosion. Consequently this practice was environmentally unsound and unsustainable and would render the land useless for crop production in the longer term. The practice was deemed "environmentally bonkers" by a representative of the Soil Association interviewed on the programme as the consequences could be disastrous.

This would surely be contrary to WBC's policies on sustainable land use.

These concerns are in addition to those expressed in the letter dated 27th May 2015 outlining the Council's very **strong objection** to this application.

Regards

Mrs. Elizabeth Halson
Swallowfield Parish Clerk

Attached is a PDF copy of this letter.

--

Mrs. Liz Halson
Parish Council Clerk
Swallowfield Parish Council
Parish Office
Swallowfield Street
Swallowfield, Reading
Berks RG7 1QX

Click [here](#) to report this email as spam.

15th July 2015

Attn: David Wetherill
Planning Department
Wokingham Borough Council
Shute End
Wokingham
Berks RG40 1WR

F/2015/0767 – Anaerobic Digester Bio-gas Plant, Hill Farm, Jouldings Lane, Farley Hill

Dear David

Swallowfield Parish Council has asked me to draw your attention to an article on the BBC Countryfile program broadcast on Sunday 12th July 2015 on how growing crops to feed anaerobic digesters could be a disaster for our soil. The piece starts 6mins 47seconds into the programme.

The Council would urge WBC to investigate the issues raised in this piece.

From the BBC Website

Soil is one of our most precious assets. Farming, food and life itself depend on it. On average 2.2 million tonnes of topsoil are eroded annually in the UK, costing an estimated £45million to the farming industry. So is it time that we learn to love it or lose it? Tom Heap discovers how the very crops farmers are being encouraged to grow could be having a detrimental effect on soil. Maize is a case in point. It's one of the biggest growing crops in the country, used for animal feed and to feed Anaerobic Digesters that create biofuel but according to the Soil Association it could be a disaster for our soil.

Summary from Councillors who watched the programme

There was a very interesting item on the BBC Countryfile programme yesterday about anaerobic digesters and the implications of growing maize and other shallow-rooted crops specifically to be rotted down in digesters. It said that the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) was expressing concern about the practice of growing of maize and similar shallow-rooted crops for use in digesters because they have the effect of impoverishing the soil and making it susceptible to erosion. Consequently this practice was environmentally unsound and unsustainable and would render the land useless for crop production in the longer term. The practice was deemed "environmentally bonkers" by a representative of the Soil Association interviewed on the programme as the consequences could be disastrous.

This would surely be contrary to WBC's policies on sustainable land use.

These concerns are in addition to those expressed in the letter dated 27th May 2015 outlining the Council's very **strong objection** to this application.

Regards

Mrs. Elizabeth Halson
Swallowfield Parish Clerk

This page is intentionally left blank