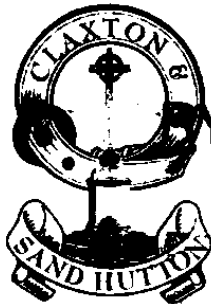


**Claxton & Sand Hutton  
Parish Council**

The Byre  
Field House Farm  
Thornton-le-Clay  
YORK  
YO60 7QA



YEDALE DM

13 JAN 2015

Fiona Hill  
Clerk

Peter Stott  
Chairman

Angela Steele  
Vice chair

Email: clerk@claxton-sandhutton.org.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

**Ref: 14/01073/MFUL**

The Parish Council has carefully considered the revised application statement and supporting documentation. In addition, we have visited two Anaerobic Digester Plants currently operated by JFS & Associates. On the basis of this information, and after wide consultation with local residents, the Parish council strongly objects to this application being allowed.

Our main ground for objection is that this is an application for an industrial-scale processing plant, concerned principally with power generation, and that it is inappropriate for such a plant to be placed immediately adjacent to two conservation villages, within an area of greenbelt and adjacent to an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**Size and Scale**

According to information available on [www.biogas.info.co.uk](http://www.biogas.info.co.uk), a small scale anaerobic digester at premises used for agriculture is one in which the total quantity of waste treated or stored at any one time does not exceed 1,250 cubic metres and in which the appliance used has a net rated thermal input of less than 0.4 megawatts. The proposed application is for 8 silage clamps each of 2160 cubic metres (a total of 17,280 cubic metres) plus one 1750 cubic metre bay for manure. The heat and power unit will have a 1 megawatt capacity. This cannot be classed a farm-scale operation and is clearly not primarily for agricultural consumption – this is for energy generation (i.e., it is essentially a commercial power station). No evidence is provided to substantiate the applicant's statement that this plant will "benefit the rural economy".

With its undefined references to "the farm", the Planning Statement (PS) is potentially misleading about the scale of the operation. At times this refers to Gravel Pit Farm, which at 800 acres (para 1.15, or possibly 1200 acres, Design Statement, para 1.5), cannot be the source of all the material to be used. Elsewhere (e.g., PS para 1.13) "the farm" appears to mean a much larger agricultural enterprise that includes a number of other holdings, extending to 5250 acres, and spread over a large area of Yorkshire.

Some of the adverse environmental implications of this large-scale proposal development are detailed below. (In some paragraphs we point out comments and statements in the PS that are unsubstantiated, and we urge the planning officer to ensure the veracity of these before making recommendations to the planning committee.)

**1) Impact on highways**

The statements made on this issue are not substantiated; that is, no data is provided as to current traffic flow (type/frequency) and there is incomplete data with respect to traffic generated by the proposal. In PS para 4.23 it is suggested that the proposal will be "traffic neutral", but this statement has not been backed by evidential data. Para 4.19 seems disingenuous; our view is that traffic flow will be increased substantially, given that, by the applicant's own admission, the bulk of

13/1/15 - cm 11/01/15

the manure will need to be brought in by road from other farming operations in Kilburn, Tadcaster, and Northallerton. These movements could also have a bio-security risk.

In this context, we note that applicant states that the resultant digestate will be used on the land at Gravel Pit Farm (PS para 2.12). Advice from other working farmers in the villages leads us to think that the amount of digestate being produced will far exceed the required capacity of the local acreage of Gravel Pit Farm. (Stephen Boyle of Business and Environmental Services at NYCC has indicated his own concerns on this matter in his letter dated 26 August 2014 to RDC). Traffic movements will be increased if (as seems likely) it is necessary to export some of the digestate from Gravel Pit Farm.

#### 2) Visibility

Ryedale's Local Plan Strategy SP13 Landscapes indicates, inter alia, that proposals should contribute to the rural landscape, the ambience of the area, and its tranquillity. An industrial-scale processing plant does not do this.

Parts of the village of Claxton are close, as the crow flies, to the proposed site and a 14-metre high digester tank will certainly be visible from there. Reference is made to screening supplied by woodland, but this lies outside the ownership of the applicant. In PS para 1.20 the applicant asserts that should woodland around the site be felled "replanting would certainly take place". No evidence is supplied to support this assertion, and local experience of felled sites in the close vicinity of Gravel Pit Farm disprove it, as they have remained unplanted for a number of years to date.

The Parish Council would wish to ensure long term screening by way of new planting within the full boundary of Gravel Pit Farm was a clear condition. This would also appear to accord with recommendations made by John Clayton (The Council's Tree & Landscaping Officer) in a memorandum dated 23 December 2014 to Alan Hunter.

#### 3) Odour

The odour assessment document, takes no account in respect of the prevailing winds that pass over both Claxton and Sand Hutton, or of the effects to be expected in other conditions (e.g., on warm, still nights). We can find no reference to receptor monitors having been placed in either Sand Hutton or Claxton villages, nor any reason as to why they were not. We also question the unsubstantiated comment that "maize is considered most odorous" (para 3.1). It seems unlikely it will smell worse than raw chicken and other farmyard manure. We therefore feel that the impact of odour on our villages has not been properly considered by the applicants.

#### 4) Noise

We can find no account of consideration being given to the impact of the gas conditioning plant. We believe this must be properly and thoroughly assessed before the application is presented to the Planning Committee.

#### Conclusion

The applicant's Design statement para 4.12, concludes that the impact upon the community "is not unacceptable". We, of the community concerned, strongly disagree.

Yours faithfully

Peter Stott  
Chair of Parish Council