

**DRAFT - MINUTES OF THE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7.30PM**

Present: Cllr D. Parsons (Chair), Cllr K. Fergus, Cllr G. Prangnell, Cllr C. Daniels, Cllr H. Heylen, Cllr C. Pomfret and Cllr CA. Pomfret.

In attendance: Cllr Criswell and 3 members of the public

1.00	Apologies.	Action
1.01	Cllr O'Brien (Away) Cllr Day (Harvesting)	
2.00	To receive declarations of interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.	
2.01	There were none.	
	The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7.32pm.	
3.00	Open Forum	
	10 minutes for the public to comment on the planning application below.	
3.01	Cllr Criswell reported that the Traffic Lights at Wheatsheaf Junction had been approved again today.	
3.02	The Chairman asked the public if they would like to speak on the application, they declined.	
	The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 7.34pm.	
4.00	Planning	
4.01	Planning Application CCC/21/088/FUL – ENVAR, St. Ives Road, Somersham.	
	Demolition of in-vessel compost buildings/tunnels and ancillary development; construction of a dry anaerobic digestion (AD) facility, pellet fertiliser facility, healthcare waste energy recovery facility, waste transfer station, vehicle re-fuelling station, biomass storage building, surface water storage lagoons, extension to concrete pad and ancillary development including car park.	
	The comments received from the 4 th September Open Day, were read out before the discussion began.	
	Cllrs Daniels and Fergus gave their views on the application, it was then discussed by Council.	
	The Chairman asked Cllr Criswell for his views on the application.	
	Council Recommended Refusal – 1 in favour, 5 against, 1 abstained due to lack of information.	
	Cllr Daniels was in favour of the application, subject to other statutory agencies not objecting. Cllr Fergus abstained until Council were more informed, an updated traffic report that is due in two weeks and a report from the Environment Agency, when available.	

Distrust among the local community of ENVAR's ability to manage the proposed site.

ENVAR's consultation with local residents & bodies on their current plans have been neither timely nor effective.

ENVAR allowed a serious fire to break out at their facility around two years ago; their response to the four-week fire was totally inadequate with local residents being left in the dark while the fire was burning and receiving no explanation or apology from the company afterwards.

Lack of need for another Healthcare Waste Energy Recovery Facility (HWERF).

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals & Waste Local Plan (adopted this year) quotes their recent Waste Needs Assessment as not identifying any capacity gaps [in waste management] which would justify the allocation of sites.

The healthcare waste facility at Addenbrookes is currently operating within capacity. In 2019 it was operating at just over 50% of capacity.

When questioned by us on the need for another HWERF in the area, ENVAR merely said that there was a need but could not offer evidence for that; they told us that they have no doubt they can procure the 12,000 tonnes of healthcare waste they need but we suggest this would have to come from further afield and would be better processed close to where the need really is in order to avoid long HCV journeys.

Storage of propane & methane gas onsite.

This is inherently dangerous and would represent an unacceptable risk close to local villages.

Creation of a chemical factory.

The proposal, if accepted, would result in the current site moving from hosting an agricultural process to hosting a chemical process which would be unacceptable in a rural environment.

Impact on local traffic.

Without sight of ENVAR's revised Traffic Statement, requested in the Transport Statement Review carried out by Cambridgeshire County Council, we cannot support the application.

Environmental impact of the HWERF.

Without sight of the Environment Agency's report on the impact of the proposed HWERF on health, the land & local livestock, we cannot support the application.

Ongoing Monitoring.

If this application is approved, there will be – rightly or wrongly – widespread suspicion among local people as to the risks to health, to the land & to local livestock. This could have a serious impact on livelihoods in what is a predominantly agricultural area. We feel strongly that a frequent & rigorous monitoring regime – of air quality, soil quality, water & livestock - should be established in order to help allay locals' fears. The monitoring should be carried out by an independent party, and we see no reason why, as a condition of approval, ENVAR should not be asked to contribute towards the cost.

While Colne PC have the serious reservations expressed in the comments above, we accept that the move from "in vessel" processing of green waste to the use of an anaerobic digester will deliver benefits, not least in terms of reduced smell and the contribution of energy to the national grid. However, we do not feel that these benefits are sufficient – with the knowledge we have at present – to overturn the disadvantages of the proposal.

5.00 Date of the next Ordinary Meeting – 28th September 2021.

6.00 Close of Meeting.

6.01 The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.20pm.

Chairman's
Signature.....

Min – 7th September 2021

Date.....

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