

GREG SMITH MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Buckinghamshire Council Planning Department
by email

Monday 15th April 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

Application CM/0022/22
Land to the south-east of Hornage Farm, Bicester Road, Chilton

This application is for a significant five tank anaerobic digester and associated buildings to create a large complex on a rural 6.9ha site.

This would remove 6.3ha of grade 3b Moderate Quality land from productive agricultural use and while the opportunities for sustainability is noted, this would have an impact on a far wider area with local land being encouraged to change their crops to suit the digester.

Using the applicant's own data, only 35% of the feedstock needed for the digesters is available within a 3km radius. This alone will cause significant safety concerns and impacts on the local rural highway, and the B4011 on which it is proposed the site is access from, before one considers the 65% of feed stock coming from further afield.

The applicant's own traffic submissions shows the site creating nearly 12,000 trips after construction. On a rural road network this will be very noticeable, not only the increase in traffic, but the large and slow nature that the HGVs and tractors. The effect on Oakley and Long Crendon on the Bicester Road will be significant; including the impact on the free flow of traffic in day time hours, and in particular during the peak summer harvest period. This import of feedstock by road will be contrary to the Minerals and Waste Plan policies SO6.

As a resident of the nearby village of Chearsley which will equally be affected, I am particularly familiar with the nature of the local roads and the impact that regular heavy traffic can have, including from other parts of the County such as those roads experiencing the damage inflicted by HS2 HGV movements.

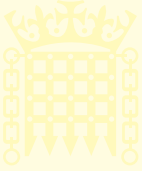
There is also the concern that this proposed form of anaerobic digestion will encourage farmers in the surrounding area to grow crops specifically for use within the digester as opposed to crops that might otherwise contribute towards food production and food security, so not only contributing to local traffic, but potentially removing agricultural land for food purposes.

Buckingham Constituency: **Buckingham, Princes Risborough, Winslow & Surrounding Villages**

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The proposal's scale and character will have a significant impact on the landscape and is contrary to VALP policy BE2 and C3 (f, g and r in particular), and Minerals and Waste Plan policy SO7. The row of five 17m high tanks and adjacent sheds on a large concrete forecourt will be a very industrialised development in this rural location.

It is interesting to note that West Oxfordshire recently rejected a very similar scaled application outside Witney, and despite being very close to the town, it was still unacceptable in terms of the industrial development in a rural setting, impact on the landscape and the impact on adjacent highways.

With the impact on local food production, the rural landscape, and the impact on roads, safety and travel times on the surrounding road network, I object to the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Greg Smith".

Greg Smith MP
Member of Parliament for Buckingham Constituency