

RECOMMENDATION : SECTION 106

REFERENCE: P/14/700/FUL

APPLICANT: AGRIVERT LTD
THE STABLES RADFORD CHIPPING NORTON OXFORDSHIRE

LOCATION: PARC STORMY STORMY DOWN AIRFIELD STORMY DOWN

PROPOSAL: ANAEROBIC DIGESTION FACILITY FOR 30 YEAR PERIOD WITH ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS & WORKS

RECEIVED: 21st October 2014

SITE INSPECTED: 10th November 2014

APPLICATION/SITE DESCRIPTION

The application seeks planning permission for the construction and operation of an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility at Parc Stormy, Stormy Down, Bridgend for a period of 30 years.

AD is the process where organic material is biologically treated in the absence of oxygen using naturally occurring micro-organisms to produce biogas, which can be used to generate a renewable green energy and is fed into the National Grid. The AD process also produces a nutrient rich bio-fertilizer that can be used as both a fertiliser and a soil improver.

The proposed AD facility would process approximately 48,500 tonnes of biodegradable organic waste (the majority of which would be comprised of food waste) per annum and would generate 2.4MW of renewable energy per annum.

The proposed facility is comprised of the following:-

- Reception building measuring 40m x 50m and reaching a maximum height of 14m.
- 7 circular digestion and storage tanks, each measuring 28m in diameter, finished with a domed roof reaching a maximum height of 16.5m, sunk into the ground by 1m. (15.5m above ground level)
- 2 combined heat and power (CHP) gas engines and associated equipment
- Biofilter
- Silage storage area
- Weighbridge area
- Site Office/welfare facility
- 1.25m high containment bund and security fence
- Low level lighting

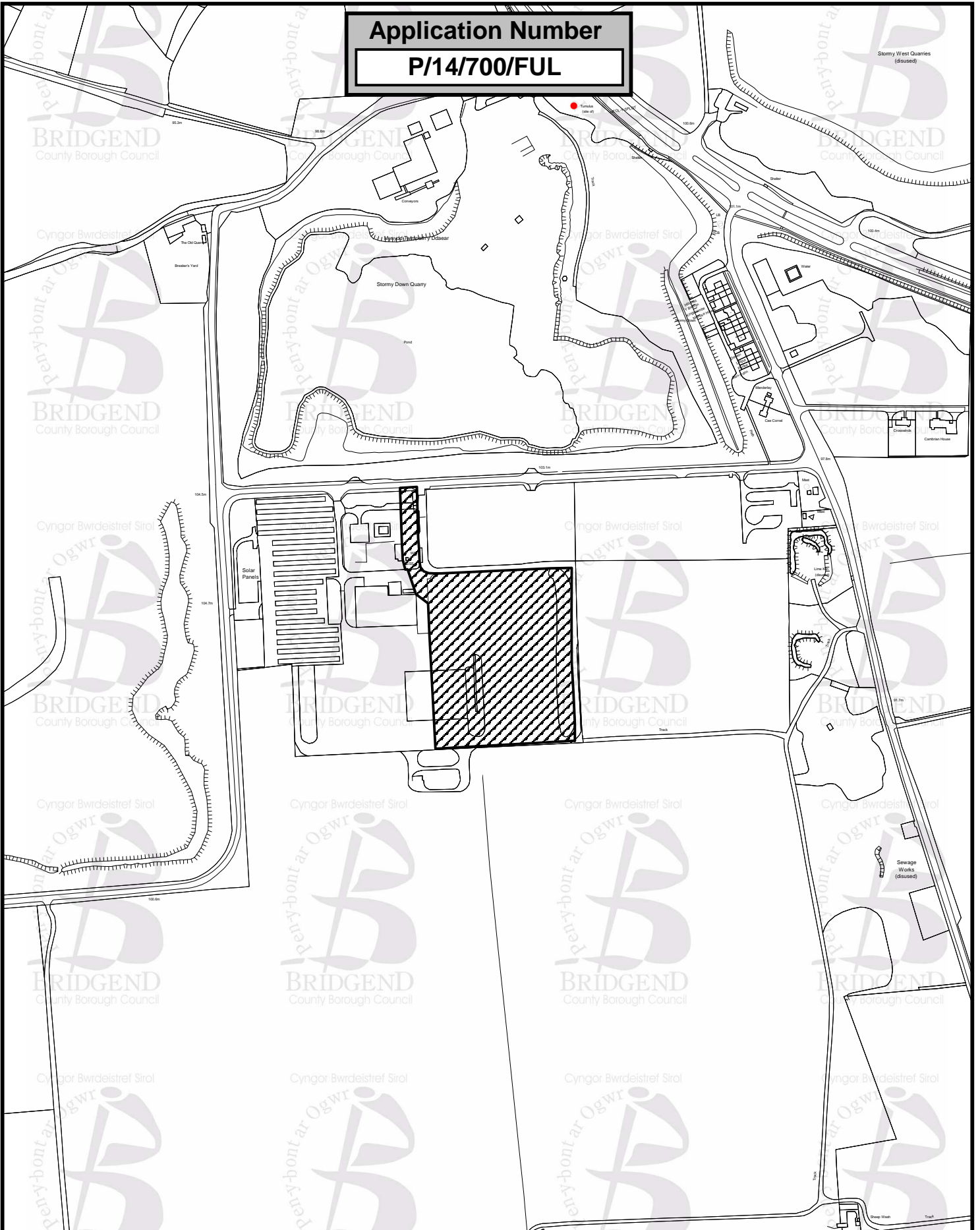
The application site is located within Parc Stormy, Stormy Down, part of the former RAF Stormy Down air base. Current operations on the wider Parc Stormy site include cement production and the production of renewable energy generation through solar photo-voltaic panels and an application was recently approved for a 105m high wind turbine at the site.

Access to the site will be via the existing access to the northern boundary of the site. To reach the A48 vehicles will head west on the unclassified to the north of the site before turning right onto Mount Pleasant Road for 280m. Vehicles will then turn right on to Heol y Splott and head north east for 370m before reaching the A48. It is predicted that the transport movements during operation will be an average of 60 two-way heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) per day.

The digestate will produce energy 24 hours a day and the site will be manned and take deliveries

Application Number

P/14/700/FUL



Scale 1:5000

**Date Issued:
29/01/2015**

**Development-Mapping
Tel: 01656 643176**

Mark Shephard

Corporate Director-Communities

Communities Directorate,
Bridgend County Borough
Council, Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend CF31 4WB.

O/Drive/Plandraw/new MI layouts/
Committee DC Plan

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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



of waste between the following hours:-

Monday - Friday 0700-1800

Saturday and Bank Holiday 0700 - 1600

Sunday 0800-1400

The construction of the proposed AD plant would take 47 weeks and will take place during the hours of 0730 - 1800 Monday to Friday and 0730-1300 on Saturdays. It is not proposed that any abnormal loads will be used in the construction phase, the peak of traffic movement associated with the construction would peak at 380 two way movements per day

Planning permission for an Anaerobic Digester facility was previously approved, by the Development Committee, on part of the application site in 2010 (P/09/917/FUL refers). The permission has not been implemented and expires in September 2015. The previously approved development was for a smaller operation dealing with 19,000 tonnes per year and was subject to a S106 Agreement which limited the vehicle movements associated with the AD facility to 102 per day.

The following is a breakdown of the AD process for Members information, this information was provided with the application. The AD process can be split into six distinct activities:-

1. Reception- Waste enters the site within a refuse collection vehicle (RCV) and is weighed over the weighbridge. The vehicle then proceeds to the enclosed reception building where access is gained through speed doors. Once inside the doors are closed to retain negative air pressure to ensure odour is controlled. Waste is tipped into reception bunkers with a moving floor. Once the loads have been deposited, the rear of the vehicle is washed down. The vehicle then exits through another speed door. Odours from the delivering tankers are extracted from the building and treated through the biofilter.

Stabilising energy crop silage is stored on site in a silage clamp and is delivered regularly to the energy crop feed bunker by loading shovel, the silage is needed to help balance the biology of the digesters.

2. Pre-treatment - All material from the soil feed bunker is fed into the macerator. This machine processes the waste in line with Animal By-Product Regulations. The resultant thick, organic mixture drops, by gravity, into a settling and mixing tank, where the small pieces of heavy contaminations (glass, grit and metal) settle out by gravity. Liquid wastes are added directly to the macerator.

3. Digestion - The first phase of digestion is completed in the digester tanks. Each tank is heated to 39 degrees Celsius and biogas is released and stored in the void above the digestion mass, sealed in by a twin membrane roof. The gas is kept at a low pressure by moving roof membrane that fills and empties as the biogas levels rise and fall.

The substrate is displaced from the digester tank and fed into a second digester where more biogas is extracted. On leaving the first digester tank it passes through a macerator.

4. Pasteurisation - Pasteurisation of the digestate is carried out in order to kill bacteria. The material from the digester tank is introduced into a pasteurisation tank in batches, which is then heated using hot water from the gas engines exhaust gas heat exchanger system. Once temperature has been achieved the batch passes onto storage.

5. Energy production - The methane produced by the digesters is naturally high in sulphides. Sulphides are a problem for gas engines and must be reduced. The first stage of reduction is carried out within the digestors until ready for use in the gas engine.

The biogas is dehumidified and compressed prior to introduction into the carbon filter. The gas engines are carefully sized to operate at maximum efficiency and to create the necessary power. The gas engine receives the biogas and uses it as fuel in powering a conventional generator unit to produce electricity at 415 volts. The hot water from the gas engine cooling system and exhaust gas heat exchanger is used to heat pasteurisation tanks, to keep the digesters at the required temperatures for mesophilic digestion and to dry the biogas. The noise of the gas engine is suppressed within a sound insulated engine container. The power generated by the engine is transmitted directly into the National Grid via transformers and high voltage connection.

6. Digestate Storage and Recycling - The storage tanks have sufficient capacity to keep 16 weeks storage within the process. The first three storage tanks are fitted with gas roofs to provide gas storage. Sealed tanks are used to transport the digestate end product from the site local to farms.

RELEVANT HISTORY

P/08/804/FUL APPROVED 12-12-2008
+conditions

BIO GAS PLANT WITH ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS & GAS PIPELINE TO CHP UNIT AT TES FACILITY AT UNIT 1 STORMY DOWN

P/09/27/FUL REFUSED 22-05-2009

PROPOSED OPEN STORAGE AREAS TO BE ASSOC. WITH SUBDIVISION OF FORMER MOD BUILDING INTO 2 UNITS & EXTRA OPEN STORAGE

P/09/450/FUL WITHDRAWN 23-09-2009

CHANGE OF USE OF OPEN AREA TO PERMIT OPEN STORAGE OF PORTAKABINS & STEEL STORAGE CONTAINERS

P/09/451/RLX Conditional relax 28-08-2009

VARY COND 1 OF 03/939 TO PERMIT CONTINUED OPERATION OF SUNDAY MARKET

P/09/530/ESO EIA not required 20-08-2009

SCREENING OPINION FOR NEW BUILDING FOR FEEDSTOCK RECEPTION HALL & USE OF HANGAR FOR IN VESSEL COMPOSTING

P/09/698/FUL APPROVED 29-09-2010
+conditions

PROVISION OF MODULAR BUILDING (SUITABLE FOR RELOCATION) TO BE USED FOR STORAGE AND DRYING OF MATERIALS

P/09/699/RLX Conditional relax 23-10-2009

VARY COND. 1 OF P/07/631/FUL TO PERMIT RETENTION OF LOW CARBON SUBSTITUTE TEST PLANT UNTIL 2034

P/09/917/FUL APPROVED 29-09-2010
+conditions

C/U TO PROVIDE IN-VESSEL COMPOST FACILITY, AIR MANAGEMENT UNIT

P/11/138/FUL APPROVED 09-05-2011
+conditions
GROUND BASED SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS FOR ENERGY GENERATION

P/11/140/FUL APPROVED 18-05-2011
temporarily
ERECT DE-MOUNTABLE RESEARCH LABORATORY

P/11/225/FUL APPROVED 03-06-2011
temporarily
C/U FOR TEMP STORAGE OF SOIL & AGGREGATES GENERATED WITHIN SITE
(PENDING RE-USE IN BUILDING) & IMPROVEMENT WORKS

P/11/529/FUL REFUSED 07-09-2011
TEMPORARY STORAGE OF TIMBER IN ADVANCE OF THE ERECTION OF THE
APPROVED DRYING SHED

P/11/531/FUL Non-determ. 18-10-2012
(Appeal)
PROVISION OF 1 WIND TURBINE ON SITE OF FORMER WATER TOWER

P/11/627/FUL APPROVED 21-10-2011
temporarily
ERECT 6 NO. 50KW SOLAR PHOTO-VOLTAIC TRACKING ARRAY

P/11/643/RLX Conditional relax 19-12-2011
RELAX COND 1 OF 06/44/FUL TO EXTEND TIME FOR SOILS & GREEN WASTE
RECYCLING WITH ASSOC. BUILDINGS,PARKING, LANDSCAPING

P/12/534/FUL REFUSED 19-11-2012
PROVISION OF 1 WIND TURBINE ON SITE OF FORMER WATER TOWER

P/13/904/FUL APPROVED 18-12-2014
temporarily
PROVISION OF 1 WIND TURBINE ON SITE OF FORMER WATER TOWER

P/14/350/FUL APPROVED 26-06-2014
temporarily
CONSTRUCT A LOW CARBON SYSTEMS DEMONSTRATION CENTRE

PUBLICITY

The application has been advertised in the press and on site.
Neighbours have been notified of the receipt of the application.
The period allowed for response to consultations and publicity expired on 20 November 2014.

NEGOTIATIONS

The applicant entered into pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Town/Community Council Observations

Notified on 27th October 2014

Merthyr Mawr Community Council provided the following comments:-

- '1. My Council is concerned that the current site occupiers do not comply with existing planning conditions. They request regular inspections by planning enforcement officers as a condition of any new consents.
2. My Council consider the working hours are excessive given the close proximity of residential properties. They request the hours be restricted to 0700 to 1400 on Saturdays and Nil on Sundays.
3. Councillors suggest that crossing of the A48 carriageway should be prohibited and the central reservations closed due to the increasing risks of collision caused by large and slow-moving vehicles crossing the path of oncoming traffic on the carriageway.
4. Councillors strongly recommend closure of the access road to the application site at its junction with the unclassified road from the A48 to the Amenity Site. This low cost measure would guarantee the road would not be used for unauthorised access by commercial site traffic but would cause minimum disruption to legitimate road users.
5. Given the visibility of the site from a considerable distance - for example from Margam Park - Councillors suggest the proposed landscaping bund is insufficient and should be increased.
6. There appears to be an inconsistency in the applicant's vehicle movement figures which state 13 vehicle moves in to the site and 16 vehicle moves out of the site - this would require an additional three vehicles to leave the site every day? If the applicants mean 13 deliveries and 16 collections then the total vehicle moves is actually $2(13 + 16) = 58$. To this can be added the four employees' vehicles, bringing the total to 66 vehicle movements per day.'

Destination & Countryside Management

Requested that a number of conditions be attached to any permission granted.

Economic Development

Advised that the proposed business is within one of the priority business sectors as set out by Welsh Government.

Head Of Street Scene (Drainage)

Has no objection to the proposal.

Group Manager Public Protection

Provided the following comments on the application:-

'The odour report demonstrates that, with adequate management control relating to the operation of the plant, the handling, quantity and nature of the feedstock and type of abatement to be used (ie fast acting doors, building being kept under negative pressure, biofilters and a secondary water scrubber), the odour should not give rise to annoyance or be detrimental to the local amenities. However, correct management of the site and maintenance of critical abatement plant and systems will be crucial to controlling the odour emissions which will be regulated by

the Environment Agency via an Environmental Permit.

Dispersion modelling of NOx emissions from the proposed facility was undertaken using appropriate modelling software. Predicted changes to pollutant concentrations and changes to nitrogen and acid deposition as a result of the proposed facility were not determined to be significant based on the criteria specified in the Environment Agency's Horizontal H1 guidance for assessing air emissions. In addition, no exceedences of air quality limit values are predicted as a result of the proposed facility.

The noise report also shows that with appropriate mitigation, the noise should not be detrimental to the local amenities.'

Although it is acknowledged that the majority of controls would be enforced via an Environmental Permit conditions have been suggested to attach to any permission granted.

Natural Resources Wales

Has no objections to the proposal subject to conditions and advised that an Environmental Permit from Natural Resources Wales will be required which will cover all the protected measures expected for the proposed development.

Welsh Water Developer Services

Advised on sewerage.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust

Requested that a condition be attached to any permission granted.

Head Of Street Scene (Waste & Recycling)

Provided the following comments on the application:-

'The proposal to construct an AD plant at Stormy Down, may present the Authority with a future disposal point for its food waste. While the outcome of any long term commitment for the treatment of the Council's food waste will be depend on a future procurement exercise, the presence of a facility within the boundaries of the County Borough Council can only benefit the Authority's position and ability to secure a good market rate for the treatment of this waste. This plant will help to regulate the market place and ensure that BCBC costs are kept to a minimum.

In the event that the Council's food waste is delivered to this facility, alongside any direct financial savings in treatment and transport costs there would also be a measurable reduction in the Council's carbon footprint.'

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

Joan & Duncan Blight, The Hollies, Stormy Lane

Objects to the proposal for the following reasons:-

- Odours
- Traffic
- Noise

David Francis, Pentre

Objects to the proposal for the following reasons:-

- Human toxicity
- Smell
- Lack of infrastructure

Sandra Grindley, Lilliput

Objects to the proposal and requests to speak at the committee meeting.

The objections are as follows:-

'I strongly object to the proposal. I am concerned about the odours which may be a health hazard and also the extra volume of traffic passing our homes.'

Colin Ball, 1 Stormy Lane

Objects to the proposal and have requested to speak at the Development Control Committee meeting. The objections are as follows:-

'This application is for a 30 year period which will exceed any approved planning on site and make the quarrying of limestone unavailable for this period of time.

The road system in the area cannot support the extra volume of traffic that this application would create. This application will increase the amount of traffic that passes our homes to a dangerous level and create extra noise disturbance for the residents. BCBC cannot or will not police the businesses that have signed S106 agreements for this site regarding traffic routing and there is no evidence that this will change.

This application will be higher than the existing buildings on site and will have a detrimental visual impact on the residents and the surrounding communities.

This application will create a terrible odour problem for the residents of Stormy Down, especially when the waste digestate is "maturing".

This will then create a health hazard with the amount of flies it will attract. Not for just a few months of the year as with farm waste but for the WHOLE YEAR.

If the applicants say it will not, why don't they apply for planning on an industrial estate away from residential properties with better road access?'

Lloyd Rowe, Swyn Y Don

Objects to the proposed development and has registered to speak at the Development Control Committee. The objections are summarised as follows:-

- Noise pollution
- Highway safety
- Odour pollution
- Air Quality

COMMENTS ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

The site will be periodically monitored, however, if any suspected breaches of conditions occur, this should be brought to the attention of the Local Planning Authority in order for the suspected breach to be investigated.

With respect to traffic routing, all complaints of non-compliance have been investigated and no evidence was found of breaches. No evidence has been provided by the complainant, despite being requested of for details witnessed breaches.

The Transport Assessment submitted with the application states that an average of 66 movements will occur per day.

With regard to the other objections received these are addressed in the 'Appraisal' section of this

report.

APPRAISAL

The application is referred to the Development Control Committee for determination in view of the objections received from local residents and Merthyr Mawr Community Council.

The application seeks planning permission for an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility at Parc Stormy, Stormy Down for a period of 30 years. The proposed development will generate 2.5MW of renewable energy.

The report will assess the relative planning merits of the AD facility and its impact within the County Borough of Bridgend.

The Appraisal will cover the following topics:-

1. National and Local Policy context
2. Landscape and visual amenity
3. Odours
4. Ecology
5. Transportation
6. Conservation and Archaeology
7. Drainage

1. National and Local Policy

National Policy in relation to renewable energy development is contained within Planning Policy Wales (7th Edition 2014) (PPW) and Technical Advice Note 8: Renewable Energy (TAN8)

PPW identifies a UK target of 15% of energy from renewables by 2020 and states that the Welsh Government is committed to delivering an energy programme to reduce carbon emissions whilst enhancing the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the people and communities of Wales. This is outlined in the Welsh Government's Energy Policy Statement Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition (2012).

PPW advises that the Welsh Government's aim is to secure an appropriate mix of energy provision for Wales, whilst avoiding and minimising environmental, social and economic impacts.

PPW aims at para 12.1.4 to promote the generation of energy from renewable and low carbon sources at all scales and para 12.8.6 seeks to maximise its benefits to the economy and communities, whilst minimising potential environmental and social impacts.

Para 12.10.1 of PPW states that, in determining applications for renewable and low carbon energy development and associated infrastructure, planning authorities should take the following into account:-

- The contribution a proposal will play in meeting identified national, UK and European targets and potential for renewable energy, including the contribution to cutting greenhouse gases;
- The wider environmental, social and economic benefits and opportunities from renewable energy and low carbon development;
- The impact on the national heritage, the coast and the historic environment;
- The need to minimize impacts on local communities, to safeguard quality of life for existing and

future generations;

- Ways to avoid, mitigate or compensate identified adverse impacts;
- The impacts of climate change on the location, design, build and operation of renewable and low carbon energy development. In doing so consider whether measures to adapt to climate change impacts give rise to additional impacts;
- Grid connection issues where renewable (electricity) energy developments are proposed; and
- The capacity of and effects on the transportation network relating to the construction and operation of the proposal

Technical Advice Note 6 - Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (TAN 6) at para 3.7.2 recognises that renewable energy is an appropriate use in rural locations and states 'Many economic activities can be sustainably located on farms. Small on-farm operations such as food and timber processing and food packing, together with services (e.g. offices, workshop facilities, equipment hire and maintenance), sports and recreation services, and the production of non-food crops and renewable energy, are likely to be appropriate uses.'

Technical Advice Note 8- Planning for Renewable Energy states at para 1.6 'As well as developing new sources of renewable energy which are essential to meeting the targets set by energy policy, the Assembly Government is fully committed to promoting energy efficiency and energy conservation. The land use planning system is one of a number of mechanisms which can help deliver improved energy efficiency and local planning authorities are expected to consider matters of energy efficiency when considering planning policy and applications.'

In relation to Anaerobic Digestion TAN 8 states at para 3.3 that the siting of biogas plant and the associated energy generation equipment is dependant upon the source of the digestate and advises that the kitchen and catering waste may come from further afield.

Technical Advice Note 21: Waste in relation to AD plants considers that AD plants has greater potential to reduce greenhouses gas emissions than other food composting treatment infrastructure.

Welsh Governments Towards Zero Waste - Waste Strategy for Wales (June 2010) advises that by 2050, as a minimum, the Welsh Government will have reduced the impact of waste by producing approximately 65% less waste (than in 2010). A key objective to reduce Wales' greenhouse gas emissions, is that waste needs to be diverted from landfill. The Strategy notes that the best way to treat most wastes away from landfill is for them to be recycled and, specifically in the case of food waste, to be anaerobically digested. The strategy states 'anaerobic digestion has significant potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions' and 'the use of AD is strongly recommended for source segregated food waste.'

National Policy is translated at a local level via the Local Development Plan (LDP) which was adopted by the County Borough in September 2013.

The proposal would generate energy and, as such, the proposal should be considered in association with Policy SP8 of the LDP - Renewable Energy which states:-

'Development proposals which contribute to meeting national renewable energy and energy efficiency targets will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impacts on the environment and local communities'.

Policy ENV18 of the LDP is especially relevant and provides a more robust assessment for renewable energy schemes. Policy ENV18 states:-

'Proposals for renewable energy developments will be permitted provided that:

- 1) In the case of wind farm developments of 25MW or more, the preference will be for them to be located within the boundary of the refined Strategic Search Area;
- 2) The availability of identified mineral resources or reserves will not be sterilised;
- 3) Appropriate monitoring and investigation can demonstrate that the development will not have any significant impacts on nature conservation;
- 4) Appropriate arrangements have been made for the preservation and/or recording of features of local archaeological, architectural or historic interest;
- 5) They can be safely accessed to permit regular maintenance without detriment to the environment or the public rights of way network;
- 6) They will not detrimentally affect local amenity by reason of noise emission, visual dominance, shadow flicker, reflected light, the emission of smoke, fumes, harmful gases, dust, nor otherwise cause pollution to the local environment;
- 7) They will not lead to electromagnetic disturbance to existing transmitting and receiving systems (which includes navigation and emergency services), thereby prejudicing public safety;
- 8) Local receptors of heat and energy from the proposal are identified and, where appropriate, are connected to/benefit from the facility; and
- 9) Provision has been made for the removal of all infrastructure from, and reinstatement of the site following termination of the use.'

The site is allocated for temporary development under REG4 of the LDP which states:

'Temporary development of the former Stormy Down Airfield will be permitted where it relates to/facilitates the creation of a cluster of innovative green industries'.

The reference to temporary development is due to the site being located within a Limestone Resource Safeguarding Area designated under Policy ENV9.

The more recent planning consents on this site have been temporary consents expiring in 2035 to ensure that the limestone resource can be extracted if required. However, it has been established that there is enough limestone available to exceed this date and any permission can be granted temporary consent for a 30 year period.

The site is also located within the Mineral Buffer Zone for the Cornelly Group of Quarries and as such Policy SP6 of the LDP is relevant. However, given that the application seeks temporary permission and there is adequate provision of limestone, it is not considered that the proposed development would adversely affect the mineral reserves.

In view of the existing development on the site and the future plans of the site owner to develop the site for 'green developments, a Design Brief (see attached) was approved by the Council in June 2010. The main aim of the Brief is:

'To ensure that future development proposals are adequately controlled and do not prejudice future mineral resources and are generally in compliance with policies in the Unitary Development Plan and the future LDP. Development should not adversely affect highway safety, privacy and visual amenity or harm neighbours residential amenity'.

The Brief also provides a practical tool for use by a variety of key stakeholders to inform future development proposals. It forms a material part of the decision making process by officers of the County Borough when considering future planning applications by providing additional site specific detail to the policies that apply to the site as contained in the LDP. It will provide developers with a guide to the form, amount and location of development that may be considered to be acceptable within the context of the local Development Planning framework.

One of the aims of the Brief is:

To promote sustainable forms of development that helps Bridgend CBC to meet various policy targets set at a local and national level. The Brief also advises that encouragement will be given to proposals that have identifiable links with existing uses on the site. This would assist in achieving synergy on site between different uses, achieving economies of scale in traffic movements, use of energy and boundary treatments. In this way, a cluster of 'Innovative Green Industries' could be created to assist the County Borough in meeting the ambitious carbon reduction policies of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Having regard to the above national and local policies and the Development Brief, the facility is considered to comply with policies and is considered to be acceptable in principle.

2. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment accompanied the planning application which assess the impact of the visual changes arising from the proposed development together with changes to the character and quality of the landscape. Photomontages were also provided.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment concluded that the proposed development would have an impact of slight significance in the short term but reducing to neutral as mitigation planting improves the quality and condition of the landscape and reduces visibility of the development.

The application site is not located within a Special Landscape Area (SLA) or a Conservation Area, however there is a SLA, as defined by Policy ENV3 of the LDP, located approximately 1Km to the north and west of the site. A photomontage has been provided showing the proposed facility from this location. The AD facility is not a prominent feature and will appear on the horizon along with the existing buildings at Parc Stormy. Given, the limited height of the facility, it is not considered to have an adverse impact on the SLA.

The application site is on a predominantly flat area as part of a disused airfield.

The application site is a brownfield site, which is of relatively low visual value. The introduction of the proposed AD facility will reinforce the industrial nature of the site when viewed from the north. However, it is noted that the proposed digester tanks resemble agricultural structures and buildings, such as, silos used for grain or manure storage, which are also often grouped together on farms and can be of a similar height to that of the proposed digester tanks. The application also proposes a shallow pitched reception building, which will reach a maximum height of 14m. This is considered to have a similar scale and appearance to an agricultural barn and is also in keeping with the existing buildings on site. It is therefore considered acceptable at this location. Furthermore, part of an existing large storage building will be removed to accommodate the proposed development.

Views of the proposed AD facility will be possible at close proximity from the highways surrounding the application site. These views will be intermittent and areas of woodlands, hedgerows and scattered trees will screen views onto site. Whilst the AD facility will be visible at parts along the highways surrounding the site, the majority of receptors at these locations will be motorists and motorists are generally attributed a lower sensitivity to the visual impacts of a development. In order to reduce the immediate visual impact a condition should be attached to any permission granted requiring a landscaping scheme to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The residential dwelling in closest proximity to the application site is approximately 220m to the north east of the site and, as such, the proposed AD facility is not considered to dominate the outlook from the nearest residential property.

There are a number of footpaths near the application sites. From the footpath crossing Heol y Sheet to the east of the application site, only views of the tops of the digester tanks and reception

building would be possible at a distance of approximately 215m from Heol y Sheet. Other public rights of way are a considerable distance from the site and only long distance views would be possible. Given the agricultural appearance of the development, on a site which is allocated for Green Energy, the visual impact of the proposed development on views from these public right of ways is not considered to be so adverse as to warrant refusal of the scheme.

There are a number of other existing structures on and adjacent to the application site which have a greater visual prominence than the proposed AD facility. The telecommunications mast and the water tower, which is to be replaced with a 105m high wind turbine, are far more prominent in the landscape than the proposed AD facility, which will be 15.5m above ground level at the highest point.

Having regard to the LVIA submitted it is considered that the proposed development will have an agricultural appearance, will not be a visually prominent development and will be located on a brown field site which has been allocated for such development. As such, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of visual amenity and will not adversely affect the countryside character to the south of the site.

In order to ensure that the proposed development will be sympathetic to the industrial and rural surroundings of the site a condition should be attached to any permission granted requiring the colours of the tanks and materials of the reception building and other associated buildings to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The light green colour shown on the photomontages would not be acceptable.

3. ODOUR AND NOISE

With regard to odour, the application is accompanied by a comprehensive Air Quality and Odour Assessment report and the applicant has been in discussions with the Public Protection department regarding this matter during the processing of the application.

The report concluded that the impact of odour is likely to be negligible off site and, as such, changes in odour are not considered to be significant as a result of the proposed facility.

The qualitative method of assessment applied found that the potential of the proposed AD facility to cause nuisance to the surrounding area and residential receptors is negligible, due to the nature of odours being released, the control of these processes and the distance of the few receptors to the proposed facility. In the quantitative method of assessment it was found that predicted changes to pollutant concentrates and changes to nitrogen and acid deposition, as a result of the proposed facility, were insignificant based on EZ significance criteria. In addition, no exceedances of air quality limit values or critical loads are predicted as a result of the proposed facility.

The Public Protection Officer has assessed the information submitted, including the impact of the digester tanks, chimney and flare, and has no objection to the development subject to conditions.

With regard to noise, a noise report was submitted with the application. The report states that the reception building is provided with noise attenuation to control activities that occur within it. The noise report also took into account the recently approved wind turbine at the Cenin site (P/13/904/FUL refers).

All of the proposed digestate pumps are located underground to minimise noise emissions, the pumping and heading containers located between the tanks are acoustically treated and the gas engine is suppressed within a sound insulated engine container. The noise attenuation and minimisation treatments proposed are considered to be acceptable and the Public Protection department have assessed the scheme in relation to impacts on noise levels and consider it

acceptable subject to conditions.

4. ECOLOGY

The application was accompanied by an ecological report which concluded that bats do not appear to be using the hanger as a roosting place and it was likely that bats do not use the building as a roost site.

The report also identified the site as being used by nesting birds and found that Himalyan Balsam was present on site. The report recommended mitigation and those mitigation suggestions will be attached to any permission granted as planning conditions.

The application site is located within the countryside and within 750m of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Consequently the impact of lighting need to be considered. Artificial lighting can impact on a number of species and all development should consider and minimise the impact of lighting schemes. The application is proposed to be a 24hour operation, 7 days a week, therefore it is likely that there will be some lighting on site at all times. Therefore, in order to ensure that the lighting scheme does not adversely impact on habitats a condition should be attached to any permission granted requiring a lighting scheme to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

5. TRANSPORTATION

The application has been submitted with a comprehensive Transport Assessment (TA). The TA states that the majority of vehicles entering the site will range from small dust carts (up to 2 tonnes) to articulated vehicles (up to 27 tonnes). The TA has been based on the expected busiest time of year September - December, when the digestate is taken to local farms for spreading. Movements during this period could peak at 102 two-way movements per day, however, the TA has provided a breakdown of expected average movements during this period which amounts to 3 staff two way movements, 14 HGV imports of waste and silage, two way movements and 16 HGV export of digestate two way movements, which equate to an average of 33 two way movements per day.

The construction period will involve a large amount of vehicle movements, including HGVs, LGVs and staff vehicles, which will peak at 380 two way vehicle movements, when the cement pour is taking place. There are no abnormal loads proposed with the construction of the facility. In order to ensure that the construction traffic is controlled and will not pose a risk to highway safety a condition should be attached to any consent requiring a construction management plan and routeing will be controlled via a Section 106 Agreement.

The principal concern in regard to highway safety relates to the potential hazards caused by HGVs undertaking right turn manoeuvres across the A48 from Stormy Lane or Heol y Splott junctions with A48, as the central holding areas are not of sufficient size to accommodate long vehicles. Long vehicles turning right will overhang the outside lane of the north-westbound carriageway of the A48.

In order to overcome this potential highway safety hazard it will be necessary to ensure that all HGVs departing the AD facility turn left on to the A48 and all HGVs visiting the AD facility will traverse along Heol y Splott. A S106 Agreement for a routeing agreement would be required to ensure that this HGV traffic routing would occur and could be properly controlled. The applicant has advised that the routeing would also be part of the contractual agreements with the suppliers.

This routeing arrangement will also ensure that the HGV movements are not passing the majority of residential dwellings in Stormy Down and will ensure that these properties are not disturbed by the traffic movements associated with the proposed AD facility.

The proposed routeing agreement was applied to the previous consent for an AD facility (P/09/917/FUL refers) and the proposed maximum daily movements of 102 was agreed during the determination of that application. During the processing of the previous application these levels of movements were accepted as, in July 1985, the former Ogwr Borough Council stated that, if the hanger buildings and their immediate curtilages were to be used for either storage and/or light industrial purposes, no enforcement action would be taken. As such the northern and southern hangers at the Parc Stormy site could be used for these purposes without the requirement for planning consent. Highways have assessed the likely traffic movements that could be generated by such development within the southern hanger and concluded that it would be higher than that of the expected daily averages proposed for the AD facility.

6. CONSERVATION AND ARCHITECTURE

The application site is on the former Stormy Down Airfield, established during the 1930s as a training airfield, the airfield was built on an area where pre-historic and Roman remains are noted. However, the proposed development is not considered to impact on the archaeological features as any features that may exist are likely to have been damaged by the previous development of the site and are unlikely to be of major significance, but mitigation will be required. Consequently, a condition should be attached to any permission granted requiring an archaeological watching brief during any ground disturbance.

7. DRAINAGE

The application site will be bound by a 1.25m high containment bund and all of the rain falling within the bunded area would be contained and collected for various uses in the treatment process. The water will be collected by a series of underground sumps and pipes taking the water into a storage tank within the reception building to be reused in the AD process. The collection of the rainwater will result in an overall reduction of water runoff from the site of 87%.

The application is accompanied with a comprehensive Water Management Plan, which details how water would be managed within the bunded area of the site, and the Land Drainage Officer has no objection to the plan. In order to ensure that the Water Management Plan is employed a condition should be attached to any permission granted requiring the developer to implement the submitted Water Management Plan.

Having regard to the above planning considerations, the proposed development is considered acceptable, subject to conditions and S106 requirements for a routeing agreement. In addition to the planning permission the proposed development would also have to adhere to the Council Directive 96-61-EC on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control, Environment Act 1995, amongst other European and National legislations, which the development will have to operate within and are enforced by other authorities such as Natural Resources Wales.

CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding the objections received, this application is recommended for approval because the development complies with national and local policy, Council policy and Council's guidelines and does not adversely affect visual amenities nor so significantly harms residential amenities, air quality or highway safety as to warrant refusal. The proposal would also assist in the Welsh Government and the Authority reaching targets for recycling and would generate 2.4MW of renewable energy.

RECOMMENDATION

(A) The applicant enter into a Section 106 Agreement to:-

i. Agree a route for heavy goods vehicles which only permits them to travel to and from the site and the A48 via Mount Pleasant Road and Heol y Splott and that such vehicles only turn left from Heol y Splott onto the A48.

(B) The Corporate Director Communities be given plenary powers to issue a decision notice granting consent in respect of this proposal once the applicant has entered into the aforementioned Section 106 Agreement, subject to the following conditions:-

1 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents: plan numbers A312.1000 P001C, A312.1000 P003B, A312.1000 P004B and A312.1000 P005A received on 21 October 2014.

Reason: To avoid doubt and confusion as to the nature and extent of the approved development.

2 Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development shall take place until a detailed specification for, or samples of, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings and tanks hereby permitted have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason : To ensure that the proposed materials of construction are appropriate for use on the development so as to enhance and protect the visual amenity of the area.

3 No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority a landscaping scheme. All hard and soft landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details. The works shall be carried out prior to beneficial use of any part of the approved development or in accordance with the programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To maintain and improve the appearance of the area in the interests of visual amenity, and to promote nature conservation.

4 The Anaerobic Digester plus any associated works hereby permitted shall be removed from the site on or before 31 March 2045.

Reason: - To enable the Local Planning Authority the matter to be reviewed at the end of the period of the temporary consent and to protect identified reserves of limestone.

5 The 'Water Management Plan' received on 21 October 2014 shall be implemented prior to the beneficial use of the Anaerobic Digester facility hereby approved commencing and shall be applied for the duration of the approved operation.

Reason: To ensure effective drainage of the site.

6 Prior to the beneficial use of the facility commencing a 'lighting design strategy for biodiversity' for the development shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall:-

a) Identify those areas/features, on and surrounding the site, that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for

example, for foraging; and

b) Show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of biodiversity.

- 7** The mitigation recommendations as detailed on page 8 of the Ecological Report received by the Local Planning Authority on 21 October 2014 shall be applied to the construction phase of the Anaerobic Digester facility hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity.

- 8** The developer shall ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist is present during the undertaking of any ground disturbing works in the development area, so that an archaeological watching brief can be conducted. The archaeological watching brief shall be undertaken to the standards of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The Local Planning Authority shall be informed, in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the development, of the nature of the said archaeologist and no work shall begin until the Local Planning Authority has confirmed, in writing, that the proposed archaeologist is suitable. A copy of the watching brief report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within two months of the fieldwork being completed by the archaeologist.

Reason: To identify and record any feature or archaeological interest discovered during the works, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource.

- 9** No more than 48,500 tonnes of waste annually shall be imported into the site for processing in the Anaerobic Digester operation hereby approved. Written records of tonnages imported into the site shall be available for inspection by Planning and Public Protection Officers on request at all reasonable times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 10** No development shall commence on site until a scheme for highway widening works has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented as agreed prior to any works commencing on site in respect of the Anaerobic Digestion Facility

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 11** A direction signage scheme for the proposed control of vehicle movements at the site access onto/from Mount Pleasant Road shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The direction signage scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the details prior to the approved development being brought into beneficial use and then retained in perpetuity.

Reason:- In the interests of highway safety.

- 12** No vehicle movements associated with the site operations, including any operations involving the importation of waste, removal of waste and finished products and

transportation of waste outside the reception building, shall take place outside the following times:-

Monday - Friday 0700-1800
Saturdays and Bank Holidays 0700-1600
Sundays -0800-1400

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- 13** No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected and a timetable for its implementation. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed plan and timetable.

Reason : To ensure that the general amenities of the area are protected.

- 14** No development shall take place until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Method Statement shall be implemented as agreed.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 15** Not later than 12 months before the cessation of the Anaerobic Digester Facility, a site restoration scheme including a timetable, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall include the management and timing of works and a traffic management plan to address highway issues arising during the decommissioning period. Full site restoration shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed scheme and timetable.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 16** Odour shall be controlled in accordance with the scheme of control measures specified in the Air Quality and Odour Assessment Rev A report submitted to the Local Planning Authority on 21 October 2014.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- 17** The biological filtration system hereby approved shall consist of both a biofilter and water scrubber.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- 18** All operational vehicles arriving at and leaving the site shall be appropriately sealed or covered so as to prevent material spillage and odour nuisance.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- 19** Noise generated from all operations on the site expressed as an A-weighted equivalent continuous sound pressure level (LAeqT) shall not exceed the following as measured (or where this is not possible, calculated) at the boundary of the noise sensitive premises specified below:

(i) the noise rating level in any one hour period between 0700-2300 shall not exceed an LAeq (1hour) of 36dB at Cae Cornell and Mywydd Farm and 30dB at Mount Pleasant Farm.
(ii) The noise rating level in any 15 minute period between 2300-0700 shall not exceed an LAeq(5mins) of 28dB at Cae Cornell and 28dB at Mount Pleasant Farm.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- 20** Construction noise shall be controlled in accordance with the scheme of mitigation measures identified in Section 9 of the Noise and Vibration report submitted to the Local Planning Authority on 21 October 2014.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- 21** The loading and unloading of vehicles and pre-treatment of waste shall be carried out inside the reception building hereby approved which shall be fitted with fast acting doors.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity.

- 22** No development shall commence until a remediation strategy that includes the following components to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall each be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

i. A preliminary risk assessment which has identified:-

- all previous uses,
- potential contaminants associated with those uses,
- a conceptual model of the site indicating sources, pathways and receptors,
- potential unacceptable risks arising from contamination at the site.

ii. A site investigation scheme, based on (i) to provide information for a detailed assessment of the risk to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site

iii. The results of the site investigation and the detailed risk assessment referred to in (ii) and, based on these, an options appraisal and remediation strategy giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they are due to be undertaken.

iv. A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy in (iii) are complete and identify and requirements for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action.

The scheme shall be implemented as agreed.

Reason: Prevention of pollution and to protect the water environment.

- 23** The development hereby approved shall not commence until such time as a Method Statement detailing all necessary pollution prevention measures for the operational and post operational phase of the development is submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Method Statement shall identify as a minimum:-

- Storage facilities and emergency containment for all fuels, oils, chemicals and explosives and any other polluting substances
- Construction compounds, car parks, offices etc.
- Details of surface water drainage arrangements to be installed to intercept and treat contaminated surface water run-off
- Details of maintenance of site access/coal haulage to ensure no polluting discharge
- measures for dealing with any contaminated material (demolition waste or excavated waste)
- Details of emergency contacts, for example the Natural Resources Wales Pollution hotline 0800 807 060

The Method Statement should then be efficiently communicated to all contractors and sub-contractors and any deficiencies rectified immediately.

Reason: Prevention of pollution and to protect the water environment.

* THE FOLLOWING ARE ADVISORY NOTES NOT CONDITIONS

a) Notwithstanding the objections received, this application is recommended for approval because the development complies with National and Local policy, Council policy and Council's guidelines and does not adversely affect visual amenities nor so significantly harms residential amenities, air quality or highway safety as to warrant refusal. The proposal would also assist in the Welsh Government and the Authority reaching targets for recycling and would generate 2.4MW of renewable energy.

b) The developer is advised to consider the provision of nest boxes within the development for bird species and the incorporation of bat boxes, bat tiles and bat bricks.

c) Rainwater run off shall not discharge into the highway surface-water drainage system. Failure to ensure this may result in action being taken under the Highways Act 1980.

d) Foul water and surface water discharges shall be drained separately from the site.

e) No surface water shall be allowed to connect, either directly or indirectly, to the public sewerage system.

f) Land drainage run-off shall not be permitted to discharge, either directly or indirectly, into the public sewerage system.

g) The developer is advised that an Environmental Permit will be required and are advised to contact Natural Resources Wales regarding this matter.

g) The developer is urged to consider the advisory information on this application that has been received from consultees and which may be accessed via <http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/planningapplications/search.php>

MARK SHEPHARD
CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

Background Papers

None