

Proposed Media Statement

A Northacre Renewable Energy Ltd (“NREL”) proposal for an energy from waste facility was granted planning permission in 2019. However, NREL is now seeking planning permission to alter the scheme to allow it to change the technology from gasification to moving grate combustion - a technology which has been successfully and safely deployed across the UK and Europe for many years.

It is easy for misleading statements to be made by those who oppose facilities such as that proposed by Northacre Renewable Energy, regarding the performance of modern combustion technology. There have been claims that it is outdated, with language and references to “1960s” technology.

The moving grate combustion system that we intend to use at Northacre is based on process technology that has been utilised for decades. However, as with any technology solution, the approach to the application of technology and project specific configuration such as design, efficiencies, performance and monitoring, have continued to be developed and refined.

For example, it is well known that the early applications of this combustion technology (the old-style incinerator people may be thinking of) were not configured to produce electricity and did not have pollution mitigation equipment such as flue gas cleaning, which has been a continuing development and part of any energy from waste facility since the 1980s.

Not only has the technology developed, but the solutions and approach to monitoring emissions have become more sophisticated, with continuous monitoring now part of any new energy from waste facility. These advances have been deployed in parallel with advances in regulation and associated regulatory powers. The EU’s Industrial Emissions Directive (as adopted into UK legislation) reinforces the need for all aspects of the design and operation to utilise “Best Available Techniques”. These have most recently been completely reviewed and updated in December 2019 and it is these standards that this plant has been designed to, and that the Environment Agency (“EA”) will be considering when writing the Permit for the facility.

The EA has responded positively to our request to prioritise the appointment of an officer to assess the content of our Permit application. The outcome of this initial assessment of our Permit application will mean that the application is “duly made”. After this we expect the EA to make our application available publicly and consult openly on it, which we welcome.

Despite already having planning permission in place for an energy from waste facility, we believe that it is our responsibility to develop the best possible project. If granted permission for the change in technology, we would have an opportunity to build a state-of-the-art facility, which addresses the pressing need for a sustainable long-term solution to non-recyclable waste in Wiltshire.

For more information on the NREL scheme, please visit our website: <https://northacre-energy.co.uk/>

A link and guidance on how to view our virtual Community Engagement event, which took place in July 2020, is available on our contact page.