

Dear Ms Knott

I am getting in touch on behalf of Acorn Bioenergy about improved proposals for Astwick Green Energy, a plan for a new renewable biomethane gas generation plant near the villages of Evenley and Croughton. Our proposals would generate enough clean energy to power the equivalent of 8,142 households, greater than the number of homes in Brackley, while creating major benefits for the local rural economy.

As you may be aware, we put forward a previous proposal for such a development on this site in August 2022. Although this received no objections from technical consultees and the Council's Planning Team recommended its approval, our planning application was refused in December 2023 because of concerns about its scale, height and massing on the local area, and impacts on the local landscape character.

We have listened to this feedback and have changed our plans.

Through a complete redesign of the scheme, we have prepared new proposals which maintain all of the benefits of clean renewable energy, tackle climate change and support the rural economy, but significantly reduce their scale, height and massing and related local landscape impacts.

How we've improved our plans:

- **Reduced the number of tanks:** the original plan included five tanks which have now been reduced to three
- **Reduced the tank heights:** the original plan had all five tanks at 16.5m high, now only one is at this height with the other two tanks limited to 9m
- **More landscape planting:** in addition to the planting proposed in the original scheme, we have added extra tree planting along the site's southeastern boundary
- **Removed vehicles from public roads:** 20% of vehicle movements will use farm tracks, eliminating their impacts on roads
- **Enhanced wildlife:** as well as retaining existing trees our proposals will deliver significant gains to biodiversity

Reduced landscape impact

We've listened to the feedback from our previous application and taken steps to reduce the impacts of the proposal, with fewer tanks, most of which are lower, minimising the impact on the landscape, but kept all the benefits to the environment and the rural economy.

The buildings at Astwick Green Energy won't look out of scale from the type of structures, such as barns, often seen on commercial farms.



Our site boundary does not include any Public Rights of Way. The updated plans combine the lower building heights and reduced massing with more extensive planting and landscaped bunds, meaning local people will be able to continue countryside walks without unacceptable visual impacts.

Delivering Benefits

Importantly, our improved proposals maintain the following significant benefits:

- Generating enough renewable gas to heat the equivalent of 8,142 households, greater than the number of homes in Brackley
- Decarbonising energy generation and agriculture, essential to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and tackling climate change
- Providing a secure and affordable source of energy, and reducing our dependency on imported gas from volatile parts of the world
- Providing 15 Full Time Equivalent jobs, with more through the construction process
- Supporting 35 further Full Time Equivalent jobs created in the supply chain

Supporting the rural economy

We will work hand-in-hand with the local farming industry, providing local farmers with guaranteed revenue and natural fertiliser.

Astwick Green Energy will take organic material, including crops from rotations and manure, from local farms to feed the plant. The same farmers will benefit by receiving the natural fertiliser produced at the end of the gas generation process. This will reduce the amount of expensive and imported artificial fertiliser that local farm businesses need to buy, improving soil health and storing more carbon.

Consultation

We have submitted an EIA Scoping request to West Northamptonshire Council. This is not a planning application but will help inform the final plans. We will also be consulting local people through a newsletter and online consultation hub – viewable at www.astwickgreenenergy.com - and will keep you updated with progress throughout the planning process.

In the meantime, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the proposals. If you would like to arrange a dedicated meeting, please do let me know by replying to the email that accompanies this letter.

If you have any immediate questions, please also feel free to get in touch.

Kind regards

Katie Phillips
On behalf of Acorn Bioenergy