

19 June 2020

Press release

Changes needed to existing planning permission for energy from waste scheme in Westbury.

Northacre Renewable Energy Limited (NREL) is proposing to change the technology for its Northacre facility from gasification to conventional moving grate combustion.

The facility has existing planning permission which was granted in 2019, however the changes now being proposed require that a new planning application is submitted.

A spokesperson for NREL explained the primary reasons for the change in technology: “In the latter part of 2019 new lower emissions standards were introduced covering all energy from waste facilities. As a result, gasification offered no advantages on emissions when compared to more established conventional moving grate technology.

“Secondly, conventional moving grate technology supply chains are more established and better able to offer competitive solutions whilst guaranteeing build times in a post-BREXIT UK. In addition, conventional moving grate technology can offer more flexibility to adapt to the increasing focus and effort to remove certain materials such as plastic from residual waste streams.”

The Northacre facility will generate low carbon energy from residual waste that would otherwise either be sent to landfill or exported to Europe for energy recovery outside of the UK. The residual waste will be sourced primarily from commerce, industry and households within Wiltshire, including outputs from the adjacent waste treatment plant. Government strategy recognises that energy from waste is preferable to landfill in the waste hierarchy and that the export of waste-derived fuel does not contribute to UK energy targets and is effectively a lost resource to the UK.

The kind of technology that the plant will use has been endorsed by the Committee on Climate Change, which in its Technical Report of May 2019 specifically called for greater private sector investment in energy-from-waste capacity in the UK as part of the country's path to a zero-carbon economy.

The electricity generated will boost the local electricity supply network, unlocking development on the surrounding employment zone on Northacre Industrial Estate and nearby Hawke Ridge Business Park.

Once operational, the Northacre facility will support 40 permanent, skilled jobs. During the construction phase, at peak activity, there will be around 450 construction workers employed.

NREL expects to submit the planning application to the local authority in July / August this year and submit its Environmental Permit application to the Environment Agency immediately after validation of the planning application.

Further details on the proposals can be viewed at www.northacre-energy.co.uk and a virtual community engagement event will be held on 7 July at 6pm. This will be an opportunity for those interested to engage with the NREL team. Details on how to participate will be emailed to those who register their interest at: Northacre@bioenergyinfrastructure.com. The registration process will allow for submission of questions in advance of the event. Those who do not have access to the internet can call 0118 929 8350 to register their interest and receive written details on how to dial-in by telephone. **ENDS**

Notes:

- Northacre Renewable Energy Limited (NREL) is a special purpose joint venture established to deliver the Northacre facility in Westbury. NREL is owned by Bioenergy Infrastructure Group, a UK independent power producer specialising in energy-from-waste and biomass facilities, and The Hills Group, a Wiltshire based company with business interests in waste management, quarrying aggregates and house building.
- Moving grate combustion technology is widely established and proven. It is used in 90% of the UK's 48 fully operating energy from waste facilities and in over 400 EFW facilities across Europe.
- When configured to only export electricity, the Northacre facility would have a generating capacity of 25.6MW which would produce 201,728MWh/year which is sufficient to meet the average annual domestic power requirements of just over 48,000 homes (UK average domestic consumption of 4.2MWh per household. Source Ofgem)
- The Northacre facility offers the opportunity to reduce the significant distance that output from Hills' neighbouring waste treatment plant has to travel.