Proposed statement for the Wiltshire Times – 14 September 2020:

"Our previous proposal for an energy-from-waste facility was granted planning permission in 2019. However, we are now seeking to change the technology from gasification to conventional moving grate combustion. This technology has been successfully and safely deployed across the UK and Europe for many years. Public Health England has repeatedly given energy-from-waste plants a clean bill of health and is satisfied that they do not pose any risks to neighbouring communities.

"Emissions from the facility would be tightly regulated by an Environmental Permit (EP) for the Facility which will be granted by the Environment Agency (EA). The EP will include emission limits and requirements for continuous monitoring and reporting of emissions to the EA.

"A detailed assessment of the impact on local air quality has been carried out and provided to the planning authority and EA. This has shown that the development would not have a significant impact on human health and has considered the impact of a range of pollutants including fine particles. As part of the assessment, the length of the visible plume has been calculated and shown that the longest length to be less than 500m with the majority of plumes only being visible for less than 50m.

"As part of its EP determination process, in addition to the review of the application documentation and determining whether the proposals represent the 'best available techniques', the EA's in-house technical specialist will undertake detailed audits of the following assessments which were submitted in support of the EP application:

- Air Quality Assessment;
- Human Health Risk Assessment;
- Noise Assessment;
- Site Condition Report (ground conditions);
- CHP Assessment; and
- R1 application (essentially an assessment of the facility's efficiency).

"The EA's technical teams will undertake a detailed review of the relevant assessments and feedback to NPS on these, seeking clarity or further information if they believe it to be necessary. The EA will only grant an EP for the facility if it is satisfied that the facility will not have an unacceptable impact on the environment, or human health. The determination process will also include assessments of the Operator's competency which include operating techniques, management systems and technical competence.

"When granting an EP, the EA will impose emission limits which the facility will be required to comply with throughout its life, but which will also be subject to review and revision in line with changing legislation or industry requirements during the life of the facility. Emissions will be monitored 24 days a day and data will be publicly available.

"Waste combustion involves very heavily regulated emissions control and the application of 'best available techniques' to ensure that emissions remain within clear legislative limits. In the emissions control process particulates in combustion gases are removed, and flue gases cleaned prior to passing through the stack. The height of the stack has been specifically calculated to ensure that emissions are sufficiently dispersed such that their effects can be categorised as negligible for all pollutants, in all locations, over all time periods.

"All of the residual waste that would be treated at the Northacre facility is already being transported by road within Wiltshire and the wider area. Whilst the plant will generate a small increase in throughput tonnage and HGV numbers, the comparison of daily traffic flows shows no significant changes arising from the development, with

the increases in general traffic on local roads all well below 1% and specifically less than 0.1% on the A350. In granting its consent to our 2019 scheme, the local highways authority said the impact of the facility on local traffic volumes would be negligible.

"This project is important for Wiltshire. It will turn thousands of tonnes of locally sourced household and business residual waste into low carbon energy that would otherwise be buried in landfill sites. Residual waste is that which is left over after economically recyclable material has been removed from the waste stream.

"It is right that society aims to achieve very high levels of recycling. But the reality is that in Wiltshire and across England waste recycling rate has now have now plateaued over the past seven years at about 45%. This is because most waste collection and disposal authorities have rolled out most of the available initiatives to encourage households to recycle their waste, and while recycling rates are a little higher among businesses, around half of our commercial and household waste ends up in landfill sites around the county and the UK. Moreover, both the means and money to further boost recycling is limited. Current expert forecast is that, even with increased recycling, there will be a shortfall on residual waste treatment capacity of approximately 7 million tonnes in 2035 across the UK.

"This is why UK Government policy continues to support the development of energy-from-waste facilities. Indeed, the kind of low-carbon 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.

"At a time of significant economic uncertainty, the Northacre facility represents a very timely £200 million investment in Wiltshire's economy, and a significant new source of local employment including many highly-skilled permanent roles. It is also an important investment in low-carbon energy at a time when the county of Wiltshire has declared a climate emergency."

- **NREL Spokesperson**