

Northacre Renewable Energy – Press Statement on Environmental permit process – 3 June 2021

Northacre Renewable Energy Limited (NREL), is seeking to change the technology for its Northacre facility from gasification to moving grate combustion. This change has required a new planning application and a decision is expected to be made by the newly appointed Wiltshire Planning Committee, although a date for this has not yet been confirmed. The need for the facility and the suitability of the location have already been clearly established by previous planning permission granted in July 2019.

Alongside the planning application, NREL also applied to the Environment Agency (EA) for an Environmental Permit to operate the facility.

The EA consulted with the public on the environmental permit application from 27th November 2020 and following a four-week extension, the consultation closed on 21st February 2021. Since closing, the EA's in-house technical specialists have been undertaking detailed audits of the information contained in the application, including documents which detail how NREL intends to protect the health of people and the wider environment.

The Environmental Permit process is still in progress and the EA have issued NREL with a Schedule 5 Notice for Additional Information. We are working closely with the EA to provide this information as part of the determination process.

Whilst concerns over air quality, emissions and pollution control have been raised by local residents, a landmark UK-wide study commissioned by Public Health England and the Scottish Government found “no conclusive links to health effects from waste incinerators”. That conclusion was based on data gathered from 22 sites across the UK by researchers at Imperial College London's Small Area Health Statistics Unit (SAHSU). In a media statement issued by Imperial following the release of the 2019 study, Professor Anna Hansell, Director of the Centre for Environmental Health and Sustainability at the University of Leicester, who previously led the work while at Imperial College London, said: “Modern and well-regulated incinerators are likely to have a very small, or even undetectable, impact on people living nearby.”

In addition, NREL has confirmed that emissions from the facility would be tightly regulated and limits set by the Environmental Permit. These limits, which were already extremely stringent, have been recently tightened further. Emissions will be monitored 24 hours a day and the data will be submitted to the EA as well as being made publicly available.

The Northacre Facility will turn 243,000 tonnes of the region's commercial and industrial **residual** waste into low carbon energy – enough to power 48,000 homes. This waste would otherwise be buried in landfill sites or needlessly exported to Europe as fuel for similar energy from waste facilities. The Northacre Facility provides a solution this **non-recyclable** residual waste, which is why UK Government policy continues to support the development of EfW facilities to deal with residual waste, as part of the country's path to a zero-carbon economy.

The Northacre facility has never been more important to Wiltshire's sustainable future. The project represents a £200 million investment in the local economy and a major new source of employment including many highly-skilled permanent roles. In addition, the facility addresses the pressing need for a sustainable long-term solution, to non-recyclable residual waste in Wiltshire by reducing landfill's contribution to climate change. **Northacre Renewable Energy is ready and committed to play its part in the transition to a low carbon economy.**

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Notes to Editors:

Dominic Tonner
Hawthorn Advisors
d.tonner@hawthornadvisors.com

About Northacre Renewable Energy Limited

[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.

About Bioenergy Infrastructure Group

Bioenergy Infrastructure Group (“BIG”) is a specialist owner and operator of biomass and waste to energy solutions. BIG is establishing the UK’s largest portfolio of biomass and waste to energy facilities, which will have the potential to divert over 1 million tonnes of waste each year from landfill and deliver vital additional electricity capacity to the national grid, helping to meet demand from industry and households across the UK. Taking a long-term approach and targeting mid-scale facilities throughout the development cycle, from greenfield sites to those already in operation, BIG has established a market leading position by leveraging its experience and speed of decision making to achieve the level of portfolio scale, diversification and operational synergies required to attract institutional capital into UK bioenergy.

More about BIG at <https://bioenergyinfrastructure.co.uk/>

About Hills Group

The Hills Group is a privately-owned family company with a broad and successful portfolio of business activities which include recycling and waste management; quarrying of aggregates and production of ready-mixed concrete; and building new homes. It is a dynamic regional business which, while centred on Wiltshire, has stretched its boundaries into neighbouring areas.

More about Hills Group at <https://www.hills-group.co.uk/>