



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is an Anaerobic Digester?

An anaerobic digester (AD) produces energy and bio-fertiliser by breaking down grass and maize silage together with certain types of food waste. It does this by 'fermenting' the material inside sealed vessels or tanks to release a gas (methane) that can be used to power an engine driving known as a combined heat and power unit (CHP). In turn the CHP plant produces electricity which is fed into the National Grid (there is a substation and connection point on site).

What goes in it?

'Feedstock' is fed into the AD facility to make them work. Feedstocks would originate from surrounding farms and nearby food related industries. Any feedstock from the food sector would come onto the site as a pump-able liquid in a sealed tanker. It would then be transferred into a sealed storage vessel and once the transfer is complete the vehicle would leave. The sealed nature of the transfer prevents any smells creeping out. The number of vehicle trips to and from the site will vary according to the season with autumn and spring being the prime time for fertilisers and soil improvers to be used by the farming sector. The feedstocks would stay in the digestion tanks for between 40 and 90 days, being kept at a constant temperature of around 38 degrees centigrade with occasional agitation using a mixer to promote digestion and the resultant continuous gas production.

Is there any waste and what happens to it?

Once the material in the sealed digestion tanks has been broken down, the resultant material, known as 'digestate' would be pumped out into one of the sealed storage tanks. The tanks as proposed would give about 6 months storage of digestate. The digestate is virtually odourless and is spread on land as a soil improver and fertiliser. In fact on some farms it may enable them to replace their use of artificial fertilisers. We expect our digestate to meet the national standards required for it to be generally made available as a fertiliser. The AD plant and operation would be practically odourless with the delivery and processing of material taking place in a completely sealed environment -from the delivery of the feedstock, through to the pumping of digestate to the outgoing tankers. Heat is also produced as a by-product of the process and can be used to warm buildings, dry crops etc. At the moment there are no firm plans to use the heat although we are currently investigating uses for it.

Is it environmentally friendly?

The concept of AD is one which is strongly supported by the government as being an environmentally friendly way of generating energy from renewable resources. There are over 7,000 operational AD plants in Germany and just over 100 running in the UK. Numbers are expected to increase significantly in the near future. The material that would go into the digester tanks would otherwise normally go to either landfill or incineration. The AD process makes a practical use of something we would otherwise just throw away.

If you have any questions about the proposed plant, please feel free to ask them of any of the team -its what we are here for!

