

Summary of Central Public Concerns	Response
Scheme Principles	<p>The proposed development seeks to utilise local businesses waste (which cannot be reused or recycled) and extract energy and heat from it which can be fed back into the economy. This accords with both European and UK Government Waste Management Policy.</p> <p>The fuel will be locally-collected (North West Durham area) before being transported to the Hownsgill site in sealed HGV vehicles.</p> <p>At the current time this material is either landfilled or exported long distances for disposal within other Counties. This landfilling and/or transportation of Durham's wastes creates significant quantities of greenhouses gases. This material will now be processed by the area which has generated it in line with the proximity principle.</p> <p>It should be noted that all household domestic waste (ie 'black bag'/green bins) collected by Durham County Council is currently taken to a large-scale, Energy from Waste (EFW) facility at Billingham, Teesside. The proposed facility will take industrial and commercial waste material which does not form part of this contract.</p>
Carbon	<p>It is widely accepted that EfW is the lowest carbon solution for managing residual waste. It diverts material from landfill (avoiding methane emissions) and generates useable electricity and heat. The addendum to the Environmental Statement sets out the carbon savings associated with the diversion of material from landfill to EfW. For every tonne of waste diverted from landfill to EfW, 200kg of CO2 equivalent is saved. On this basis, the 60,000 t/pa currently going to landfill which would be diverted to this facility would equate to a net reduction of 26,000 tonnes of CO2 equivalent per annum.</p>
Impact on Recycling Rates	<p>UK national policy prioritises reduction, re-use and recycling over recovery but it does recognise that this isn't always possible. The remaining waste that cannot be reused or recycled is residual waste that often ends up in landfill or exported abroad. This facility will only use residual waste that has already been through several rounds of recycling, either by businesses and consumers, or in sorting centres. Therefore, this plant will not have an impact on recycling.</p> <p>Landfills emit carbon dioxide and methane. Using the waste in an energy recovery facility reduces these greenhouse gas emissions from landfill, while generating energy. This energy can displace some of the energy produced by traditional gas-fired power plants.</p>
Project Genesis Ltd	<p>Project Genesis Ltd (PGL) was formed after the closure of Consett Steel Works to redevelop the redundant land. So far, it has levered in approximately £200 million of investment into the local economy and will continue doing so through future projects.</p> <p>Their contribution to the regeneration of the area and importance within the Local Economy is highlighted within the adopted Local Plan.</p>
Relationship with Genesis Trust	<p>The Genesis Trust is a registered Charitable Trust which consists of a Board of Trustees. The Trust was established to enable the regeneration of the former Steelworks site in Consett. Project Genesis Ltd, the development company charged to deliver investment to the site report regularly to the Board of Trustees on opportunities and progress.</p> <p>The trust utilises land receipts from developments for re-investment in its local charitable objectives.</p>

<p>Consultation Process</p>	<p>The consultation process has been undertaken in accordance with legislation and best practice.</p> <p>At the pre-application stage Project Genesis Ltd published news articles, circulated a newsletter and also launched a public website. The distribution catchment of the newsletter was agreed with Durham County Council.</p> <p>Unfortunately the COVID19 restrictions has meant that a public meeting was not possible, however the applicant followed the guidelines set out within the Town and Country Planning COVID Regulations 2020 to ensure that members of the public where given the opportunity to comment on the proposal at the pre-application stage.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that technical issues associated with the website meant that there was a delay to responding (and publishing) some comments/objections raised, this was rectified as soon as possible.</p> <p>Since the submission of the application, the formal consultation process has been undertaken by Durham County Council. The applicant has also provided an updated website to keep members of the public informed during this process.</p>
<p>Confusion regarding the title of facility and receipt of a number of different consultation letters</p>	<p>The planning application and associated documentation refers to the proposal as an Energy Facility which is fuelled with RDF (a Refuse Derived Fuel), the planning authority registered and renamed the application to an Energy from Waste Facility. The applicant was provided with seven days to confirm the renaming of the facility but the Local Planning Authority consulted on this application prior to the starting of the 7 day period or any agreement being reached.</p> <p>It is understood that the Local Planning Authority undertook a round of public notification and then provided a new notification consultation for a wider area (including the previous recipients). The justification for this is unknown by the applicant.</p>
<p>Geographic Location</p>	<p>The proposed development will be located at Hownsgill Industrial Estate alongside other industrial users and manufacturers (eg Greencore, Symingtons, JT Dove and Go-Ahead Group). The co-location of these similar processing uses is considered to be acceptable in UK Government Waste Management Policy.</p> <p>The non-residential location ensures that the facility can deliver the maximum energy and heat required by nearby users whilst protecting the amenity of the local community.</p> <p>The project is part of a much wider regeneration masterplan for Consett and the surrounding area, and could underpin other projects including shops, quality housing, a care village and a new hospital and healthcare facility. It will provide sustainable, low-carbon energy and heat for local residents, businesses and the wider community.</p> <p>It will also provide much-needed investment to install new infrastructure, enabling the development of the consented 5MW solar farm on the Hownsgill site supplying power during peak demand. Furthermore, there are also plans for an electric vehicle charging hub using low-cost power.</p> <p>The level of investment in cleaner, renewable energy is estimated in excess of £35 million and improves the green credentials of the regeneration of the area.</p>

<p>Proximity to Residents, Heritage Trail and Hospital</p>	<p>The proposed development site is located on an existing Industrial Estate which is allocated for similar processing uses. The Environmental Statement has demonstrated that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on residential properties in the area.</p> <p>The proposed facility will provide heat to the proposed hospital and as such will act as an enabler to this important community facility.</p> <p>The Environmental Statement Addendum has provided a further assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the Industrial Heritage Trail. This assessment has confirmed that the proposal will not have a significant detrimental impact on users of the trail. In addition, the Industrial Heritage Trail seeks to celebrate the industrial heritage of the area and as such the proposal is not considered to be out of keeping with the purpose of the trail itself.</p>
<p>Adverse Environmental Impacts</p>	<p>An Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken to assess the possible environmental affects of the proposed scheme. The results of this assessment have been provided within the Environmental Statement which has been submitted alongside the planning application.</p> <p>The assessment has confirmed that the facility will not have an significant environmental impacts on the site or surrounding area.</p> <p>The results of these assessments have been verified through the consultation process with the statutory consultees.</p>
<p>Landscape and Building Height</p>	<p>The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment contained within the Environmental Statement and the subsequent Regulation 25 Addendum has assessed the impacts of the proposed development in accordance with agreed methodology.</p> <p>It has been confirmed that the proposal will have a minor adverse impact on the local area and this should be seen in the context of its wider industrial location.</p>
<p>Adverse Road and Traffic Impacts</p>	<p>The proposed development will generate up to 11 vehicles (a total of 22 movements in and out) and nine cars (18 movements) daily during work hours only (Mon-Fri/9am-5pm). On average, there will be two HGV movements (one vehicle in and out) and no car movements during peak hours each week day. The local road network has adequate capacity to accommodate this increase.</p> <p>The site is easily accessible by public transport and cycling, and there are planned cycle spaces and a parking bay reserved solely for car-share employees. HGVs will access Hownsgill Park from the A692 roundabout and will not drive through residential areas.</p>
<p>Noise (24 hours)</p>	<p>The noise assessment submitted as part of the planning application and associated Environmental Statement demonstrates that with all the appropriate measures in place, local residents will not be affected by noise from the facility. All mechanical processes will be housed within the building and fitted with dampers and silencers to mitigate noise.</p>
<p>Lighting</p>	<p>The proposed lighting will be directional to ensure that there is no light spill from the proposed facility.</p>

<p>Hazardous Materials</p>	<p>The proposed development will only take non-hazardous waste. Project Genesis Ltd are talking to a number of local suppliers who currently send their waste to landfill and that are interested in diverting material to the proposed facility. All are permitted waste sites that operate under strict Environment Agency regulations. The waste will already have been sorted (with recyclables removed) before it arrives at our site so we can be sure it is the correct specification for the technology being proposed. This process will ensure that no unsuitable material will be combusted within the plant.</p> <p>The applicant will ensure responsible disposal of waste products from the facility. The fly ash will be stabilised and disposed of at a Hazardous Waste site.</p> <p>The bottom ash will either be used in construction products (blocks, concrete etc), or as an engineering material for haul roads on a local landfill, this material is not hazardous.</p>
<p>Risk of Accident</p>	<p>The applicant will be required to agree a Fire Prevention Plan with the Environment Agency which will set out the fire prevention measures and procedures in place on the site.</p> <p>The applicant will also not be able to store waste for more than a couple of days at the site as part of the Environmental Permit and the volume and duration waste is stored for will be strictly monitored by the Environment Agency.</p>
<p>Employment</p>	<p>The proposed facility seeks to address a local need to manage waste which is produced by businesses in the area. This facility will provide an essential service to the local economy.</p> <p>With less power outages and cheaper, cleaner energy, Consett will be an attractive place to live and work. This will encourage inward investment and regeneration through improved business competitiveness, could increase job opportunities for the area. We anticipate that the scheme could deliver up to 60 new jobs during the construction period, nine operational positions at the plant and up to 20 new jobs within the supply chain.</p> <p>Furthermore, the new 'Community Energy Supplier' will create further employment opportunities, anticipating approximately 15 new jobs in the first year. Delivery partner, Fusion for Business Ltd (a local business energy consultancy) will also create an estimated 20 new positions in 2021 to support activities.</p>
<p>Smell</p>	<p>No food, perishable or organic waste will be used at the plant meaning that the RDF is relatively dry in composition and therefore odour-free.</p> <p>All deliveries will be in enclosed vehicles and materials will be tipped, stored and processed in sealed buildings with odour control systems in place, including negative pressure which sucks air into the building.</p> <p>The reception hall will also be equipped with a dedicated odour control unit which is self-sufficient and therefore able to treat odours at any time, even when the Plant is not running.</p>

Emissions	<p>The planning application includes an Air Quality and Human Health assessment which has assessed the potential impact of emissions in the local area (considering prevailing wind and proximity to residents and other designations). This concludes that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on local air quality, human health or local ecology.</p> <p>The facility will use proven technology and the process is closely regulated by the Environment Agency. Before it can operate the facility will need an Environmental Permit and it will have to meet very strict emissions limits. Emissions data is monitored continually with safety controls designed to shut the plant down if it exceeds allowed levels.</p>
Monitoring of Emissions	<p>The proposed development will be required to adhere to strict environmental limits. Data from the emissions stack will be collected via a sensor and sent straight to the control room and the Environment Agency. This will ensure that limits are monitored, and action immediately taken in the unlikely event of any breach.</p>
Windblown detritus & Pest nuisance	<p>The waste will be transported to the facility within covered HGVs and will be fully enclosed within the building prior to tipping. This will ensure that no litter escapes to the surroundings and as such no vermin will be attracted to the site.</p> <p>The process of driving onto site and depositing into a building will ensure that dust is not generated by the proposed facility.</p> <p>The proposed facility operates at negative pressure which will ensure that all particulates are retained within the sealed building.</p>
Run-off and Drainage	<p>The proposed development includes a drainage design which collects all surface water (there is very little water used within the process) and cleans (via interceptor) before being released into the public sewer.</p> <p>All necessary permissions will be gained to ensure appropriate quantities and water quality are adhered to.</p>
Devaluation of Property	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that property prices are impacted by the presence of an Energy Facility which processes RDF. In fact, a study undertaken by Cluttons LLP in 2011, showed that, based on empirical evidence of house prices near to three operational EfWs, that there were no noticeable effects due to the presence of the facilities.</p>
Adverse Health Impacts	<p>An assessment of the impacts of the proposed development is included within Chapter 10 of the Environmental Statement. This demonstrates that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on human health.</p> <p>Predicted impacts on existing pollutant concentrations and nitrogen and acid deposition rates at both sensitive human and ecological receptors were considered insignificant in accordance with the relevant Environment Agency guidance.</p> <p>The proposed development will be required to adhere to strict environmental limits. Data from the emissions stack will be collected via a sensor and sent straight to the control room and the Environment Agency. This will ensure that limits are monitored, and action immediately taken in the unlikely event of any breach.</p>

** This spreadsheet seeks to respond to the central themes of concern raised by members of the public and does not seek to respond to individual response/comment. These responses should be read alongside the submitted planning application, Environmental Statement and Regulation 25 Addendum.*