



Planning Statement Hownsgill Energy Facility

Hownsgill Industrial Estate, Consett, Durham
For:

Project Genesis Ltd

CRM.0138.001.PL.R.002



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Planning Statement

Project:	Howns Gill Energy Facility
For:	Project Genesis Ltd
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Planning Statement (PS) has been prepared by Enzygo Ltd to accompany a planning application to Durham County Council (as Waste Planning Authority) for the development of an Energy Facility located within the Hownsgill Industrial Estate in Consett, Durham, DH8 7EQ (Grid reference E 410469 N 549814).

1.1.2 The proposed Energy and Resource Park includes three central components as follows:

- A fuel store, and
- Energy Plant.
- Combined heat and power equipment and infrastructure

1.1.3 The proposed development will generate 3.48MWe of low carbon electricity and provide a sustainable solution for managing residual commercial waste which will significantly reduce waste otherwise sent to landfill.

1.1.4 The Facility will process up to a maximum of 60,000 tonnes per annum of non-hazardous Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) produced from various types of waste locally arising, mainly commercial and industrial waste from 4 to 5 local sources/suppliers.

1.1.5 The proposed development is actively incorporating Combined Heat & Power, allowing both electricity and heat from the facility to be exported for use in the surrounding area.

1.1.6 The CHP element of the scheme is a crucial element of the wider energy hub strategy for Hownsgill Industrial Estate and Project Genesis. In combination with other developments (such as the consented solar development), the potential is to create reliable sources of zero and low carbon heat and power which can be supplied at advantageous rates to current neighbouring hospital, care and leisure developments, to future commercial developments within the industrial estate, and potentially also to nearby local residents. This directly supports objectives for a circular economy and to promote a Green Recovery, with a strong pull to attract inward investment to Consett through the availability of low carbon, lower cost energy.

1.2 Purpose of Planning Statement

1.2.1 This PS introduces the planning application documents and describes the reasons for the planning application. The Statement summarises the main elements of the proposed

development and considers the proposals in the context of national planning policy, the development plan and other material considerations.

1.3 Applicant

- 1.3.1 Project Genesis is a joint venture between Dysart Developments Ltd and Durham County Council and was formed after the closure of the Consett steel works, with the intention to comprehensively redevelop the redundant land. The development has invested millions into the local economy so far and is seeking to continue to do so through future projects.
- 1.3.2 The Project Genesis Trust has been active in the preparation of the County Durham Plan, to seek to ensure that future plans for the former Consett steel works site are incorporated in the wider development strategy for the area.
- 1.3.3 A comprehensive masterplan has been agreed with Durham County Council and is now referenced within the adopted Local Plan.

1.4 Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.4.1 In order to inform the development proposals and scope of assessment work, various pre-application discussions were held with Durham County Council at an early stage in the project's development to assist in gaining an understanding of key issues. These included a pre-application advice meetings in May 2017 and January 2020.

1.5 Environmental Impacts Assessment Regulations

- 1.5.1 The proposed development includes a waste disposal installation for the incineration of non-hazardous waste with a capacity exceeding 100 tonnes per day and therefore falls within Class 10 of Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('The Regulations'). The proposed development has therefore been subject of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which is reported in the Environmental Statement (ES) supporting this planning application.
- 1.5.2 A Scoping Request was submitted to Durham County Council. A copy of the Scoping Request is provided in Appendix 1 of this Planning Statement.
- 1.5.3 The subsequent Scoping Opinion was received on the 25th September 2020 and is provided within Appendix 2 of this Planning Statement.

1.5.4 This planning application and associated EIA has followed the requirements of the Scoping Opinion.

1.6 The Project Team

1.6.1 The planning application and supporting EIA has been undertaken by the competent expert in their field. The project team has included:

Party	Responsibility	Competence
Project Genesis Ltd	Applicant and owner of the development site	As described in section 1.3
HoSt	Technology Provider Energy Plant	<p>HoSt was formed in 1991 as the result of a joint-venture between Holec Projects and Stork, two well-established suppliers of energy systems.</p> <p>From 1999 onwards HoSt has been a fully independent business whose activities focus 100% on the technological development of waste-to-energy systems for the processing of biomass and waste flows and the supply of systems for the sustainable generation of energy from biomass and waste. HoSt has become a major European EPC supplier of bioenergy systems with over 27 years' experience, a large service team throughout Europe and a team of more than 120 engineers who design, construct and install these advanced bioenergy systems.</p> <p>The technology offered is based on a step grate, for which HoSt has more than 40 reference plants throughout Europe. 10 of these plants have a boiler capacity between 5-20 MW. They run on various types of waste, biomass and various wood fuel streams.</p>

BGI	Technology Provider: Energy Plant	<p>Bio Global Industries Ltd (BGI) is an innovative energy company that delivers both highly flexible and cost effective solutions to renewable energy in the UK.</p> <p>BGI are in Partnership with HoSt Technologies in Amsterdam, Netherlands for Waste to Energy installations in the UK, ranging from 6MW to 20MW, they technology is renowned for their low emissions, which are below EU standards.</p>
Sadler Brown	Architects & Design Engineers	<p>With offices in Newcastle, Chester, London, Harrogate, Edinburgh and Cardiff our practice operates throughout the UK, and internationally on a broad range of projects.</p> <p>The practice has a proven track record across a number of industrial and infrastructure commissions, including recently with rail infrastructure in Tyneside, Wearside and the Middle East; below ground service roads and tunnels in the UAE; Warehousing facilities in Northumberland and Sunderland; and masterplanning layouts for infrastructure on a commercial business park in Newcastle.</p> <p>More locally we were part of the team who secured Outline Planning Consent for a mixed use development close to the Hownsgill Industrial Park, as well as delivering projects in many other sectors across County Durham. Many of our projects are sited in sensitive rural / rural-urban fringe locations. Each proposal is developed on merit, considering place and being environmentally responsive in approach.</p>

Enzygo Ltd	Environmental Assessment and Planning	Enzygo is an independent, multi-disciplinary environmental consultancy with a proven track record of delivering creative, integrated and cost-effective solutions that maximise the potential of development sites. The consultancy was set up in 2008 and employs 57 staff across Bristol, Sheffield and Manchester.
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Table 1.1 Project Team

1.6.2 A full statement of competency is provided within chapter 1 of the ES.

1.7 Planning Application Validation Requirements

1.7.1 The Planning Application is supported by this Planning Statement and a number of additional reports detailed in Table 1.2 below.

1.7.2 The Planning Application Drawings are referenced in Table 1.3 below and are contained within Volume 3 of the ES.

1.7.3 A completed copy of Durhams’s Validation checklist has been provided within Appendix 3 of this Planning Statement.

Document Title	Reference
Planning Application Forms	Online Ref: PP 09216487
Planning Application Fee	Online Ref: PP 09216487
Ownership Certificate	Online Ref: PP 09216487
Agricultural Holding Certificate	Online Ref: PP 09216487
Planning Statement (PS)	This Document
EIA Scoping Request Report	Appendix 1 to the PS
EIA Scoping Opinion Report	Appendix 2 to the PS
Validation Checklist	Appendix 3 to the PS
Pre-Application Consultation Report (PAC)	CRM.0138.001.PL.R.003
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	CRM.0138.001.EC.R.001
Heritage Assessment	P00064/01

Document Title	Reference
Transport Statement	TSC543
<u>Environmental Statement (ES)</u> Chapter 1: Introduction Chapter 2: Approach to ES Chapter 3: Site and Setting Chapter 4: Planning Policy Chapter 5: Development Description Chapter 6: Need and Alternative Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Impact Chapter 8: Geo Environmental Chapter 9: Noise & Vibration Chapter 10: Air Quality & Human Health	<u>Appendix</u> No Appendix 2.1: Request for Scoping Opinion 2.2: Scoping Opinion 2.3: PAC Report No Appendix No Appendix No Appendix 6.1 Design evolution 7.1 Method Statement 7.2 Landscape Assessment Tables 7.3: Consultation 7.4: Figures 8.1: Phase I Preliminary Assessment 8.2: Ground Investigation Interpretive Report 9.1: Glossary of terms 9.2: Baseline Noise Data 9.3: Noise Contours 9.4: Operational Noise Assessment 9.5: Construction Noise Assessment 10.1: Air Quality Assessment (including stack height) 10.2 HHRA 10.3: Odour Risk Assessment

Document Title	Reference
Chapter 11: The Water Environment	11.1: FRA & Drainage Strategy
Chapter 12: Climate Change	No Appendix
Chapter 13: Socio Economic	No Appendix
Chapter 14: Amenity	No Appendix
Chapter 15: Summary & Conclusions	No Appendix
Non-Technical Summary	No Appendix

Table 1.2: List of Planning Documents

Drawing Number	Title
CRM.0138.001.PL.D.001	Site Location Plan
AL(0)010	Proposed Site Boundary Plan
AL(0)011	Existing site plan
AL(0)012	Proposed site plan
AL(0)013	Proposed roof plan
AL(0)014	Boundary treatment plan SW & NW
AL(0)015	Boundary treatment plan NE & SE
AL(0)016	Proposed security lodge
AL(0)020	Proposed NW elevation
AL(0)021	Proposed NE Elevation
AL(0)022	Proposed SE elevation
AL(0)023	Proposed SW elevation
Figure 7.27	Landscape Strategy Plan

Table 1.3: List of Plans and Drawings

2 APPLICATION SITE

2.1 Location

2.1.1 The proposed development site is approximately 1.64 hectares and is located within the Hownsgill Industrial Estate in Consett, Durham, DH8 7EQ (Grid reference E 410469 N 549814).

2.1.2 The site location plan CRM.0138.001.PL.D.001 provides the wider area context.

2.2 The Application Site

2.2.1 The application site is identified in plan 010 and figure 2.1 below:



Figure 2.1: Proposed development site

2.2.2 The Site is relatively level, falling in a south-east direction from 246.27 metres Above Ordnance Datum (m AOD) in the northern corner, to 244.36m AOD at the Site entrance. The fall of 1.91m over 157m gives a gradient of 1:82.

2.2.3 There is a large mound of material which runs along the site's north west boundary adjacent to the C2C cycle path.

2.2.4 Plan 011 provides the existing topographical data for the site.

2.2.5 This ground is subject to some low-lying vegetation as identified in figure 2.1 above.

2.3 Utilities

- 2.3.1 Northumbrian Water asset plans show there is a Ø375mm S102 surface water sewer and Ø150mm S102 foul sewer, beneath Knitsley Lane to the east of the Site.
- 2.3.2 No utilities currently cross the application site.

2.4 Access

- 2.4.1 Access to the site is gained from the A692 Castleside/Gateshead road to the north and Knitsley Lane to the east of the proposed development site.
- 2.4.2 Consett is situated to the northwest of County Durham. It is at the centre of a number of transport corridors. The A691 links the north-west of the county with Durham City and the A692 provides connectivity to Gateshead and Newcastle. The A693 links directly to the A692 and provides access to Stanley, Chester le Street and the A1 motorway

2.5 Surrounding Land Uses

- 2.5.1 The development site is located within the centre of the Hownsgill Industrial Estate. The Estate is currently made up of a number of industrial units and a consented solar farm which has yet to be implemented.
- 2.5.2 These buildings to the south cover approximately 3,872m₂ and are 7.3m at their highest point.
- 2.5.3 The nearest residential areas are:
- Properties north of Consett Road, to the north.
 - Properties on The Chequers, to the east.
 - Properties on Knitsley Lane, to the southeast.
 - Howns Farm, to the southwest.
- 2.5.4 A plan which shows the wider context of the application site is provided in Figure 2.2 below:

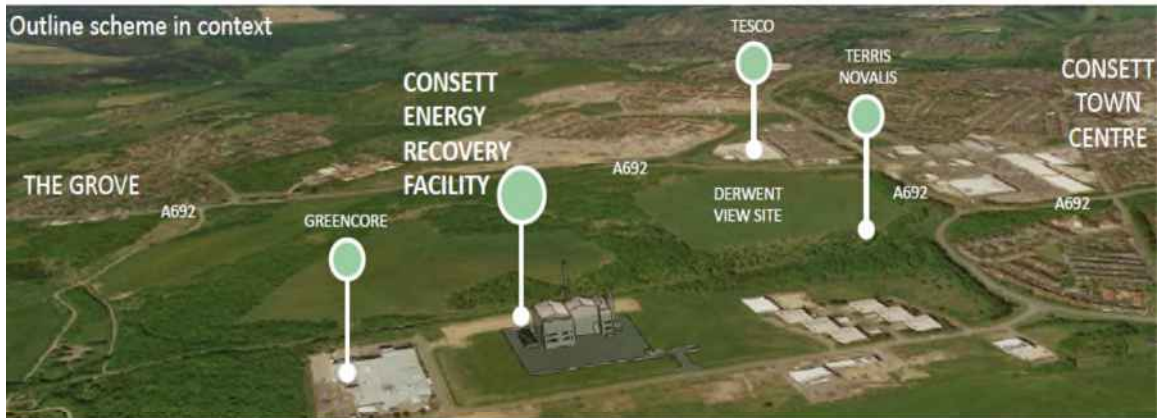


Figure 2.2

Public Rights of Way

2.5.5 The area is generally accessible via public roads and footpaths in the urban areas to the east of the site. The nearest PROW include:

- Footpath FP 23 which extends south through Hownsgill Farm;
- Footpath FP 49 which extends northwest from Hownsgill viaduct to the A692; and
- Footpath FP 21 which meanders east from Hownsgill viaduct through Hown's Wood and Knitsley Wood.

2.5.6 The Consett and Sunderland Railway Path is approximately 50m north of the site, which is a promoted route also forming part of the Sustrans Coast to Coast (C2C) long-distance path/cycleway which follows the route of a former railway line. This connects with the Lanchester Valley Railway Path approximately 600m to the southwest of the site.

Conservation Areas

2.5.7 The application site is not in or near to a conservation area. The nearest conservation areas are Shotley Bridge approximately 3km northwest of the site alongside the river and the urban areas of Bridgehill and Shotley Bridge and Blackhill in Consett approximately 1.5km to the north.

Landscape Designations

2.5.8 The site is not in a designated landscape. The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at its nearest boundary is approximately 2.5km to the southeast of the site.

Listed Buildings

2.5.9 There are no listed buildings on the application site, there are listed buildings in the study area, mainly in the town, those nearby include:

- Hownsgill Viaduct Grade II* approximately 1km southwest;
- An arch under the former railway line,(now the Consett and Sunderland Railway Path) Grade II, approximately 650m southwest; and
- High Knitsley Farmhouse and barn Grade II and , approximately 1km southeast;

Scheduled Monuments

2.5.10 There are no scheduled monuments on the site. The 17th century Allensford blast furnace scheduled monument is in the study area approximately 2.5km northwest of the site.

Nature Conservation Designations

2.5.11 There are sites of nature conservation importance on the western edge of the study area these include Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and National Nature Reserves. There is a Local Nature Reserve (local designation) at Allensford Woods to the northwest of the site.

Flood risk

2.5.12 The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning identifies that there is no risk of flooding from the rivers or the sea. The area to the south of the access road is identified as being at risk of surface water flooding.

Geology

2.5.13 Borehole records close to the site show Made Ground over Alluvial clay and superficial gravels (Diamicton) and bedrock comprising sandstone and mudstone. Coal was encountered at 6mbgl and 15mbgl (0.2 and 0.5m thick).

2.5.14 The site has been subject of contamination and remediation from its industrial past, this is presented in detail within Chapter 8 of this ES.

2.6 Development History

2.6.1 The site (and wider area) has been historically used as part of the quarry to the north, railway to the south and then part of the Consett Steel Works as identified in figure 2.3 and 2.4 below.



Figure 2.3

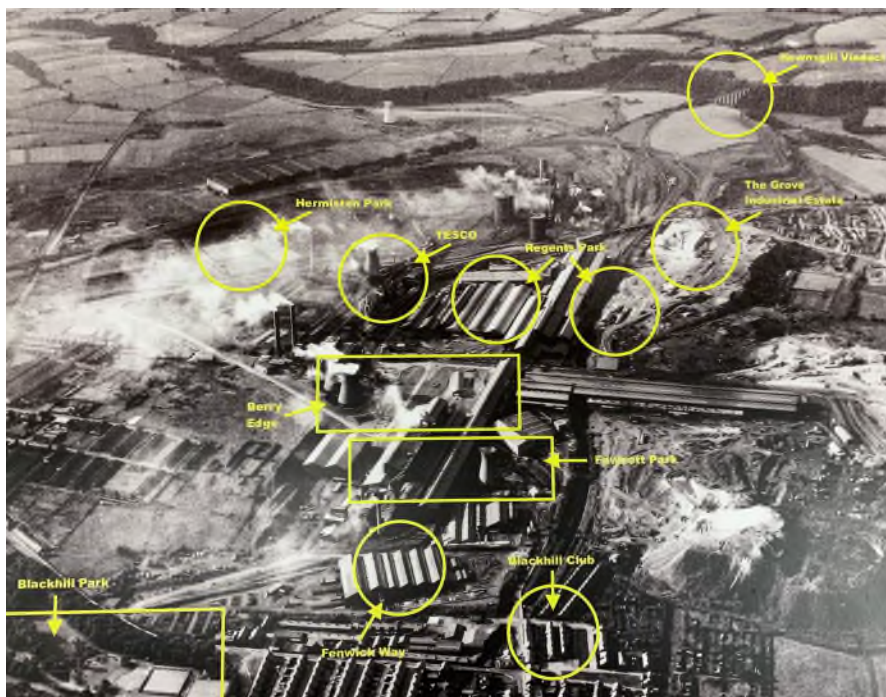


Figure 2.4

2.6.2 The proposed development site can be identified by the Hermiston Park label in figure 2.4 above which was operational in the 1960s and 70s and was fully demolished by 1987.

2.6.3 Mapping records indicate that the site was part of the open land within the Hownsgill Industrial Park between 1988 and 1995.

2.7 Recent Planning History

2.7.1 Since the restoration of the area, the proposed development site has remained as vacant brown field land.

2.7.2 A review of the Local Planning Authorities planning application webpage has been undertaken and the site is not subject to any pending or recently decided planning applications.

2.7.3 The wider area has a number of extant consents as illustrated in figure 2.5 below:



Figure 2.5: Site Plan

2.7.4 Of most relevance is a development, Bessemer Court, Unit 1 at the Hownsgill Industrial Park, which has outline planning consent for the development of 14 units for business use (B1) and general Industry (B2) with associated car parking, access and enabling works (1/2012/0600/85504). This was varied in 2019 to change the level of car parking (DM/19/01834/VOC). This site is located to the south east of the access road and is under construction.

2.7.5 A planning consent for a Solar Park has also been granted under consent DM/15/02364/FPA and is identified in figure 2.5 (red, purple and sky blue shading).

2.7.6 More recently, in February 2020, planning approval was granted for an outline application for a mixed use scheme including community hospital (C2) and pharmacy (A1); sheltered care unit

(C2); residential care unit (C2); gym and wellbeing centre (D2); hotel (C1); public house (A4); micro-brewery (B2/A4); and vets practice (D1) at land to the South of Puddlers Corner Roundabout (planning reference DM/19/01987/OUT). This land is located to the north west of the industrial Estate.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Summary of development

3.1.1 In summary, the proposed Energy Facility is designed to process approximately 60,000tpa of waste to delivery approximately 3.48MW of power. It comprises the following three elements:

- The Fuel Store which will receive and store the materials prior to processing and,
- The Energy Plant and associated stack which will combust the material to produce energy and heat.
- Combined Heat and Power equipment and associated infrastructure.

3.1.2 The proposed layout and associated elevations are provided in plans 012 and 020, 021, 022, 023 Site Elevations respectively.

3.2 The Technology

3.2.1 The Energy Facility will utilise moving grate technology which has a proven track record both in the UK and Europe.

3.2.2 The flow diagram below provides an illustration of the proposed technology processes:

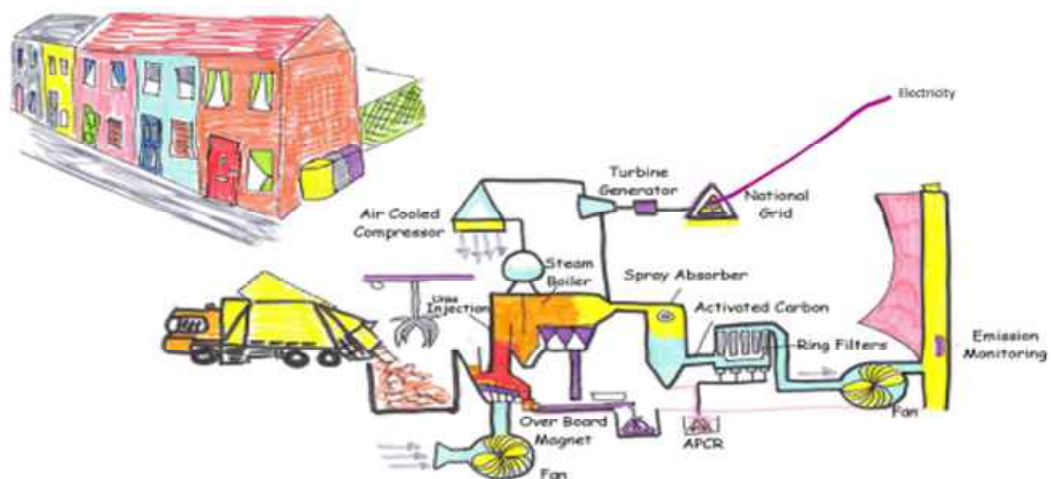


Figure 3.1: Process Diagram.

3.3 Proposed Operational and Technological Processes

Delivery

- 3.3.1 Upon reception at the site, each delivery vehicle will be weighed at the weigh bridge and the waste screened to ensure compliance with the acceptance criteria.
- 3.3.2 Delivery vehicles will then be routed within the site to access the fuel store.
- 3.3.3 The fuel store will operate at negative pressure and roller shutter doors will be used to ensure odours are not released as HGVs empty their loads into the building.

Storage and transportation of Materials

- 3.3.4 The material will be removed from the storage silo by an internal crane which will load it onto a push floor.
- 3.3.5 The material will then be pushed by ladders (steel structures) onto a belt conveyor which will move it into the Energy Plant. The material is then transported into a hydraulic infeeding unit which feeds the material into the furnace.



Figure 3.2 Infeeder system

The Furnace & Boiler House

- 3.3.6 The material is transported through the furnace by a hydraulically driven moving grate and is subsequently dried, gasified and combusted.
- 3.3.7 The temperature in the furnace is controlled between 925°C and 975°C. Low NO_x emissions and complete combustion is reached by specially designed stage combustion.
- 3.3.8 The grate is cooled by the fresh air under the grate and flue gas recirculation.

- 3.3.9 Most of the ash falls from the end of the moving grate into the wet ash conveyor. Fine ash that goes through the grate also falls in the wet ash conveyor and is automatically transported to the ash container.
- 3.3.10 The wet system prevents dust from spreading in the boiler house.



Figure 3.3: Wet ash conveyor

Steam Cycle

- 3.3.11 Maximum electrical output is generated by the combination of high-pressure steam within the steam turbine.



Figure 3.4: Steam turbine

Flue gas cleaning

- 3.3.12 The cooled flue gas from the boiler goes into a cyclone where dust is removed. Bicar and active carbon is injected in the fluegas to reduce HCl, SO_x, dioxins and heavy metals.
- 3.3.13 The ash from the boiler and the cyclone is transported to the wet ash system.
- 3.3.14 NO_x emissions are reduced with Urea injection in the furnace. Due to high contents of nitrogen in the fuel, a catalytic deNO_x (SCR) installation will also significantly reduce the NO_x emissions from the Energy Centre.
- 3.3.15 All material will be carefully stored in sealed units in accordance with Environment Agency guidelines.

Outputs

- 3.3.16 The facility will produce approximately 3.48MW of electricity which will be used to power local development and residences.
- 3.3.17 The facility will also produce heat for supply via a district heating scheme to be developed to support adjacent development. Infrastructure will be provided to the site boundary ready for connection. Proposals for the utilisation of the heat will apply for all necessary connections to the site boundary.
- 3.3.18 The connection will be provided by a DNO and as such falls under the statutory authorities' permitted development rights.

Residual Outputs

- 3.3.19 Residual outputs that cannot be processed, including ash (bottom and fly ash) will be removed for off-site reuse and disposal

Air Emissions

- 3.3.20 All stack emissions will be kept within IED (Industrial Emission Directive) Limits.

Noise Emissions

- 3.3.21 The estimated specifications of noise emission of the installation are as follows:
- The average sound pressure in the Energy Plant will be approximately 80dB(A). Sound levels outside the plant will be mitigated to a suitable level.
 - The maximum sound pressure level in the Energy Plant will be lower than 85 dB(A) at 1 metre distance.

3.3.22 In the turbine room, control room and stacks will have silencing equipment installed.

Odour Emissions

3.3.23 The facility will be equipped with a negative pressure system to prevent fugitive release of odorous air. This is based around 2 systems as follows:

- Air would be drawn from the Fuel Store into the Energy Plant and used in the combustion process where odours would be destroyed.
- The Fuel Store will also be also equipped with a dedicated odour control unit.

3.3.24 The primary method of extraction would be via the Energy Plant, supplemented with the 2 stage odour control unit at times when the Energy Plant is off line.

Water Usage

3.3.25 The facility will be able to produce high pressure steam by recovering energy from the engine exhaust gases. The steam will be used for heating purposes (process and buildings) and for steam tracing.

3.3.26 Condensate will be recovered and re-circulated in the steam turbine.

3.3.27 The raw water will be sourced from the public mains supply. The plant will consume approximately 4-5m³/h.

3.3.28 Detailed fire water calculations will be provided as part of the permit. However, the proposed fire water tank has been designed to hold 16m³/hr of fire water to be available if required.

3.4 Operation

3.4.1 The plant will be operating 24 hours a day.

3.4.2 Deliveries will take place over a 15-hour period between 6am and 9pm.

3.5 Built Development

3.5.1 The elevations provided in plans 020, 021, 022 and 023 provide details of the proposed built structures including:

- The Energy Plant approximately 35.5m long, 22m high and 32.7m wide.
- The Fuel Store approximately 25.8m long, 22m high and 45.3m wide.
- The stack, at a height of 50m.

3.5.2 The following table provides details of the proposed developments ancillary equipment:

Table 3.1: Ancillary Equipment

Equipment	Length	Width	Height	Number
Water Tank	6m	6m	25m	1No.
External Silo	4m	3.2	2.1	4No
Dry coolers	11.5m	2.4m	3m	7No.
Ash bins	6.4m	2.3m	2.1	2No
Weighbridge	22m	5m	N/A	1No

3.6 Staff

3.7 There will be three staff working at the facility on each of the three eight hour shifts per day (06:00-14:00, 14:00-22:00 and 22:00 to 06:00).

3.8 Landscape Planting and Management

3.8.1 The proposed landscape management plan is provided in plan 7.27. This plan includes additional planting along the south eastern and south western boundaries of the site.

3.9 Site Drainage

Grey Water

3.9.1 Grey water will be collected and recirculated within the Energy Plant.

Surface Water

3.9.2 Surface water will be managed via the existing drainage network. Full details of the proposed drainage strategy are set out within chapter 11 of the supporting Environmental Statement.

3.10 Ancillary Development

On site circulation

3.10.1 On entering the site, vehicles will be directed around the southern perimeter of the facility.

3.10.2 Vehicles will then drive straight into the fuel reception building and deposit the material. These vehicles will exit the site via the same route.

- 3.10.3 Due to the relatively low number of vehicles entering and existing the site, queuing is not expected. However, in the unusual event that this occurs, vehicles can wait at the site access without affecting traffic movements through the industrial estate.

Site Management

- 3.10.4 Upon entry to the site, vehicles will turn into the access road and be admitted into the site via a sliding access gate by staff manning the adjacent security hut.

Parking

- 3.10.5 7 new parking spaces (one of which will be for disabled users) will be provided for staff and visitors to the east of the proposed development site. A pedestrian route is also proposed to ensure safety.

Fencing

- 3.10.6 The proposed development will be surrounded by 2.0m high powder coated metal fencing.

External Lighting

- 3.10.7 Lighting will be directional to ensure that light spill is kept to a minimum.

3.11 Access & Traffic

- 3.11.1 The fuel will be delivered to the facility in 23 tonne capacity articulated containerised trucks with walking floors resulting in 2609 inbound and 2609 outbound movements per year, an average of 9 deliveries or 18.2 vehicle movements per weekday (a single vehicle which delivers to the site and then leaves creates one movement in and one movement out – two movements).

- 3.11.2 An additional 0.7 vehicle movements per weekday of process chemicals will be delivered to the development site.

- 3.11.3 The ash output from the operation would be collected from the facility in appropriately secure trucks with a 20 tonne capacity, resulting in 470 inbound and 470 outbound movements per year, an average of 3.3 vehicle movements per weekday.

- 3.11.4 The total number of vehicle movements (including deliveries and exports) per weekday associated with the facility would be 22 HGV movements and a maximum of 18 car movements. On average, there would be less than two HGV movements and no car movements during each weekday network peak hour.

3.12 Substances used on site and storage of hazardous material

3.12.1 The SNCR de-NO_x system will use urea as the reagent. The reagent and treatment chemicals will be stored in suitable containers or stainless steel bunded storage tanks provided with a pressure relief valve and vent scrubber system, as appropriate. In the event of a spillage, the bunds will retain the liquid.

3.12.2 These materials will be stored in accordance with Environment Agency guidelines.

3.13 Utilities

Mains Water

3.13.1 Northumbrian Water is the local water undertaker within Durham. It is responsible for fresh water supply and the wastewater sewerage networks.

Electrical Power

3.13.2 Under normal atmospheric conditions the plant will be rated to produce 3.48MW of electrical output.

3.13.3 This energy will be exported to the national grid for distribution.

3.13.4 The plant is able to run for 8,000 hours per year and will be connected to the Local Smart Grid.

Heat offtake

3.13.5 Excess heat will be exported to the wider regeneration area.

3.13.6 The connections will be subject to a future planning application.

3.14 Facility Inputs and Outputs

Waste Types

3.14.1 The facility will process non-hazardous residual waste materials from a variety of local sources, mainly commercial, which will be collected and delivered to the site.

Capacity

3.14.2 The proposed development will process up to 60,000 tonnes of waste material a year.

3.14.3 In addition to the waste materials other key raw materials into the facility will include:

- Water;
- Bicar;

- Activated Carbon; and,
- Urea.

3.14.4 Approximately 2,000 tonnes of process chemicals (as outlined above) will be utilised at the plant per year.

Outputs

3.14.5 In addition to the export of electricity and heat, the facility will produce the following outputs which will be removed off site:

- 7,200 tonnes of fly ash;
- 1,200 tonnes of bottom ash; and
- 1,000 tonnes of spent chemicals.

3.15 Monitoring and Hazard Prevention

3.15.1 The proposed development has incorporated hazard prevention in its design in order to reach Environment Agency standards.

3.15.2 Monitoring of the development will take place under the permit requirements as issued by the EA.

3.16 Plant Maintenance and Shut down

3.16.1 Plant maintenance will be required for four weeks every year.

3.16.2 The proposed development has been designed to hold a maximum of 630 tonnes of waste at any given period. This allows Project Genesis Ltd to hold material during emergency shut-downs but ensures that the facility is not at risk of fire.

3.16.3 This accords with the Environment Agencies stringent requirements.

3.17 Decommissioning

3.17.1 Planning Permission is sought for permanent development on the site and therefore it is not considered necessary to consider the impacts of the decommissioning phase within this Environmental Statement.

3.18 Construction

Timescales

3.18.1 The construction phase will take approximately 18 to 21 months.

Hours of Work

3.18.2 Construction operations will generally take place between the following hours;

- 06.00-20.00 Monday to Friday
- 07.00-17.00 Saturday

3.18.3 No construction works will take place on Sundays or Public Holidays without prior agreement with the planning authority.

3.18.4 Any intrusive works outside these hours would be with prior agreement of the planning authority, accept in the case of any emergency.

Access to the Site

3.18.5 Access to the site will be via the existing access arrangements.

Construction Plant

3.18.6 Plant to be used during the construction phase will include the following:

- Tracked Excavators (Excavation and loading);
- Crushing Plant;
- Articulated Dump Trucks;
- Wheeled Back Hoe Loaders;
- Road Vehicles – up to 36 GVW;
- Vibrating Rollers;
- Asphalt Paving Plant;
- Piling Rigs;
- Ready Mixed Concrete Trucks;
- Concrete Pump;

- Cranes; and
- Diesel Generators.

Construction Stages

3.18.7 The construction stages are as follows:

- Mitigation: Necessary mitigation measures to be put in place where necessary;
- Mobilisation: Work to start on site;
- Level Site and Trenches: There will be minimal material movement at the site as the existing bund will be retained.
- Retaining Wall, Hardstanding and Roads: The provision of all necessary hardstanding and access road improvements;
- Piling and Foundations: This is required for both the Fuel Store and Energy Plant;
- Drainage: Laying of all drainage infrastructure;
- Steelwork: Erection of all steelwork;
- Cast Floors;
- Cladding and Doors;
- Crane;
- Builders work and plant delivery;
- M&E;
- Tanks;
- Stacks;
- Weighbridge;
- Landscaping.

Operational Practices

3.18.8 The following details set out the operational practices that will be employed during the construction phase in order to minimise the environmental impacts.

3.18.9 Further detail will be provided in a Construction Management Plan which will be provided as part of condition to any planning consent.

Site Security and Safety

3.18.10 Fencing will be erected to ensure the security and safety of the site.

Contractors Compound & Site Facilities

3.18.11 The contractor will utilise temporary offices at the construction site.

Set down Areas

3.18.12 The proposed development site has enough space to provide for set down areas.

Loading and Unloading of plant and materials

3.18.13 Construction delivery and plant traffic will be directed by means of prominent signage into the site along the road.

3.18.14 On entry to the site a check point, with gateman/security guard in attendance, will be placed with visible signage requesting delivery drivers to sign in and notify site personnel prior to entry into the construction work area.

3.18.15 All loads and tickets will be checked prior to the offloading of materials and plant on site, or within the designated materials laydown area.

3.18.16 All off-loading activities will be carried out under a permit to work procedure

Wheel Wash Facilities

3.18.17 A wheel wash facility will be provided close to the site entrance.

Measures to control dust and dirt during construction

3.18.18 The site will adopt the following mitigation measures where appropriate:

- Identify a responsible person in charge, likely to be Site Supervisor who will be on site during working times and will maintain a Log Book of emissions and carry out site inspections;
- Machinery and dust causing activities will be located away from sensitive receptors where practicable;

- Temporary roads will be watered to reduce the level of dust emissions;
- Water will be used as a dust suppressant
- Measures to Address Contaminated Ground
- Any contaminants found during the construction phase will be dealt with in accordance with a Construction Management Plan, to be formulated and agreed with the Regulatory Authorities.
- If contaminated ground is encountered during the construction phase, the contaminated material will be excavated and placed on impervious sheeting. The material will be banded to prevent any liquid run off.
- A registered laboratory will be brought in to undertake Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC) tests and identify the type and level of the contaminant. The materials will then be disposed of, via a licensed haulier, at an appropriately licensed facility.

Measures to address groundwater

3.18.19 The areas of hardstanding which will be constructed using bound pavement construction and incorporate dedicated drainage. The design, construction and operation of the proposed development will provide environmental enhancement measures, which are in greater detail within Chapter 8 of this Environmental Statement.

3.18.20 As part of the site preparation works a site strip will be undertaken along with removal of any existing obstructions.

Site Specific Procedures

3.18.21 The following site-specific procedures will be in place during the construction period as appropriate:

- all employees will attend a site induction carried out by the construction contractor on arrival to site. The induction will be project-specific emphasising the contractor's safety procedures and rules and site plans phasing;
- all employees will have signed onto the contractors Permit to Work/Risk Assessment and will have read and understood the method of work and safety procedures prior to commencing work on site;

- 'Take Time' risk assessments will be completed by each working gang or persons prior to commencing work;
- all plant operatives will be competent trained personnel and carry the required certification (CPCS) in line with the contractors approved list;
- site staff will carry out daily checks as part of safety and quality procedures; and
- all operatives will be briefed at induction stage on the importance of waste segregation and recycling of materials generated on site.

Staff

3.18.22 Construction is anticipated to employ up to 60 staff.

Residues and Emissions

3.18.23 The following section provides a summary of estimates, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions associated with the construction phase of the proposed development. The basis for these estimates, as well as an assessment of their potential impacts and effects are discussed in more detailed within the Environmental Statement.

Emissions to air

3.18.24 There is the potential for dust generation during the construction phase due to earthworks, and movements of mobile plant accessing and operating on the site.

3.18.25 Contractors will be required to use good engineering practices and follow good practice guidance as outlined in the previous section to minimise dust emissions during the construction phase.

Traffic

3.18.26 The busiest phase of construction will generate approximately 5 two-way movements per hour.

3.18.27 This traffic is temporary and will be routed within the development site.

Noise

3.18.28 Indicative noise levels for construction plant/activities or the main construction phase are summarised in the table below.

Source	Noise (dBA) at 10m
Vibratory Sheet Piling Rig	88
44ton Tracked 360 deg Excavator (loading)	85
44ton Tracked 360 deg Excavator	82
Articulated Dump Truck	80
14ton Tracked 360 deg Excavator	83
Wheeled Back Hoe Loader	68
Wagon (drive by)	80
Telescopic handlers	71
Roller	79
Water Pump	62
Concrete pump	78
Generators	57
Cement Mixer Truck (discharging)	75
Crane (anticipated worst case scenario)	78

Figure 3.2: Estimated Construction Noise Emissions at Source

Vibration

- 3.18.29 The expected levels of vibration to be generated on the development site and the location of construction activity relative to surrounding buildings and occupiers will not have detrimental effect on receptors outside the site boundary.
- 3.18.30 Vibration assessments will be carried out for personnel using equipment which propose a risk as required under current regulations.

4 REVIEW OF PLANNING POLICY

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following identifies the key relevant planning documents against which this proposal will be determined.

4.2 The Development Plan

4.2.1 The application site is located within the administrative boundary of Durham County Council and within the local planning authority area of the former Derwentside District Council. The District was abolished in 2009 as the two-tier system of administration in County Durham was replaced with a unitary Durham County Council, replacing both the existing county council and district councils.

4.3 Adopted Planning Policy

4.3.1 The adopted development plan is made up of two central documents. Those relevant to this planning application are as follows:

- County Durham Waste Local Plan (April 2005) Saved Policies; and
- County Durham Plan (Adopted 2020)

4.3.2 There are no adopted Neighbourhood Plans of relevance to the application site.

4.3.3 Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents relate only to new residential developments and so are not relevant to the proposed development.

4.3.4 The relevant planning policies are set out below.

4.4 County Durham Waste Local Plan Saved Policies

4.4.1 The recently adopted County Durham Local Plan has replaced all of the policies contained within this plan with the exception of 13 policies.

4.4.2 These 13 policies will be replaced by a new Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations document. Work on this document is due to begin in 2020.

4.4.3 The saved policies of relevance to the proposed development are outlined below.

4.4.4 **Saved Policy W6:** Design states that new buildings for waste management uses should be carefully sited and designed to complement the location and existing topography. Landscape

proposals should be incorporated as an integral part of the overall development of the site. Where appropriate, the opportunity should be taken to illustrate best practice by incorporating sustainable design principles in new building, using recycled materials wherever possible.

4.4.5 **Saved Policy W26:** Water resources states that proposals for waste development which does not involve landfill or landraise will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact or significant deterioration to:

a) the quality of surface or groundwater resources; and

b) the flow of surface or groundwater at or in the vicinity of the site.

4.4.6 **Saved Policy W29:** Modes of Transport states that waste development will be required to incorporate measures to minimise transportation of waste. A Transport Assessment shall be produced in support of all proposals for waste development which is likely to have significant transport implications. The Transport Assessment will be required to show, where practicable, that full consideration has been given to the transport of waste by rail and through pipelines.

4.4.7 **Saved Policy W31:** Environmental Impact of Road Traffic states that waste development will only be permitted if:

a) traffic estimated to be generated by the development can be accommodated safely on the highway network and the amenity of roadside communities is protected;

b) the strategic highway network can be safely and conveniently accessed; and

c) the impact of traffic generated by the development on local and recreational amenity is otherwise acceptable.

4.4.8 **Saved Policy W32:** Planning Obligations for Controlling environmental impact of road traffic states that in granting planning permission for waste development, planning conditions will be imposed and planning obligations or other legal agreements sought, to cover the following matters, insofar as they fairly and reasonably relate to the proposed development:

a) the routing of traffic to and from the site;

b) highway improvements or maintenance;

c) the prevention of the transfer of mud, dust, litter or release of smoke onto the public highway by measures including the provision of wheel cleaning facilities, suitably metalled access roads and the sheeting of laden vehicles;

d) access to and from the site and the provision of on-site turning, parking, loading and unloading areas; and

e) the means of transporting material within the site, or between different parts of the same working area.

4.4.9 **Saved Policy W35:** Cumulative Impact states that in considering proposals for waste development the cumulative impact of the following will be taken into account:

a) existing waste development in the area;

b) waste development with planning permission, including proposals not yet started; c) past waste development in the area;

d) current planning applications for waste development in the area;

e) other non-waste activities in the area.

Permission will not be granted where the cumulative impact exceeds that which would be acceptable if produced from a single site under the relevant policies of this plan”.

4.5 County Durham Plan: Waste Management Policies

4.5.1 National planning policies require councils to plan for the needs of waste management in order to ensure that waste is managed in a sustainable and efficient manner, in accordance with the waste hierarchy. The County Durham Plan seeks to provide a set of strategic policies for waste in County Durham over the Plan period and additionally:

- Identifies, where possible, the scale of waste management capacity that will need to be accommodated within the county over the period to 2035;
- Sets out as far as possible where and when new provision will be necessary;
- Provides clear guidance to enable site specific allocations and planning applications to be considered in both locational and criteria based terms; and
- Allocates strategic sites for new waste development, where necessary.

4.5.2 Key waste policies of relevance to the proposed development are as follows:

- **Policy 47:** Sustainable Minerals and Waste Resource Management
- **Policy 48:** Safeguarding Minerals Sites, Minerals Related Infrastructure and Waste Management sites
- **Policy 60:** Waste Management Provision
- **Policy 61:** Location of New Waste Facilities

4.5.3 **Policy 47:** Sustainable Minerals and Waste Resource Management

“The development of a sustainable resource economy in County Durham will be promoted, encouraged and facilitated by:

a) ensuring that waste is managed in line with the waste hierarchy in sequential order. In particular:

1. supporting proposals that minimise waste production; help prepare waste for re-use; and increase the capacity and capability of the county's network of waste management facilities to reuse, recycle and recover value from waste materials; and

2. resisting proposals for the disposal of residual waste via landfill or via the incineration of waste without energy recovery unless a need can be demonstrated which cannot be met by existing facilities and by treatment solutions higher in the waste hierarchy.

b) supporting opportunities for on-site management of waste where it arises and encouraging co-location of waste developments with industrial uses so that waste can be used as a raw material;

c) encouraging all proposals for mineral extraction to minimise the amount of mineral waste produced in extraction, handling, processing and stockpiling; and to maximise the potential for mineral waste to be used in recycling or on-site restoration. If mineral waste is not required for these purposes then where practicable, a market for its potential use should be identified;

d) encouraging and permitting the concurrent working of two or more minerals from the same site provided that the operation or restoration of the site is not prejudiced or significantly delayed, the overall proposal remains acceptable and does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on either the environment, human health or the amenity of local communities;

e) permitting proposals for aggregate recycling facilities including at locations suitable for permanent waste management facilities and also at active quarries and landfill sites. Proposals at active quarries and landfill sites will only be permitted:

1. for a temporary period not exceeding the permitted life of the quarry or landfill site;

2. provided that the operation or restoration of the site is not prejudiced or significantly delayed; and

3. provided that the overall proposal remains acceptable and does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on either the environment, human health or the amenity of local communities”.

4.5.4 Policy 48: Safeguarding Minerals Sites, Minerals Related Infrastructure and Waste Management sites

“Existing and allocated minerals sites, minerals processing facilities and minerals related transportation infrastructure and important waste management sites shall be safeguarded and protected from all non-mineral and non-waste related development.

Planning permission will not be granted for non-minerals or non-waste related development that would result in the loss of existing or allocated minerals processing facilities and minerals related transportation infrastructure and waste management sites unless:

a. where the facility, infrastructure or site is in active use an alternative suitable site within an acceptable distance can be provided, which is at least as appropriate and acceptable for the use as the safeguarded site; or

b. the facility, infrastructure or site is not in active use and it can be demonstrated that it no longer meets the current or anticipated future needs of the minerals, building and construction industry or the waste management industry; or

c. the need for the alternative development outweighs the benefits of retaining the existing, or allocated infrastructure, facility or site.

Planning permission will not be granted for non-minerals or non-waste related development next to a safeguarded minerals processing facility, minerals related transportation infrastructure, minerals site or waste management site, or within a defined minerals or waste site safeguarding zone (where defined on Map C in the policies map document) other than for:

d. exempt development; or

e. where it can be demonstrated that the new non-minerals or non-waste development would not prevent, prejudice or be prejudiced by the current or future use of the safeguarded infrastructure, facility or site including through provision of adequate mitigation to reduce any impacts to an acceptable level”

4.5.5 **Policy 60:** Waste Management Provision

“Proposals for the provision of new or enhanced waste management capacity will be permitted where they:

a contribute to driving the management of waste up the waste hierarchy and do not prejudice the movement of waste up the waste hierarchy; and

b. assist in moving the management of waste in County Durham towards net self-sufficiency and/or make an appropriate contribution to regional net self-sufficiency by managing waste streams as near as possible to their production; and

c. assist in meeting the identified need, set out within this Plan, for new waste management capacity to manage specific waste streams over the Plan period or can demonstrate an additional need which cannot be met by existing operational facilities within County Durham or the North East”

4.5.6 The policy states that moving the way waste is managed up the waste hierarchy is a key objective of government policy. The waste hierarchy places a priority on the prevention of waste, followed by reuse then recycling, then other recovery (which can include energy from waste). As part of this hierarchy, waste disposal is the last resort. While the Plan is limited in what it can do to minimise the generation of waste, the policy seeks to both maximise the management of waste up towards the highest practical levels of the waste hierarchy and ensure that proposals do not prejudice the movement of waste up the waste hierarchy by imposing a degree of restraint on other forms of development, such as landfill, and incineration without

energy recovery (which, as disposal options, represent the lowest level of the hierarchy), unless a need is demonstrated. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how their proposed facility accords with this approach.

4.5.7 Supporting text to the policy states that Government policy is clear that while there is a policy aim that waste planning authorities should manage all of their own waste in line with the established waste planning principles of self-sufficiency and the proximity principle that there is no expectation that each local planning authority will be able to do so. In this regard, County Durham plays an important part in the management of waste in the North East and established flows of waste exist between County Durham and adjoining areas and other areas in the country.

4.5.8 Provision for future waste management in County Durham is based upon providing facilities to deal with the county's own waste arisings whilst acknowledging those flows which already exist (net self-sufficiency).

4.5.9 This policy is supported by the following tables:

Table 4.1: Baseline Arisings by Waste Type

Quantity (2016) (tonnes x 1,000 per annum)		Data Source
Non-Hazardous Waste	Total: 644.2kt, of which Dry Recyclate: 246.9kt, Organic waste: 62.7kt, and Residual waste: 334.6kt	Waste Data Flow, Regional C&I survey
Inert/Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste (CDEW)	623.3kt (943.6kt including imports)	Environment Agency Permit Returns
Hazardous Waste	43.7kt	Environment Agency Permit Returns
Agricultural Waste	3.0kt (reported by Permit Returns)	Environment Agency Permit Returns
Low Level Radioactive Waste	942 GBq	Environment Agency IPPC Returns
Waste Water	50kt	Northumbrian Water

Table 4.2: Current Available Capacity by Site Type

Facility Type	Available Capacity (tonnes x 1,000 per annum)	Data Source
Mixed Materials Recovery Facility	270.0 ktpa	Environment Agency
Composting	190.0 ktpa	Environment Agency
Non-Hazardous Transfer	1,190.6 ktpa	Environment Agency
Anaerobic Digestion	72.4 ktpa	Environment Agency
Clinical Waste Transfer	30.0 ktpa	Environment Agency
Hazardous Waste Transfer	30.0 ktpa	Environment Agency
Inert Waste Transfer	98.6 ktpa	Environment Agency
Non-hazardous residual waste treatment/disposal	12.7 ktpa	Environment Agency
Inert Landfill, Non Hazardous Landfill and Non-Hazardous (with SNRHW cell) Landfill	11,104,913 cubic metres	Environment Agency
Vehicle Depollution Facility	145.0 ktpa	Environment Agency

Table 4.3: Future Projected Growth in Arisings by Waste Stream

Waste Type	Quantity (tonnes x 1,000)		
	2016	2025	2035
Non-Hazardous waste - recycle	246.9	265.2	267.1
Non-Hazardous waste - organic waste	62.7	66.0	62.7
Non-Hazardous waste - residual waste	334.6	326.3	333.9
Construction and Demolition (Inert)	623.3	623.3	623.3
Hazardous waste	43.8	43.7	43.0

Table 4.4: Surplus Capacity (Including Any Capacity Gap) by Site Type (to 2035)

Facility Type	Surplus Capacity (tonnes x 1,000 per annum unless otherwise stated)
Mixed Materials Recovery Facility	118.8
Organic Recycling Capacity	162.2
Non-Hazardous Transfer	817.3
Anaerobic Digestion	122.6
Clinical Waste Transfer	28.6
Hazardous Waste Transfer	-11.2
Inert Waste Transfer	78.9
Non-Hazardous Residual Waste Treatment/Disposal	-67 to -145
Inert Landfill and Non-Hazardous Landfill	-3,682.8 (m ³ x 1,000)
Vehicle Depollution Facility	

4.5.10 Supporting text paragraph 5.586 discusses non hazardous residual waste management and states that:

“ In respect of the forecast Non-Hazardous residual waste treatment/disposal capacity gap it is understood that the identified capacity gap reflects the pattern of final management for LACW, whereby waste which cannot be composted or recycled is managed by incineration at the Suez Energy from Waste (EfW) plant at Haverton Hill in the Tees Valley. The council’s contact with Suez runs until 2021 with options to extend to 2025. The council’s evidence base has also identified that a significant quantity of Non-Hazardous residual waste treatment capacity is in the planning pipeline across the North East and may come on stream in future years depending on the waste management industries ability to deliver the proposed schemes. Nonetheless, the council will consider positively planning applications to provide additional treatment capacity. It is recognised that such facilities could assist in managing waste towards the top of the waste hierarchy and could contribute both to net and regional self-sufficiency. Such proposals will be looked upon favourably where the proposal is acceptable in all other respects taking into account all relevant Plan policies”

4.5.11 **Policy 61:** Location of New Waste Facilities states that:

“Proposals for new or enhanced waste management facilities will be permitted where they will assist the efficient collection, recycling and recovery of waste materials and they:

- a) are located outside and do not adversely impact upon the setting or integrity of internationally, nationally and locally designated sites and areas;*
- b) are located outside the Green Belt or are in locations which do not impact upon its openness;*
- c) minimise the effects of transporting waste including by locating as close to arisings as practical; and*
- d) can be satisfactorily located as part of an existing waste management facility, or where the waste management facility can be satisfactorily co-located with complimentary activities and potential users of recovered materials, recyclates and soils, energy and heat, where appropriate and feasible and where this represents a sustainable option; or*
- e) can be satisfactorily located on suitable land identified for employment use, or on suitable previously developed land in the larger towns and villages where the site can serve a local or larger catchment except where:*

- 1) *they are located on a strategic or specific use employment site. Such sites are generally not considered to be appropriate for new waste management facilities unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not cause unacceptable adverse impact on the strategic or specific use employment sites principal use;*
- 2) *they are small scale waste management facilities that genuinely require a rural or outdoor location and that do not locationally conflict with the provisions of criterion (a) or (b) and other relevant policies in the Plan. In such circumstances proposals will be permitted where they can be satisfactorily located either:*
 - i) *within either existing redundant rural agricultural or forestry buildings and their curtilages as part of farm diversification activities;*
 - ii) *within small scale new build adjacent to existing farm buildings or extensions to existing farm buildings as part of farm diversification proposals; or*
 - iii) *using existing areas of hardstanding for outdoor composting operations.*

All proposals for farm based waste management facilities will be required to demonstrate that the management of waste is ancillary and appropriate in scale to the existing primary use of the site and that the waste to be managed arises either on site or within the local area.

All proposals must demonstrate that there will be no unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, human health or the amenity of local communities”.

4.6 County Durham Plan Application Site Designations

4.6.1 An extract of the adopted proposals map is provided below:

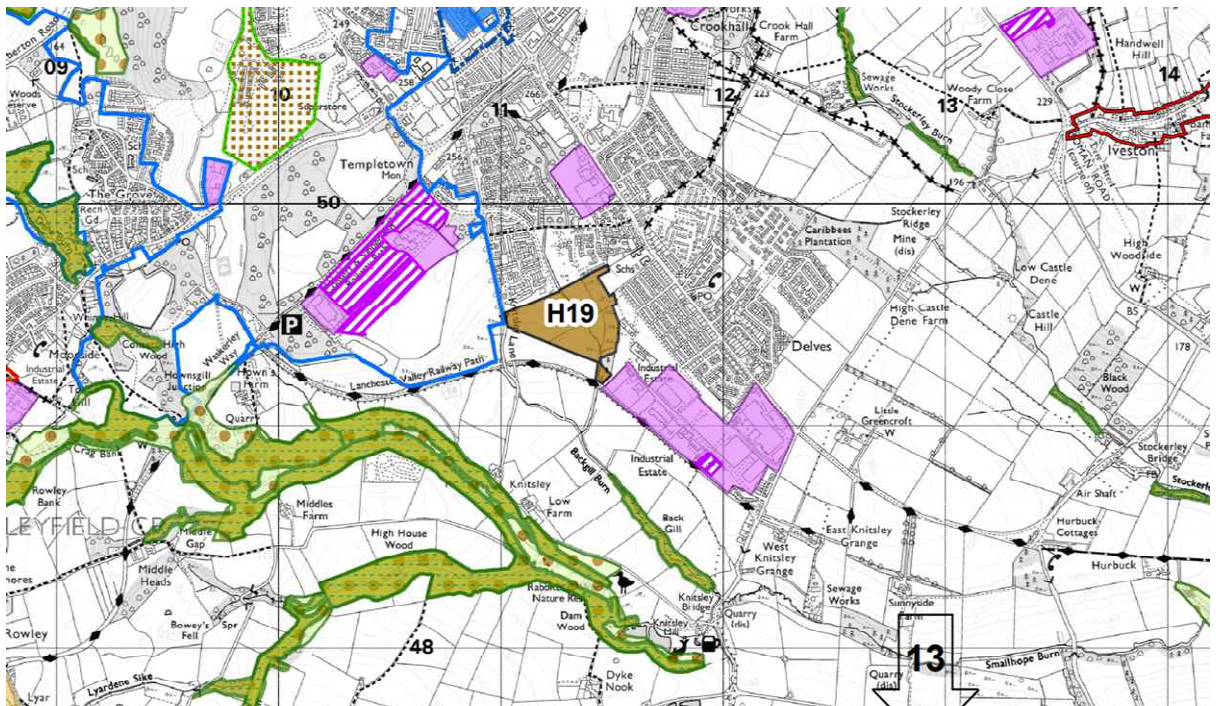


Figure 4.1: Proposals map

4.6.2 The site is allocated as follows:

- Within the Boundary for Project Genesis
- Employment Land (Allocation)
- Employment Land (Protected Site)

4.6.3 The policies of relevance are detailed below.

Policy 2: Employment Land

4.6.4 Policy 2 seeks to identify undeveloped land and plot for employment land and allocates them for B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage) unless specifically stated.

4.6.5 Project Genesis is referred to specifically and states that:

“In order to continue to progress the regeneration of Consett the council will support mixed use development on the Project Genesis site, as shown on the policies map, including a site of 10.8 hectares at Hownsgill Industrial Estate for general employment land, provided the development accords with relevant development plan policies”.

4.6.6 Supporting paragraph 4.28 continues to provide additional guidance associated with the project Genesis Trust stating that:

“4.38 The Project Genesis Trust was formed in 1994 as a registered charity in order to regenerate the site of the former Consett Steelworks and reinvest the funds from the development in the provision of environmental, recreational and social benefits to local people. Project Genesis prepared a concept masterplan for the site in 2012 to determine the developable zones and the types of uses the site can support. Approximately 40% of the developable land identified in the Masterplan has now either been completed or is under construction including a number of new commercial developments principally a supermarket, coffee shop, restaurant, a significant amount of new housing, including affordable housing and housing for older people, a new building for Derwentside College and a number of new industrial premises and offices for local and international businesses. In addition, 10.8 hectares of land is allocated at Hownsgill as part of the Masterplan to support further jobs growth and contribute to the ongoing regeneration of the town. The important role of Project Genesis in continuing to bring forward further development in the future is recognised, as are the benefits it has to the community of Consett both socially and economically and in terms of regenerating the built and natural environment”.

4.7 County Durham Plan: Other relevant policies

4.7.1 The following general planning policies will also be relevant to a development proposal on the application site:

- **Policy 21:** Delivering Sustainable Transport
- **Policy 25:** Developer Contributions
- **Policy 26:** Green Infrastructure
- **Policy 29:** Sustainable Design
- **Policy 31:** Amenity and Pollution
- **Policy 32:** Despoiled, Degraded, Derelict, Contaminated and Unstable Land
- **Policy 33:** Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
- **Policy 35:** Water Management
- **Policy 36:** Water Infrastructure
- **Policy 39:** Landscape
- **Policy 40:** Trees, Woodlands and Hedges
- **Policy 41:** Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- **Policy 42:** Internationally Designated Sites

- **Policy 43:** Protected Species and Nationally and Locally Protected Sites

4.7.2 These policies are outlined briefly below.

Policy 21

4.7.3 Policy 21: Delivering Sustainable Transport states that transport implications of development must be addressed as part of any planning application, where relevant this could include through Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans. All development shall deliver sustainable transport by:

- delivering, accommodating and facilitating investment in safe sustainable modes of transport in the following order of priority: those with mobility issues or disabilities, walking, cycling, bus and rail transport, car sharing and alternative fuel vehicles;*
- providing appropriate, well designed, permeable and direct routes for walking, cycling and bus access, so that new developments clearly link to existing services and facilities together with existing routes for the convenience of all users;*
- ensuring that any vehicular traffic generated by new development, following the implementation of sustainable transport measures, can be safely accommodated on the local and strategic highway network and does not cause an unacceptable increase in congestion or air pollution and that severe congestion can be overcome by appropriate transport improvements; and*
- ensuring the creation of new or improvements to existing routes and facilities do not cause unacceptable harm to the natural, built or historic environment.*

All development should have regard to the policies set out in the County Durham's Strategic Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan and, where possible, contribute to the development of a safe strategic cycling and walking network and in particular the routes set out in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. Any new routes should not have an unacceptable adverse impact on environmental or heritage assets.

Proposals for new development should comply with the council's Parking and Accessibility Standards and accommodate current and future demand for low emission vehicles”.

Policy 25

4.7.4 Policy 25: Developer Contributions states that new development will be approved where any mitigation necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms is secured through appropriate planning conditions or planning obligations. Such mitigation will relate to the

provision, and/or improvement, of physical, social and environmental infrastructure taking into account the nature of the proposal and identified local or strategic needs.

- 4.7.5 In respect of planning conditions, developers will be required to adhere to specific, fair and reasonably practicable planning conditions as a means of mitigating any adverse effects resulting from a development.
- 4.7.6 In respect of planning obligations, developers will be required to enter into Planning Obligations which are directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, in order to secure the mitigation that is necessary for a development to be acceptable in planning terms.
- 4.7.7 In order to ensure that the mitigation and any associated benefits of a scheme are secured and sustainable development achieved, review mechanisms and/or an overage payment clauses may be built into Planning Obligations to ensure that contributions can be periodically reviewed to reflect any changes in circumstances or market conditions seeking to ensure that where market conditions have improved, the scheme can deliver all requirements in full.

Policy 26

- 4.7.8 Policy 26: Green infrastructure states that development will be expected to maintain and protect, and where appropriate improve, the county's green infrastructure network. This will in turn help to protect and enhance the county's natural capital and ecosystem services. Development proposals should incorporate appropriate Green Infrastructure (GI) that is integrated into the wider network, which maintains and improves biodiversity, landscape character, increases opportunities for healthy living and contributes to healthy ecosystems and climate change objectives.
- 4.7.9 Development will be expected to maintain or improve the permeability of the built environment and access to the countryside for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. Proposals that would result in the loss of, or deterioration in the quality of, existing Public Rights of Way (PROWs) will not be permitted unless equivalent alternative provision of a suitable standard is made. Where diversions are required, new routes should be direct, convenient and attractive, and must not have a detrimental impact on environmental or heritage assets.

Policy 29

- 4.7.10 Policy 29: Sustainable Design is a very broad policy, with relevant parts to the planning application being:

“All development proposals will be required to achieve well designed buildings and places in accordance with local guidance documents, and:

a. contribute positively to an area’s character, identity, heritage significance, townscape and landscape features, helping to create and reinforce locally distinctive and sustainable communities;

b. create buildings and spaces that are adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions and include appropriate and proportionate measures to reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and ensure public safety and security;

c. minimise greenhouse gas emissions, by seeking to achieve zero carbon buildings and providing renewable and low carbon energy generation, and include connections to an existing or approved district energy scheme where viable opportunities exist. Where connection to the gas network is not viable development should utilise renewable and low carbon technologies as the main heating source;

d. minimise the use of non-renewable and unsustainable resources, including energy, water and materials, during both construction and use by encouraging waste reduction and appropriate reuse and recycling of materials, including appropriate storage space and segregation facilities for recyclable and non-recyclable waste and prioritising the use of local materials;

e. provide high standards of amenity and privacy, and minimise the impact of development upon the occupants of existing adjacent and nearby properties; and

f. contribute towards healthy neighbourhoods and consider the health impacts of development and the needs of existing and future users, including those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.

Landscape proposals should:

g. respond creatively to topography and to existing features of landscape or heritage interest and wildlife habitats;

h. respect - and where appropriate take opportunities to create - attractive views of and from the site;

i. reflect in the detailed design any features characteristic of the locality such as boundaries, paving materials and plant species;

j. create opportunities for wildlife including though the use of locally native species;

k. make appropriate provision for maintenance and long term management; and

l. in the case of edge of settlement development, provide for an appropriate level of structural landscaping to screen or assimilate the development into its surroundings and provide an attractive new settlement boundary.

(...)

All major new non-residential development will be required to achieve Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) minimum rating of 'very good' (or any future national equivalent)

(...)".

Policy 31

- 4.7.11 Policy 31: Amenity and Pollution states that development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no unacceptable impact, either individually or cumulatively, on health, living or working conditions or the natural environment and should be integrated effectively with any existing business and community facilities. The proposal will also need to demonstrate that future occupiers of the proposed development will have acceptable living and/or working conditions. Proposals which will have an unacceptable impact such as through overlooking, visual intrusion, visual dominance or loss of light, noise or privacy will not be permitted unless satisfactory mitigation measures can be demonstrated whilst ensuring that any existing business and/or community facilities do not have any unreasonable restrictions placed upon them as a result.
- 4.7.12 Development which has the potential to lead to or be affected by unacceptable levels of air quality; inappropriate odours; noise and vibration or other sources of pollution, either individually or cumulatively, will not be permitted including where any identified mitigation cannot reduce the impact on either the environment, amenity of people or human health to an acceptable level.
- 4.7.13 Development which does not minimise light pollution and demonstrate that the lighting proposed is the minimum necessary for functional or security purposes will not be permitted.
- 4.7.14 Sensitive development (such as housing, schools and hospitals) will not be permitted near to an existing or potentially polluting development including waste water and sewage treatment facilities. Potentially polluting development will not be permitted near to sensitive uses unless satisfactory mitigation can be demonstrated.

Policy 32

4.7.15 Policy 32: Despoiled, Degraded, Derelict, Contaminated and Unstable Land states that development will not be permitted unless the developer can demonstrate that:

“a. any existing despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land issues can be satisfactorily addressed by appropriate mitigation measures prior to the construction or occupation of the proposed development;

b. the site is suitable for the proposed use, and does not result in unacceptable risks which would adversely impact on the environment, human health and the amenity of local communities; and

c. all investigations and risk assessments have been undertaken by an appropriately qualified person”.

Policy 33

4.7.16 Policy 33: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy states that renewable and low carbon energy development in appropriate locations will be supported. In determining planning applications for such projects significant weight will be given to the achievement of wider social, environmental and economic benefits.

4.7.17 Proposals should include details of associated developments including access roads, transmission lines, pylons and other ancillary buildings. Where relevant, planning applications will also need to include a satisfactory scheme to restore the site to a quality of at least its original condition once operations have ceased. Where necessary, this will be secured by bond, legal agreement or condition.

Policy 35

4.7.18 Policy 35: Water Management states that, in respect of flood risk and sustainable drainage systems, all development proposals will be required to consider the effect of the proposed development on flood risk, both on-site and off-site, commensurate with the scale and impact of the development and taking into account the predicted impacts of climate change for the lifetime of the proposal. This includes completion of a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) where appropriate. Development will not be permitted unless:

“a. in the functional floodplain (flood zone 3b), as identified in the Strategic FRA, it is water compatible or essential infrastructure;

b. in flood zones 2 and 3a it passes the Sequential Test, and if necessary the Exceptions Test, as required by national policy; and

c. it can be proven through a FRA that the development, including the access, will be safe, without increasing or exacerbating flood risk elsewhere, any residual risk can be safely managed and where possible will reduce flood risk overall”.

Regarding Surface Water Flood Risk:

d. for major developments (130) the management of water must be an intrinsic part of the overall development;

e. on all new development there is no net increase in surface water runoff for the lifetime of the development. Where greenfield sites are to be developed, the runoff rates must not exceed and where possible should reduce the existing greenfield runoff rates. On previously developed land, as close as practicable to a greenfield rate must be achieved. In exceptional cases where the developer can satisfactorily demonstrate that greenfield run-off rates are unachievable, a betterment rate (which should be a minimum of 50% of the existing site run-off rate) will be agreed with the council. Surface water run-off must be managed at source wherever possible and disposed of in the following order:

- 1. To an infiltration or soak away system.*
- 2. To a watercourse open or closed.*
- 3. To a surface water sewer.*
- 4. To a combined sewer.*

Policy 36

4.7.19 Policy 36: Water Infrastructure provides for the following:

“Disposal of Foul Water – in the consideration of development proposals, the hierarchy of drainage options that must be considered and discounted for foul water are (in the following order):

- 1. Connection to the public sewer;*
- 2. Package sewage treatment plant (which can be offered to the Sewerage Undertaker for adoption);*
- 3. Septic Tank (which must drain into an appropriate soak away and not discharge directly into a watercourse).*

Applications involving the use of non-mains methods of drainage (including Septic Tanks/Cess Pits) will not be permitted in areas where public sewerage exists.

In respect of Sewage and Waste Water Infrastructure, proposals for new or extensions/improvements to existing water treatment, waste water, sludge or sewage treatment works will be permitted, unless the adverse impact of development outweighs the need for greater capacity and other benefits.

In respect of Flood Defence Infrastructure, proposals for additional flood defences will be permitted only where it can be demonstrated that the proposal represents the most sustainable response to a particular threat and demonstrates long term maintenance can be achieved.

Proposals which seek to mitigate flooding, create natural flood plains or seek to enhance and/or expand flood plains in appropriate locations will be permitted”.

Policy 39

- 4.7.20 Policy 39: Landscape states that proposals for new development will be permitted where they would not cause unacceptable harm to the character, quality or distinctiveness of the landscape, or to important features or views.
- 4.7.21 Proposals will be expected to incorporate appropriate measures to mitigate adverse landscape and visual effects.
- 4.7.22 Development affecting valued landscapes, defined as Areas of Higher Landscape Value and shown on Map H, will only be permitted where it conserves, and where appropriate enhances, the special qualities of the landscape, unless the benefits of development in that location clearly outweigh the harm.
- 4.7.23 Development proposals should have regard to the County Durham Landscape Character Assessment and County Durham Landscape Strategy and contribute, where possible, to the conservation or enhancement of the local landscape.

Policy 40

- 4.7.24 Policy 40: Trees, Woodlands and Hedges states that in respect of trees, proposals for new development will not be permitted that would result in the loss of, or damage to, trees of high landscape, amenity or biodiversity value unless the need for, and benefits of, the proposal clearly outweigh the harm. Where development would involve the loss of ancient or veteran trees it will be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

Policy 41

- 4.7.25 Policy 41: Biodiversity and Geodiversity states that Proposals for new development will not be permitted if significant harm to biodiversity or geodiversity resulting from the development cannot be avoided, or appropriately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for.
- 4.7.26 Proposals for new development will be expected to minimise impacts on biodiversity by retaining and enhancing existing biodiversity assets and features, and provide net gains for biodiversity including by establishing coherent ecological networks. Measures should be appropriate, consistent with the biodiversity of the site and contribute to the resilience and coherence of local ecological networks.
- 4.7.27 Proposals for new development will be expected to protect geological features and have regard to Geodiversity Action Plans, the Durham Geodiversity Audit and where appropriate promote public access, appreciation and interpretation of geodiversity.
- 4.7.28 Development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity or geodiversity will be permitted, where they accord with other relevant policies in the Plan.
- 4.7.29 Development proposals which are likely to result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitat(s) (such as peatlands or lowland fen) will not be permitted unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

Policy 42

- 4.7.30 Policy 42: Internationally Designated Sites states that development that has the potential to have an effect on an internationally designated site/sites, (including all development within 0.4 kilometres of the sites, as shown on Map B of the policies map document), either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will need to be screened in the first instance to determine whether significant effects on the site are likely and, if so, will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment.
- 4.7.31 Development will be refused where it cannot be ascertained, following Appropriate Assessment, that there would be no adverse effects on the integrity of the site, unless the proposal is able to pass the further statutory tests of 'no alternatives' and 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' as set out in Regulation 64 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. In these exceptional circumstances, where these tests are met, appropriate compensation will be required in accordance with Regulation 68.

4.7.32 Where development proposals would be likely to lead to an increase in recreational pressure upon internationally designated sites, a Habitats Regulations screening assessment and, where necessary, a full Appropriate Assessment will need to be undertaken to demonstrate that a proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the site. In determining whether a plan or project will have an adverse effect on the integrity of a site, the implementation of identified strategic measures to counteract effects, can be considered during the Appropriate Assessment.

4.7.33 Land identified and/or managed as part of any mitigation or compensation measures should be maintained in perpetuity. Development proposals which have an adverse impact on mitigation or compensation measures will not be allowed.

Policy 43

4.7.34 Policy 43: Protected Species and Nationally and Locally Protected Sites states that all development proposals in, or which are likely to adversely impact upon (either individually or in combination with other developments), any of the following national designations (where not a component of an internationally designated site):

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- National Nature Reserves

will only be permitted where the benefits of development in that location clearly outweigh the impacts on the interest features on the site and any wider impacts on the network of sites.

4.7.35 All development proposals in, or which are likely to adversely impact upon, any of the following local designations:

- Local Sites (Geology and Wildlife)
- Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)

4.7.36 will only be permitted when it can be demonstrated that the benefits of development in that location outweigh the impacts on the local nature conservation interest or scientific interest on the site and any wider impacts on the network of sites.

4.7.37 In all cases where development impacts adversely on a designated site, mitigation, or as a last resort compensation, must be provided and it must be demonstrated that the proposed mitigation or compensatory measures are appropriate to the designations assigned to the site and deliver clear net gains for the habitats and/or species assemblages the site is designated for.

4.7.38 In relation to protected species and their habitats, all development which, alone or in combination, has a likely adverse impact on the ability of species to survive, reproduce and maintain or expand their current distribution will not be permitted unless:

a. appropriate mitigation, or as a last resort compensation, can be provided, which maintains a viable population and where possible provides opportunities for the population to expand; and

b. where the species is a European protected species, the proposal also meets the licensing criteria (the 3 legal tests) of overriding public interest, no satisfactory alternative and favourable conservation status.

4.8 Project Genesis Masterplan

4.8.1 Project Genesis was formed after the closure of the Consett steel works, with the intention to comprehensively redevelop the redundant land. The development has invested millions into the local economy so far and is seeking to continue to do so through future projects.

4.8.2 The Project Genesis Trust has been active in the preparation of the County Durham Plan, to seek to ensure that future plans for the former Consett steel works site are incorporated into the adopted plan. It is the Trust's aim that it will be accepted that the masterplan complements existing council policy and taken into account as a material consideration when applications for the site and wider area are considered.

4.8.3 A comprehensive masterplan was submitted as part of the Trust's representations to the draft County Plan, covering the full Project Genesis site area. A Statement of Common Ground was subsequently agreed with Durham Council as part of the examination stages.

4.8.4 In his examination report of the Durham Plan of the 17th September 2020 stated that:

"272. Policy 2 refers to the Council supporting mixed use development on the Project Genesis site as shown on the Policies Map including 10.8 hectares at Hownsgill Industrial Estate for general employment uses. In order to ensure that the Plan is effective and justified, policy 2 needs to be modified to clarify that all such development will need to accord with relevant policies, and paragraph 4.37 needs to refer accurately to the masterplan and key developments that have taken place on the site of the former steelworks since the 1990s [MM21]. The Policies Map needs to be amended to show the area to which the policy applies for it to be effective".

4.8.5 This masterplan is now referenced within the adopted County Plan.

4.8.6 In respect of the application site, the agreed masterplan shows that office, general industrial, storage, distribution and energy plant are all intended appropriate uses for this part of the wider regeneration site. A snapshot of the masterplan is provided within Figure 4.2 below.



Figure 4.2: Masterplan

4.9 National legislation, Planning Policy and Strategies

4.9.1 The national legislation, planning policies and strategies relevant to the proposed development includes:

- Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011
- Climate Change Act 2008
- National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)
- National Planning Policy for Waste (2014)
- National Waste Management Plan for England (2014)
- Our Waste, our Resources: A Strategy for England (2018)
- The Renewable Energy Strategy (July 2009)
- Leading on Clean Growth – The Government’s response to the Committee on Climate Changes 2019 Progress Report to Parliament – Reducing the UK emissions (October 2019)

- Net Zero The UKs contribution to stopping global warming (May 2019)
- Reducing UK Emissions 2019 Progress Report to Parliament (July 2019).
- A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)
- Energy from Waste – A guide to the debate (DEFRA) February (2013)
- Resources, Recovery and the road to net zero, Policy Connect (July 2020)

4.9.2 Also of relevance is the following European legislation and policy documents.

- The Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)
- EU Action Plan for a Circular Economy
- The Landfill Directive
- Industrial Emissions Directive (IED)
- A European Strategy for Plastics in the Circular Economy (2018)

4.9.3 A full synopsis of these documents are provided in chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement.

4.10 Discussion

4.10.1 A detailed review of relevant adopted planning policy and other material considerations has informed the design of this proposal and are documented in Chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement. In summary the key considerations are:

- Waste Reduction and the Circular Economy;
- Sustainable Development;
- Climate Change and Low Carbon Energy;
- Local Community and the Sub Regional Economy;
- Site Location and Wider Waste Management Strategy;
- Sustainable Design and protection.

4.10.2 Chapter 5 outlines how the proposal has been designed to confirm with adopted policies, specifically addressing the considerations outlined above. Further evidence is provided in Chapter 6, which summarises the findings of key environmental assessments/reports which support this planning application.

5 COMPLIANCE WITH ADOPTED POLICY

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Consistent with the requirements of S70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act, as amended, and S38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004, this proposal is designed to fully comply adopted development plan.
- 5.1.2 The key policy documents against which this proposal will be judged are summarised in chapter 4 of this Planning Statement with a full synopsis of the policies provided in Chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement.
- 5.1.3 Matters which are considered to hold significant weight in the determination of this proposal are explored in the following section.

5.2 The Waste Reduction and the Circular Economy

- 5.2.1 In the 25 Year Plan, the Government has pledged to leave the environment in a better condition for the next generation. The government's strategy for achieving these goals (in relation to waste management) is set out in 'Our Waste, Our Resources, a Strategy for England 2008.
- 5.2.2 Within this strategy, the government seeks to progress towards a Circular Economy which will *'see us keeping resources in use as long as possible, so we extract the value from them. We could recover and regenerate products and materials whenever we can, giving them a new lease of life'*.
- 5.2.3 Paragraph 5.483 of the Local Plan also highlights the importance of the circular economy and provides a policy intention to support applications that successful contribute towards the circular economy.
- 5.2.4 This process of extracting the maximum value and use from all raw materials, products and waste, fostering energy savings is vital to the achievement of the Circular Economy illustrated in Figure 5.1.



Figure 5.1 The Circular Economy

5.2.5 The proposed development accords with these requirements by extracting value (in the form of heat and energy) from those products that cannot be recycled or reused.

5.2.6 This heat and electricity is then fed back to local businesses thereby completing the cycle and ensuring that the maximum value is taken from all resources used whilst reducing waste, costs and carbon emissions in accordance with the Local Plan.

5.3 Sustainable Development

5.3.1 European Policy sets out requirements that member states must comply with in terms of waste management. The following Directive is relevant to the proposed application:

- The Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)

5.3.2 National and Regional Planning Policy. Under European Law, all EU Member States are required to draw up a Waste Management Plan. For England, the following national documents are relevant to the proposed application:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Waste Management Plan for England (NWMPE) 2013
- National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW)
- Planning Practice Guidance
- Climate Change Act 2008

European Policy

5.3.3 The Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) marks a shift in how we see waste and identifies that it should be regarded as a valuable resource rather than an unwanted burden. The Directive places emphasis on preventing waste from arising and preparing waste for reuse. The Directive also sets ambitious recycling goals. Figure 16 illustrates the waste hierarchy.



Figure 5.2: Waste Hierarchy

5.3.4 Article 16 requires member states to establish an integrated and adequate network for the disposal of wastes. This should include all necessary supporting waste management facilities such as waste transfer stations and processing facilities.

5.3.5 Article 28 requires all EU Member States to draw up a waste management plan. This should cover the entire geographical territory of the Member State, and be in line with the provisions of:

- Article 1 WFD (protection of environment and human health by preventing or reducing the adverse impacts of the generation and management of waste and by reducing overall impacts of resource use and improving the efficiency of such use);
- Article 4 WFD (the waste management hierarchy);
- Article 13 WFD (protection of human health and environment); and
- Article 16 WFD (principles of self-sufficiency and proximity).

5.3.6 The Proposed Development is in line with this Directive as it would contribute to reducing the amount of waste going to landfill and would contribute to the reuse of waste to provide a

valuable resource. The Proposed development has been assessed against both national and local policy, and as demonstrated below, is consistent with these policies.

National Planning Policy

- 5.3.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the National Planning Policy for England and introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development must take into account the environmental, economic, and social aspects of development.
- 5.3.8 The Proposed Development would provide a number of environmental, economic and social benefits:
- 5.3.9 **Environmental** - The facility would process RDF materials to generate heat and power - contributing power to the grid and the supply of heat to local The facility will also use up to 60,000 tonnes per annum of non-hazardous residual waste materials, and in doing so, divert this away from landfill.
- 5.3.10 **Economic** - The relatively high cost of waste disposal in the UK has made export an increasingly attractive option. Even with the additional costs of processing, the export of refuse derived fuel is price-competitive and less expensive than landfilling. With very few Energy Recovery Facilities currently in the UK, the proposed development will enable maximum value to be extracted from the waste it processes - not only reducing the volume of waste going to landfill, but also reducing the need for RDF export, whilst at the same time contributing power to the UK National Grid.
- 5.3.11 **Social** – With an increasing demand for energy recovery facilities in the UK, the social benefits of enabling the growth of the facilities come in the form of new jobs and environmental enterprise initiatives.
- 5.3.12 The location of the proposed development is within an area where this form of development has been incorporated into the masterplan from an early stage.
- 5.3.13 Chapter 12 of the NPPF considers the requirement for good design. The design of the facility is based on the form-follows-function principle, by which the shape and layout of the facility supports its intended function. The development is industrial in nature, and within a location identified as suitable for this type of development. The choice of colour has been selected to reflect other development in the area. The height of structures has been minimised to

accommodate volume required only. The height of the stack has been informed and is driven by air quality considerations and Environment Agency requirements.

- 5.3.14 Chapters 13-16 of the NPPF considers environmental aspects of development, including protecting Green Belt land, meeting the challenges of climate change and flooding; conserving and enhancing the natural environment; and conserving and enhancing the historic environment. It outlines how the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change will be managed and sets out that the reuse of existing resources should be encouraged, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
- 5.3.15 Technical assessments have been undertaken to assess environmental impacts associated with the proposed development and these are summarised within Chapter 6 of this Planning Statement. These demonstrate that the development will not result in significant environmental impacts which cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level.

National Policy for Waste

- 5.3.16 The Waste Management Plan for England (WMPE) sets out the Government's ambitions to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. This includes ensuring the delivery of sustainable development and resource efficiency; and allowing the provision of modern infrastructure. The guidance is mainly provided for Local Authorities when allocating sites for waste management and considering relevant planning applications.
- 5.3.17 The policy document identifies the importance of identifying suitable sites and areas for waste management facilities. This requires local authorities to identify suitable sites within their Local Plan and sets out guidance which Local Authorities should follow when identifying sites.
- 5.3.18 The proposed development is located on land within the Hownsgill Industrial Estate which has been identified as an area for commercial development under a masterplan referenced in the Adopted Local Plan, which seeks to create an energy surplus at the site as an attractor and benefit to new development. As such, the choice of site location is appropriate for the Proposed Development.
- 5.3.19 The WMPE also sets out that the Government supports efficient energy recovery from residual waste to deliver environmental benefits, reduce carbon impact and provide economic opportunities.

5.3.20 The proposals in this application are considered to be consistent with the policies and strategies outlined in the WMPE. The feedstock source proposed is RDF, which is produced from waste once any recyclates have been removed. This application supports efficient energy recovery from waste and would utilise some of the RDF which is currently exported from the UK. There is clear support for this type of development as the Government supports energy recovery from residual waste.

5.3.21 The National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW), addressed below, provides policy to assist waste planning authorities in the determination of planning applications. It sets out that proposals for waste management facilities should demonstrate that they do not 'cut across' and undermine local plan objectives with regard to the movement of waste up the waste hierarchy.

5.3.22 The Proposed Development will enable the facility to provide waste treatment technologies in the local area, to manage local RDF that would otherwise go to landfill or be exported abroad. It will generate heat and power to be used in a number of ways, including contributing power to the grid and the supply of heat to local users. The proposed facility therefore makes an important local contribution to the Government's WMPE policy to recover energy from residual waste treatment.

Planning Practice guidance – Waste

5.3.23 The guidance sets out that it is important to consider the cumulative effect of waste disposal facilities on a community's wellbeing, and that impacts on environmental quality, social cohesion and inclusion and economic potential may all be relevant. Other points of particular relevance to this planning application are as follows:

5.3.24 The siting of waste management facilities will be driven by a number of issues including:

- The likely distribution of waste arisings;
- The likely catchment and necessary flows of waste for the type of facility being proposed;
- Physical and environmental constraints limiting the likely opportunities for accommodating suitable waste management facilities;
- Suitability of local transport infrastructure and availability of sustainable transport methods.

- 5.3.25 Driving waste up the Waste Hierarchy is an integral part of the National waste management plan for England and national planning policy for waste. National waste planning policy is capable of being a material consideration in decisions on planning applications for waste management facilities. The Proposed Development will utilise RDF derived from materials that would otherwise have been sent to landfill or exported and put it to good use as a sustainable fuel.
- 5.3.26 The principles of self-sufficiency and proximity are set out in Article 16 of the Waste Framework Directive. The proposed development would take in materials produced in the local area.

National Planning Policy for Waste

- 5.3.27 The National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) was published in October 2014. The NPPW is read in conjunction with the NPPF and national waste management plan objectives.
- 5.3.28 The NPPW provides national policy on the development of Local Plans which identify the need for waste management facilities, identify suitable sites and areas, and on determining planning applications.
- 5.3.29 The NPPW paragraph 7 sets out policy to assist waste planning authorities in the determination of planning applications. There are six key parts to the policy:
- 5.3.30 First, applicants only need to demonstrate market need for a proposed facility if it conflicts with the Local Plan of the area. In such a case, the waste planning authority should consider the extent to which operational facilities (i.e. not merely 'planned') can satisfy any identified need. In any event, the proposed Energy facility does not conflict the Durham County Council Waste Strategy and Waste Local Plan, as addressed below.
- 5.3.31 Second, proposals for waste management facilities should demonstrate that they do not 'cut across' and undermine local plan objectives with regard to the movement of waste up the waste hierarchy. The proposed Energy facility does not cut across or undermine the objectives of Durham County waste planning policies, in that it will provide waste treatment technologies in the local area to manage local waste that currently has no identified local treatment outlet.
- 5.3.32 The technology proposed is capable of being supported by Government as the best available technologies for the treatment of the materials concerned – the applicants are aiming to demonstrate this going forward and elements which would support are contained with the proposals.

5.3.33 The proposed facility will generate export electrical power to the national grid or local off-takers. The facility will be CHP enabled, with a clear plan in place to connect to local heat users subject to agreement with them. The proposed Energy facility will therefore make an important local contribution to the Government's waste management plan policy to recover energy from residual waste treatment.

5.3.34 Third, waste planning authorities are asked to consider the likely impact on the local environment and on amenity against the criteria set out in Appendix B of the National Planning Policy for Waste:

a. Protection of water quality and resources and flood risk management – the planning application and Environmental Statement for the proposed energy facility have demonstrated the acceptability of the proposal in flood risk and surface water/foul water drainage terms. A Preliminary Risk Assessment and full site investigations have been undertaken which are assessed within the ES.

b. Land stability - The site of the proposed facility is a restored industrial site. A preliminary risk assessment, coal mining risk assessment and site investigations have been undertaken and are review in the ES. These raise no concerns regarding the proposed development.

c. Landscape and visual impacts – Considerations include the potential for design-led solutions to produce acceptable development which respects landscape character, and the need to protect landscapes or designated areas of national importance, or any localised height restrictions. The LVIA states that it is considered that the site has capacity to accommodate the proposed development without significant residual, adverse effects on the landscape and visual amenity of the area.

d. Nature Conservation – There are no sites of international importance for nature conservation, SSSI or national nature reserves within proximity of the proposed facility. The ecological appraisal submitted with the application has considered more distant sensitive sites and has considered emissions impacts from the proposed facility. Air Quality emissions impacts to these sites have been assessed and have been found to be negligible. The application submission has demonstrated that a net ecological gain can be achieved from the development.

e. Conserving the Historic Environment – The Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment has demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts arising from the development of the proposed Energy facility, specifically on listed buildings including the Hownsgill Viaduct.

f. Traffic and Access – The Transport Statement has demonstrated that the traffic generation associated with the proposed facility is below thresholds for the consideration of a potentially severe traffic impact i.e. net traffic flows on the wider network should not be impacted as a result of the proposed development and so the impacts are regarded as ‘not severe’ in NPPF terms on capacity on existing roads, roundabouts and junctions, at all times of the day.

g. Air emissions, including dust – An Air Quality Assessment is submitted with the planning application. This demonstrates that impacts from emissions during the operational phase of the proposed development are negligible at all receptors considered. Furthermore, the transportation and air quality assessments conclude that vehicle emissions will have a negligible effect during both construction and operation. Appropriate mitigation against dust impacts have been recommended during the construction phase. It is considered that the proposed energy facility will not result in a significant effect which compromises the designation features of ecological sites.

h. Odours – The proposed facility will be carefully managed to avoid the creation of odours. An odour risk assessment has been submitted with the application to demonstrate the measures incorporated into the proposed development and operations, to identify risks and the effectiveness of measures to address these. This work has concluded that potential odour impacts associated with waste handling at the development are predicted to be negligible at all receptors.

i. Vermin and birds – This is not relevant to the proposed facility, for two reasons. All waste will be brought to the site in covered or sealed vehicles and there will be no storage of waste at the site either outdoors. Materials will be unloaded into the fuel store and normally used immediately.

j. Noise, light and vibration – A noise and vibration assessment has been submitted in support of the proposed facility. The result of the assessment is that the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to any complaints about noise impacts. A lighting scheme with an assessment of impacts has been submitted with the planning application and this demonstrates that the proposed facility.

k. Litter – the nature of the materials being imported to the site and methods outlined (sealed or covered HGVs), combined with the limited storage of waste at the site inside a building should mean that litter should not be a problem.

I. Potential land use conflict – The proposed facility is located on an allocated employment site within an area promoted (through the masterplan) for the development of energy-related facilities.

5.3.35 Fourth, Waste Planning Authorities should ensure that waste management facilities are well-designed so that they contribute to the character and quality of the area in which they are located. The proposed design of the building, which would accommodate waste fuel and the energy plants, reflects the small-scale nature of the technology adopted for the development. It is simple and effective technology, designed to support residual waste management at smaller scale. As such, statement buildings are not likely to be relevant to this type of facility and the form of development is designed to be efficient and viable for the scale of activity proposed, which is a smaller, modular, residual role for energy from waste processing. That said the proposed design is intended to make a contribution to the Hownsgill Estate. Landscape mitigation and boundary treatment is incorporated, building treatment and stack design and colour are intended to complement existing development and reduce potential visual impacts.

5.3.36 Fifth, Waste Planning Authorities should concern themselves with the planning aspects of proposals and should not with the control of processes which are a matter for pollution control authorities. Waste Planning Authorities should work on the assumption that the relevant pollution control regime will be properly applied and enforced.

5.3.37 Sixth, the NPPW seeks to ensure that landfill sites are restored to beneficial after uses. This policy is not relevant to the proposed development.

Local Policy

5.3.38 The Sustainable Development Statement contained within the local plan recognises the importance of securing balanced communities, ensuring that the needs of communities are met.

5.3.39 Policy 60 of the adopted County Local Plan requires that proposals for waste management facilities will be determined having regard to the overall aim of sustainable development which includes self-sufficiency, the proximity principle and waste hierarchy.

5.3.40 Policy 47 also requires that energy is recovered from proposed incinerating activities.

5.3.41 The proposed development is assessed against these principles below.

- **Self Sufficiency:** The proposed development seeks manage local business waste to produce a reliable energy and heat supply (back to those same businesses). It is therefore concluded that the proposed development accords with the principles of self-sufficiency.
- **The Proximity Principle:** The proposed development seeks to manage waste generated in the local area, thereby managing waste as close as practicable to the generation of the material.
- **Waste Hierarchy:** This is a priority order via which waste should be managed requiring that the generation of waste is prevented, prepared for reuse or recycled. For the remaining waste the priority is for recovery over landfill, the proposed development is seeking to do this.

In the 'model of waste arisings and waste management capacity in the north east of England' published in 2012 (and used as an evidence base for the Durham Local Plan) it is recognised that the region has a high dependency on landfill, commenting that all of the available energy recovery capacity is targeted at local authority collected waste. The proposed development seeks to move the management of residual waste generated by local businesses from final disposal up the waste hierarchy to recover energy from it thereby according to the core principles of the waste hierarchy.

It should be highlighted that all recyclable material will be removed from this waste stream prior to its delivery to the plant and as such the facility will not impact on current or future recycling rates.

- **Energy Recovery:** The proposed development seeks to provide energy and heat to the surrounding area.

5.3.42 Policies 47 and 60 of the County Local Plan require that proposals for the provision of new waste management facilities (in particular proposals that manage residual waste) can demonstrate that they assist in meeting identified need that cannot be met by existing operational facilities within County Durham or the North East.

5.3.43 The most recent waste arisings data for the County is provided within the Durham County Plan.

5.3.44 Table 11 of the Local Plan sets out the baseline arisings by waste type, confirming that in 2016 approximately 334,600 tonnes of residual waste was produced per annum within the County.

5.3.45 Table 12 confirmed that the current available capacity for non-hazardous residual waste disposal/treatment (excluding landfill) was 12,700 tpa.

5.3.46 Table 13 of the Local Plan sets out the future waste arisings and waste management capacity and is replicated in figure 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Future Projected Growth in Arisings by Waste Stream

Waste Type	Quantity (tonnes per annum x 1,000)		
	2016	2025	2035
Non-Hazardous waste - recycle	246.9	265.2	267.1
Non-Hazardous waste - organic waste	62.7	66.0	62.7
Non-Hazardous waste - residual waste	334.6	326.3	333.9
Construction and Demolition (Inert)	623.3	623.3	623.3
Hazardous waste	43.8	43.7	43.0

5.3.47 Whilst table 14 of the Local Plan seeks to identify forecast capacity by site type to 2035 and is replicated in figure 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: Surplus Capacity (Including Any Capacity Gap) by Site Type (to 2035)

Facility Type	Surplus Capacity (tonnes per annum x 1,000 unless stated otherwise)
Mixed Materials Recovery Facility	118.8
Organic Recycling Capacity	162.2
Non-Hazardous Transfer	817.3
Anaerobic Digestion	122.6
Clinical Waste Transfer	28.6
Hazardous Waste Transfer	-11.2

Inert Waste Transfer	78.9
Non-Hazardous Residual Waste Treatment/Disposal	-67 to -145
Inert Landfill and Non-Hazardous Landfill	-3,682.8 (m ³ x 1,000)
Vehicle Depollution Facility	136

5.3.48 The supporting text states that the table indicates that for most waste facility types there is no significant need to identify new waste management sites in the plan as there is already significant capacity existing. However, table 6.3 identifies a shortfall for non-hazardous residual waste treatment/disposal.

5.3.49 Paragraph 5.586 of the Local Plan provides additional background to this deficit stating that:

*“In respect of the forecast Non-Hazardous residual waste treatment/disposal capacity gap it is understood that the identified capacity gap reflects the pattern of final management for LACW, whereby waste which cannot be composted or recycled is managed by incineration at the Suez Energy from Waste (EfW) plant at Haverton Hill in the Tees Valley. The council’s contract with Suez runs until 2021 with options to extend to 2025. The council’s evidence base has also identified that a significant quantity of Non-Hazardous residual waste treatment capacity is in the planning pipeline across the North East and may come on stream in future years depending on the waste management industries ability to deliver the proposed schemes. **Nonetheless, the council will consider positively planning applications to provide additional treatment capacity. It is recognised that such facilities could assist in managing waste towards the top of the waste hierarchy and could contribute both to net and regional self-sufficiency. Such proposals will be looked upon favourably where the proposal is acceptable in all other respects taking into account all relevant Plan policies”** (authors highlight).*

5.3.50 The proposed development seeks to provide waste management for commercial and industrial wastes which is separate from the LACW stream and as such may not be accounted for within forthcoming contracts. The operator is already in discussions with potential suppliers and is confident that there is a market need for a scheme in this location.

5.3.51 The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with policies 47 and 60 of the Local Plan.

5.4 Climate Change and Low Carbon Energy

5.4.1 The movement away from traditional fossil fuel energy and movement towards low carbon energy is considered to be a major part of tackling climate change (please refer to Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement).

5.4.2 There is a long-standing debate as to how/if energy from waste material constitutes a renewable and low carbon energy.

5.4.3 In 2013 (updated in 2014) DEFRA's published its on guide on energy from waste (Energy from Waste – A Guide to the debate). The document recognises that Energy from waste is not just being about waste management but also as an energy source, highlighting that:

- *The energy it produces is a valuable domestic energy source contributing to energy security;*
- *As a partially renewable energy source it can also contribute to our renewable energy targets which are aimed at decarbonising energy generation.*
- *It has the added advantage that it is non-intermittent, so it can complement other renewable energy sources such as wind or solar.*

5.4.4 This is reiterated in National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) which states that

“Energy from Waste (EfW) – the principal purpose of the combustion of waste, or similar processes (for example pyrolysis or gasification) is to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill in accordance with the Waste Hierarchy and to recover energy from that waste as electricity or heat. Only waste that cannot be re-used or recycled with less environmental impact and would otherwise go to landfill should be used for energy recovery. The energy produced from the biomass fraction of waste is renewable and is in some circumstances eligible for Renewables Obligation Certificates, although the arrangements vary from plant to plant”.

5.4.5 It is therefore clear that energy released from the combustion of residual waste materials can be considered to partially contribute towards renewable energy requirements. In addition to this partial contribution towards renewable energy targets, the proposed development will offset the energy produced by traditional fossil fuels.

5.4.6 Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement also demonstrates that the proposed development offers a significant carbon saving against the existing situation. Helping the region progress towards a low carbon future.

- 5.4.7 In light of this, the proposed Energy Centre is considered to contribute towards legally binding targets of at least 80% greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (Climate Change Act 2008) and the movement towards a target of net-zero emissions from Green Houses Gas by 2050 (Leading on Clean Growth 2019).
- 5.4.8 In addition to these legally binding targets the production of renewable and low carbon energy is also consistent with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance for Waste which require that developments should support the transition to a low carbon future.
- 5.4.9 The transition to a local carbon future through the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy is supported by objective 16 and policy 33 of the Local Plan which supports the development of renewable energy sources provided that there is no demonstrable harm.
- 5.4.10 It is therefore considered that the proposed development contributes towards objectives of reducing global impacts on Climate Change supported by international, national and local level governance.
- 5.4.11 Paragraph 5.340 of the Local Plan and the associated Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) requires that the County mitigate the impact of, and adapt to, climate change.
- 5.4.12 As demonstrated above, the proposed development seeks to provide renewable energy and heat in line with these requirements. The Environmental Statement submitted alongside this planning application has assessed the impacts of the proposed development, including the adaptation to climate change.

5.5 Local Community and the Economy

- 5.5.1 The Project Genesis Trust was formed in 1994 as a registered charity in order to regenerate the site of the former Consett Steelworks and reinvest the finds from the development in the provision of environmental, recreational and social benefits to local people.
- 5.5.2 Project Genesis has prepared a concept masterplan to determine the developable zones and types of uses that the site can support. This masterplan now forms part of the Local Plan and approximately 40% of the developable land has now either been completed or is under construction. These developments have included a supermarket, coffee shop, restaurant, a significant amount of new housing, including affordable housing and housing for older people, and a new building for Derwentside College and a number of new industrial premises and offices for local and international businesses.

- 5.5.3 The Local Plan states that *“The important role of Project Genesis in continuing to bring forward further development in the future is recognised, as are the benefits it has to the community of Consett both socially and economically and in terms of regenerating the built and natural environment”*.
- 5.5.4 The proposed development fits into the wider regeneration of the area, not only offering a sustainable solution to waste generated by businesses in the local area but also providing low carbon heat and electric to support wider development in the area.
- 5.5.5 At the current time, the applicant is investigating the potential to provide heat and electricity to the local leisure centre or hospital, significantly benefits these high demand users.
- 5.5.6 The additional financial support that the proposed development will provide will allow the consented solar park to be implemented (offering both a baseload and peaking energy provision for the area).
- 5.5.7 The proposed development will also provide up to 60 construction jobs and 9 operational staff which will be advertised in the local area. In addition, the proposed development will also provide indirect employment benefits including the provision of local services, transport operators etc.
- 5.5.8 This assessment demonstrates that the proposed development provides significant benefits to the local community not only through the sustainable management of waste and provision of heat and energy, but also in the contribution to the local and sub regional economy in accordance with Policy 2 and Objective one of the Local Plan.

5.6 Site Location and Wider Waste Management Strategy

- 5.6.1 Paragraph 3 of the National Planning Policy for Waste (2014) requires local authorities to *‘prepare Local Plans which identify sufficient opportunities to meet the identified needs of their area for the management of waste streams’*.
- 5.6.2 This process is undertaken through the allocation of waste sites within the development plan (which includes an extensive site search process finally agreed by the inspector at inquiry). Additional location policies are also provided which guide the location of such facilities towards industrial and employment land.
- 5.6.3 The County Durham Local Plan, policy 61 sets out the locational requirements for waste management uses. These requirements (as replicated in chapter 4 of this planning statement) can be summarised under the following headings:

- Proposals shall not be located within environmental/greenbelt/landscape designated areas.
- Proposals should minimise transportation of waste and protect the local highway network.
- Proposals should be located on existing waste management sites, with complementary activities and users of outputs.
- Proposals should be located on employment/industrial land, previously developed land but not on strategic or specific user employment sites.
- Proposals should not have an unacceptable impact on the environment and health.
- Proposals should be able to demonstrate that they generate useable electricity and heat.

5.6.4 The proposed development site can be regarded as fulfilling all of these criteria as demonstrated below:

Proposals should not be located within environmental/landscape designated areas

5.6.5 The proposed development site is not located within or adjacent to an environmental, green belt or landscape designation.

Proposals should minimise the transportation of waste and protect the local highway network

5.6.6 The proposed development will generate a total of 22HGV movements and a maximum of 18 car movements. On average, there would be less than two HGV movements and no car movements (due to staggered shift patterns) during the peak hour period.

5.6.7 The industrial estate has been designed to ensure the free flow and appropriate access for the proposed development.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network.

Proposals should be located on existing waste management sites, with complementary activities and users of outputs.

5.6.8 The proposed development is not located on an existing waste management site, however it is located adjacent to the users of the heat and electricity and therefore accords with this policy requirement.

5.6.9 The users of the industrial estate are similar in nature to the proposed use and their operations would not be adversely affected by such a use of the site.

Proposals should be located on employment/industrial land, previously developed land but not on strategic or specific user employment sites.

5.6.10 The proposed development site is located on land allocated for employment and industrial development under policy 2 of the Durham County Plan.

5.6.11 The site (and its immediate area) is specifically referenced as Project Genesis, stating that:

“In order to continue to progress the regeneration of Consett the council will support a mixed use development on the Project Genesis Site, as shown on the policies map, including a site of 10.8 hectares at Hownsgill Industrial Estate for general employment land, provided the development accords with relevant development plan policies”.

5.6.12 The supporting paragraph 4.28 continues to provide additional guidance associated with the project Genesis Trust stating that:

“4.38 The Project Genesis Trust was formed in 1994 as a registered charity in order to regenerate the site of the former Consett Steelworks and reinvest the funds from the development in the provision of environmental, recreational and social benefits to local people. Project Genesis prepared a concept masterplan for the site in 2012 to determine the developable zones and the types of uses the site can support. Approximately 40% of the developable land identified in the Masterplan has now either been completed or is under construction including a number of new commercial developments principally a supermarket, coffee shop, restaurant, a significant amount of new housing, including affordable housing and housing for older people, a new building for Derwentside College and a number of new industrial premises and offices for local and international businesses. In addition, 10.8 hectares of land is allocated at Hownsgill as part of the Masterplan to support further jobs growth and contribute to the ongoing regeneration of the town. The important role of Project Genesis in continuing to bring forward further development in the future is recognised, as are the benefits it has to the community of Consett both socially and economically and in terms of regenerating the built and natural environment”.

5.6.13 These allocations demonstrate the progression of thinking towards the development of the area which has been confirmed during the recent examination of the Local Plan.

5.6.14 The proposed development is located within an allocated industrial estate and is therefore in accordance with national and local policies for the location of waste management uses.

5.6.15 The proposed development is also part of a wider masterplan for the area and as such is fully compliant with the locational policies for this use.

Proposals should not have an unacceptable impact on the environment or health

5.6.16 This Environmental Statement and associated planning submission demonstrate that the proposed development will not have an unacceptable impact on the environment or local users. This is discussed in greater detail within chapter 6 of this planning statement.

Proposals should be able to demonstrate that they generate useable electricity and heat

5.6.17 The proposed development will generate heat and electricity which will be utilised by the local area.

5.7 Design and Protection

5.7.1 The proposed development is subject to a number of design and protection policies from the adopted Local Plan.

5.7.2 Policy 29 requires that all proposals achieve well designed buildings and places and:

- **contribute positively to an area's character, identity, heritage significance, townscape and landscape features:** The proposed development is industrial in nature and its presence in an established and allocated industrial area is entirely appropriate with the existing character and identity of the area.
- **create buildings and spaces that are adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions and include appropriate and proportionate measures to reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and ensure public safety and security;** The proposed development has been designed to be fit for purpose and to ensure that it is resilient to climate change.
- **minimise greenhouse gas emissions, by seeking to achieve zero carbon buildings and providing renewable and low carbon energy generation, and include connections to an existing or approved district energy scheme where viable opportunities exist. Where connection to the gas network is not viable development should utilise renewable and low carbon technologies as the main heating source;** The proposed develop seeks to provide a partial renewable and low carbon energy. The presence of the facility will allow the wider industrial estate to utilise renewable energy and heat in line with the requirements of this policy.

- **minimise the use of non-renewable and unsustainable resources, including energy, water and materials, during both construction and use by encouraging waste reduction and appropriate reuse and recycling of materials, including appropriate storage space and segregation facilities for recyclable and non-recyclable waste and prioritising the use of local materials;** The proposed facility seeks to move waste management up the waste hierarchy, reducing the regions reliance on landfill.

The management of the residual waste stream will not have an adverse impact on wider recycling, only providing the mechanism to sustainably manage waste that cannot be recycled.

- **provide high standards of amenity and privacy, and minimise the impact of development upon the occupants of existing adjacent and nearby properties;** The Environmental Statement submitted with the planning application has assessed the proposed development impact on amenity and has concluded that it will not have a detrimental effect on local occupants.
- **contribute towards healthy neighbourhoods and consider the health impacts of development and the needs of existing and future users, including those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.** The Environmental Statement includes a Human Health Impact Assessment which has concluded that the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on Human Health.

Landscape proposals should:

- **respond creatively to topography and to existing features of landscape or heritage interest and wildlife habitats;**
- **respect - and where appropriate take opportunities to create - attractive views of and from the site;**
- **reflect in the detailed design any features characteristic of the locality such as boundaries, paving materials and plant species;**
- **create opportunities for wildlife including though the use of locally native species;**
- **make appropriate provision for maintenance and long term management;**
- **in the case of edge of settlement development, provide for an appropriate level of structural landscaping to screen or assimilate the development into its surroundings and provide an attractive new settlement boundary.**

The proposed development has sought to limit the impacts of the proposed development on the landscape with good design (as demonstrated within chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement) and the introduction of cladding to break up the appearance of the larger buildings.

The proposal has also sought to add landscaping to provide wildlife corridors linking the site with the wider area.

A full landscape and visual impact assessment is provided within the Environmental Statement.

- 5.7.3 The policy continues to require major new non-residential development will be required to achieved Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment method (BREEAM) minimum rating of 'very good' (or any future national equivalent). The proposed development is an energy facility and therefore produces energy for its own operation and that of surrounding users. It is therefore considered that the proposal offers a beneficial impact on local energy efficiency.
- 5.7.4 Supporting text paragraphs 5.292 to 5.296 (Energy and Resources) requires that developments aim to achieve zero carbon status. Renewable energy technologies are encouraged on site and where opportunities for viable installations have been identified, it is expected that such installations would go forward as part of the development. The proposed development aims to provides onsite partially renewable energy to the wider industrial estate and is therefore a central component to achieving this goal within Hownsgill.
- 5.7.5 Table 17 of the Local Plan sets out the Minerals and Waste Infrastructure Assessments for minerals and/or waste infrastructure. This Planning Statement and associated reports and Environmental Statement includes all relevant required details.
- 5.7.6 Table 5.3 below summarises the remaining environmental protection policies which have been considered as part of this planning application. A full assessment of the proposals against these requirements is provided within the supporting documents to this planning statement and the associated Environmental Statement.

Table 5.3: Planning Policy Compliance

Local Plan Policy	Topic	Comment
P39	Protection of landscape assets	Please refer to paragraphs concerning landscape above.
P41/43	Nature Conservation	<p>The proposed development has introduced landscaping which can also be used as wildlife corridors.</p> <p>The supporting PEA and air quality chapter contained within the Environmental Statement has assessed the impacts of the proposed development on nature conservation and designations.</p>
P44	Protection of heritage assets	<p>There are no heritage assets adjacent to the proposed development site. The heritage assessment submitted alongside the planning application has concluded that the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on local heritage designations.</p>
P35	Flood Risk	<p>The proposed development is not in an environment agency flood zone. The Flood Risk Assessment submitted as part of the Environmental Statement has concluded that the proposed development is not at risk of flooding and does not increase the risk of flooding outside the site.</p> <p>The access road will be the subject of an emergency flood evacuation plan.</p>
P21	Transportation	<p>The proposed development has limited vehicle movements and is located on an industrial estate which has the capacity to accommodate trips from the Energy Facility.</p>
P32	Despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land	<p>The proposed development is part of a wider reclamation of the Consett Steel works and has undergone previous remediation.</p> <p>A detailed assessment is provided within Environmental Statement chapter 8.</p>
P31	Control of development causing pollution	<p>The Environmental Statement has assessed the impacts of the proposed development and has concluded that the facility will not pollute the site or surrounding area.</p> <p>The development will be controlled through both the planning permission and environmental permit to ensure the safe operation of the plant and protection of the local area.</p>
P26	Green infrastructure – maintain, protect and improve.	<p>The proposed development seeks to introduce a landscape buffer and wildlife corridor into the site.</p> <p>The facility will be seen from the C2C cycle way in the context of the wider industrial estate but does not impact directly upon it.</p>
P36	Water Infrastructure	<p>The drainage strategy contained within the Environmental Statement seeks to ensure that all necessary water infrastructure is in place at the proposed development.</p>

5.7.7 Saved Policy W35 of the Waste Local Plan provides policy guidance relating to cumulative impacts and states that permission will not be granted where cumulative impact exceeds that which would be acceptable if produced from a single site. The Environmental Statement submitted alongside the planning submission has assessed the cumulative impacts of the proposed scheme alongside other operating/permitted in the area. The Environmental Statement has concluded that the proposed development will not give rise to any detrimental impacts either on its own or in combination with other schemes in the area.

5.8 Summary and Conclusions

5.8.1 The proposed development is considered to comply with the adopted development plan subject to detailed matters.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL AND AMENITY CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This chapter considers the potential for environmental and amenity impacts from the proposed development.

6.2 Remaining Impacts

6.2.1 The fundamental aim of the EIA process is to identify, assess and evaluate the significant environmental impacts of a project with a view to developing methods of mitigating these effects. The ultimate goal is to achieve a scheme design that has no significant environmental impacts.

6.2.2 In addition to the residual negative impacts, the development will have beneficial effects and these have been identified with the Environmental Statement.

6.2.3 The principal benefits of the proposed development, however, would be to:

- Generate a new reliable local, low carbon electricity supply to sustain and promote the growth of local businesses and to supply the wider national grid.
- Generate a new reliable local, source of heat to sustain and promote local businesses.
- Move the management of waste up the waste hierarchy through recovery of a partially renewable, low carbon energy from waste left over after recycling, which would otherwise be landfilled or exported abroad.
- Support the development of the Hownsgill Masterplan to aid in the regeneration and provision of new jobs in the area.

6.2.4 The remainder of this chapter summarises the technical assessments undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, reported within the Environmental Statement. The summary takes account of the proposed mitigation measures.

6.3 Need & Alternatives

6.3.1 The process and decisions underpinning the need for the facility, the choice of technology and alternative sites considered have been identified, described and evaluated. The conclusions of the assessment are set out below.

- 6.3.2 The NPPW paragraph 7 sets out policy to assist waste planning authorities in the determination of planning applications. Within this requirement, applicants only need to demonstrate market need for a proposed facility if it conflicts with the Local Plan of the area. In such a case, the waste planning authority should consider the extent to which operational facilities (i.e. not merely 'planned') can satisfy any identified need.
- 6.3.3 The proposed Energy facility does not conflict the Durham County Council Waste Strategy and Local Plan, as addressed previously.
- 6.3.4 This assessment has, however, also demonstrated that there is both a national, regional and local need for residual commercial and industrial waste management facilities within Durham.
- 6.3.5 The proposed development produces up to 3.48MWe of electrical energy, providing valuable and reliable domestic energy source which reduces reliance on fossil fuels. Energy produced from waste is also recognised as contributing towards the Government's renewable energy targets.
- 6.3.6 With regard to the assessment of alternative locations, the proposed development is compliant with the locational requirements set out within Appendix B of the National Planning Policy Guidance on Waste and the locational requirements set out in local policy documents.
- 6.3.7 Firstly, the facility will accept small amounts of residual materials from a number of local suppliers and the proposed location is within a suitable distance of all of these market-based suppliers.
- 6.3.8 Secondly, the development of an energy-generating development on the industrial estate is part of a wider plan to attract inward investment to Consett through the availability of reliable and cheaper energy supply at the site and from adjacent energy developments. It is already proposed to provide heat to an adjacent strategic development which has recently secured outline planning permission. The wider masterplan has been accepted by Durham County Council and is included in the adopted Local Plan. It is therefore concluded that there are no more suitable locations for the proposed use within the region.
- 6.3.9 The final layout has been derived from a detailed analysis of both operational and environmental needs.
- 6.3.10 It is concluded that the proposed development fulfils an established need and that there are no more suitable locations, technologies or layouts for the proposed development.

6.4 Landscape and Visual Impact

6.4.1 Chapter 7 of the ES has assessed both the landscape and visual impacts of the proposal, the conclusions are summarised as follows:

Construction

6.4.2 Works involved during the construction period would include temporary and permanent works to build the new facility. In general, the activities and effects associated with the construction period are predicted to be broadly similar and no worse than the effects predicted at year 1 of the operational phases.

Landscape Character

6.4.3 The existing character of the site is defined by its restored nature forming part of an area which is intended for future development. The overall character of the area is mixed and typical of urban fringes where there are varied land uses and features. Land to the south and south west beyond the urban fringe is more rural and more so toward the edge of the study area and beyond into the North Pennines AONB. However, the landscape is influenced by its industrial past and is interspersed with relic features and land restoration. In addition, there are various existing prominent modern developments present including industrial buildings at Hownsgill Park, a consented solar farm to the south, settlement on high ground and wind turbines in the wider surroundings which affect the overall landscape character and sensitivity. The proposed development fits with this existing pattern of development in a suitable location adjacent to other similar development on the edge of a settlement.

6.4.4 The LPA has anticipated expansion of the settlement edge for business use development similar.

6.4.5 The proposed development would not affect any important landscape features on the site or immediately adjacent. There are prominent natural landscape features in the local area which include semi mature trees to the northwest of the site. These will be unaffected by the proposed development and it is proposed that tree cover will be enhanced by planting on the development site.

Residual Visual Effects

6.4.6 The extent of change in views is limited by the existing urban fringe character and nature of views in the locality, on the whole changes beyond the immediate surroundings are anticipated to be minor adverse. The provision of inherent design mitigation and soft landscaping to provide filtering of views and for general amenity will be beneficial in reducing residual effects.

- 6.4.7 Views generally from locations in the surrounding area will comprise an increased amount of built form of industrial character and tall vertical elements on the skyline. The site benefits from screening provided by existing raised ground and semi-mature woodland on land immediately adjacent alongside the Consett and Sunderland, which will continue to develop in future years to provide further screening. Built development is commonplace in views from locations through the study as is typical of this urban fringe location on the edge of Consett. Buildings typically appear amongst trees and woodland on sloping landform and is notable on high ground to the northeast and northwest of the site. There are various prominent and detracting features in most views from the surrounding area, these include existing development industrial type buildings at Hownsgill Park, individual wind turbines and settlements, overhead lines and supporting steel lattice towers crossing the landscape.
- 6.4.8 There will be long term residual visual effects as a result of the development pertaining to the appearance of the upper part/roofline of the proposed buildings and the stack, which will be visible from the majority of directions around the site and are not considered significant. These will mainly affect receptors/shorter distance views from locations in close proximity. There will be some minor residual effects on longer distance views such as those from high ground to the southwest/west but seen in the urban fringe setting comprising varied prominent elements this is not significant and will reduce slightly in future years as a result of mitigation planting

6.5 Geo-Environmental

- 6.5.1 Chapter 8 of the ES assesses the proposed developments impact on Geo-Environmental conditions. The chapter outlines the design, construction and operation of the proposed development and its associated environmental enhancement measures, which are assessed below.
- 6.5.2 As part of the site preparation works, a site strip will be undertaken along with removal of any existing obstructions. This will remove potential unforeseen contamination sources leading to environmental betterment. Unforeseen contaminated soils are considered to have Minor magnitude whilst the significance of the controlled waters is considered Minor. Based on this impact without mitigation is considered to be Minor Adverse. Impact following design mitigation will be Minor Beneficial.
- 6.5.3 Unforeseen contaminated soils are considered to have Minor magnitude whilst the significance of end users is considered Minor based on the commercial end use. Based on this impact

without mitigation is considered to be Minor Adverse. Impact following design mitigation will be Minor Beneficial

- 6.5.4 Potential risk to construction workers will be managed through the use of normal management and hygiene practices together with appropriate personal protective equipment. This will follow the normal health and safety hierarchy of protection. Unforeseen contamination is considered to have Minor magnitude whilst the significance of the construction workers considered Major. Based on this impact without mitigation is considered to be Major Adverse. Impact following design mitigation will be Neutral.
- 6.5.5 The use of bound pavement construction and solid building floor slabs will provide greater encapsulation of the site and contribute to breaking the potential pollutant linkage with future site users. No contamination has been identified and so impact is Neutral.
- 6.5.6 Where deep foundations are proposed the risks of creating a preferential flow path will be addressed through the use of a piling risk assessment. As no contamination risk has been identified impact to controlled waters is considered Neutral.
- 6.5.7 During the operational stage risks from potential release of fuels and chemicals will be mitigated through the use of containment bunds to storage areas in accordance with Environment Agency guidance.
- 6.5.8 Fuels and chemicals will not be stored near to water courses.
- 6.5.9 Spill response kits will be available on site and will be used should localised spillage or leakage occur. The site will be subject to regular inspections and any localised spillage identified and removed.
- 6.5.10 As operational activities will be undertaken in accordance with appropriate practices. Impact following implementation of the design mitigation measures will be Neutral.
- 6.5.11 Foundations will be designed to transfer loads through Made Ground and in to competent soils and rock. It is considered to have Minor magnitude whilst the significance to the structures is considered Moderate. Based on this impact without mitigation is considered to be Minor/Moderate Adverse. Impact following design mitigation will be Neutral.
- 6.5.12 No significant risk from coal mining activities have been identified and so impact is considered Neutral.

6.6 Noise

- 6.6.1 The assessment contained within chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement has considered the potential of the proposed development to give rise to noise impacts at the identified sensitive receptors close to the application site.
- 6.6.2 Noise levels during construction operations would remain below the levels derived in accordance with the guidance contained in BS5228.
- 6.6.3 Vibration levels during construction operations would remain well below the level at which vibration might just be perceptible in residential environments.
- 6.6.4 The BS4142 assessment of operational noise levels, including site operations and vehicle movements, would remain below the prevailing background noise levels at all residential receptors assessed during the daytime. However, overnight, predicted noise levels would exceed the prevailing background noise levels, mitigation measures to reduce this exceedance to a minimum have been included within the design.
- 6.6.5 The BS833 assessment of operational noise levels at nearby receptors has shown that:
- Predicted internal noise levels at nearby offices would fall within the design range adopted for the assessment of internal noise levels in non-domestic buildings prior to the application of the mitigation measures suggested.
 - predicted internal noise levels at the nearby residential receptors would meet the guideline value for sleeping in bedrooms prior to the application of the mitigation measures suggested.
 - The cumulative impact assessment has shown that the proposed development would have no significant impact on the ambient noise levels at the receptors assessed.
- 6.6.6 Based on the results of the assessment and conclusions drawn, noise and/or vibration should not pose a material constraint for the proposed development.

6.7 Air Quality & Human Health

- 6.7.1 The air quality assessment is set out in chapter 10 of the ES. The conclusions of the assessment are as follows.

Construction

- 6.7.2 The assessment has concluded that the additional heavy vehicle movements on local roads generated during the construction stages will be well below the EPUK/IAQM screening criterion (100 AADT) for potentially significant impacts on air quality at existing locations. It was therefore, not considered necessary to assess the impacts of construction traffic emissions further.
- 6.7.3 The construction works would have the potential to create dust. The assessment has therefore applied a package of mitigation measures to minimise dust. The implementation of these mitigation measures will ensure that any residual effects will not be significant.

Operation

- 6.7.4 The proposed facility will include all necessary emissions abatement and continuous emissions monitoring to ensure that the installation complies with the relevant emission limits. This will be a requirement of the environmental permit, regulated by the Environment Agency, that must be issued in order for the facility to operate.
- 6.7.5 Dispersion modelling of a number of pollutants was undertaken using ADMS 5.2. Impacts at both human and ecological receptors were quantified and the results compared with the relevant limits. The operational air quality effects of the proposed development on both human health and designated ecosystems (both individually and in combination) are judged to be 'not significant'.
- 6.7.6 An assessment of operational traffic both in isolation and in combination with other road users has been undertaken. The assessment concludes that as the increases in road traffic are well below the screening thresholds for potentially significant impacts on air quality, it can reasonably be assumed that the increase in roadside concentrations that the additional traffic will generate will be no greater than that which will trigger a negligible impact regardless of baseline concentrations.
- 6.7.7 Potential odour impacts associated with waste handling at the development are predicted to be, at worst, negligible at all receptors with the implementation of both integral and additional mitigation measures.
- 6.7.8 The air quality assessment has confirmed that a 50m stack is regarded as being an option that gives acceptable environmental performance and is acceptable under BAT (Best Available Technique) as required by the Environment Agency.

6.8 Water Environment

6.8.1 Chapter 11 of the Environmental Statement assesses the proposed developments potential impact on the water environment. The findings of the report are summarised below:

Flood Risk

6.8.2 The risk of surface water flooding is assessed as negligible for the Site but medium for the access/egress.

6.8.3 The risk of flooding from all other sources is assessed as negligible.

Mitigation Measures

6.8.4 The risk of surface water flooding affects the access/egress but would still be accessible by emergency services. Flood risk along the access/egress route will be mitigated to a low and acceptable level through the implementation of a basic Flood Evacuation and Management Plan.

6.8.5 Residual flood risk would be mitigated through the following approach:

- Adoption of a surface water management strategy.
- The finished floor levels above external levels.

Flood Guidance

6.8.6 The proposed use is classified as essential infrastructure. Essential infrastructure uses are considered acceptable in terms of flood risk in Flood Zone 2. Subject to the implementation of the above mitigation measures, the Sequential Test would be passed, and the Exception Test would not be required.

Site Drainage

Surface Water

6.8.7 The proposed development will increase the area of impermeable surfaces and therefore increase the amount of runoff without mitigation.

6.8.8 Surface water runoff from the Site will be restricted rate, which offers a betterment to existing conditions with uncontrolled runoff across all return periods.

6.8.9 Surface water runoff from the proposed development would be attenuated on-site up to and including the 1 in 100-year event, plus 40% climate change.

6.8.10 A SuDS drainage scheme is proposed to manage excess runoff from the development using cellular storage, with a connection to the adjacent private surface water sewer.

Foul Water

6.8.11 It is proposed that foul flows will discharge to the adjacent private foul sewer.

6.8.12 The assessment demonstrates that the proposed development will operate with minimal risk from flooding, will not increase flood risk elsewhere and is compliant with the requirements of national and local policy guidance.

6.9 Climate Change

6.9.1 Chapter 12 of the ES sets out the proposed development effects on Climate Change.

6.9.2 A raft of legislation and guidance has emerged within the last few years which reinforce the Government's commitment towards addressing both the cause and consequence of climate change. The review of the sustainability and needs objectives clearly demonstrate that there is an increasing urgency to develop a range of energy proposals which reduce reliance on fossil fuels in order to reduce the generation of CO₂ emissions and to firm up England's energy supply.

6.9.3 The proposed development will reduce the methane emissions associated landfilling which has a significant Global Warming Potential.

6.9.4 The proposed development will also offset carbon used in the production of energy, working towards the Governments low carbon goals.

6.9.5 In addition, the impacts of climate change on the proposed development have been considered within relevant technical assessments, and this confirms that the proposed development is appropriate for the application site.

6.9.6 It is therefore concluded that the proposed development will have a minor beneficial impact on climate change.

6.10 Socio Economic

6.10.1 Chapter 13 of this ES sets out the proposed developments effects on the socio-economic context of the area.

6.10.2 The baseline assessment shows that the wider area has:

- Moorside East has lower than average levels of economically active people.

- It has higher than average levels of unemployment.
- It ranks within the bottom 10% for living environment domain.
- It ranks poorly for overall access to housing and services.

6.10.3 The proposed development is part of a wider masterplan for employment at Hownsgill Industrial Estate. The provision of stable low carbon energy and heat will attract local investment providing much needed regeneration and jobs to the area.

6.10.4 The proposed development will also provide businesses with a sustainable and cost-effective way to manage wastes which cannot be recycled.

6.10.5 It is therefore concluded that the proposed development will have a moderate beneficial impact on socio economic indicators.

6.11 Amenity

6.11.1 Chapter 14 of this ES assesses the overall impacts on the proposed development on amenity. The assessment considered the impacts of the following:

- Mud, litter, dust , waste, noise and vehicle emissions during construction; and,
- Odour, noise, litter & vermin, heat and emissions during the operational stages.

6.11.2 The assessment has demonstrated that integral design features of the proposed development and with suitable additional mitigation measures, the proposed development will have a negligible impact on the site and wider surroundings.

6.12 Ecology

6.12.1 An assessment of the proposed developments impact on ecological features and designations have been provided in a stand-alone report supporting this planning application.

6.12.2 The assessment of impacts and associated ecological effect to identified features are presented in table 6.1 below. Ecological features have been screened out where no likely significant effects have been identified or where impact is unlikely to occur. Cumulative effects have also been considered where applicable.

6.12.3 Other than the ecological features listed below, there are no perceived potential impacts on any other sites, habitats or species in the wider area

Ecological Feature	Impact	Avoidance/Mitigation	Compensation	Significance of residual effect
Green Infrastructure	Potential damage and/or degradation of off-site trees/habitats which contribute to green infrastructure	The off site scrub corridor to the NW will be protected. Low level lighting shall be used to avoid disruption of the local wildlife corridor.	None required	No significant effect anticipated
Bats	Potential damage and/or degradation of suitable foraging and committing habitats	Physical protection and sensitive lighting will minimise the risk of degradation of the adjacent suitable bat foraging and commuting habitats.	None required	No significant effects anticipated
Nesting Birds	Risk of disturbance of nesting birds during the construction phase	Clearance to be undertaken outside nesting bird season. If necessary to undertake scrub clearance in this time, a suitably trained ecological clerk of works would supervise the clearance to ensure no active nests are affected.	None Required	No significant effects anticipated.

Table 6.1: Ecological assessment and mitigation

6.12.4 The assessment has confirmed the site provide opportunity to incorporate appropriate measures to mitigate any potential impacts to ecological features and to demonstrate ‘biodiversity net gain’ in accordance with the NPPF and local planning policy. As such no significant residual impact can be expected.

6.13 Heritage

6.13.1 An assessment of the proposed developments impact on heritage assets has been provided in a stand-alone report supporting this planning application.

6.13.2 The development site does not include any designated or non-designated heritage assets. The proposed development would not therefore physically affect any known heritage assets. It has been previously developed and has a negligible archaeological potential.

6.13.3 The report has assets the impact of the proposed development on nearby heritage assets as follows:

- Grade II* listed Hownes Gill Viaduct (asset ID LB 1): The heritage values of the asset would remain unaltered and the proposed development would have a neutral effect on this asset.
- Grade II listed Accommodation Arch under Former Railway (asset ID LB 2): There would be no harm to its heritage values and the proposed development would have a neutral effect on this asset.
- Non-designated heritage Asset ID A3 is the Railway trackbed at Hownsgill. The proposed development would have a neutral effect on this asset.
- Grade II listed High Knitsley Farmhouse and Barn west of High Knitsley Farmhouse (asset IDs LB 3 and 4): The additional industrialising effect of the development in views at the periphery of the setting of the asset would impact its historic value. The magnitude of impact would be negligible. The asset's value is high and this would therefore result in an effect of negligible significance. This is not a significant effect in EIA terminology and is at the lowest end of the scale of effects set out in the NPPF as less than substantial harm.
- Grade II listed East Knitsley Grange Farmhouse (asset ID LB 5): The proposed development would not affect the contribution made by setting to the significance of this asset and the proposed development would have a neutral effect on this asset.
- Non-designated heritage Asset ID A1 :The proposed development would not affect the contribution made by setting to the significance of this asset and the proposed development would have a neutral effect on this asset.
- Non-designated heritage Asset ID A2 is the former site of the Consett Iron and Steel Works. The building was demolished and the site cleared and levelled. It is therefore anticipated that the site will not include any archaeologically significant evidence associated with the Consett Iron Works. The proposed development would therefore not affect the significance of this asset and the proposed development would have a neutral effect on this asset.

6.13.4 Given the low archaeological potential of the site, no further archaeological field survey is considered necessary in this case.

6.13.5 The significance of effect in relation to Grade II listed High Knitsley Farmhouse and Barn as a result of development within the setting of these assets is negligible and at the lowest end of

the 'less than substantial harm' scale of effects. Therefore no further mitigation is proposed in relation to these assets and the proposed development is deemed acceptable in heritage terms.

6.14 Transport

- 6.14.1 The Transport Statement submitted alongside this planning application making a robust prediction of the total number of vehicle movements per weekday
- 6.14.2 The report concludes that the vehicle movements associated with the facility would be 22 HGV movements and a maximum of 18 car movements. On average, there would be less than two HGV movements and no car movements during each weekday network peak hour.
- 6.14.3 It concludes that there would be a negligible number of vehicle movements associated with the proposed facility.

6.15 Conclusion

- 6.15.1 This planning application has been supported by an Environmental Statement and associated supporting documents that have assessed the impact of the proposed development on the site and its surrounds.
- 6.15.2 The Environmental Statement and associated stand-alone reports have not identified any significant impact from the proposed development. It has shown that the development will create both moderate beneficial and slight adverse effects and that mitigation measures embodied within the project design, or imposed through planning conditions, will limit any impacts identified.

The proposed development is therefore compliant with the Appendix B of the NPPW and the County Durham Local Plan.

7 PLANNING CASE AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1.1 Project Genesis Ltd proposes to develop and operate an Energy Facility which includes:
- A fuel store; and,
 - An Energy Plant.
 - Combined heat and power equipment and associated infrastructure.
- 7.1.2 The Proposed Energy Centre will process up to 60,000 tonnes per annum of non-hazardous residual commercial waste materials from a variety of sources which will be collected and segregated prior to being delivered to the site.
- 7.1.3 The proposed development will generate 3.48MWe of low carbon energy from materials generated by local businesses which would otherwise be disposed of to landfill. This accords with the principles of the Waste Hierarchy and the proximity principle.
- 7.1.4 The outputs from the Energy Facility will be used to regenerate the local area, providing a sustainable, low carbon and low-cost energy supply which will encourage business to locate within the Hownsgill area providing investment and jobs.
- 7.1.5 The proposed development contributes towards the Governments renewable energy and low carbon targets and provides businesses in the area with the opportunity to utilise low carbon energy in accordance with local policy requirements.
- 7.1.6 The proposed development is located on an industrial estate and is part of a wider area masterplan which includes the provision of this energy facility. The proposed development therefore complies with the locational requirements as set out in national and local planning policy.
- 7.1.7 Sustainable and sensitive design of the proposed development addresses site-specific planning considerations, in particular, potential impacts on noise, air quality and odour. Technical assessments carried out in support of this proposal demonstrate that the proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the site or surrounding area.
- 7.1.8 It is therefore concluded that the proposed development complies with national and local planning policy and should therefore be consented.

REFERENCES

- The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.



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