Peel Environmental Limited
Land off Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Houghton Main, Barnsley
Proposed Houghton Main Renewable Energy Park
Our ref: CRM.066.001

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Proposed Houghton Main Renewable Energy Park
Request for Pre-Application Advice

This document supports a request for pre-application planning advice from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (**BMBC**) regarding a proposal for a Renewable Energy Park on land off the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Houghton Main, Barnsley.

Site Location
The site is located to the west of the A6195 Park Spring Road to the west of the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout. The site is centred on National Grid Reference 441660, 406420. The site location is shown on the attached Site Location Plan.

Site Description
The site is part of the former Houghton Main Colliery. The colliery is understood to have been a deep mine that was subsequently subjected to open cast working in the 1990s. Following the cessation of mining at the site the mining void was backfilled and the land restored for future development.

Access to the site is via an existing spur off the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout. This access is currently used by the Alkane Coal Bed Methane engines (although vehicular traffic to this site is extremely limited).

The land is currently covered in grass, with some structured planting adjacent to Park Spring Road (outside the development site). A large grass bank is located along the Northern boundary of the site. The bank used to form part of the local railway network in the area that used to serve the Colliery.

The site is fairly flat in nature, with a general slope from the front of the site to the rear of the site. The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1. A portion of the western corner of the site is within Flood Zone 2.

Planning Policy
The Development Plan for the site comprises the:

- Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (**UDP**) (December 2000) (Saved Policies);
- Barnsley Core Strategy (September 2011); and

- Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham (**BDR**) Joint Waste Plan Development Plan Document (**DPD**) (March 2012)

Barnsley UDP

The site is allocated in the UDP (Saved Policies) as an '*Area of Investigation for Potential Employment Development*' (Policy DA4). The allocation is surrounded by Green Belt and an area of '*Washlands*' (Policy DA12) to the south and west.

Policy DA4 states:

> "*The site of the former Houghton Main Colliery is designated as an area of investigation for potential employment development*."

Barnsley Core Strategy

Policy CSP 19 of the Core Strategy seeks to safeguard existing employment land and land previously used for employment to protect future employment potential.

BDR Joint Waste Plan DPD

The subject land was not considered for allocation in the Joint Waste Plan DPD because, as set out in the Site Assessment Report undertaken in October 2008, "*Part of the site* [was] *already developed*". As such, the site was not taken any further in the allocation of sites for waste development.

Emerging Planning Policy

The Development Sites and Places Consultation Draft (July 2012) considers the future use of all land within the borough. It also contains general and site specific policies which will be used to determine planning applications. The site is identified in this document as an '*Employment Land Option*' (Site N2). Policy EMP1 '*Uses on employment land*' which relates to allocated employment land states:

> "*On allocated Employment Sites, or land currently or last used for employment purposes, we will allow the following uses:*
>
> - *Research and development, and light industry*
> - *General industrial*
> - *Storage or distribution*
>
> *Ancillary uses will be allowed where appropriate in scale.*
>
> *Other uses may be considered on their merits, particularly their contribution to the borough's economic offer and job density.*"

Proposed Development

The development proposed is a Renewable Energy Park compromising an Anaerobic Digestion (**AD**) facility and a Timber Resource Recovery Centre (**TRRC**). The proposed layout of the Renewable Energy Park is shown on the attached Site Layout Plan.

AD Facility

The AD facility will be located on the eastern portion of the site and will have an annual throughput of approximately 66,000 tonnes per annum (**tpa**). The primary feedstock of the AD facility will be appropriate commercial and industrial material. The facility will use the bio-gas created by the AD process in an on-site Combined Heat and Power (**CHP**) engine to generate electrical energy for supply to the National Grid.

The main components of the development will be: Storage and Digester Tanks; a Process Building (incorporating Administration and Welfare facilities); a Gas Bubble; CHP Engine; and Substation. The development will also include a weighbridge, hardstanding for manoeuvring and car parking area.

TRRC

The TRRC will be located on the western portion of the site and will have an approximate annual throughput of 150,000tpa. The TRRC will receive and process wood-derived biomass to generate electrical energy for supply to the National Grid.

The main components of the TRRC will be: A Reception Hall; Process Building; Turbine Hall; Air Cooled Condensers; Emissions Stack and Offices/Workshop. The development will also include a weighbridge, hardstanding and area for car parking.

It is currently envisaged that the Reception Hall will have a maximum height of 11m and the Process Building will be approximately 30m in height. The height of the emissions stack will be determined by air quality modelling but is not expected to exceed 50m.

Employment

The proposed development is expected to generate approximately 150-200 full time equivalent (**FTE**) jobs during the peak construction period and approximately 30 FTE jobs during the operational phase (not including in-direct maintenance contracts *etc.*).

Vehicle Movements

The anticipated Heavy Goods Vehicle (**HGV**) movements generated by the Renewable Energy Park are set out in the table below.

Component Part	**HGV movements (per day)**
Anaerobic Digestion Facility	60
Timber Resource Recovery Centre	50
Total	110

Environmental Impact Assessment

Given the proposed throughput of the Renewable Energy Park, the development falls within Part 10 of Schedule 1 to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (the **EIA Regulations**). The planning application will therefore need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement (**ES**). It is proposed to undertake a formal EIA scoping exercise at an early stage of the process to confirm the content of the ES with BMBC.