Planning Statement

Planning Application for the Development of Houghton Main Renewable Energy Centre (REC) comprising a Timber Resource Recovery Centre and Associated Infrastructure

Land located off Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Park Spring Road, Houghton Main, Barnsley

Peel Environmental Management (UK) Limited and Houghton Main Waste Limited

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Project:	CRM.066.004
Location:	Land Located off Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Park Spring Road, Houghton Main, Barnsley
For:	Peel Environmental Management (UK) Limited and Houghton Main Waste Limited
Status:	Final
Date:	February 2015
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Reviewer:	Lee Searles **Director of Planning**

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1.0 Introduction

Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement supports a planning application made by Peel Environmental Management (UK) Ltd and Houghton Main Waste Limited (hereafter to referred to as **Peel**) to develop a Renewable Energy Centre (**REC**) on land located off the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Park Spring Road, Houghton Main, Barnsley.

1.2 This planning application and its supporting Environmental Impact Assessment present revised proposals for the development of a Timber Resource Recovery Centre, which will treat up to 150,000 tonnes per annum of waste wood and virgin timber through a gasification process which will export over 20MW renewable electrical power.

1.3 The proposals are the same as those set out in a previous planning application 2014/0559, however the previously proposed anaerobic digestion facility which was included in the earlier application has been removed. This has reduced the amount of built development associated with the development of the site and also has reduced the amount of traffic generated through the proposed development.

1.4 The application site boundary has been amended to omit the land formerly shown as to be occupied by the AD facility. This area is now being promoted for an alternative, non-waste related use.

1.5 In other respects, apart from some additional internal circulation space which has been added to the east of the Timber Resource Recovery Centre, a relocation of the sub-station, and some landscaping to its new eastern boundary, the application details remain essentially the same to that determined by Barnsley Council on 18th November 2014.

1.6 The application updates existing technical assessments so that they are consistent with the proposals now being submitted. It updates information and assessments to take account of the revised proposals, and changed impacts, in accordance with Town and Country planning and EIA regulations.

1.7 The applicants have worked closely with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council to ensure that the application meets council information requirements in terms of timescales for validation and determination.

1.8 This planning statement sets out the following:

- Details of the background and the application site;
- A description of the development proposals;
- An explanation of why the proposals are consistent with European, national and local planning policy; and

- A justification of the need of the proposed development, both in terms of renewable energy generation and availability of feedstock.

The Site

1.9 The application site is approximately 3.0 hectares in size. The red line application area is shown on the Site Location Plan (PL002). The site is former colliery land located off the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Park Spring Road, Houghton Main, Barnsley. The nearest postcode to the site is S71 5EX and the National Grid Reference of the centre of the site is SE 41696 06515.

Proposed Facilities

1.10 The REC comprises a Timber Resource Recovery Centre (**TRRC**). The TRRC will receive approximately 150,000tpa of biomass which may include waste timber from the commercial and industrial sectors and will subject it to a process that recovers clean ferrous and non-ferrous material for recycling. It will be developed by Northern Bio Power Limited. The construction and operation of the TRRC will be carried out under contract. The partners involved have recently developed similar facilities in Plymouth and Tyseley, Birmingham.

1.11 The development will create an energy generation facility with the potential to export 20 megawatts (**MW**) of electricity and provide a direct heat and/or electrical supply to appropriate off-takers in the local area.

1.12 The layout details are shown on the Proposed Site Layout Plan (PL003).

Fuel Source

1.1 The TRRC will be fuelled by biomass which may include timber, derived primarily from commercial and industrial sources.

1.2 The TRRC will have capacity to process 150,000 tpa of biomass (waste wood), which will be supplied through a single contract. Northern Bio-Power intends to include provisions within these arrangements for as much waste wood as possible to be supplied from local and sub-regional markets. A single contract provides advantages in terms of improving the ability of the operators to manage heavy vehicle traffic routes to the plant, to manage and limit delivery hours in accordance with operational, traffic and local amenity considerations. From an operational viewpoint, a single contract also provides more control over the quality and consistency of waste materials and greater security in terms of power generation. More information on fuel sources is provided in Chapter 6 of this statement.

Permitting Process

1.3 The applicants met with the Environment Agency on 27th October 2014, to hold pre-application discussions for the environmental permit required for the proposed REP application 2014/0559, refused by Barnsley Council on 18th November. The agency wrote to Barnsley Council officers on 31 October 2014 about the proposed facilities, including the TRRC contained in this revised application. The letter stated that:

"From the information that was provided it was clear that the facilities proposed are known technology and will be operated to familiar principles. The representatives at the meeting demonstrated to us that they have researched and understood the technology and that the facilities will be built and operated with regards to relevant best available techniques for environmental protection. The proposals are also in keeping with the waste hierarchy and current waste management practices.

We cannot make a judgement on the outcome of an environmental permit application. However we would like to provide confidence to the planning authority that the proposed facilities are of the type that have been successfully permitted and regulated elsewhere. Based on the information provided at this early stage there is no known reason, subject to a complete and robust application being submitted, that facilities of this type could not be effectively permitted and regulated by the Environment Agency.

An environmental permit application will require the applicant to comprehensively assess impacts of their proposals on air, water, land, odour, noise and fugitive emissions, and we will include conditions in the permit to ensure that the appropriate controls are taken in controlling those impacts. Environmental permits are public register documents and examples of other permits for similar facilities can be provided to demonstrate the degree and extent of environmental controls that will be placed on the operator of such facilities."

1.4 As stated, the revised application for a proposed REC comprising only the TRRC at Houghton Main is identical to the proposed TRRC discussed with the Environment Agency at the pre-application meeting in October 2014. The above confirmation from the EA provides confidence that the proposed facility will be able to be permitted, developed and operated in accordance with a strong environmental permit process that will safeguard the environment and protect people from harm in the extremely unlikely event that problems should arise.

The Applicant

1.5 The applicant is Peel Environmental Management (UK) Limited and Houghton Main Waste Limited (Peel). Peel owns, manages and develops infrastructure in the waste, minerals and environmental sectors. The company identifies sites suitable for development and is at the forefront of developing new infrastructure by working with technology partners to address the energy challenges faced. Peel is seeking to develop a network of energy facilities across England and Scotland, and is currently pursuing opportunities in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire. Houghton Main Waste Limited is a special purpose vehicle created by Peel to deliver the proposed Houghton Main REC development.

Community Consultation

1.6 A comprehensive programme of community engagement was completed in the preparation of the previous planning application 2014/0559 which these revised proposals update. This programme is detailed in full in the Statement of Community Involvement (**SCI**) which accompanies this application at Section 4 of the Planning Application documents. An

addendum has been prepared to update engagement activities since November to support preparation of this revised application.

Planning Supporting Statement

1.7 The proposed REC represents an opportunity to provide sustainable and renewable energy to industrial development in the area and to the wider National Grid.

1.8 The Planning Application contains the following documents:

- **Part One: Forms, Notices and Certificates:**
  - Completed Planning Application Forms;
  - Completed Ownership Certificates;
  - A summary of the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's Planning Validation 'Local List' as it relates to this proposal, and details of where to find each validation requirement within the application documents;
- **Part Two:** This **Planning Statement**, containing information in support of the planning application;
- **Part Three: Design & Access Statement**, containing information in support of the planning application (see Section 3);
- **Part Four: Statement of Community Involvement**, detailing the means by which the community was engaged in the development of the application proposal and the outcomes of that community engagement (see Section 4);
- **Part Five: Alternative Site Assessment,** A comprehensive Alternative Site Assessment (see Section 5);
- **Part Six: Sustainability Statement**, detailing how the proposed development meets sustainable policy objectives, achieves carbon reduction benefits and contributes to regional renewable targets (see Section 6);
- **Part Seven: Energy Statement,** (see Section 7)
- **Part Eight: Surface Water Drainage Scheme Details** (see Section 8);
- **Part Nine: Tree Survey** (see Section 9);
- **Part Ten: Figures and Drawings** (see Section 10)

1.9 In addition to the planning documents detailed above, the application is accompanied by a comprehensive Environmental Statement which provides a full appraisal of the environmental baseline conditions of the site and surrounding area, an assessment of the likely and potential environment impacts of the proposed development when considered against and in combination with the environmental baseline and, where necessary, recommendations for

mitigation measures to ensures the environmental impacts of the proposed development are acceptable.

1.10 The Environmental Statement has been prepared in full accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011.

- **Technical Assessments** (see Volume 3) covering the following topics:
  - Background, Introduction and Context**;**
  - Site Description;
  - Proposed Development;
  - Planning History and Policy Context;
  - Need and Alternatives;
  - Transport Assessment;
  - Hydrology, Flood Risk and SUDS;
  - Air Quality Assessment;
  - Landscape and Visual Amenity Assessment;
  - Noise and Vibration Assessment;
  - Ecology and Nature Conservation Assessment;
  - Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions Assessment;
  - Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Assessments;
  - Socio-Economic Impact Assessment;
  - Socio-Economic Impacts;
  - Other Amenity Issues;
  - Cumulative Impacts and
  - Summary

1.11 A scoping request was submitted to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) on 10th February 2014. BMBC issued their Scoping Opinion Response on the 10th April 2014 and it is included for reference at Volume 3, Appendix 1.2 to the Environment Statement. The technical assessments identified above have been produced and subsequently updated in accordance with the scope of work identified in the Scoping Request Response.

2.0 Site Description

Introduction

2.1 The subject site is 3.0 ha in area in to the west of the A6195 Park Spring Road. The site is located approximately 1km west of Little Houghton and 6.5km east of Barnsley town centre.

2.2 The site is bound by curved flood defences to the north and west which follow the alignment of a disused rail line. The River Dearne runs in a north south direction to the west of the site. The northern half of the eastern edge is bound by employment land which is the remaining portion of the allocated employment site. Beyond that is the A6195 Park Spring Road. In the southern part of the site (south of the roundabout), the eastern edge is bound by disused land.

2.3 The site is brownfield land primarily vegetated with rough restored grassland. Some scattered shrubs and small trees are also present on the site. The site is flat except for the bunding at its northern and western boundaries.

2.4 The site was subject to open cast colliery workings between 1997 and 2001 which included the removal of any earthworks associated with the former railway lines. The colliery was previously used for mining by UK Coal between the 1890s and 1991. Once open casting was completed, the land was reclaimed and compacted to provide a platform suitable for industrial development. There is an ASOS Fulfilment Centre on adjacent land to the east and south east of the site. The warehouse was developed by Prologis and was constructed under Reserved Matters Approval 2005/1441 (which followed Outline Planning Permission B/03/0762/HR granted in 2003 for Class B1, B2 and B8 development of the site). The existing warehouse has recently been granted planning permission for an extension (ref: 2012/1018).

2.5 The site is relatively remote from any residential properties. There are a few scattered farms and properties nearby, the closest being Crook Farm located approximately 0.8km to the west, Store Mill Farm located 1.5km to the north west, Tyers Hall Farm located to 1.8km to the south west and a housing development located on Doncaster Road, located 1.8km south west of the proposed development.

Access

2.6 Access to the site is from a spur off an existing roundabout (known as Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout) on the A6195 Park Spring Road.

2.7 The existing spur access will be improved as part of the proposed development and tailored to suit the development proposals. An entry gate and weighbridge will be constructed as shown on drawing PL003 Proposed Site Layout Plan which accompanies the planning application.

2.8 The site is well connected to the strategic highway network, with the both the A1 (M) and M1 approximately 9km away to the east and west respectively. Access to the motorway network

can be gained using the A6195 and other A-class roads linking to it. Similarly, a good class of road (A635) provides connection to Barnsley town Centre.

Site History

2.9 The site is part of the former Houghton Main Colliery which has been subject to both deep shaft mining and, more recently, opencast working. Following opencast working the site was backfilled and restored to original levels.

2.10 The South Yorkshire Mining Advisory Service, in its pre-application consultation response of 6 January 2014, confirmed that:

> "*The site predominantly lies in an area which used to form part of Houghton Main Colliery which operated from the late 1800s and closed in the early 1990s. Previous land use included railway sidings associated with the colliery and opencast coal extraction. Opencast operations began in 1997 and were completed in 2001, which involved working the Shafton, Highgate and Highgate Rider Coal Seams. The site was restored to original levels using earthwork compaction methods; however, according to past site investigations for this site (White Young Green Environmental) areas of the fill material will require further compaction/improvement in order to minimise the potential for ongoing creep settlement.*"

2.11 The Coal Authority, in its pre-application consultation response of 19 December 2013, confirmed that:

> "*The site was subject to underground mining in 10 seams at depths from 316m to 851m, which were last worked in 1991. The site has also been subjected to surface coal mining which has subsequently been restored. The site also has recorded probable historic shallow coal workings and thick coal outcrops."*

2.12 The site is therefore considered to be brownfield, previously developed land suitable for redevelopment. Since restoration the site has been the subject of a planning application, granted in 2008 and extended in 2011, for 19 light industrial units using the existing site access. Full details of the site's planning history are provided in Chapter 4 of this Statement.

Sensitive Receptors

2.13 The nearest residential properties to the application site are Crook House Farm located approximately 0.8km to the west, Store Mill Farm located 1.5km to the north west, Tyers Hall Farm located 1.8km to the south west and a housing development located on Doncaster Road located 1.8km south west of the site. Potential impacts of the proposal on these and other nearby residential dwellings, including noise and visual, have been taken into account and fully assessed throughout the application. Amenity impacts deriving from the proposed operations (such as noise) have been alleviated through the appropriate design and layout of the site. Mitigation measures will also be implemented including on-site landscaping and planting to address any residual visual impacts.

2.14 There is an existing warehouse (ASOS Fulfilment Centre) on land to the east of the site on the opposite side of Park Spring Road.

2.15 The site is surrounded by the Barnsley Green Belt on three sides. The impact of the proposal on the setting of the Barnsley Green Belt has been considered in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Chapter 10) of the Environmental Statement which accompanies this application.

2.16 A public footpath runs alongside the north east tip of the application site.

2.17 The RSPB Dearne Valley Old Moor wetlands nature reserve lies approximately 5km to the south of the site. The reserve is based around several lakes which form marshland and reedbeds. There are also open water and land habitats present at the reserve.

Nature Conservation

2.18 There are a number of designated nature conservation sites, included Local Nature Reserves (**LNR**) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (**SSSI**) within 15km of the application site. The potential impacts of the proposed development on these sites are considered in the accompanying Environmental Statement.

2.19 There are no European Designated Sites (Ramsar, Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas) within 15km of the site.

2.20 The site is located within Landscape Character Area C2 Lower Dearne Lowland River Floor.

Flood Risk

2.21 The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1. Part of the site, in the North West corner, is within Flood Zone 2. The proposed site layout has been designed to minimise the flood risk to the site and surrounding area. The part of the site within Flood Zone 2 is largely free of built form. The Air Cooled Condensers which are in that area are built on stilts and therefore are raised above the flood risk area.

2.22 Following discussions with the EA over the development of the Flood Risk Assessment for the previous application 2014/0559, the EA is in agreement that topographic information for the site illustrates that the Flood Zone 2 outline may not be truly representative and that further modelling work is not required to discount the Flood Zone 2 location of the site.

2.23 Enzygo has mapped the modelled flood levels after consultation with the Environment Agency. This modelling work was conducted by JBA Consulting Ltd in May 2004. Using detailed topographical information for the site area and modelled flood levels from the Environment Agency, it can be seen that the flood zone associated with a 1 in 200 year flooding event (0.5% AEP) does not extend to the site area.

Planning Allocations / Designations

2.24 The application site is previously developed land. In the current context, the development plan for the application site comprises:

- The Barnsley Draft Local Plan (published for consultation in November 2014)
- The Barnsley Core Strategy (Adopted September 2011);
- The remaining Saved Policies of the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (**UDP**) (adopted December 2000); and
- Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (adopted March 2012).

2.25 The Draft Local Plan proposes the application site as suitable for employment allocation (Site N2- Land west of Park Spring Road, Houghton). Box N2 states that any development at Park Springs, Houghton must consider potential impacts on the nearby Edderthorpe Ings Local Wildlife Site and include appropriate mitigation where necessary. It also states that any development would be expected to retain the marshy grassland areas, or if this is not possible, wetland features should be incorporated into the development as replacement habitat.

2.26 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.

2.27 Policy DA4 states:

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

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

2.29 The subject land was not considered for allocation in the Joint Waste Plan 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. It is understood from this statement that the merits of the site for allocation were not considered as part of the process.

2.30 The Development Sites and Places Consultation Draft (July 2012) considers the future use of all land within the borough to "*Create the conditions for economic growth and greater prosperity through the provision of quality employment sites...*" It also contains general and site specific policies which will be used to determine planning applications.

2.31 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."

2.32 The former Houghton Main Colliery site was allocated within the Unitary Development Plan for Major Employment site. A range of potential employment sites were assessed as part of the preparatory process for the Development Sites and Places DPD. The proposed site was selected potentially for Employment development within this DPD.

2.33 A full assessment of the proposal against relevant national, regional and local planning policy is provided in Chapter 5 of this planning statement, which confirms that the proposal is consistent with relevant planning policy.

3.0 Proposed Development

Introduction

3.1 The proposed Renewable Energy Centre (REC) comprises a 150,000 **tpa** Timber Resource Recovery Centre (**TRRC**). The development of the site will create an energy generation facilities with the potential to export 20 megawatts (**MW**) of electricity and to provide a direct heat and/or electrical supply to appropriate off-takers in the local area.

3.2 The TRRC will receive approximately 150,000tpa of biomass which may include Civic Amenity Waste and waste timber from construction and demolition, which will be subjected to a process that recovers clean ferrous and non-ferrous material for recycling. The facility will source previously used wood from the surrounding area to process in the TRRC. The biomass used will include wood products recovered from commercial and industrial sources after the removal of other valuable recyclable materials. Other wood-derived fuels such as paper products may also be used in the process. The proposed TRRC will comprise the following key elements;

- Reception Hall (65.0m X 45.0m X 9.0 to eaves, 11.37 to top of upstand)
- Process Building (102.0m X 30.0m X 30.0m to top of parapet)
- Stack (2.5m diameter X 45m)
- Turbine Hall (25.7m X 18.0m X 17.9m)
- Offices/ workshop (12.3m X 18m X 17.9m to parapet)
- Air Cooled Condensers (53.7m X 13.4m X 23.0m)
- Ash Storage Silos (6.6 diameter X 14.8)
- Fire water tank (13.0m diameter X 7.0m)
- Fuel oil storage tank (13.2m X 2.4m X 2.5m)
- Standby generator (13.2m X 3.2m X 2.0m)
- Fire Water pumps enclosure (4.0m X 3.0m X 2.5m)
- Sub-station
- Weighbridge (2 off);
- Site fencing;
- External Lighting
- Parking spaces
- A cycle shelter

TRRC Process Description

3.3 The feedstock, pre-prepared biomass, will arrive at the facility in a form ready for use in the gasification process. This material may, due to its source, still have some valuable ferrous and non-ferrous metals included in the deliveries. The first stage of the process is to recover these

materials from the feedstock using a combination of magnets and eddy current separation. These recovered materials are then removed from the facility and also recycled.

3.4 The remaining prepared/cleaned feedstock is then transferred into a gasification chamber where it is heated in a low oxygen environment (gasification) to a point where the material is forced to drive off its valuable gases. These gases are where the process derives most of its energy.

3.5 As the gasses leave the gasification process they enter a combustion chamber where they are ignited to produce a sustainable and consistent energy level. This energy (heat) is then passed through a boiler to produce steam.

3.6 The steam generated is produced at a temperature and pressure sufficient to power a turbine connected to an alternator for the production of renewable electricity which either goes directly to local businesses that can use it or it is sent directly to the National Grid.

3.7 Remaining gases from the process pass through an advanced cleaning process to remove any harmful emissions and particulates to regulated levels before exiting the plant via a stack. All emissions are monitored and controlled by the Environment Agency under an Environmental Permit to ensure they do not permit any form of harmful emissions through the facilities operation.

3.8 Where possible all residuals (*e.g.* recycled metals/ash from the gasification process) from the plant with a value to other market sectors and these are also recovered and reprocessed.

TRRC Stack

3.9 The TRRC will have a stack for the cleaned gases from the gasification process. The height of the stack has been determined through detailed air dispersion modelling as 45m.

Hours of Construction and Operation for both facilities

3.10 The hours of construction and operation proposed are set out in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Hours of Construction and Operation of the Facility

Activity	Monday-Friday	Saturday	Sunday/Public Holidays
Construction	0700-1900	0700-1300	No Working
TRRC Deliveries	0700-1900	0700-1300	No Deliveries
TRRC Operations	24 hours	24 hours	24 hours

3.11 Although no fuel deliveries are proposed on Sundays or Public Holidays, there may be occasions (following periods of unplanned outage for example) where some Sunday deliveries may be required to catch up. In those instances, it is proposed to notify BMBC of any such intention in advance.

Access and Vehicle Movements

3.12 The facility will be accessed via an existing spur off the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Park Spring Road, Houghton Main. This existing roundabout has been designed for industrial use and is a suitable access point for the proposed development.

3.13 The anticipated vehicle movements generated by the proposed development are set out in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2 TRRC Heavy Vehicles Daily Movement Summary

	TRRC Heavy Vehicle Traffic		
	IN	OUT	TOTAL
AM (peak)	3	3	6
PM (peak)	0	1	2
Daily	30	30	60

3.14 The TRRC will employ upto 25 members of staff. The operator has advised that a maximum of 4 shift staff will be on site at any one time and that the facility will operate two 12-hour shifts per day (7am-7pm).

3.15 The total forecast of traffic in and out of the proposed REC is shown in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3 Total REC Traffic two-way

	Total HV Traffic			**Total Staff Car Traffic**			**Total Traffic**		
	IN	OUT	TOTAL	IN	OUT	TOTAL	IN	OUT	TOTAL
AM (peak)	3	3	6	3	0	3	6	3	9
PM (peak)	1	1	2	0	3	3	0	4	5
Daily	30	30	60	8	8	16	38	38	76

Employment

3.16 The proposed scheme will generate up to 25 full time equivalent (**FTE**) jobs during operation of the facility and an estimated 200 FTE jobs during the peak of construction activities.

4.0 Planning History

4.1 A search of the BMBC's Planning Explorer database on 29 January 2015 reveals the planning permission history for the site and surrounding area set out in Table 4.1 below.

Application Number	Site Address	Development Description	Status	Date Registered	Decision
2014/0559	Land off Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Park Springs Road, Barnsley	Development of Renewable Energy Park comprising Timber Resource Recovery Centre and Anaerobic Digestion Facility and associated infrastructure.	Final Decision	30-05-2014	Refuse
2013/0860	Park Spring Road, Little Houghton, Barnsley	Erection of 3 no. turbines wind farm with a height of 80m to hub and 126.5m to blade tip, including substation building and ancillary infrastructure. (Environmental Impact Assessment)	Final Decision	09-09-2013	Approved with conditions
2012/1018	ASOS, Park Spring Road, Little Houghton, Barnsley, S72 7GX	Erection of extensions to southern and western elevations of existing distribution warehouse and extension to existing surfaced car parking area	Final Decision	13-09-2012	Approved with Conditions
2011/1443	Land off Park Spring Road, Houghton Main, Little Houghton, Barnsley	Erection of 19 industrial units with associated external works and landscaping (Extension to time limit of application 2008/1426)	Final Decision	20-12-2011	Approved with Conditions
2011/0951	Land off Park Spring Road, Little Houghton, Barnsley, S72	Installation of a 70m high meteorological data gathering mast (Temporary for 2 Years).	Final Decision	08-08-2011	Approve for a Temporary Period
2008/1426	Land off Park Spring Road, Houghton Main, Grimethorpe Barnsley	Erection of 19 industrial units with associated external works and landscaping	Final Decision	11-09-2008	Approved
2005/1441	Park Springs, off Park Spring Road, Little Houghton, Barnsley.	Erection of a distribution warehouse and associated offices, car parking, service areas and landscaping (Reserved Matters).	FINAL DECISION	22-08-2005	Approved with Conditions
B/03/0762/HR	S/O Houghton Main Colliery, Middlecliffe Ln, Little Houghton	Outline for modification of Condition No. 1 of planning consent B/99/1064/HR for use of land for industrial/employment uses	Final Decision	14-05-2003	

Table 4.1: *Planning History of the site and surrounding land (as at 29 January 2015). Orange highlighting indicates permissions covering the subject site.*

5.0 Planning Policy

Introduction

5.1 This chapter considers the proposed development against the relevant provisions of national planning policy, the Development Plan and other material considerations relevant to the proposal.

5.2 This chapter includes a review and analysis of key European, national and local policies which relate to renewable energy generation and waste management infrastructure and development policies relevant to the proposed development.

European Policy

- *The Framework Directive on Waste (2008/98/EC);*
- *The Landfill Directive (1999/31/EC)*

National Energy Policy

- *Climate Change Act (2008)*
- *UK Bioenergy Strategy (April 2012)*
- *UK Biomass Strategy (2007)*
- *The 2007 White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge*

National Planning Policy

- *National Practice Guidance*
- *National Planning Policy Framework (2012)*
- *PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management, revised March 2001*
- *Government Review of Waste policy in England 2011*
- *Waste Strategy for England 2007*
- *Anaerobic Digestion Strategy and Action Plan (DEFRA)*

Local Planning Policy

- *The Barnsley Draft Local Plan (Published for consultation in November 2014)*
- *Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (Adopted March 2012);*
- *The Barnsley Core Strategy (Adopted September 2011); and*
- *The remaining Saved Policies of the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (adopted December 2000).*

5.3 Guidance on energy generation and waste management, both in terms of the siting of facilities and the treatment of waste and energy stream starts at the European level, with Central Government and the LPA all having a role to play in the formation of the policy and guidance to developers.

European Policy

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

5.4 The Waste Framework Directive (**WFD**) is a European Union Directive that was originally published in 1975 and substantially amended in 1991 and 2008. The aim of the WFD is to provide an overarching legislative framework for the collection, transport, recovery and disposal of waste across Europe.

5.5 The WFD introduces two key concepts in waste management, namely the Proximity Principle and the Waste Hierarchy:

The Proximity Principle

5.6 Article 16 of the Waste Framework Directive states:

> *"The network shall enable waste to be disposed of or waste referred to in paragraph 1 to be recovered in one of the nearest appropriate installations, by means of the most appropriate methods and technologies, in order to ensure a high level of protection for the environment and public health"*

5.7 This identifies the concept of the '*Proximity Principle*' which is that waste should be treated close to the source of arising assuming that health and the environment are protected.

The Waste Hierarchy

5.8 The Waste Hierarchy is a tool for prioritising the management of waste. It is presented in Article 4 of the WFD as the priority order for waste prevention and management legislation and policy. It is presented in the WFD as:

- *Prevention;*
- *Preparing for re-use;*
- *Recycling;*
- *Other recovery, e.g. energy recovery; and*
- *Disposal*

5.9 The role of the waste hierarchy is to guide sustainable waste management. The hierarchy gives top priority to waste prevention, followed by preparing for re-use, recycling, and other types of recovery (including energy recovery), and last of all disposal (*e.g.* landfill).

5.10 The WFD states that:

> *"When applying the waste hierarchy referred to in paragraph 1, Member States shall take measure to encourage the options that deliver the best overall environmental outcome. This may require specific waste streams departing from the hierarchy where*

this is justified by life-cycle thinking on the overall impacts of the generation and management of such waste".

"Member States shall take into account the general environmental protection principles of precaution and sustainability, technical feasibility and economic viability, protection of resources as well as the overall environmental, human health, economic and social impacts, in accordance with Articles 1 and 13"

5.11 Paragraph 31 of the WFD states that:

"The waste hierarchy generally lays down a priority order of what constitutes the best overall environmental option in waste legislation and policy, while departing from such hierarchy may be necessary for specific waste streams when justified for reasons of, inter alia, technical feasibility, economic viability and environmental protection".

5.12 **Assessment of proposals against these policies -** The proposed development facilitates a move up the waste hierarchy by managing and recovering energy from material that would otherwise either be disposed to landfill or exported overseas for treatment.

5.13 It is considered that the principle of the proposed REC is in accordance with European policy as it is an established technology which will successfully direct waste wood away from landfill and generate a renewable source of energy and heat, without significant adverse effects on the environment and human health.

National Energy Policy

Climate Change Act (2008)

5.14 The Climate Change Act 2008 makes it the duty of the Secretary of State to ensure that the net UK carbon account for all six Kyoto greenhouse gases for the year 2050 is at least 80% lower than the 1990 baseline, toward avoiding dangerous climate change.

5.15 The Act aims to enable the United Kingdom to become a low-carbon economy and gives ministers powers to introduce the measures necessary to achieve a range of greenhouse gas reduction targets. An independent Committee on Climate Change has been created under the Act to provide advice to UK Government on these targets and related policies. In the act Secretary of State refers to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change.

5.16 **Assessment of proposals against these policies –** The proposed REC would be a secure low carbon energy development and would therefore make a direct contribution towards the Government's Climate Change objectives.

UK Bioenergy Strategy (April 2012)

5.17 It is widely recognized that bioenergy has an important role to play if the UK is to meet its low carbon objectives by 2050. The strategy sets out the Coalition Government's approach to securing the benefits of bioenergy.

5.18 The UK Government has a responsibility to ensure that its policies only support bioenergy use in the right circumstances. This strategy is based on a statement of four principles which will act as a framework for future government policy on bioenergy.

5.19 In summary the four principles state that:

- *Policies that support bioenergy should deliver genuine carbon reductions that help meet UK carbon emissions objectives to 2050 and beyond;*
- *Support for bioenergy should make a cost effective contribution to UK carbon emission objectives in the context of overall energy goals: and*
- *Support for bioenergy should aim to maximise the overall benefits and minimise costs (quantifiable and non-quantifiable) across the economy.*

5.20 **2020 Renewables Target**: The 2009 Renewable Energy Directive sets a target for the UK to achieve 15% of its energy consumption from renewable sources by 2020. This compares to 3.3% in 2010. The scale of the increase over the next 8 years represents a huge challenge and will require strong contributions from all three sectors of electricity, heat and transport.

5.21 **2050 Carbon Reduction Target**: The Climate Change Act 2008 establishes a long-term framework to tackle climate change.

5.22 The Act aims to encourage the transition to a low-carbon economy in the UK through unilateral legally binding emissions reduction targets. This means a reduction of emissions of at least 34% by 2020 and a domestic greenhouse gas emissions reduction of at least 80 percent by 2050. Both targets are against a 1990 baseline.

5.23 **Assessment of proposals against these policies -** It is clear there is a need for renewable energy developments in relation to both demand and the achievement of the Government's climate change objectives. On this basis substantial weight should be given to the contributions made by renewable energy developments such as the proposed REC.

UK Biomass Strategy (2007)

5.24 This strategy, published with the Government's Energy White Paper, meets the commitment made in the Energy Review (2006) and in the Government's response to the 2005 Biomass Task Force Report and brings together current UK Government policies in biomass for energy, transport and industry.

5.25 The Biomass Strategy acknowledges the importance of fuels sourced from biomass in tackling climate change. Biomass will have a central role to play in meeting the EU target of 20% renewable energy by 2020. The Climate Change Bill, published in draft in March 2007, sets out a proposed UK target of at least 60% cuts in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 and a strong

new system of carbon budgeting. We need to explore every avenue for achieving these cuts in emissions in sustainable ways over the decades ahead.

5.26 Biomass is renewable and generally has low carbon characteristics. Where biomass is produced and processed with due regard to sustainability and carbon savings, it can be carbon-neutral (the CO2 released when it is used to create energy can be offset by the CO2 it consumes when growing).

5.27 Biomass is also very versatile and can be used as fuel across the energy spectrum for electricity, heat and transport as well as the production of industrial material. At current usage levels biomass can be considered as an untapped resource.

5.28 The Government's strategy for biomass is intended to:

- *"realise a major expansion in the supply and use of biomass in the UK*
- *facilitate the development of a competitive and sustainable market and supply chain*
- *promote innovation and low-carbon technology development so biomass can deliver relatively higher energy yields contribute to overall environmental benefits and the health of ecosystems through the achievement of multiple benefits from land use*
- *facilitate a shift towards a bio-economy through sustainable growth and development of biomass use for fuels and renewable materials*
- *Maximise the potential of biomass to contribute to the delivery of our climate change and energy policy goals: to reduce CO2 emissions, and achieve a secure, competitive and affordable supply of fuel"*

5.29 Paragraph 2.1 of the strategy states:

> *"Biomass is an important tool for tackling climate change, as well as offering new commercial opportunities. For the purposes of this Strategy, we are taking biomass to mean any biological material, derived from plant or animal matter, which can be used for producing heat and/or power, fuels including transport fuels, or as a substitute for fossil fuel-based materials and products"*

5.30 **Assessment of proposals against these policies -**The proposed development will contribute to a more diverse and secure mix of energy generation, and in turn contributes to the security of the UK's renewable energy supply at a time when energy demand is increasing and the impacts of climate change are gaining prominence in Government policy agendas.

5.31 National waste and energy policy contains a clear message: positive planning which facilitates renewable energy developments is essential if the government commitments to climate change and renewable energy are to be met. The role of biomass in helping to meet these commitments is widely recognised and its use is encouraged.

The 2007 White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge

5.32 UK energy policy is set out in the Energy White Paper of May 2007 and Low Carbon Transition Plan of July 2009.

5.33 The 2007 White Paper: "Meeting the Energy Challenge" sets out the Government's international and domestic energy strategy to address the long term energy challenges faced by the UK, and to deliver four key policy goals:

1. *"To put the UK on a path*
2. *To cut carbon dioxide emissions by some 60% by about 2050, with real progress by 2020;*
3. *To maintain reliable energy supplies;*
4. *To promote competitive markets in the UK and beyond, helping to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth and to improve productivity; and*
5. *To ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated"*

5.34 The Government has set national targets for electricity generated from renewable sources and expects 10% of total electricity generation by 2010, 15% by 2015 and 20% by 2020.

5.35 The Government recognises the importance of recovering energy from biomass. Facilities should be sized and contracts designed in accordance with the local availability of fuel. The Government's targets on renewable energy generation, power generation processes such as energy from Biomass must be considered.

5.36 There are a number of benefits of recovering energy from biomass, as follows:

- Improved energy security;
- Meeting UK energy demand in more sustainable way;
- Biomass heat generation can provide a cheap sustainable heat resource;
- Biomass heat generation can replace coal for industrial sites, industrial processes and off grid locations; and
- Energy is recovered from material that may otherwise be landfilled or exported.

5.37 In particular, the White Paper confirms that applicants for energy development do not need to demonstrate either the overall need for renewable energy or its distribution, nor question the energy justification for why a proposal for such development must be sited in a particular location.

National Practice Guidance

5.38 On 6 March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched planning practice guidance web-based resource. This was accompanied by a Written Ministerial Statement which includes a list of the previous planning practice guidance documents cancelled when this site was launched.

5.39 Planning Practice guidance is now available entirely online in a usable and accessible way. The web-based resource was developed following the recommendations of the External Review of Planning Guidance which the Government previously consulted on.

5.40 DCLG will be actively managing the planning practice guidance, and any necessary updates will be made as soon as possible.

5.41 Paragraph 001 states:

> "*Addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework expects to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking"*

5.42 Paragraph 002 states:

> *"Good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that design quality matters and that planning should drive up standards across all forms of development. As a core planning principle, plan-makers and decision takers should always seek to secure high quality design"*

5.43 **Assessment of proposals against these policies –** The proposed REC will develop a renewable energy facility to manage waste in a sustainable manner and generate heat and power from renewable sources. The Design and Access Statement in Appendix 1 demonstrates that an appropriate design approach has been adopted to achieve a high quality design concept that takes account of the existing urban form, and the natural and heritage features of the surrounding area.

5.44 Paragraph 003 states:

> *"Increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses. Planning has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable".*

5.45 Paragraph 004 states:

> *"…… all communities have a responsibility to help increase the use and supply of green energy, but this does not mean that the need for renewable energy automatically overrides environmental protections and the planning concerns of local communities"*
>
> *Goes on to say…*
>
> *"There are no hard and fast rules about how suitable areas for renewable energy should be identified, but in considering locations, local planning authorities will need to ensure they take into account the requirements of the technology and, critically, the potential impacts on the local environment, including the cumulative impacts"*

5.46 **Assessment of proposals against these policies -** The proposed REC will accommodate established technologies which will successfully direct waste wood away from landfill to generate a renewable source of energy and heat. The proposed location is an established employment site on previously developed land, consistent with the locational policies and criteria set out in local plans.

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

5.47 The *National Planning Policy Framework* (**NPPF**) is the current national planning policy document in England. Its publication in March 2012 introduced significant changes to the planning system and replaced a raft of Planning Policy Statements (including PPS22: Renewable Energy).

5.48 At the heart of the NPPF is a "*presumption in favour of sustainable development*". Through the NPPF the Government clarifies that where applications accord with policy there should be an approval without delay provided that the impacts do not significantly outweigh the benefits. In this case, there is strong evidence that the selected site is sustainable in terms of renewable energy generation, waste management and transport, and the proposed built form and plant also reflect sustainable development principles.

5.49 Crucially, in terms of renewable energy the NPPF, at Paragraph 98, states that Local Planning Authorities should:

- *"not require applicants for energy development to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low-carbon energy and also recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and*
- *Approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once opportunity areas for renewable and low-carbon energy have been mapped in plans, local planning authorities should also expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying opportunity areas."*

5.50 Paragraph 97 of the NPPF states:

"*To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources. They should:*

- *Have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources;*
- *Design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts;*
- *Consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure the development of such sources;*

- *Support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside such areas being taken forward through neighbourhood planning; and*
- *Identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers"*

5.51 The proposals comprise a sustainable development in this context, by increasing the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and providing the potential for the supply of energy and heat to local users.

5.52 Other sections of the NPPF relevant to the proposal are detailed below:

- **Building a strong, competitive economy - Paragraph 19** states: "*Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system*";
- **Promoting sustainable transport - Paragraph 32** states: "*All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport* Assessment. *Plans and decisions should take account of whether:*

  – ...safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and - ------- _Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limits the significant impact of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe."
- **Requiring good design - Paragraph 65** states: "*Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns are mitigated by good design."*
- **Meeting the Challenge of climate change and flooding – Paragraph 97** identifies that local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources. Planning authorities should therefore, *'Have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources*; [and] *design their policies to maximise renewable energy while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts.'*

5.53 **Assessment of proposals against these policies -** The statements below assess the proposal against those Core Planning Principles of the NPPF which are relevant to the proposed development.

Achieving Sustainable Development

5.54 The NPPF sets the focus of planning as contributing to sustainable development. This requires planning to have an economic, social and environmental role.

5.55 The Environmental Statement which accompanies this application contains the findings of a number of technical assessments and confirms that the proposal will have no unacceptable environmental or social impacts in the local or wider area that cannot be satisfactorily mitigated through the incorporated measures put forward in the development proposals. In accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF, the proposal has been demonstrated to be in line with the Development Plan.

5.56 It is demonstrated throughout this Planning Statement and accompanying documents that the development proposed represents sustainable development.

Strong, Competitive Economy

5.57 Chapter 4 of this statement and Chapter 14 of the Environmental Statement demonstrate the economic benefits of the proposal in terms of direct and indirect employment, construction and the establishment of new local supply chains. The proposed REC will create 200 jobs during construction and 25 permanent jobs (Full Time Equivalent). The proposed REC will export 20 megawatts of decentralised energy to the national grid with the potential to supply local businesses electrical and heat energy.

5.58 Having stable local sources of energy supply is of increasing importance to business. The proposed REC will bring wider economic benefits to the area as a result of its presence and renewable energy contribution.

Sustainable Transport

5.59 The Environmental Statement which accompanies this application includes a Transport Assessment which confirms that the traffic impacts of the proposal are acceptable.

5.60 A travel plan is a tool for managing access to a site that aims to promote access by sustainable modes. The opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport for access to the site have been considered. Use of these modes offers the opportunity to reduce the amount of traffic generated by the proposal thereby minimising the negative effects of traffic associated with the scheme.

5.61 Given the limited population within an acceptable walking distance of the site it is considered that walking is unlikely to make a significant contribution to travel to the site, but routes are available from the nearest settlement areas.

5.62 National cycle network routes run to the west and south of the site. Cycling can offer a realistic alternative to car trips up to 5km.

5.63 Bus stops are available on both sides of Park Spring road adjacent to the site. These are of a good standard with shelters, timetable information and footway connections. The existing bus services offer a good level of coverage and timings for access to the site by bus.

Good Design

5.64 On the 4th March 2014 the proposed development was presented to Barnsley Urban Renaissance Design Advisory Panel, an independent design panel who offer advice to designers to help develop schemes into those with a high design quality that may be supportable for planning approval in design terms. The opportunity to present the proposed REC project to the Panel was welcomed and found the review process to be supportive and informative.

5.65 The Panel were presented with the design development process undertaken and agreed that the adopted 'form follows function' and the design approach was appropriate. The comments by the advisory panel are covered in Section 3 of this planning application.

Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change

5.66 The NPPF identifies the need to increase the supply of renewable and low carbon energy. The application site is not identified as a strategic site for renewable energy within the local plan however its location is considered suitable for the following reasons:

- The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1. Part of the site, in the North West corner is within Flood Zone 2. The proposed site layout has been designed to minimise the flood risk to the site and surrounding area. Therefore the site it not within an area at risk of flooding nor will the development affect the risk of flooding elsewhere;
- The facility will provide direct heat and/ or electrical supply to appropriate off takers in the local area, therefore avoiding the transportation of gas at long distances;
- Built development such as tanks are built to endure the effects of climate change and can withstand heavy snow loads, strong winds and excessive heat.

Decision-Taking

5.67 To set the scope of the technical assessments carried out in support of this application, discussions have taken place with BMBC planners and other statutory bodies such as the Highways Authority, Environmental Health and the Environment Agency.

5.68 It has been demonstrated that the development proposal is consistent with the Development Plan and represents sustainable development. It is therefore considered that the development as proposed is afforded a high level of support by the NPPF.

5.69 The application site is not identified as a strategic site for renewable energy within the local plan. However, the site location has a number of benefits which make it suitable for the proposed development from a planning policy perspective:

- A detailed alternative site assessment has been undertaken in support of the application. That assessment confirms that there are no more suitable sites for the development proposed within the Barnsley, Doncaster or Rotherham areas;
- The site is identified as being suitable for employment use in local planning policy documents;
- The site is restored colliery land and therefore considered to be previously developed land;
- There is potential to supply power and/or heat to neighbouring industrial uses.

5.70 The proposed REC is considered to be entirely consistent with the relevant terms of the NPPF.

Assessment of proposals against National Planning Policy for Waste (October 2014) and Waste Management Plan for England

5.71 The DCLG published the National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) in October 2014. The NPPW replaces PPS10 and is to be read in conjunction with the NPPF and the National Waste Management Plan (published as the Waste Management Plan for England in December 2013).

5.72 Paragraph 5 of the NPPF referred to national waste planning policy as being published as part of the National Waste Management Plan for England. However, the Waste Management Plan for England (WMPE), when published in December 2013, did not contain land use planning policies, but referred to forthcoming National Planning Policy for Waste, then in draft form, now published. To all intents and purposes, national planning policy for waste is contained within the new NPPW which replaces PPS10. The NPPF is to be taken into account where it is relevant.

5.73 Given that the NPPF, NPPW and WMPE are to be read in conjunction, what the WMPE says about waste management technologies is relevant in planning policy terms. On page 13, the WMPE says the following about other recovery:

> *The Government supports efficient energy recovery from residual waste – of materials which cannot be reused or recycled – to deliver environmental benefits, reduce carbon impact and provide economic opportunities.*

5.74 The WMPE says that, for Construction and Demolition waste in 2010, 2% (1.5 million tonnes) of the 77.4 million tonnes created was 'sorting residues' containing a significant further amount of waste wood from construction and demolition. The WMPE (page 20) indicates that, in 2011, 15 million tonnes of materials per annum was exported from the UK for recycling and recovery. 884,000 tonnes of RDF was exported from the UK in 2012.

5.75 The WMPE element of national planning policy for waste therefore gives clear support for the development of other recovery facilities to secure energy recovery from residual waste. Again, the WMPE indicates the significant waste stream arising in the commercial and industrial and construction and demolition waste sectors available for this purpose. A significant fraction of

these waste streams is waste wood. Developing UK capacity to secure energy recovery from this waste stream can deliver renewable energy and low carbon energy generation benefits, which the Government is seeking to encourage.

5.76 The proposed TRRC will contribute to meeting government's strategy as outlined in the WMPE.

5.77 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. This addendum concentrates on the policy in relation to the determination of planning applications. In a further section below, further assessment is provided to support the planning application in the context of the Barnsley Doncaster Rotherham Joint Waste Plan.

5.78 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:

1. 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 REC at Houghton Main does not conflict the Barnsley Doncaster Rotherham Joint Waste Plan in that the plan sets out plan requirements for waste facilities to deal with commercial and municipal waste requirements. It sets out strategic sites for waste management use and also criteria based policies which are used to indicate how proposals for waste management facilities on other employment sites will be approached. The proposed REC at Houghton Main is consistent with these policies in being an allocated employment site.

2. 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 REC at Houghton Main does not cut across or undermine the objectives of the Barnsley Doncaster Rotherham Joint Waste Plan in that it will provide waste treatment technologies in the local area to manage local and sub-regional waste wood that would otherwise go to landfill, incineration or for export. The technology proposed is supported by Government as the best available technologies for the treatment of the materials concerned. The proposed TRRC will export around 20MW electrical power to the national grid or local off-takers. The facility will be CHP enabled, ready to connect to local heat users subject to agreement with them. The proposed TRRC therefore makes an important local contribution to the Government's WMPE policy to recover energy from residual waste treatment.

3. 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 REC have demonstrated the acceptability of the proposal in flood risk and surface water/foul water drainage terms (the Environment Agency has not objected to the proposal). A Phase 1 Environment Report has recommended further Phase 2 intrusive site investigations to be carried out post planning permission.

b. **Land stability** - The site of the proposed REC is a former colliery and opencast coal working. The site has been infilled and restored. The Phase 1 Environment Report and Coal Mining Report were reviewed by the South Yorkshire Mining Advisory Service. They agreed with recommendations in the report that further intrusive site investigations should be carried out as a condition of planning permission and this is agreed by the applicants.

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 Design and Access Statement produced in support of proposals for the REC at Houghton Main, explains how the need to respect the current landscape, including the build development in it, has informed proposals. The approach to building form provides a more varied skyline and avoids a large and obtrusive impact in the landscape. The proposed colour scheme helps the proposed facilities to blend in successfully with the landscape backdrop. In addition, the landscape and visual impact appraisal assesses the impact of the proposed REC in visual, landscape and townscape terms. Inevitably with a development of this size, there is a slight to moderate impact from some receptors. To mitigate these impacts, the applicant has sought identify on site and off site measures which can be taken to improve the landscape around the proposed facility. The applicant has also offered a financial contribution to Barnsley Council for the improvement of the Nature Improvement Area in Barnsley.

d. **Nature Conservation** – There are no sites of international importance for nature conservation, SSSI or national nature reserves within proximity of the proposed REC. However the site does sit within the Dearne Valley Nature Improvement Area. The applicant has been able to successfully demonstrate how the impacts arising from the development could be accommodated on site through a programme of ecological works to relocate species to a set-aside area for pond development. The applicants have also agreed to make a financial contribution to Barnsley Council for improvements to the Nature Improvement Area.

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 REP.

f. **Traffic and Access** – The Transport Assessment has demonstrated that the traffic generation associated with the proposed REC is insignificant (and 'not severe' in NPPF terms) in terms of capacity on existing roads, roundabouts and junctions, at all times of the day. This has been agreed with Barnsley Highways. The proposed REC would generate significantly less traffic than would be generated by the already permitted development of an industrial estate of 19 business units on the same site.

g. **Air emissions, including dust** – The applicant has submitted an Air Quality Assessment which has been reviewed by Barnsley Council's Council Environmental Health Officer and Pollution Control Officer. Following the submission of further information in response to questions from them, they have not objected to the proposal. The Environment Agency has also not objected to the proposal on grounds of air quality.

h. **Odours** – The TRRC will not generate odours from waste wood or from the gasification process. It is clear that, in planning terms, the proposed REC is acceptable in these terms. In addition, the operating conditions of the proposed REC and the control regimes to be adopted will be considered carefully and set out in full in separate environmental permit processes to be regulated by the Environment Agency.

i. **Vermin and birds** – This is not relevant to the proposed REC at Houghton Main, 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 or indoors (more than one day). Materials will be unloaded inside the reception halls of the TRRC.

j. **Noise, light and vibration** – A noise and vibration assessment has been submitted in support of the proposed REP. The result of the assessment is that the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to any complaints about noise impacts. The nearest residential receptors are 0.6 km away at Edderthorpe and 0.9 km away at Darfield and Little Houghton. It will be a normal condition of planning permission for details of any external lighting to be submitted prior to operation of the proposed REC.

k. **Litter** – the nature of the waste wood/timber being imported to the site and methods outlined (sealed or covered HGVs), combined with the non-storage of significant waste at the site should mean that litter should not be a problem.

l. **Potential land use conflict** – The proposed REC is located on an allocated employment site with a current planning permission for the development of an industrial estate. It is predicted that the industrial estate would give rise to the daily movement of 768 vehicles to and from the site. With this in mind, the potential for the site to accommodate significant employment development whilst sitting alongside other existing significant development (such as ASOS) is accepted by Barnsley Council. With this in mind the proposed REC would generate only 60 HGV movements per day, plus a small number of staff vehicles mostly outside peak hours. Notwithstanding, the applicants have offered to

create a HGV Management Plan to ensure that any impacts arising from the development are avoided.

4. 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. As referred to in response to point c. of the criteria of Appendix B, the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application does set out a clear design approach which has resulted in a more varied built form and a carefully chosen colour scheme to enable the proposed facility to be acceptable in landscape terms.

5. 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.

6. Ensure that landfill sites are restored to beneficial after uses….(not relevant to this proposal).

Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011

5.79 In June 2011 the Government published its review of waste policy in England. This document contains actions and commitments, not only of government but of other key actors, which together set a clear direction toward a zero waste economy. These actions have formed the implementation plan for waste policies in the Waste Review and for the rest of this parliament.

5.80 Some of the principle commitments of this document are to:

- *Prioritise efforts to manage waste in line with the waste hierarchy and reduce the carbon impact of waste;*
- *Develop a range of measures to encourage waste prevention and reuse, supporting greater resource efficiency;*
- *Support energy from waste where appropriate, and for waste which cannot be recycled;*
- *Consult on restricting wood waste from landfill and review the case for restrictions on sending other materials to landfill;*

5.81 **Assessment of proposal against these policies:** The proposal represents a move up the waste hierarchy by diverting waste from landfill and using it to general energy. This represents greater resource efficiency.

5.82 The goals of the Government review of waste policy in terms of recovery of energy are as follows:

- *Recovery of energy from waste and its place in the waste hierarchy is understood and valued by households, businesses and the public sector in the same was as re-use and recycling;*

- *Energy is recovered in variety of ways, using the best technology available for the circumstances. The resulting electricity, heat, fuel or other products are seen as commodities with real economic value;*
- *Recovery of energy from waste makes an important contribution to the UK's renewable energy targets, minimising waste to landfill and helping to meet UK carbon budgets.*

5.83 Paragraph 212 states that:

"Our overarching goals are to ensure that:

- *Recovery of energy from waste and its place in the waste hierarchy is understood and valued by households, businesses and the public sector in the same way as re-use and recycling;*
- *Energy is recovered in a variety of ways, using the best technology available for the circumstances;*
- *Recovery of energy from waste makes an important contribution to the UK's renewable energy targets, minimising waste to landfill and helping to meet UK carbon budgets;*
- *With increased trust in energy from waste and innovative incentives, recovery infrastructure is generally accepted, and industry and communities make use of energy from waste to routinely meet a proportion of their energy and waste management needs.*

5.84 The goals of the National Waste Policy Review 2011 in terms of recovery of energy are as follows:

- *Recovery of energy from waste and its place In the waste hierarchy is understood and valued by households, businesses and the public sector in the same way as re-use and recycling;*
- *Energy is recovered in a variety of ways, using the best technology available for the circumstances. The resulting electricity, heat, fuel or other products are seen as commodities with real economic value; and*
- *Recovery of energy from waste makes an important contribution to the UK's renewable energy targets, minimising waste to landfill and helping to meet UK carbon budgets*

5.85 Paragraph 239 states that:

"The role of government is to facilitate informed decisions by communities, local authorities and businesses about how they recover value from their residual waste. To do this we will:

- *Support the role of energy recovery from waste within hierarchy and aim to improve understanding of this role;*

- *Provide a clear position on the health implications of the*
- *recovery of energy from waste, based on the best available evidence, to support a reasoned, evidence based evaluation of risks and benefits;*
- *Work with all involved to identify commercially viable routes by which communities can realise benefits from hosting recovery infrastructure*

5.86 Paragraph 259 states:

> *"The planning system plays a key role in rebuilding our economy by ensuring that the sustainable development needed to support economic growth is able to proceed as easily as possible"*

5.87 The overall objective for waste policy is the protection of human health and the environment by producing less waste and by using it as a resource wherever possible. Through more sustainable waste management the Government aims to break the link between economic growth and the environmental impact of waste.

5.88 Paragraph 28 of the statement states:

> *"Any given technology is (where applicable) more beneficial if both heat and electricity can be recovered. Particular attention should therefore be given to the siting of plant to maximise opportunities for Combined Heat and Power".*

5.89 Paragraph 31 states:

> *"The merits of recovering energy from waste wood were highlighted in recent research. Of the estimated 7.5 million tonnes of waste wood arising's in the UK, the vast majority (6 million tonnes-80%) is landfill… with energy being recovered from just 0.3 million tonnes (4%)…. The key to realising the carbon benefits for wood waste that cannot be readily re-used or recycled lies in the availability of markets for waste wood (in the form of suitable combustion facilities for clean and/or contaminated wood that satisfy Waste Incineration Directive standards) and development of supply chains."*

5.90 **Assessment of proposals against these policies –** The proposals contribute to the achievement of these policies through the provision of energy recovery from waste wood and combined heat and power.

Local Planning Policy

Barnsley Draft Local Plan (Published for Consultation in November 2014)

5.91 The Draft Local Plan outlines local planning policy for the future development of Barnsley up to the year 2033. It sets out the key elements and approaches to development in order to improve the local economy and quality of life for those who live and work in the area.

5.92 **Section 9** sets out general policies to guide the type, location and quality of development in the borough. **Policy GD1** states that proposals will be approved if they do not have a significant effect on the living conditions of existing and future residents; they are compatible with

neighbouring land; they include landscaping; and adverse impacts on the environment are minimised and mitigated.

5.93 **Assessment of proposals against these policies.** The proposed development has been designed to comply with this. The proposed site is relatively isolated from high density residential areas and will not negatively affect exiting or future residents. The proposed site has an industrial history and is close to a large warehouse development. Landscaping has been incorporated into the design, and the impacts on the environment have been considered and mitigated.

5.94 **Section 11** considers the economy, and highlights the serious levels of unemployment in the area. The document identifies that in order to create a larger and more diverse economy, more businesses and jobs are needed in the Borough. The Local Plan states that it will support economic growth by providing a range of new employment sites and premises in order to attract new investment. More specifically, the Local Plan identifies a number of sectors that could facilitate growth, one of these being Low Carbon.

5.95 **Assessment of proposals against these policies.** The proposed development is for a Low Carbon energy from waste site, and therefore fits in with the Local Plan's objectives.

5.96 **Policy E1** states that around 300 ha of land will be designated towards meeting the needs of existing and future industry and business up to 2033. Site 'N2' is the proposed site, and this is identified in the Local Plan as allocated for employment land. The document goes on to state that development at this site will be expected to:

- Consider the potential impact on the nearby Edderthorpe Ings Local Wildlife Site and include appropriate mitigation where necessary.
- Retain the marshy grassland areas. Where these cannot be retained, suitable wetland features should be incorporated into the development as replacement habitat.

5.97 **Assessment of proposals against these policies.** The proposed site is within an area designated for employment, and the development ensures that the Local Wildlife Site and the marshy grassland area is not negatively impacted.

5.98 Section 20 considered Climate Change, and Policy CC1 states that development will be expected to:

- 'Reduce and mitigate the impact of growth on the environment and carbon emissions
- Ensure existing and new communities are resilient to climate change
- Harness the opportunities that growth, and its associated energy demands, bring to increase the efficient use of resources through sustainable construction techniques and the use of renewable energy'

5.99 It goes onto state that 'we will take action to adapt to climate change by:

- Giving preference to development of previously developed land in sustainable locations
- Locating and designing development to reduce the risk of flooding
- Promoting the use of sustainable drainage systems
- Promoting investment in Green Infrastructure to promote and encourage biodiversity gains'

5.100 **Assessment of proposals against these policies.** The proposed development would export 20MW of renewable energy, and the site itself makes use of the renewable energy it generates. The buildings have been designed to ensure high standards of energy efficiency, including the use of high insulation materials, glazing and power-saving lighting systems. The proposed site is previously developed and all built aspects are within Flood Zone 1. Further details of the sustainability aspects of the site are within the Sustainability Statement Chapter.

Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan, Adopted March 2012

5.101 The Barnsley Doncaster Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (Joint Waste Plan) forms part of each borough's development plan, known as the Local Development Framework. The JWP is the detailed planning strategy for providing waste management facilities across Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham over the period to 2026. More specifically, it sets out:

- *A long term vision and a series of aims that will guide and inform decisions regarding waste management facilities;*
- *The overall approach to managing and reducing waste In the three boroughs;*
- *The role that waste management will play in the context of South Yorkshire and the wider region;*
- *A range of waste management facilities and sites in accessible locations to meet our recycling, recovery and landfill diversion targets and waste capacity needs over the plan period; and*
- *A detailed policy framework against which planning applications for waste development (including small-scale facilities) will be assessed.*

Policy WCS1: Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham's Overall Strategy for achieving sustainable Waste Management

5.102 The proposed REC is supported by the policies set out in the. Policy WCS1 (D1) of the Joint Waste Plan says that strategic waste management developments will be directed towards the three identified strategic waste sites (plus one reserve site) in Policy WCS3, where possible. The policy does not require strategic waste developments to take place only on those sites.

Other policies (WCS4) and paragraphs in the Joint Waste Plan provide flexibility to allow for proposals on other sites to be considered positively.

5.103 Part D2 of policy WCS1 says that innovative waste treatment technologies will be allowed where they support the vision and aims of the Joint Waste Plan.

- Aim A seeks to move municipal waste management up the waste hierarchy, which the proposed REC does for commercial and industrial waste.
- Aim B seeks to promote the timely provision of facilities to meet identified need in Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham, which, given the requirement to provide significant amounts of capacity in each time period to 2026, the proposed REC does.
- Aim C seeks to promote facilities which enable waste to be managed locally, and to use rail and water facilities. It is acknowledged that the proposed REC site at Houghton Main is not rail or water based, but then it is suggested that this Aim is geared more towards the movement of waste from single sources (eg municipal waste) rather than the many more varied sources that exist in the commercial and industrial waste sector (notwithstanding the operators' intention to limit the number of suppliers to their facilities).
- Aim D seeks to maximise economic benefits from waste management and to provide resources for industry. The proposed REC does this in terms of the production of secure renewable electricity to the national grid or local off-takers. There is potential for the supply of heat from the development to local users who want it.
- Aim E seeks to maximise the potential to co-located facilities which utilise different waste streams and to create renewable energy. The proposed REC does this through the provision of a waste wood gasification facility, which will export around 20MW electrical power to the national grid.
- Aim F seeks to locate waste management facilities on vacant and underused brownfield land in existing employment areas. The Houghton Main site is a former colliery, opencast mine, and railway land which was developed over a 150 year period. The site now lies restored only to a low level and is an empty, allocated employment site located on a strategic road with good access.
- Aim G seeks to protect the amenity of local residents and environments. One of advantages of the site at Houghton Main is its distance from sensitive residential receptors. The closest houses are 0.6 km in Edderthorpe and 0.9km Darfield and Little Houghton.
- Aim H seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from waste management processes through energy efficient waste technologies and innovative

transport solutions. The proposed REC comprises an efficient and innovative waste treatment technology. The material imported to the TRRC will be already prepared and so will avoid the transport of bulky materials to the site which need to be processed further.

5.104 Part D3 of WCS1 supports proposals for waste management facilities which enable the management of waste locally, but also allow for the import and export of materials from the area where this is a sustainable option. The applicants have provided information to demonstrate that the proposed TRRC will draw in materials from a local and sub-regional catchment which is consistent with this element of the policy.

5.105 Part D4 indicates a priority for the development of waste management facilities on vacant, underused, brownfield sites in areas earmarked for regeneration. The Houghton main site fits this criteria and is located in an area of Barnsley identified for significant economic development.

5.106 Part D5 seeks the location of new facilities in areas with good transport links in and around urban areas. The proposed REC is located on the A6195 Park Springs Road, which the Transport Assessment demonstrates has capacity to accommodate the proposed development with insignificant impacts. Indeed the location of the facilities on this route enables the impacts of HGV movements through local communities to be avoided completely.

5.107 Part D6 says that waste developments should ensure that there are no impacts on sensitive aquifers. The proposed REC is not located in such an area.

5.108 Part D7 says that waste proposals should not have unacceptable impacts on designated nature conservation sites. The proposed REC is located in the Dearne Valley NIA (which covers the eastern half of Barnsley Borough). The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and follow on surveys undertaken in support of the planning application and Environmental Statement have demonstrated that there are no unacceptable impacts on either the ecology of the site or on neighbouring areas. The applicants have offered a financial contribution to Barnsley Council to support wider improvements to the Dearne Valley NIA, so that, as a significant development, the proposed REC will make its contribution to the NIA.

5.109 Policy WCS1 sets out the overall strategy for achieving sustainable waste management across all waste streams. It states that that new facilities will be assessed on a case by case basis. Each proposal will be assessed against the criteria set out within this policy. It is therefore appropriate to demonstrate how the proposed development is consistent with Policy WCS1. Of relevance to this assessment is the following:

- The proposed development is not allocated for strategic waste management in the JWP. However, the site did form part of the evidence base during the production of the Joint Waste Plan as a potential site for Waste Management. At the time of consideration, the site was deemed unavailable and therefore not taken forward for consideration. As such, no assessment of the site's merits as a location for a strategic waste management facility was made.

- The proposed development is located on previously developed land – the site was part of the Houghton Main Colliery which was subject to both deep shaft mining and, more recently, opencast working and is therefore considered to be brownfield and land suitable for redevelopment.
- The site is allocated for employment purposes in other policy documents.
- The site is well connected to the strategic highway network, with both the A1 (M) and M1 approximately 9km away to the east and west respectively. Access to the motorway network can be gained using the A6195 and other A class roads linking to it. The existing site access off the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout has been designed and constructed to a standard suitable for the development proposed.
- The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1. A small part of the site, in the north west corner, is within Flood Zone 2. The proposed site layout has been designed to minimise the flood risk to the site and surrounding area. This has included locating the Air Cooled Condensers (which are to be built on stilts) in the north west corner, whilst keeping the rest of the area in Flood Zone 2 is largely free of built form.
- The proposed development is not located within any known designations for ecology, nature conservation or Green Belt. The site is adjacent to the Barnsley Green Belt. The impact of the proposal on the setting of the Green Belt has been taken into account in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which has been carried out and reported in the Environmental Statement which accompanies this application.

Policy WCS4: Waste Management proposals on non-allocated sites

5.110 Policy WCS4 sets out criteria against which waste management proposals on non-allocated sites are to be assessed.

5.111 Para 4.17 of the Joint Waste Plan says that policy WCS4 makes policy provision for waste management proposals which may come forward on sites that are not allocated. Para 4.18 says that '*where waste processing activities take place within a sealed building and there is no external treatment or waste storage, they are similar in character to an industrial process. These proposals will be acceptable in principle within employment or industrial areas subject to meeting other policy requirements.'*

5.112 Policy WCS4 says that waste management proposals on non-allocated sites will be permitted provided that:

- A1- they do not significant affect the character or amenity of the site or surrounding area. The proposed REC is located adjacent to a major distribution facility and within a wider area characterised by the development of significant industrial and distribution facilities along strategic highway routes.
- A2 – contribute towards the aim of sustainable waste management, which the proposed REC does.
- A3 – do not undermine the provision of waste development on strategic sites set out under policy WCS3. The plan indicates the need for significant development of new waste facilities through the plan period. The proposed REC moves towards that aim.

- A4 – prioritise the reuse of vacant or underused brownfield land, which the proposed REC does.
- A5 – facilitate better quality reclamation of the site. The proposed REC will improve the quality of what is a former colliery site restored only to a low level.

5.113 The policy WCS4 also says where these criteria are met, sites such as (2) designated employment and industrial sites may be acceptable in principle. Houghton Main is such a site.

5.114 In a more general summary, the proposed development is in accordance with these criteria, as follows:

- The proposed development is not located within any European or Local designated areas;
- Would contribute towards the aims of sustainable waste management in line with the waste hierarchy;
- Provides a facility on previously developed land, the site was part of the Houghton Main Colliery which was subject to both deep shaft mining, more recently, opencast working and is therefore considered to be brownfield and land suitable for redevelopment;
- The site is adjacent to a large distribution centre to the east and south east of the site;
- Would not have an unacceptable effect on water resources or drainage;

5.115 Whilst the Houghton Main site was not allocated for waste management in the Joint Waste Plan, the site did form part of the evidence base during the production of the Joint Waste Plan as a potential site for waste management. At the time of preparing the joint waste plan the site was not available as the site had gained planning permission for '***19 light industrial units***' and therefore was not considered for a new strategic waste management facility.

5.116 A number of criteria were set in this process, against which the sites were assessed, the Houghton Main site was suitable in terms of:

- Objective 6:Cutural and historic heritage: 'the site is not in close proximity to features of historic or cultural heritage', therefore no effects are expected';
- Objective 7: water quality and quantity: 'potential facilities are likely to be in enclosed buildings and therefore have no effect in water quality';
- Objective 8: 'Efficient use of land: 'on previously developed land' 'not within the Green Belt', 'not within the Countryside Policy Area' and 'the site is previously developed, therefore positive effects in efficient use of land are expected'; and,
- Objective 11: 'Flooding 'Entirely within Flood Zone 1 (not in Flood Zone 2 or 3) therefore no effects on flooding are expected, 'development of facility is likely to create a small number of jobs and may include education centre, 'development of modern waste facilities may encourage investment and growth of green industry, as well as a sustainable local economy'. The site is now available for waste uses.

5.117 Taking all of these factors into account, it is therefore considered that the proposed development is compliant with policy WCS4.

Policy WCS6: General Considerations for all Waste Management Proposals;

5.118 Policy WCS6 of the Joint Waste Plan sets out the general considerations for all waste management proposals. Part A of the policy lists 17 criteria against which proposals for waste management facilities must demonstrate their acceptability. The applicant's planning application and Environmental Statement has successfully addressed each of these. Part B of the policy says that proposals must include sufficient information to demonstrate how they will comply with Part A through adequate description of processes, waste types, waste sources, life of the operation, access and storage. Again, the Planning Application and Environmental Statement fully address these requirements. A detailed review of the proposals against the criteria is set out below:

- Criteria 1: The proposed development demonstrates that it supports the vision and objectives of the Joint Waste Plan. The Joint Waste Local Plan sets a 67% target for diverting waste from landfill by 2015. It is therefore considered that the proposals will contribute to the targets set out in the Waste Joint Plan;
- Criteria 2 & 3: Access to the site is from a Spur off an existing roundabout (known as Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout) on the A6195 Park Spring Road. The site is well connected to the strategic highway network with both A1 (M) and M1 approximately 9km away to the east and west respectively. Access to the motorway network can be gained using the A6195 and other-A class road linking to it. Similarly, a good class road (A635) provides connection to Barnsley town centre.
- Criteria 4: The design and layout of the proposals have been designed to make best use of the land available and to make best use of adequate space on site for vehicles entering, waiting, unloading and leaving safely. This is further explained in the Design and Access Statement which accompanies this planning application.
- Criteria 6: Aims to protect and enhance the attractiveness and character of the surrounding area. As explained in the Design and Access Statement and the Environmental Statement, the quality and visual appearance and impact of the Houghton Main proposal has been given very close attention and have been designed to a high quality to enhance the proposed built development;
- Criteria 7: States that effective on-site waste management measures will need to be provided to ensure safety and security. Security will be an important consideration for the REC.
- Criteria 9: The proposal seeks to protect and enhance air quality, including the reduction of air pollution and the emission of greenhouse gases. Peel proposes to meet the stringent emission standards that will be required by the Environment Agency. The operation of the proposed REC could give rise to dust, which will be contained within the buildings. In addition, the generation of electricity from waste will help reduce the burning of fossil fuels that causes greenhouse gas emissions. The

reduction in the amount of waste going to landfill will also reduce the amount of landfill gases such as methane which also contributes to the greenhouse effect;

- Criteria 12: The Houghton Main proposal is located outside of these protected areas;
- Criteria 13 & 14: The planning application for the proposed REC is accompanied by an Environmental Statement that shows that the proposals are environmentally acceptable and can be mitigated;
- Criteria 15: The proposed development is not located in close proximity to an Airport and will therefore not have an impact on the safety or air travel;
- Criteria 16: The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1. Part of the site, in the North West corner, is within Flood Zone 2. The proposed site layout has been designed to minimise the flood risk to the site and surrounding area. The part of the site within Flood Zone 2 is largely free of built form. The Air Cooled Condensers which are in that area are built on stilts and therefore are raised above the flood risk area.
- Criteria B: aims to provide sufficient information which should be provided within the planning application. This is further explained in this Planning Application and Environmental Statement which accompanies this planning application.

5.119 **Policy WCS7: Managing Waste in all development**

Policy WCS7 requires all major development proposals to include a waste management plan, which sets out a range of information required. This information is contained within this Supporting Statement and within various chapters of the Environmental Statement which accompanies this planning application.

Barnsley Core Strategy (Adopted September 2011)

5.120 The Core Strategy sets out the key elements of the planning framework for Barnsley, and the approach to its long term physical development to achieve the Council's vision of what sort of place Barnsley wants to become. The document reflects the council's hopes and aims for the people who live, work, run businesses and enjoy leisure in Barnsley.

5.121 The Barnsley LDF will be made up of a number of different documents including the Development Plan Documents (DPD's) consisting of the Core Strategy, Town Centre Area Action Plan, Development Sites and Places and Proposals Map.

5.122 **Policy CSP 6: Development that Produces Renewable Energy**

Policy CSP6 states that support will be given to development proposals that produce renewable energy if proposals don't significantly harm character of the landscape, biodiversity, highway safety and infrastructure. Although the site is located on all sides by the Barnsley's Green Belt, it is important to note that the site is an existing brownfield site located adjacent to industrial buildings. The Environmental Statement explains how the proposal

seeks to minimise any potential adverse effects which could rise from the proposed development of the nature conservation of the surrounding area.

5.123 **CSP25: New Development and Sustainable Travel;**

The location of the proposed REC facilities has been selected to provide optimum transport efficiency. A Transport Statement has been prepared for the proposed development. Potential traffic generation arising from the construction and operation of the proposed REC has been assessed.

5.124 **CSP26: New Development and Highway Improvement**

The effects of traffic on local amenity are examined in detail in the Environmental Statement. The Transport Statement has confirmed the suitability of the road network to accommodate the likely volumes of traffic expected as a result of the proposed development during all stages of development.

5.125 **CSP28: Reducing the Impact of Road Travel;**

Peel has taken great care to minimise adverse environmental effects, and this is set out in detail in the Environmental Statement that accompanies the planning application. The Houghton Main proposals will generate traffic within the capacity of the road network. This is further explained in the Environmental Statement and Traffic Impact Assessment which accompany the planning application.

5.126 **CSP29: Design Principles**

A Design and Access Statement (D&AS) has been produced in support of this REC. The D&AS demonstrates that an appropriate design approach has been adopted, and be followed throughout the process, to result in a development that can integrate successfully with the surrounding environment. The design approach has achieved a high quality design concept that takes account of the existing urban form, and the natural and heritage features of the surrounding area.

The proposed development is industrial in nature and the main components of the development will be industrial in appearance.

Policy CSP29 sets out criteria for the design, siting and external appearance of proposals. These have been taken in to account in the design of the REC. This is further explained in the D&AS accompanying this planning application.

The design and layout of the proposals have been designed to make best use of the land available and to fit into the local context and topography. The proposals will generate energy that will be used within the plant, and could also be used to heat adjacent or nearby buildings subject to take up. The Houghton Main proposals are therefore broadly in line with this policy

5.127 **CSP30: The Historic Environment**

Policy CSP30 requires that development should accord with the objectives of and not cause damage to character and appearance of conservation areas, listed buildings and archaeological remains. The proposed development is located outside of any such protected areas. There is however some adjacent site interest which might be affected. The nature conservation and related issues associated with the proposed development is set out in the Environmental Statement

5.128 **CSP34: Protection of Green Belt**

The proposed development at Houghton Main is surrounded on all sides by the land within the Barnsley's Green Belt.

5.129 **CSP37: Landscape Character**

Policy CSP37 requires development to sustain, conserve and, where possible, enhance the character, local diversity and quality of the landscape and natural and built environment of the area. The site is located within Landscape Character C2 Lower Dearne Lowland River Floor. The study area is characterised by the combination of agricultural and industrial land uses. The industry in the area comprises of former open cast workings and many modern industrial developments are located on the valley floor.

5.130 Technical assessments which support this application confirm that the proposals will not have an unacceptable impact on the environment and is therefore consistent with policy CSP30 and CSP34.

5.131 **CSP39: Contaminated and Unstable Land**

A Phase 1 Environmental and Mining Report and a Contamination Assessment have been carried out and the results are reported in the Environmental Statement. The proposals are designed to ensure that risk of future pollution is minimised. See Chapter 7 for more details on how ground quality has been assessed and the findings which show no constraints on development.

5.132 **CSP40: Pollution Control and Protection**

Policy CSP40 states that development will be expected to demonstrate that is it not likely to result, directly or indirectly in an increase in air, surface water and groundwater, noise, smell, dust, vibration which would unacceptably affect or cause a nuisance to the natural and built environment. The effects of the proposed REC on air and land quality are set out in the Environmental Statement that accompanies the planning application. It is therefore considered these the proposals comply with the requirements of policy CSP40.

5.133 **CSP41: Development in Air Quality Management Areas**

Policy CSP40 states that support will be given to the monitoring of air quality. The policy seeks to protect and enhance air quality, including the reduction of air pollution and the emission of greenhouse gases. The Houghton Main proposals will meet the emission standards that will be required by the Environment Agency. Dust will be contained within the main building.

The remaining Saved Policies of the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan, (Adopted December 2000

5.134 The adopted Core Strategy supersedes a number of the Unitary Development Plan Policies.

5.135 However, until all the Local Development Framework documents are in place, some parts of the Unitary Development Plan (**UDP**) are being "saved" to ensure comprehensive planning policy coverage remains in place. Saved parts of the UDP remain in force and will be used in determining planning applications until replaced. The following policies are considered relevant to the planning application.

5.136 **Policy ED7:** Areas defined on the proposals maps as employment policy areas will remain in employment use. Unless otherwise stated in community area volumes, development will normally be permitted for business, industry and storage and distribution. Other employment generating uses may also be permitted if they are compatible with adjoining uses. Class A1 (shops) and Class A2 (Financial and professional services) will not be permitted.

5.137 The proposed REC will be an employment generating use on identified employment land and so is consistent with this policy.

5.138 **Policy T3:** The existing strategic highway network for the borough, as set out in diagram 11, has been designated and will be reviewed as appropriate in order to concentrate heavy flows of traffic, particularly HGVs's on the currently most appropriate routes.

5.139 A Transport Assessment (see Volume 3 of the Environmental Statement) has been undertaken and is submitted in support of this application. The proposed development is located in close proximity to the highway network and this will reduce the impact of traffic through residential areas. It is therefore considered that the proposed development is consistent with Policy T3.

5.140 **Policy TC21:** The external areas of Built Development will be expected to achieve good standards of both hard and soft landscape treatment. The design proposals set out in Section 3 of the Planning Application and the landscape scheme proposals set out in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment contained within the Environmental Statement address the requirements of this policy.

5.141 **Policy DA4:** The site of the former Houghton Main Colliery is designated as an area of investigation for potential employment development.

Compliance with the Development Plan

5.142 It has been demonstrated that the development proposal is consistent with the Development Plan and represents sustainable development. It is therefore considered that the development as proposed is afforded high level of support by the NPPF.

6.0 Consideration of Need and Alternatives

Introduction

6.1 The Environmental Statement (Chapter 5) assesses the need and alternatives for proposed REC comprising a 150,000 tonne per annum (tpa) Timber Resource Recovery Centre (TRRC).

6.2 The NPPF, at Paragraph 98, states that:

"*When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should:*

- *not require applicants for energy development to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and also recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and*
- *approve the application* [unless material considerations indicate otherwise] *if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should also expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas.*"

6.3 In the context of this clear national policy, it is not considered necessary to provide detailed justification of the need for a renewable energy park to process up to 150,000tpa of biomass at this site.

6.4 Notwithstanding this, Policy WCS4 (*Waste Management proposals on non-allocated sites*) of the JWP states:

> "*Proposals for waste development on non-allocated sites will be permitted provided they demonstrate how they…do not undermine the provision of waste development on strategic sites set out under Policy WCS3…*"

6.5 In addition, Part B of Policy WCS6 (*General Considerations for all Waste Management Proposals*) includes a requirement for applications for waste management proposals to include details regarding "*The origins of the waste and where it is going".*

6.6 It is therefore against this context that this chapter assesses the need for the proposed development. This chapter focuses on the availability of feedstock for the proposed development and the suitability of the processes proposed and the site location.

Suitability of Site Location

6.7 A detailed updated Alternative Site Assessment (**ASA**) has been undertaken to assess the suitability of alternative sites and to justify the selection of the application site for the proposed REC.

6.8 The ASA has been undertaken with full consideration to the requirements of Policy WCS4 of the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan, saved UDP policy DA4, Core Strategy

Policies for employment land and information from the Barnsley Employment Land Review 2010. Full details of the findings of the ASA are provided in Section 5 of the planning application.

6.9 The alternative site assessment has been undertaken following a methodology agreed with BMBC planning officers. The ASA has used a wide range of methods to identify potential sites for assessment and a total of 78 sites were evaluated in a Stage 1 assessment process. 47 of these sites were found to have either significant constraints or to lack the necessary available site area. The remaining sites were further examined in a Stage 2 assessment.

6.10 The suitability of potential alternative sites in stage 2 was evaluated on the basis of access, visual impact, other amenity impacts (such as air quality and noise), proximity to waste markets, technical considerations and availability.

6.11 The main conclusion from the assessment is that whilst there are a number of suitable sites available, no site performs any better than the proposed Houghton Main site, the proposed development of which has been fully evaluated through an Environmental Impact Assessment.

6.12 Constraints of varying levels of significance were identified for most of the Stage 2 sites assessed. For the majority of the alternative sites identified, the potential for visual and amenity impacts would need to be fully assessed in order to determine suitability. If required, the suitability of mitigations to reduce to an acceptable level the visual and amenity impacts on sensitive receptors in the proximity to the alternative sites would need to be carefully evaluated.

6.13 Some sites experience access constraints for the heavy vehicle traffic associated with the proposed development. Other sites are more remote from waste sources in the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham area. On three sites, the site is either unavailable or there is concern about the technical operational aspects of the site's ability to accommodate the proposed development.

6.14 In the light of these factors and within the constraints set by the assessment, no potential alternative sites were identified that are considered to be more suitable for proposed aggregated development than the Houghton Main Site, which is the subject of this application.

Feedstock Availability

6.15 The TRRC will have capacity to process 150,000 tpa of biomass (waste wood), which will be supplied through a single contract. Northern Bio-Power intends to include provisions within these arrangements for as much waste wood as possible to be supplied from local and sub-regional markets. A single contract provides advantages in terms of improving the ability of the operators to manage heavy vehicle traffic routes to the plant, to manage and limit delivery hours in accordance with operational, traffic and local amenity considerations. From an operational viewpoint, a single contract also provides more control over the quality and consistency of waste materials and greater security in terms of power generation.

6.16 UK Timber has estimated (WRAP Poyry, 2009) that some 4.6 million tonnes per annum of construction and demolition waste wood is generated in the UK each year. Northern Bio-Power intends to include provisions within its arrangements for as much waste wood as possible to be supplied from local and sub-regional markets. Wood will be taken from sources as close to the facility as possible to minimise transportation requirements. Because of its relatively low-bulk density, waste wood is typically aggregated and prepared (shredded) before transportation, to maximise capacity on lorries and hence minimise HGV movements. The proposed TRRC will also be capable of taking oversize timber from garden waste and this potential feedstock is not included within the figures below or in assumptions. These arisings are believed to be significant.

Table 6.1: Local and Sub-Regional Sources of Waste Wood

Timber Waste Stream	Timber Tonnage arisings within 50 mile radius of Houghton Main (tonnes per annum)
Local Authority	177,219
Commercial and Industrial	395,039
Construction and Demolition	347,103
Compost Oversize	27,745
Total	974,101

Source: Private Communication LRS consultancy 2014 (Baseline data 2012)

Alternative Design and Layout

6.17 As part of the design development process for the facility on the application site various site layouts and configurations of the proposed REC were developed and each reviewed against design criteria and the overall architectural design approach. Section 3 of the planning application, the Design and Access Statement, provides full details of the design approach taken.

6.18 From the outset, a number of design constraints were identified as key drivers in developing the proposed site layout and architectural design for the Houghton Main site and the proposed REC.

6.19 The location of the TRRC facility is dictated by the site shape and size. Its siting is also influenced by having to ensure that the location and interrelationship of all buildings and external equipment, together with the road infrastructure that serves them, delivers an efficient and safe layout.

6.20 The development of the design and layout of the facility has also been guided by the site constraints and operational requirements of the proposed activities. The final layout and design of the development was considered to be the most operationally efficient means of using the space available for the activities proposed.

6.21 Peel has been keen to ensure that the evolution of design approaches takes place within a framework supported locally and which is consistent with the principle of Core Strategy policy CSP29 on design. The advice of the Barnsley Urban Renaissance Design Advisory Panel

(BURDAP) has been sought and its input has been valuable in informing the proposed design. The Design and Access Statement, explains how the design has responded to BURDAP advice.

6.22 The design approach has also sought to meet the requirements of Core Strategy policy CSP37 in relation to the retention and enhancement of the distinctiveness of Landscape Character Areas. There has been a close relationship between the development of the alternative design options and assessments of landscape character, and landscape and visual impacts. Within practical technical constraints, this has influenced approaches to site layout, building design and profile, materials and landscape proposals. Extensive engagement with local communities has also been a very important influence on design approach. Further details on this are set out in Chapter 8 of this statement and in the Design and Access Statement set out in Section 3 of the application.

Assessment of strategic waste management sites in the BDR Joint Waste Plan

6.23 The Planning Application includes an updated Alternative Sites Assessment (ASA), required as part of the EIA process. The ASA has recognised that allocated strategic waste management sites from the Joint Waste Plan must be acceptable in planning policy terms, since they had been considered and assessed through a tested waste local plan process, and adopted.

6.24 The purpose of the ASA has been to test whether, in the light of constraints and impacts that may be present from the development of the proposed site at Houghton Main, other potentially acceptable sites would obviously perform better.

6.25 The ASA makes the point that, in Barnsley, there are dozens of potentially acceptable employment sites suitable for waste management development, when the policies and criteria of the Joint Waste Plan are taken into account. Starting with allocated employment sites and comparing this with updated monitoring information from Barnsley Council, all but a relatively small number of employment sites are discounted from the ASA. These have been subjected to more detailed assessment and none are found to perform any better than the Houghton Main site.

6.26 Further explanation of the treatment within the ASA of the four strategic waste management sites allocated in policy WCS3 of the BDR Joint Waste Plan is set out below.

6.27 **Site 3.1 – Sandall Stones Road, Kirk Sandall (Doncaster)** – The site is 2ha in size and the indicated potential capacity is only 120,000 tonnes per annum, whereas the minimum site requirement for the proposed REC is approximately 3 hectares and the capacity of the facility proposed is 150,000 tonnes per annum. The mitigation identified in Table 9 of the Joint Waste Plan relates to the site's proximity to the Sherwood Sandstone aquifer and sensitive receptors. For the key reason of insufficient site size and capacity, the site is discounted.

6.28 **Site 3.2 – Hatfield Power Park, Stainforth (Doncaster)** – The 16 ha Hatfield Power Park is no longer the subject of interest in delivering the local Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham PFI waste management contract. The land identified in the Joint Waste Plan has already been permitted for waste reception and materials recycling facility including ancillary buildings (reference

10/01175/REMM – a certificate of lawful development was granted in relation to this on 12th May 2014). The significant infrastructure investment required to deliver the wider area's development potential (The Joint Waste Plan (Table 9) identifies the need for a road link to the M18 and improvements in flood defences as well as other development constraints) remains to be delivered as part of a comprehensive development already being promoted for the wider Hatfield site (i.e not the allocated site). For the purposes of viable development of the proposed REC at this time, this would render this site strongly constrained. The mitigation identified in Table 9 of the Joint Waste Plan relates to the need to avoid acid deposition from waste management uses on the Thorne Moor Special Area of Conservation. For the reasons outlined above, the site is discounted.

6.29 **Site 3.3 – Bolton Road, Manvers (Rotherham)** – The Bolton Road, Manvers Site is already being taken up by BDR for the development of its municipal waste management facilities. The site is therefore unavailable for alternative waste management uses. For this reason, the site is discounted.

6.30 **Site 3.4 – Aldwarke Steel Works, Parkgate (Rotherham)** – The 5 ha Aldwarke Steel Works is a reserve new site for strategic waste management uses. Table 9 of the Joint Waste Plan identifies the infrastructure requirements and timescale for development of the site. These include the provision of rail and river access (via river wharf and railhead) to handle bulk waste. Whilst assessed as suitable for waste management uses, the site does not fit with the proposed REC development as applied for, for two main reasons:

- The TRRC will operate as a local/sub-regional facility drawing on a small number of suppliers who would deliver materials by road and who would be unlikely to be able to utilise rail or river access. The use of river or rail access to the site would most likely be based on the transfer of waste from a single source by river or rail over the long term, most likely municipal waste.

- The mitigation identified in Table 9 of the Joint Waste Plan relates to flood risk and views from designated historic landscapes which would constrain the development of the proposed TRRC.

Summary

6.31 Based on the proven suitability of the site and the established availability of suitable feedstock for the facility, it is considered there is a justifiable need for the proposed REC on the subject site and adopting the technology and processes proposed.

7.0 Consideration of Potential Environmental Impacts

Introduction

7.1 This chapter details how the application has taken into account the planning policies and development framework (identified in Chapter 5) by summarising the findings of technical assessments and describing the mitigation measures which will be implemented as part of the proposal to minimise any residual impacts on the local environment.

7.2 Full details of the technical assessments undertaken are provided in the Environmental Statement (Volume 3) which supports this planning application.

Transport

7.3 In terms of highway impacts of the previous application 2014/0559, BMBC highways had no objections to the proposals, based on the results of the TA undertaken for that scheme, which generated 130 HGV movements per day, with 18 staff vehicle movements – 148 movements in all.

7.4 BMBC highways accepted the Transport Assessment for that application demonstrated that the then proposed REC would generate less traffic than the currently consented scheme at the site (for 19 industrial units). BMBC highways also accepted that there would be no impact on the Cathill and Broomhill roundabouts from the scheme proposed in 2014/0559. In terms of the NPPF, the BMBC officer view was that there were no highways grounds for refusal on the basis of residual cumulative impact, which was not classed as severe in this case.

7.5 Development associated with the revised application will generate only 60 HGV movements and 16 staff vehicles movements per day. This is significantly fewer HGV movements.

7.6 A comprehensive updated Transport Assessment (TA) has been undertaken by SK Transport Planning Ltd (SKTP) to utilise the information collected on current traffic movements on the local highways network, information on permitted traffic movements associated with current planning permissions on the application site, forecast the number of traffic movements generated by the proposal, ascertain any impacts the development may have on the local road network and recommend any mitigation measure which should be implemented. The TA is set out in Volume 3 of and is discussed in Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement.

7.7 The type of development proposed, whilst not generating substantial volumes of traffic, will include heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic required for the transport of materials to the site, and to a lesser extent, exports from the site. The TA shows that the development will have a minimal impact on surrounding highway network and will generate less traffic than that associated with the permitted site use.

7.8 The TA considers the impact of the proposal on the A1695 Park Spring Road and site access. In accordance with request of the BMBC in relation to the previous, larger scheme proposed in application 2014/0559, the traffic impact at the Broomhill and Cathill Roundabouts is again included within Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement. The TA shows that the proposal will generate considerably less traffic than that already permitted for the site, and also that the new proposal will generate significantly fewer movements than the previous scheme. The TA shows that the new proposal will have an insignificant impact when compared to baseline traffic conditions. The development will have an insignificant impact on the local highway network when compared to both the background traffic and the baseline traffic volumes.

7.9 In response to anecdotal local concerns, as a good neighbour, the operator has agreed to manage the timings of HGV movements to avoid periods of congestion on the local highway network, and to manage the routes used by HGV traffic accessing the site to reduce inconvenience to local communities. The TA concludes that the proposal meets the requirements of local and national policy, and that the residual impact of the proposal will not be 'severe' (a specific term applied by the NPPF).

7.10 The assessment concludes that the proposed REC will generate a low number of vehicle movements, substantially below the level that would be generated by the consented industrial scheme, and that the proposed scheme will have a minimal effect on highway operation and safety. The proposals contained in the revised application will generate significantly fewer vehicle movements than the previous scheme, accepted by BMBC Highways officers.

7.11 The Transport Assessment concludes that the proposal meets the requirements of local and national policy. Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement addresses the findings of the assessment and Table 6.21 shows that the residual impact of the proposal will be negligible (and therefore not 'severe' under the terms of the NPPF.)

Managing HGV Movements

7.12 Despite the same conditions being in place to support the previous application, members of Barnsley Council refused application 2014/0559, citing concerns over traffic impacts. Further details of the conditions in which the proposed TRRC will operate and in which HGV movements will be managed, and the mechanisms for doing this, are set out here.

7.13 The revised application brings forward the commitment from the previous application to limit HGV deliveries to take place within 'normal working hours' defined as 07.00-19.00 Monday to Friday, 07.00-13.00 on Saturday and no deliveries on Sunday. The period sought for deliveries in revised application reflects the operational characteristics of the TRRC, which will operate with the input of a constant and/or smooth flow of materials into the process. The advantages of this approach are that the need to 'stockpile' materials is significantly reduced, giving significant environmental benefits.

7.14 It is anticipated that the TRRC would take in materials from a single supplier. The TRRC would receive deliveries at a constant rate throughout the delivery period sought, a period of 12 hours on weekdays. HGVs would arrive at the TRRC at the rate of only 2-3 per hour (5 movements) or one HGV every 20-25 minutes.

7.15 This allows the facility to provide only a small amount of storage of wood materials (inside a building), needed to bridge gaps between delivery periods overnight or on Sundays, or a minimal period of disruption to supplies.

7.16 In the context of the capacity of the highways, junctions and roundabouts assessed in the Transport Assessment, this is of no significance in highways impact terms at any time of the day, including the peak hour.

7.17 The flow of materials into the renewable energy generation process at the proposed TRRC is similar in nature to the just in time distribution operations of other businesses in the area. Conditions which constrain the ability of businesses to operate in an efficient manner and in a way which minimises or avoids environmental impacts (e.g. by removing requirements to stockpile waste) need to have sound planning and environmental justification.

7.18 The Transport Assessment has demonstrated that there are no impacts arising from the proposed development on local highways, junctions and roundabouts. Impacts on peak hour traffic are minimal and are certainly not 'severe' in terms of their residual cumulative impacts as acknowledged earlier in the highways consultation response. In these circumstances, the suggestion of a condition to restrict delivery hours appears to be unnecessary in planning terms.

7.19 The applicants understand and are keen to address local community concerns about perceived impacts of HGV movements associated with the proposed REC on local highways capacity, which may remain despite the evidence presented in our Transport Assessment.

7.20 The proposal made previously, which was included with the officer recommendation as a draft condition, would require submission of a HGV Management Plan for delivery movements for approval by BMBC prior to the commencement of operations at the proposed REC. The HGV Management Plan would include a lorry routing plan and would set out details of a voluntary cap on HGV movements during peak hours. The cap would be calculated at the average number of HGV movements calculated from the number of HGV movements across the proposed delivery period of 07:00 – 19:00 Mondays to Fridays as assessed within the Transport Assessment (TA) that accompanied the REC planning application.

7.21 The average hourly HGV movements identified from the daily total HGV movement set out in Tables 5.1 and 5.4 within the TA during the peak period would be 2-3 HGV visits (5 movements). The applicant remains prepared, in relation to this revised application, to accept a planning condition that capped hourly HGV movements at this level during the agreed peak hour period. For clarification there would be no cap on Saturdays.

7.22 This approach would ensure that a highways related condition which is applied to the planning permission is reasonable and appropriate to the mitigation or avoidance of environmental impacts in accordance with the evidence presented in the Transport Assessment.

7.23 This approach will provide certainty to BMBC Highways and achieve significant improvement and a greater level of control of HGV movements during the more sensitive peak hour period than the industrial consent already in place at the site.

7.24 The suggested approach is both reasonable and proportionate to the proposed development and secures significant highways benefits at the site when considered alongside the existing unrestricted consented HGV movements associated with the site and neighbouring developments.

Framework Travel Plan

7.25 A Framework Travel Plan has been prepared to support and promote sustainable access to the site, and identify measures that can be implemented to further reduce the number of single occupancy car trips generated by the proposal.

7.26 Encouraging the use of public transport is an important aim of national and local transport policy. Section 3 of the Transport Assessment describes how these policies aim to support this principle through local development in sustainable locations. Travel plan information prepared for the scheme already permitted on the Houghton Main site (2011/1443) shows that development would generate significant demand for public transport use at the existing bus stops. The local planning authority has considered this level of extra public transport demand to be acceptable in principle.

7.27 Table 2.6 of the Transport Assessment describes the level and pattern of bus services to the site. It describes the existing bus services as offering a good level of coverage which will cover the proposed shift patterns for the proposed REC. In Autumn 2014, bus services serving Houghton Main Bus Stops were further improved, offering better connections to the site by public transport.

7.28 Appendix B of the Transport Assessment sets out a Framework Travel Plan for the proposed REC. It indicates a typical car driver mode share of 71%, which will mean that 29% may travel to the site by none-car means. Some will car share, cycle or walk but most will use bus services.

7.29 The total number of staff employed at the site will be upto 25 full time equivalents, with two shifts of four workers on 12-hour shifts (7am to 7pm) and four management staff working normal office hours (8am to 5pm). Given that shifts will be organised so as to avoid peak hour travel, only a small proportion of employees are likely to require local public transport in peak hours (on the basis of the modal share indicated above, possibly just one person using the bus in the peak period). This should not place significant extra demand on bus services.

Hydrology, Flood Risk and SUDS

7.30 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy have been prepared to identify if the site is at risk of flooding, if the development poses a risk to flooding elsewhere and establish a suitable drainage design for the development. The assessment also takes into account external factors such as climate change. The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy is set out in Volume 3 and discussed in Chapter 7 of the Environmental Statement. The surface water drainage scheme details are also set out in Section 8 of the planning application.

7.31 The key findings from the Flood Risk Assessment are that, based on a discussion with the Environment Agency and a review of Environment Agency flood maps (based on historic air photographic information) which show the site to be located largely within Flood Zone 1 with a small section in the westernmost part of the site is located within the current mapped Flood Zone 2, the site would be considered to have a low to medium risk of fluvial flooding.

7.32 However, updated and more accurate information based on further interpretation of this information in combination with detailed site topographical information surveyed as part of the previous planning application, led to the position being agreed with the Environment Agency, reflected in its response to consultation on the previous application on this matter, is that that a 'low' level of flood risk is posed by this source of flooding.

7.33 The proposed development is classified as 'less vulnerable'. Less vulnerable uses are appropriate within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3 after the completion of a satisfactory FRA. All development is, however, appropriate within Flood Zone 1.

7.34 In addition, the FRA has considered the potential impact of the development on surface water and foul runoff rates.

Surface Water Drainage

7.35 The surface water management strategy for the proposed development will manage and reduce the flood risk posed by the surface water runoff from the site.

7.36 The site is approximately 3.0 ha in area and is currently a brownfield site which is largely grassland with limited areas of a mixture of young and mature tree cover located towards the westernmost boundary of the site, with a number of hedgerows around the site perimeter.

7.37 The attenuation volume required to reduce the post-application surface water runoff to the permissible Brownfield runoff rate of 140 l/s/ha (minus 30%) has been calculated in the detailed drainage design in Appendix 7.

7.38 The total storage requirement for this site has been designed to provide 207.5m^3 of attenuation.

7.39 This provides a suitable solution to the need to manage surface water effectively to standards agreed with BMBC.

Foul Water

7.40 Assuming a peak foul water discharge of 100 litres per person per day, for a maximum of 30 FTE staff at an industrial unit with a canteen, the peak foul flow from the site will be approximately 0.04 l/s. An industrial unit without a canteen with similar staff levels will have a peak foul flow of 0.02 l/s. In reality, the site will employ upto 25 staff, of whom normally about eight will be on-site at any one time.

7.41 Discussions with the Environment Agency are on-going. There is no Yorkshire Water sewer located at the site, though there is a sewer connection further afield. As such, the use of an appropriately specified package treatment plant (which are normally designed to cater for at least 50 people as a standard), located within the site, should be investigated further at detailed design.

7.42 The location and treatment requirement for these works would need to be developed with the Environment Agency and LPA as part of the Environmental permitting process set out by the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

7.43 It has been demonstrated that both surface water and foul flows from the site can be managed such that flood risk to and from the site following the proposed development is not increased.

7.44 This FRA demonstrates that the proposed development would be operated with minimal risk from flooding, would not increase flood risk elsewhere and is compliant with the requirements of the NPPF. The development should not therefore be precluded on the grounds of flood risk.

Air Quality

7.45 An updated Air Quality Assessment has been undertaken to support the revised application. This sets out the locality's baseline conditions, establish the air quality impacts the proposed development may have on sensitive receptors (such as residential properties and the ASOS building) and identify ways to mitigate any impacts. The Air Quality Assessment is set out in Appendix 8.1 in Volume 3 of the Environmental Statement.

7.46 Modelling was undertaken to assess the effect of emissions from the proposed facility, taking into account factors such other development in the local area. The assessments concluded:

- The construction works have the potential to create dust. During construction it will therefore be necessary to apply a package of mitigation measures to minimise dust emission. With these measures in place, it is expected that any residual effects will be insignificant.

- The operational impacts of increased traffic have been discounted as insignificant using published screening criteria.
- The operational impacts of the proposed gasification plant on human health have been shown to be insignificant.
- The operational impacts of the proposed gasification plant on ecosystems have been shown to be insignificant.
- Overall the operational air quality impacts on human health and sensitive ecosystems are considered to be insignificant.

7.47 In terms of odour, there is no odour from the stack of the TRRC. A secondary combustion chamber within the facility operates at 850^{o}C for two seconds, which is a thermal oxidiser. The TRRC will be odour-free in operation.

7.48 In terms of stack height for the revised proposals, the stack for the TRRC will remain 45 metres in height. The gasifier will combust syngas at the top of the gasification chamber (where air is pumped in to catalyse the combustion) and then the waste gas will be cleaned and released via the 45m stack.

7.49 The Air Quality Assessment has screened the proposed traffic movements associated with the proposal, which as with the previous application, are well below the screening criterion.

7.50 In terms of air quality considerations, all other operational characteristics of the proposed TRRC remain the same as the previous application.

7.51 The potential for dust impacts to arise from construction will be mitigated through appropriate measures to be adopted in accordance with the construction dust impact assessment and also in accordance with a construction method statement to be prepared and submitted to BMBC for approval prior to the commencement of development.

7.52 In considering the previous application 2014/0559, concern was raised by members of Barnsley Council that meteorological information was relied upon, based on data relating to Robin Hood Airport, located 30km to the SSE. As already made clear to BMBC officers, the nationally agreed good practice for Air Quality Assessment stipulates reliance on monitoring data sites recognised by the Met Office and World Meteorology Organisation. Of two alternative sites, Emley Moor is located a similar distance to the NW and another alternative was discounted because of poor and incomplete data. Monitoring. Robin Hood Airport was judged to be the best match.

Landscape and Visual Impact

7.53 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken to identify any visual impacts which may result from the proposed development on sensitive receptors such as nearby

residential properties. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is included in the Environmental Statement.

7.54 The surrounding land uses are predominantly agricultural in nature, with the village of Darfield approximately 1.1km south, Little Houghton is approximately 0.9km south east and Great Houghton 1.5km east.

7.55 There would be areas of landscaping on the periphery of the development. Existing areas of planting on the western and northern boundaries of the site would be supplemented.

7.56 The study area is characterised by the combination of agricultural land uses. The industry in the area comprises of former open cast workings and many modern industrial developments are located on the valley floor.

7.57 The valley floor of the River Dearne that characterises the study area is located approximately 100 metres to the west of the site.

7.58 The site itself is located between 25 metres and 35 metres AOD approximately.

7.59 The ASOS fulfilment centre building is a focal element within the study area. The building has a total height of 18 metres to the building's apex. Therefore the proposed TRRC building elevation of 30 metres would be visible above the roof of the ASOS building for receptors to the east, particularly those located in Great Houghton and Little Houghton.

7.60 Due to the predominant industrial and commercial land uses surrounding the site, there is a low density of sensitive receptors.

7.61 It is unlikely that any residential receptors would be significantly affected by the proposed development, and where there are oblique or partial views of the development these would be seen as in combination with other detracting features within the view, predominantly the ASOS building.

7.62 Overall, the development is expected to have a slight adverse landscape impact and slight moderate/slight adverse visual impact. The proposal mitigates some impacts through its design approach as detailed in the Design and Access Statement at Section 3 and in the Landscaping Scheme set out in the Environmental Statement.

Landscape Masterplan

7.63 Proposals for landscape and ecological works have been developed and presented on a landscape masterplan which reflects the changed application area, but retains almost all areas previously identified for landscape improvements and sets out new areas to reflect the changed eastern boundary of the application site. We have prepared the following plans to explain our proposals:

- 1302_SK166 Landscaping Masterplan
- 1302_SK167 Landscaping Masterplan Green Corridor and Ponds Close up

- 1302_SK169 Footpath and Bridleway Link – RSPB Houghton Washlands Option

7.64 The updated landscape masterplan shows the on-site landscape and ecology provision being made:

7.65 **Western boundary landscape improvements and green corridor** – We have strengthened (by widening) the area available along the western boundary of the site for planting and an ecological corridor. This has also been lengthened through the inclusion of additional land to the south (see below).

7.66 **Off-site planting on additional land to the south of the application site** – An additional area of land to the south has been made available by Harworth Estates for landscape improvements, to be provided and maintained by the applicants. This land is edged blue on the plan and has the effect of widening the strip of land to the west of the Alkane facility, to both allow for more effective screening planting, whilst creating an area of land for semi-naturalised grassland with areas of wetland wildflower meadows to encourage the introduction of mosses and other indigenous wetland species. When mature, planting in this area will create significant landscape improvements in terms of views of the proposed REC and of the ASOS Distribution Centre from parts of Darfield.

7.67 **On-site landscape and ecological works** – A suite of small ponds and scrapes will be created in the north east of the application site. These will contain indigenous reeds, grasses and other marginal plants. This part of the site will also receive translocated marshy grassland turfs. There is an area of orchid plug planting earmarked in this area also.

7.68 An extensive area of screen planting along the northern boundary of the site will aim to enhance existing vegetation and integrate the site into its surroundings, particularly the Edderthorpe Ings Nature Reserve to the north. Woodland edge planting will include native species and habitat creation to improve bio-diversity. This is an important contribution to maintaining the contribution of habitat corridors flowing north to south around the edge of the application site.

7.69 A programme of ecological works to be undertaken prior to and during construction will ensure no harm is done to breeding birds and reptile populations through carefully timed works and translocation of species to other suitable habitats either on site or off-site.

7.70 **Off-site landscape and ecological works** – The applicants have discussed with officers of the Dearne Valley Green Heart Partnership, the anticipated translocation of reptiles to the Houghton Washland (RSPB). This will be either to an identified existing suitable habitat for translocation or to a newly created habitat.

7.71 **Financial Contribution for improvements to the Dearne Valley Nature Improvement Area (NIA)** – The applicants expect to provide a Unilateral Undertaking Agreement of the type proposed to accompany the previous application 2014/0559, which would deliver a financial contribution to Barnsley Council for bio-diversity and landscape improvements within the Barnsley section of the NIA.

Noise and Vibration

7.72 An updated Noise and Vibration Assessment, undertaken by Enzygo in January 2015, examines the potential for noise impacts which may result from the construction and operation of the proposed development on sensitive receptors such as nearby residential properties. The Noise Assessment is set out in Chapter 10 of the Environmental Statement.

7.73 A noise survey has been undertaken at the closest receptors locations to the site, which has been used to inform the assessment.

7.74 Assessment of onsite operational noise has been undertaken based upon the methodology of BS4142, the measured background noise level data and predicted operational noise levels from the proposed REC (TRRC and on site vehicles). Within the scope of this application formal consultation exercise was undertaken with the planning authority (LPA), BMBC and with the Environmental Health Department at BMBC relating to the noise and vibration issues associated with the development of the REC.

7.75 As a result of the nature of the development and the separation distances involved between the operational plant and the nearest sensitive receptors, it is not considered that operational vibration would be a significant issue associated with the proposed REC.

7.76 The processes associated with the proposed REC are unlikely to generate significant levels of vibration that would be discernible beyond the site boundary and certainly not at the closest sensitive receptors which are some distance away.

7.77 The noise monitoring survey conducted within the vicinity of the Houghton Main site was undertaken through a combination of short term attended monitoring and longer term unattended monitoring surveys.

7.78 Impacts to specific identified receptors during the construction phase are expected to be relatively short-term in duration. Typical construction techniques employed within the scope of a development would not generally give rise to significant vibration issues outside of the immediate vicinity of the operation.

7.79 The assessments of the daytime period for both the weekend and weekday periods, presented indicates that the proposed REC facility would operate at a level considered to 'Provide a positive indication that complaints are unlikely' and would not be considered to be detrimental to the amenity of the area and as such would not be considered prejudicial to development.

7.80 Further to this, the assessments indicate that the facility would conform to the criteria determined within the relevant planning guidance document, PCG No1 relating to both LA90 and LAeq criteria.

7.81 Based upon the site layout, plant complement and noise levels, as well as the inherent mitigation measures (detailed within Appendix 10B), it is apparent that the proposed REC

would conform to the criteria detailed by the LPA (L_{90} +3dB) and as such additional mitigation would not be necessary.

7.82 The short term effects of the construction activities could result in significant impacts depending upon the works being undertaken at the time and the area in which they occur. With the implementation of the proposed temporary mitigation measures, careful consideration of the construction programme, and adherence to a CEMP or S61 agreement, the resulting impact significance will be reduced to within acceptable levels.

7.83 The impacts of operational noise from the proposed facility, with the implementation of the incorporated mitigation measures as detailed within this Chapter and accompanying technical section, are predicted to be acceptable and are not, therefore, deemed to have an adverse effect within the vicinity of the application site.

7.84 Overall it is considered that the assessments undertaken within the scope of the Noise Assessment have shown that noise associated with the operation of the proposed REC, as defined within the scope of this report, would conform to the criteria determined by BMBC and as such, would not be detrimental to the amenity of the nearest noise sensitive receptor locations in the area.

Ecology and Nature Conservation

7.85 The Environmental Statement provides details of the findings of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal undertaken in early 2014. The PEA noted that the majority of the site comprises of land of relatively low ecological value (restored poor semi-improved grassland, and encroaching scrub). The relative nature conservation value of the proposal site appears to be low and the site is considered to contain habitats and flora that are at most of local nature conservation significance.

7.86 As part of the PEA, a 2km interrogation of the DEFRA MAGIC database and Barnsley Biological Records Centre (meeting Core Strategy policy requirement CSP36) revealed the following nationally important designated sites:

- West Haigh Wood at 1.6km from the proposed site boundary, designated as a Local Nature Reserve (**LNR**)**;**
- Carlton Main Brickworks, Located approximately 1.3 km from the proposed site boundary, designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

7.87 There are important ecological areas on the immediate peripheries of the site including an RSPB nature reserve being developed on land immediately west of the application site and at the nearby Local Wildlife Site at Edderthorpe Ings. Locally there are environmental initiatives underway to maximise the value of important habitat in the area through the activities of the Dearne Valley Green Heart Partnership which is taking forward objectives to improve bio-diversity within the Dearne Valley NIA.

7.88 The preliminary ecological assessment recommended a number of additional surveys which were undertaken from May 2014. These were:

- **Bat Activity Survey** - The site is assessed as being a minor commuting area for relatively common bat species. No evidence of bat roosting was located and the activity across site is judged as very low compared with other sites. The river Dearne is not surprisingly a bar corridor but the proposals are not expected to generate any light pollution that will impact on the corridor because of topographical shielding.

- **Badger Survey** - The survey revealed no evidence of badger setts or activities on site and it is assessed that it is not necessary to seek a disturbance licence for badgers from Natural England to continue with the development works. However, due to the restrictions encountered during the survey as a result of vegetation it is recommended that a suitably qualified ecologist is present on site during vegetation clearance to supervise works and supply alternative advice if any badger setts or fields signs are encountered.

- **Breeding Birds Survey** – It is not considered that the site is ornithologically valuable and in particular relative to the broader locale which has some significant ornithological sites. Inevitably there is some nesting activity on site but it is considered that this can be sensibly be dealt with by planning condition that will restrict vegetation removal to outside the nesting season of March to August or failing that ensure that it is conducted under the direct supervision of an ecologist to ensure that birds, eggs and nests are not harmed or disturbed.

- **Reptile Survey (including Great Crested Newt)** – The survey covered the areas of the site most suitable for reptile. Three reptiles were observed on the site during the survey period. A full series of measures to protect reptiles from harm during construction has been proposed in Chapter 1 of the Phase 2 Habitat Survey Report contained in Appendix 11 of the Technical Appendices to the Environmental Statement.

- **Problematic Species Survey** - The survey concluded that the application site appears to be free from contamination by problematic species and therefore no further consideration of these needs to be given at this stage. The nearest route for spread of contamination onto site is the balsam in the river corridor. It is recommended that the operator be vigilant to this risk and that their ground managers undertake period inspections of the boundaries and be prepared to use herbicidal spot spraying if the site does become threatened by encroachment.

- **Other Habitats** – A further walkover survey was conducted at the end of May 2014 to update the Preliminary Ecological Survey. This found sections of the centre of the site to contain habitat best coded as (B5) marshy grassland. These were best-fit descriptions as these areas are likely to be reflections of previous site reclamation work. The report

assessed the mosaic of wetter grassland as having an intrinsic nature conservation value which is assessed to be notable at a local or county level. However, the report considered that the marshy grassland present on site is not sustainable in the long term. If the site were allowed to continue its ecological succession, it will tend towards woodland very rapidly with a loss of all or the majority of this habitat block.

- The presence of sphagnum mosses on site is also considered to be an artefact of artificial soil compaction and is not expected to be a sustainable flora on site which will dry and shade out through woodland development.

- It is recommended that an effort be made to save the best blocks of habitat on site through "cherry-picking" and within site translocation to the margins around the proposed landscape pond. It is recommended that turfs be cut from the most diverse sections of the marshy grassland and taken to the pond margins for immediate placement. A pre commencement protocol will be submitted to the LPA detailing the translocation protocol. Furthermore cores of orchid spikes will be rescued and translocated to this area and introduced into the planting zone by plug planting.

7.89 The results of these surveys remain valid and robust in the context of the revised planning application.

7.90 Opportunities to enhance habitat linkage through planting on site has been considered and is included as part of the landscape masterplan discussed above. For example, the inclusion of a pond on the site will provide an opportunity to create habitat linkage through the site.

7.91 It is acknowledged that the significant economic investment that the proposed development will bring to the area should also make a contribution to these wider objectives within the NIA. There are limited opportunities to do this on the application site and these have been maximised in the proposals.

7.92 The opportunity to make a contribution to wider NIA improvements in the vicinity of Houghton Main is therefore proposed through a financial contribution to be made to Barnsley Council for this purpose. The mechanism adopted will be a Unilateral Undertaking Agreement signed by the applicants and the council.

Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions

7.93 Site conditions at the application site have been reassessed to reflect the new proposals. The assessment is based on an updated Phase 1 Environmental and Mining Report, a Hydrogeological desk study and Contamination Assessment, which includes an intrusive ground investigation. The assessment is set out in Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement.

7.94 Made Ground is shown across the southern area of the site associated with former open cast workings. The ground investigation undertaken by Enzygo Ltd and included within the

Contamination Assessment Report (Appendix 12.3) confirmed ground and groundwater conditions to comprise:

- Made Ground consisting of sandy gravelly clay with fragments of ash and brick extending to a depth of 28.7m below ground level (bgl); over
- Coal Measures comprising interbedded sandstone and mudstone.
- Groundwater was measured at a depth of 8.9m bgl.

7.95 With regard to the potential for land contamination, chemical analysis has been undertaken on samples of soil and groundwater. This did not detect any exceedance of General Acceptance Criteria for commercial land use and did not detect asbestos. Whilst leaching tests and groundwater analysis recorded exceedences of Flouranthene above Environmental Quality Standards, the potential risk to controlled waters was dismissed within the Contamination Assessment. No significant values of ground gas were measured. The assessment has concluded that no remedial measures are identified as being required.

7.96 The Mining Report (contained with the Phase 1 Environment Report) has reported that the Coal Authority concludes that any ground movements associated with former deep mining should have stopped. It records that there are no mine shaft entries within 20m of the site.

7.97 The Mining Report covers the ground conditions in relation to the opencast mine workings which took place between 1997 and 2001 on the site. This notes that some areas of fill material used for the restoration of the site will require further compaction. The Environmental Statement set out series of enhancement measures to address this at Construction Phase.

7.98 Based on the assessments carried out, a discovery strategy is proposed in the Environmental Statement, to address any unforeseen contamination encountered during the construction works. Operational Phase contamination risks are likely to be limited to the storage of waste, liquids and fuels. All liquid storage other than clean surface water run-off is to be stored in above ground tanks in bunded structures with double-skins to prevent accidental release to the environment. Suitable interceptors will be included within the drainage system.

7.99 On this basis, and bearing in mind that the proposed TRRC development is essentially identical to that part of the previous scheme (where all related issues were resolved), all outstanding concerns should be capable of being addressed through the discharge of appropriate conditions attached to a grant of planning permission.

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

7.100 An updated Cultural Heritage Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken to determine the likely presence of historic remains onsite and assess the possible impacts upon

the historic assets arising from the proposals. The Cultural Heritage Desk-Based Assessment is included in Volume 3 of the Environmental Assessment.

7.101 It is considered that the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on any designated cultural heritage sites or settings.

7.102 It is also considered that hitherto unknown and hence unrecorded sites may have once been present within the footprint of the proposed development. However such sites will have been destroyed by the intensive utilisation of the proposed development in the 19th and early 20th centuries and that there is a minimal potential for the development to impact directly on any archaeology that might previously have been present.

7.103 Overall, the heritage statement has identified sites of national and regional importance in the study area but these are not within the boundary of the proposed development and will not be adversely affected by the proposed development. The assessment determines that the proposed REC will not adversely affect any heritage assets within the wider vicinity of the site. No mitigation measures are recommended.

Socio-Economic Impacts

7.104 A Socio-Economic Statement is set out in Chapter 14 of the Environmental Statement. It details the positive economic benefits that will result from the development of the proposed REC. The development of the REC will generate at least 200 jobs during the construction phase and up to 25 permanent jobs during its operation.

7.105 There will be opportunities (and commitments made by Peel to encourage) for local access to jobs and supply-chains. Both through the construction process and on-going operations, the applicants intend to recruit as many of these jobs from the local labour market, which is well suited to the skill requirements of the facilities. The operator will offer the opportunity for local businesses to provide services to the proposed TRRC. As a new and important local employer, the TRRC operator will play a full part in supporting local community and environmental initiatives to further regenerate the local area.

7.106 There is a wider regeneration benefit. Many businesses locally and nationally point to their concern over rising and unpredictable energy costs and supplies. Demonstrating a sustainable, renewable and secure source of energy available for local businesses, as this scheme will provide, could encourage existing businesses to stay in the area and new ones to relocate to it. The wider economic benefits of local renewable energy should not be underestimated.

7.107 The proposed REC will therefore contribute to strategic growth objectives for Barnsley through the provision of strategic renewable energy capacity to support local businesses and encourage inward investment based on secure and sustainably energy supplies.

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

7.108 An updated Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been prepared in January 2015 by Bowland Tree Consultancy Limited. The site was visited on 27 February 2014 and a survey of trees was carried out. This survey remains valid in the context of the revised application which has not altered the footprint of the proposed TRRC or its associated infrastructure. New elements, such as the relocated eastern boundary of the application site and the identification of the sub-station, are addressed. The AIA is attached as Section 9 of the planning application.

7.109 The assessment identified seven individual trees, six groups of trees and one hedge which were surveyed for the purpose of the assessment. New tree planting as part of the site landscaping is proposed to the north-eastern and south-eastern sections of the site. The proposals include the provision of a substantial number of new trees, which is projected to adequately mitigate for the necessary development related tree losses.

7.110 Two trees were allocated high retention values, three trees and three groups were allocated moderate retention values, and two trees, three groups and the hedge were allocated low retention values. The site can be developed as proposed whilst retaining the better value individual trees and, in turn improving the overall quality if the tree cover.

Energy Statement

7.111 A short energy statement included at Section 7 of the planning application will address the requirements of Barnsley's Adopted Core Strategy policies CSP2 and CSP5. The proposed REC will directly provide renewable energy and heat to local users and will make a direct contribution to the lowering of carbon dioxide emissions. The design of the development will incorporate sustainable design and construction to adapt to the effects of climate change and achieve relevant building regulations requirements. Appropriate non-process elements of the scheme will seek to achieve very good BREEAM standards. The proposed REC fully meets the requirements of Barnsley Core Strategy Policies CSP2 and CSP5.

Sustainability Impacts

7.112 The Sustainability Statement is included as Section 6 of this planning application. The statement provides an assessment of the performance of the proposed REC against a basket of sustainable development indicators and policies at national and local level and concludes that the proposed REC performs well in sustainable development terms against the National Planning Policy Framework, Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan and Barnsley's Adopted Core Strategy.

7.113 The sustainability statement demonstrates that the proposals satisfy a number of key objectives, responding to local needs and requirements and conforming to current good practice.

8.0 Pre-Application Engagement

Introduction

8.1 The pre –application engagement proposals contained within the revised application for the proposed REC comprising a 150,000 tpa TRRC facility only builds upon the previous application proposals at the site which are being revised and updated as part of this submission.

8.2 The applicants' original consultation programme prepared to support the previous application 2014/0559, was devised to ensure stakeholders and the local community were provided with every opportunity to provide their views on the proposal. The exercise was designed and organised in line with Barnsley Council's Statement of Community Involvement. The consultation approach was designed using PPS Group's principals of consultation.

8.3 The Consultation Plan sought to:

- Notify stakeholders of the consultation programme
- Inform those being consulted about the proposal and the constraints of the site
- Consult with the public and stakeholders and get their views
- Measure responses and analyse the results
- Report back to the local community about the views that were expressed
- Respond by amending the proposal where sensible
- Publish details of the revised scheme and how the consultation programme has influenced it

Consultation methods

8.4 Various local stakeholders in the vicinity of, or with a likely interest in, the development site were identified, including residents, businesses, politicians and stakeholders. Various methods were employed to encourage constructive conversation about the proposals and widen awareness of the project. Methods of increasing awareness and encouraging participation included:

- Creating a dedicated webpage for the project at www.peel.co.uk/houghtonmain.
- Operating a set of community contact points for the application, including Freephone information line, a Freepost address and dedicated email address. These were included on all-public facing materials.

- Sending letters to elected and community representatives to introduce the proposal and offer meetings.
- Issuing a community newsletter which explained the proposal and provided the details of upcoming Information Days. This was hand-delivered to 380 homes and business in Little Houghton and posted to a further 1364 residential and business addresses.
- Hosting two, one day, drop-in public Information Days at Sandhill Golf Club in Little Houghton. Members of the project team were in attendance to answer questions during the events. Display boards used during the Information Days were available to download from the project webpage following the events.
- All attendees at the Information Days were encouraged to complete feedback forms, which sought opinions on the proposal and provided a space for general comments.
- Proactively arranging and attending meetings with key stakeholders, including parish councils, neighbouring businesses and other elected representatives.
- Issuing press releases to local media outlets to widen awareness of the project.
- Issuing community bulletins to those who took part in the consultation.

8.5 All feedback received during the consultation was logged and detailed in an SCI (See Section 4 of this application) to which this document serves as an addendum.

Latest engagement activity

8.6 Whilst the revised proposals in relation to the TRRC are almost identical remain to that element of the original application, which was consulted on and subsequently submitted to BMBC, it is important to continue to update stakeholders on the progress of the plans and answer any questions that may arise.

8.7 In this context, the applicant has made efforts to inform and update those who have previously taken an interest in the proposal to outline the content of the revised application and provide an opportunity to engage with the project team.

8.8 The Statement of Community Involvement Addendum Report provides details of these activities, which include update letters to key stakeholders, a press release, utilisation of website and contact channels and offers to meet to explain the revised proposals.

9.0 Summary and Conclusion

9.1 This Statement supports the planning application to develop the site off the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Park Spring Road, Houghton Main as a Renewable Energy Centre comprising a 150,000tpa Timber Resource Recovery Centre and associated infrastructure.

9.2 The application site is approximately 3.0ha in area and is located off the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout, Park Spring Road, Houghton Main, Barnsley. The red line application area is shown on the Proposed Site Location Plan PL002.

9.3 The development of the site will create a renewable energy generation facility with the potential to export 20MW of electricity and to provide a direct heat and/or electrical supply to appropriate off-takers in the local area.

9.4 This Planning Statement confirms that the proposed development is consistent with planning policy at national and local levels. The site is recognised within local planning policy as being suitable for employment uses and consequently potentially suitable for waste management uses. This is further supported by the alternative site assessment detailed in Section 5 of this planning application.

9.5 All technical assessments undertaken in support of this application are detailed in the Environmental Statement which accompanies the application, confirm that the environmental impacts of the proposed development are acceptable and/or can be appropriately mitigated using measures incorporated into the design of the proposed development. All information and assessments have been fully updated to provide a full consideration of the proposals.

9.6 This Planning Statement concludes that the subject site is considered suitable for the development proposed. All relevant planning policy and other material considerations have been considered and it is concluded the development in the proposed location is appropriate and suitable.

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