URGENT

Mrs. Kate Poyser,
NHDC Planning Dept.
Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City.
SG6 3JF

North Hertfordshire District Council
11 JUN 2018
Planning Control

Desert Winds
PUBLISHING

10 June 2018

Dear Mrs Poyser,

Planning Ref:18/01048/FP – Great Offley Biofertiliser Lagoon: OBJECTION

Please accept this letter as formal objection to the above planning application. It is a replication of a well-drafted and cogent argument put forward by Offley Parish Council and I am happy to repeat it more or less verbatim. *Full and accurate information on this proposal was not hitherto available so the processing of letters such as this is both urgent and important.*

The access to and from the site from the A505 slip road to Offley is dangerous and unsafe. Vehicles exit the main A505 onto the slip road at speed. The access to the track leading to the site is just around a "blind" bend. Vehicles will be unaware of any slow moving hazard, and will have little time to adjust to the situation. The "slip" road is still two way to facilitate access to Grange Cottages. The enormous tanker vehicles will need to cross over the entire width of the road, slowly, in order to enter the track leading to the lagoon. Tankers leaving the site will cause the same hazard, along with the additional danger of negotiating a hairpin to access the road back to Hitchin.

No consideration seems to have been given to the residens of Grange Cottages who will be permanently blighted by the noxious odour.

When the prevailing wind is from the west, Hitchin residents will suffer from the smells emitted. When the prevailing wind is from the east, Offley residents, businesses, recreation facilities, and the school will be blighted from this obnoxious anti-social, strong odour.

Offley Place, a nationally important listed building has just invested over one million pounds to develop a Wedding Venue. Nobody will wish to have their wedding at a venue which suffers from obnoxious smells. Visitors will resist this venue – situated at less than 600m from the lagoon.

Offley Recreation Centre, a facility widely attended and enjoyed by local residents and visitors alike, has a thriving social club, a well-established cricket club, football club, and tennis club, along with a recent MUGA, installed for the benefit and enjoyment of local children. All of this will be affected if the lagoon _ a mere 350m away – is permitted.

The Green Man pub and restaurant is in similar peril. Offley High Street is approximately 700m from the proposed site. All residents will be in the path of the invasive smells.

The applicants have stated that the 80m long lagoon will be covered, and that the smell will be minimal, unless the digestate is agitated. The application, and volumes noted, means that there will be many DAILY deliveries, and extractions from the lagoon, therefore causing constant agitation, and consequent noxious odour. The floating cover will, therefore, be irrelevant.

Residents in the countryside expect bad smells at certain times during the agricultural calendar. However, this project will, if approved, be a constant blight to the community.

The historic village of Offley is a favourite place for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The designated footpaths, bridleways, The Chiltern Way, etc., are close to the lagoon, and will be avoided by these welcome visitors.

There will be significant health, quality of life, and social detriment issues for the residents and businesses in Offley and its surrounding areas, as well as Hitchin, if the proposal is cleared to go ahead.

Country folk understand and support local agricultural activities, but this is a proposal on an industrial scale, which will bring misery – not too strong a word – to residents and businesses alike. PLEASE REFUSE THIS APPLICATION

Yours sincerely,

Tom Sheppard, MBE, 44 Salusbury Lane, Offley, Hitchin, Herts SG5 3EG, England
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