**Extraordinary meeting of Kingscote Parish Council**

To discuss the Planning application for an Anaerobic digester Chavenage Lane, planning reference: S.14/0673/FUL

**Tuesday 14th of October 2014 at the Village Hall Kingscote**

Introduction

Graham Nichols welcomed parishioners and visitors to the meeting. He explained that the site of the anaerobic digester was not in Kingscote Parish but that the junction of concern onto the A46 is. He briefly explained the function of an AD. An AD produces gas 75% of this gas will be sent 2 miles to the main gas network, at the moment there is no pipeline. The remaining 25% of gas is used to generate electricity on-site. It is only viable because of the government tariff and 1,300 acres will be needed to produce enough maize to support it. It produces a waste material called digestate which can be spread on the fields, but this is limited by the Environmental department. However, excess waste cannot be back loaded, removed from the site, in the vehicles that bring in the maze as suggested by the developers. This brings question to their traffic statistics and the risk assessment at the junction with the A46

Jenny Stuart

Graham introduced Jenny who admitted she had a vested interest, as she lives in one of the houses nearest to the proposed anaerobic digester. However, she remained adamant that the anaerobic digester is the wrong development in the wrong place. Maize is a bad crop for the land it is known to predispose soil to erosion and is thought to have contributed to the flooding in the Somerset levels.

There are also road safety issues not to mention the whole development is considered unsustainable. If the development goes ahead it will be one of the highest buildings in the Tetbury, Malmesbury area measuring 18 m in height and taking up to 6 acres of green field land. According to one government website of 112 anaerobic digester’s currently under construction in the UK only six are bigger than the proposed one here at Chavenage. Most are one 10th the size, so this one is considered to be on an industrial scale. Grants were not intended for solely bio crops to be used, only one of the 112 plans for anaerobic digesters that Jenny looked at intends to use purely bio crops. This development does not solve waste but produces waste. Jenny then went on to gives traffic statistics, but made the point that there are still several unanswered questions and it was very difficult to get a true figure for the number of vehicular movements.

If the development goes ahead highways will put conditions on the developers to improve the passing places along the Chavenage Lane, but this may not be enough. In recent years there have been eight known accidents where Chavenage Lane joins the A46.

To Summarize:

Is the anaerobic digester needed?

Does it produce jobs?

Is it sustainable?

Does it benefit the local community?

Is it appropriate to be sited here in an AONB?

It is felt the answer is NO to the above.

This is a speculative investor who will be taking money out of the area and not contributing to the community as a whole in any way.

Questions from the floor

There was immediate concern about the smell and the noise.

Also, if there is 10,000 tonnes of solid digestate and this is to be dried - there will be toxic gases produced, likely to include ammonia, which also raised concerns.

Harry Tubbs was knowledgeable on the types of generator that they might propose using and the noise effects of each. He said this is a very quiet area and noise travels easily, he quoted the problem of a small dehumidifier at the church causing unacceptable noise when everywhere is quiet at night. The AD would be working round the clock?

John Giddings questioned the cost which was quoted to be £2 million.

Cost of the pipeline would be met by the utilities companies and would therefore indirectly come out of our pockets.

It was also pointed out that anaerobic digesters have been known to explode and also produce pollution.

Parishioners wanted to know what stage the planning process is at. It is thought the earliest meeting would be 11th November. Parishioners and visitors were advised to make objections as soon as possible.

Spreading the digests onto the land would be difficult to police as the Environmental Agency have already admitted. This raised concerns of nitrate levels, quality of water and even the water table levels.

Ken Davies pointed out the need to continuously feed maize, therefore the vehicular movements and consequences of this increased traffic. There was also concern for the routes it might take and that the origins and destination of the vehicles is still unclear.

It was questioned whether this will be economically sensible and what the subsidies were. Tony asked ‘’what net energy would be generated after all the vehicular movements were taken into consideration’’

Roger Lucy considered it a commercial development and questions its viability.

Members of Ozleworth parish were also concerned and interested in unanimously objecting to the development.

It is thought that the developer’s CEO has had similar planning applications turned down on his own land and – has received fines for pollution incidents on his own farm. The company is called ‘Greener for life’ It is thought that while they have two AD plants currently under construction, they have not, as yet, had any experience in running one.

Ken pointed out that ammonia is heavier than air and fear of pollution. Also, how the generator would be stopped if there was an emergency.

Reducing the digestate produces toxic gases, how will this be managed now there appear to be plans to dry it so that it can be used as a solid fertilizer. What about the environmental costs and therefore viability of this process, in addition to the extra chemicals given off.

Parishioners appeared amazed that this planning application was being seriously considered; It was explained by Jenny that the need for energy appeared to out way other planning issues. But it is thought that this may be no more than carbon neutral at the end of the day.

Graham Nicholls has already been interviewed by radio Gloucester in an attempt to raise the profile of this unwanted planning application.

Lutz pointed out that there would be a huge number of lorries and therefore diesel pollution should also be taken into consideration.

Mike Challis questioned the possibility of appeal from either side. Graham explained that the developers could object if the application is turned down by the DCC but the objectors could only object by going for judicial review

Finally a question of ecoli infection was raised with the planned use of poultry manure.

At the end of the questions a vote was held.

**Of the 29 people present no one was in favour of the application**

**There appeared to be a unanimous OBJECTION to planning reference: S.14/0673/FUL**