

Updated Committee Report

Application Number:	P/VOC/2024/03497		
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/		
Site address:	Anaerobic Digester Plant, Rainbarrow Farm, Monkeys Jump Roundabout to Junction Below Alington Place, Martinstown, DT2 9JF		
Proposal:	The construction and operation of an Anaerobic Digestion and Combined Heat and Power Plant and associated infrastructure including a new site access road at Rainbarrow Farm (Site 1) and underground service corridor linking to a new Combined Heat and Power engine in existing Engine House (Site 2) at Poundbury to supply Poundbury with renewable heat and power (Revised proposal) (Changes to proposed plant, infrastructure and land profiling at Rainbarrow Farm (Site 1)) and as varied by 1/D/2011/2113 to include repositioning of flare and CHP container, and additional equipment to include standby generator, switch gear, back up boiler, DMT Membrane Plant, transformer, 3 tank propane store and new gas pipeline to site boundary, to enable the majority of the gas produced by the Anaerobic Digester Plant to be fed directly into the public gas supply network at the pressure regulating station adjacent Monkeys Jump Roundabout (with variation of conditions 27 and 28 of planning permission 1/D/2011/2113 to regularise the existing development by increasing traffic levels, annual feedstock throughput and feedstocks).		
Applicant name:	Ixora Energy Limited		
Case Officer:	Eleanor Godesar		
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Tarr		
Publicity expiry date:	25 October 2024	Officer site visit date:	4 October 2024
Decision due date:	22 November 2024	Ext(s) of time:	11 June 2025
No of Site Notices:	4		
SN displayed reasoning:	Adjoining neighbours and public rights of way		

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1.0 Reason application is going to committee:

- 1.1 This application is being re-reported to the Strategic and Technical Planning Committee due to the decision by members to defer the application at the committee meeting on 14 March 2025.
- 1.2 Determination of the application was deferred to allow officers to liaise with the applicant to facilitate further collaboration between the Local Planning Authority and the applicant in relation to highways issues.

2.0 Summary of recommendation:

Grant planning permission subject to conditions set out in section 8.

3.0 Background and Assessment:

- 3.1 At the Strategic and Technical Planning Committee on 14 March 2025, Members resolved to defer determination of the application.
- 3.2 A meeting was held with the applicant and their agents on 20 March 2025. In this meeting, the applicant stated that they did not consider that the Delivery and Servicing Plan (DSP) had been effectively taken into account by the Committee. They suggested they would like to provide additional information on the DSP to relevant Committee members, Ward councillors and Parish and Town Councils. Discussion also focused on amendments to the planning conditions to address matters raised by Members during the committee meeting.
- 3.3 The applicant submitted additional transport information on 7 April 2025. This document provides some additional background to Rainbarrow Farm Anaerobic Digestate Plant, the aims of the DSP, enforcement and monitoring of vehicle movements associated with the site and setting up of a Community Liaison Group. The document, along with the previously submitted Delivery and Servicing Plan, has been published on the Council's planning register.
- 3.4 This report considers the additional information, further consultation responses received and provides an update on the relevant planning matters they relate to.
- 3.5 Unless otherwise stated, all other matters set out in the 14 March 2025 Committee Report and Update Sheet relating to: description of site, description of development, relevant planning history, list of constraints, consultation responses, duties, relevant policies, human rights, public sector equalities duty, financial benefits, environmental implications and planning assessment remain unchanged. The Committee Report and Update Sheet are provided at **Appendix 1** for ease of reference or click [here](#).

4.0 Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 A planning application which seeks to retain the existing digestate lagoon and hardstanding & install a proposed lagoon cover (P/FUL/2025/00591) on adjoining land associated with the Anaerobic Digester Plant at Rainbarrow Farm has been submitted and is currently under consideration.

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5.0 Consultation Responses

5.1 Due to the nature of the additional information submitted since the March committee, officers have undertaken a targeted re-consultation of the following consultees:

- Dorchester Poundbury Ward Member
- Winterborne and Broadmayne Ward Member
- Winterborne St Martin Parish Council
- Winterborne Farringdon Parish Council Group (Winterborne Monkton PC)
- Dorchester Town Council
- Stinsford Parish Council

5.2 All additional consultee responses received since the March Committee meeting are summarised below and can be viewed in full on the Council's website.

5.3 Winterborne St Martin Parish Council

Additional Comments (received 23/04/2025)

- The additional information received from the applicant does not alter the concerns of the Parish Council already submitted.

5.4 Stinsford Parish Council

Additional Comments (received 06/05/2025)

- The only real change to the approach outlined in the DSP comes in the covering letter to councillors. Paragraph 2 concludes 'We take the Welfare of our Communities seriously'. Under the section Aims of the DSP, bullet 4 offers 'ongoing communication with local communities over concerns'. The final paragraph suggests that they are prepared to meet with community, arrange a site visit and meet with councillors at any venue of their choosing.
- The overall outcome is that: 1) the offer to meet is welcome; 2) the plan offers little more detail on what will happen on roads within Stinsford parish (Slyers Lane / Cuckoo Lane / Lower Bockhampton); and 3) there is no offer to actually change anything.
- In the Parish Council's initial response to the Delivery and Servicing Plan (received 11 March 2025) 5 questions were posed. Three of these remain unanswered.
- In conclusion Stinsford Parish Council does not believe that the amended information provides confidence that existing issues will be addressed and that the expansion of trips will not create further issues. The Parish Council therefore continues to object to the proposals.

5.5 Correspondence with Members

The additional transport information that was submitted by the applicant on 7 April 2025 has also been shared with Members of the Strategic and Technical Committee on 22 June 2025.

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6.0 Planning Assessment

Highways

- 6.1 Whilst the Highway Authority raises no highway safety concerns, the observed vehicle movements recorded since 2020 show that harvest time feedstock deliveries have grown significantly above the number of trips accepted by the previous permissions.
- 6.2 Conditioning a daily or hourly upper limit for vehicle movements during the harvest time would be challenging due to the nature of how crops are harvested and delivered to the site. However, parish councils have raised amenity concerns relating to vehicle movements. As a compromise, a Delivery and Servicing Plan (DSP), including a Route Management Plan has been submitted by the applicant. The aims of the DSP are:
- Manage peak delivery periods efficiently, particularly during harvest time, while maintaining flexibility to optimise feedstock quality.
 - Prevent excessive vehicle movements, with the DSP Manager assessing weekly delivery schedules and taking proactive steps to avoid exceeding agreed daily averages by more than 10%.
 - Maintain accurate records of incoming and outgoing vehicle movements via the weighbridge system, ensuring transparency and accountability.
 - Provide ongoing communication with stakeholders, including suppliers, hauliers, and the local community, to ensure adherence to the DSP and address any concerns.
 - Regularly review and update the DSP to reflect operational changes and best practices, with annual reviews ensuring continued effectiveness.
- 6.3 Compliance with the DSP would be achieved through the following measures:
- All delivery and collection vehicles are required to pass through the weighbridge to record movements and material tonnage.
 - Deliveries and collections must be by prior arrangement only and the DSP Manager is required to monitor scheduled deliveries weekly, taking action if planned deliveries exceed limits.
 - Records of vehicle movements are required to be kept and made available for inspection by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) when requested.
- 6.4 Condition 2 would secure the DSP and the compliance it contains. The condition also provides the opportunity for annual review of the DSP and any updates to be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the LPA.
- 6.5 Since the March meeting, the previous wording in Condition 2 associated with the log of vehicular movements has been put into a separate condition (now Condition 3). This would enable the LPA to inspect the log of vehicular movements to deal with any concerns or complaints associated with the site. The condition now also requires this log to be submitted to the LPA on an annual basis for the next 5 years. This would facilitate regular monitoring of the site to inform an understanding of vehicle movements and address issues.

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- 6.6 Paragraph 1.32 of the revised Planning Support Statement in the original planning permission (1/D/10/001372) for the site stated, and was subsequently secured by condition, that 'the majority of the feedstock will be generated within 10 miles of Rainbarrow Farm'. The applicant has requested that Condition 5 (Condition 4 in the 14 March Committee report), be amended to reflect this previous agreement and provide more flexibility.
- 6.7 Condition 13 (Condition 12 in the 14 March Committee report) is worded so that import of feedstock during harvest times does not have restricted operating hours. At the March meeting, there was some discussion about restricting imports to specific hours. This has been discussed with the applicant and concluded that this would be likely to result in more intensive vehicle movements on the highway network at times of the highest volume of traffic. As previously highlighted, the supply of feedstock crop is dependent upon when the crop is at its prime and ready for harvest, as well as weather conditions. In periods outside harvest time, the main vehicle movements would be significantly lower and mostly associated with export of digestate and CO₂ for a substantial part of the year. No amendments to the condition are therefore proposed.

Community Liaison Group

- 6.8 The applicant is offering to set up a community liaison group. This would be open to the public and provide local residents the opportunity to raise concerns associated with operation of the site.
- 6.9 There are a number of liaison groups that currently operate in Dorset, most typically for minerals sites. These have either been set up by an operator, or have been the requirement of a planning permission. Condition 19 secures the submission of a terms of reference for the meetings, and should include details such as the general purpose of the group and representatives.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 At the 14 March 2025 Strategic and Technical Planning Committee, members resolved to defer determination of the application to allow officers to liaise with the applicant to facilitate further collaboration between the Local Planning Authority and the applicant in relation to highways issues.
- 7.2 The applicant has provided further justification and a targeted re-consultation has been carried out. The exercise corroborates the officer's view that amending the original Condition 27 to secure a Delivery and Servicing Plan is an acceptable compromise for managing vehicle movements associated with feedstock supply during the harvest. The DSP contains measures including recording vehicle movements and material tonnage, providing records to the LPA on request, deliveries and collections by prior arrangement and the DSP Manager being required to monitor scheduled deliveries weekly. The DSP is enforceable through suggested Conditions 2 and 3.
- 7.3 It is considered that the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan and there are no material considerations meaning that planning permission should be refused. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to planning conditions.

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8.0 Recommendation

Recommendation: Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions.

1. Plans List - Approved

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

02 Planning Application Boundary dated December 2010
9100 Rev P2 Access and Site Road Details dated April 2010
003 Proposed Site Access and Access Road drawing dated April 2010
004 Proposed Site Access & Typical Cross Section Detail dated April 2010
16569/006 Drainage Layout as agreed on 22 February 2012
87i/01/TW/100 Rev N Overall Site Plan dated 11 June 2012
Feedstock Locations and Routes received 18 November 2024

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

2. Delivery and Servicing Plan

Imports and exports of the Anaerobic Digester Plant shall be implemented in accordance with the Delivery and Servicing Plan (Entran, January 2025). In particular, the site operator shall comply with paragraphs 4.13-4.21 of the Delivery and Service Plan. The Delivery and Servicing Plan, along with the approved Feedstock Locations and Routes plan, shall be reviewed annually by the site operator to consider updates to the approved scheme. If any updates are necessary, these shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Minerals Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal does not result in any adverse impact on highway safety and the amenities of the surrounding area and nearby residential properties and in accordance with Policies ENV16 and COM 7 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policies 12 and 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

3. Log of Vehicular Movements

A log of vehicular movements shall be kept and these formal records shall be submitted annually to the Local Planning Authority until 30 June 2030. After this date, the log shall be made available for inspection by the Local Planning Authority at seven days notice.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal does not result in any adverse impact on highway safety and the amenities of the surrounding area and nearby residential properties and in accordance with Policies ENV16 and COM 7 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policies 12 and 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

4. Feedstocks - Quantity and Type

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Feedstock from supply farms imported to Rainbarrow Farm, that require transport on the public highway, shall be limited to a maximum of 60,000 tonnes per annum. The feedstocks shall be limited to maize, rye and oat crops.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal does not result in any adverse impact on highway safety and the amenities of the surrounding area and nearby residential properties and in accordance with Policies ENV16 and COM 7 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policies 12 and 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

5. Feedstock Source Sites

Any new feedstock source sites, which have not been shown on drawing 'Feedstock Locations and Routes' received 18 November 2024, shall be located within 15 miles of the site.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal does not result in any adverse impact on highway safety and the amenities of the surrounding area and nearby residential properties and in accordance with Policies ENV16 and COM 7 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policies 12 and 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

6. Height of Storage within Feedstock Clamps

All feedstock shall be stored within the silage clamp as identified on the approved plans. The maximum height of any settled material shall not exceed 5 m above ground level in accordance with the details as submitted in paragraph 1.24 of the Planning Supporting Statement (Revised Proposal) revised December 2010 submitted as part of the planning application reference number 1/D/10/001372.

Reason: To minimise any impact on the surrounding landscape character and in accordance with Policy ENV1 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 14 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

7. Cover to feedstocks kept in silage clamp

Any feedstocks stored within any of the individual bays shall be covered by a dark green cover to RAL 6005 (Moss Green) or alternatively a black coloured cover. The feedstocks shall continue to be covered in accordance with the details outlined above so long as the silage clamps are in use.

Reason: To minimise any impact on the surrounding landscape character and in accordance with Policy ENV1 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 14 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

8. Colour of the Gas Storage Balloon

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The gas storage balloon that is located on top of the digestate store shall be retained in a grey external colour (Window Grey RAL 7040) in accordance with the details sent to the Waste Planning Authority in the email from Nick Finding dated 27 January 2011 as part of application reference number 1/D/10/001372.

Reason: To minimise any impact on the surrounding landscape character and in compliance with Policy ENV1 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 14 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

9. Retention of Re-profiled Land

The re-profiled land (as shown on plan Ground Levels Plan 8, dated 10 July 2017) shall be retained for the duration of the development.

Reason: To protect the character of the landscape and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy ENV1 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 14 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

10. Visibility Splays

The visibility splay areas as shown on drawing number 003 titled Proposed Site Access and Access Road dated April 2010 submitted as part of planning application 1/D/10/001372 shall be retained and maintained free of any obstruction (including any growth) above 600 mm when measured from the level of the adjoining highway to enable a clear line of sight.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and in compliance with Policy COM 7 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 12 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

11. Vehicle Access

All vehicles associated with the operation of the Rainbarrow Farm site shall access the facility via the roadway that approaches the main site from the east along the access approved as part of the development of the site under planning application reference number 1/D/10/001372.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy COM 7 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 12 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

12. Noise levels

The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken and operate within the noise parameters as set out within the Noise Assessment document (Revised Proposals) dated June 2010 and revised December 2010 submitted as part of the planning application reference number 1/D/10/001372.

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Reason: To ensure that the proposal does not result in any adverse impact on the amenities of the surrounding area and nearby residential properties and in accordance with Policy ENV16 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

13. Operating Hours

Excluding harvest times of the feedstocks to supply the Anaerobic Digester Plan hereby approved, the site shall only be open to receive or dispatch any vehicle carrying feedstocks, digestate or any other material or equipment associated with the operation of the site between the hours of 07:00 to 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays inclusive and 07:00 to 13:00 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays, Bank, or Public Holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenities of nearby properties from harm and in accordance with Policy ENV16 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

14. Air Quality

The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken and operate within the air quality parameters as set out within the Air Quality Assessment document (Revised Proposals) dated June 2010 and revised December 2010 submitted as part of the planning application reference number 1/D/10/001372.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal does not result in any adverse impact on the amenities of the surrounding area and nearby residential properties and in accordance with Policy ENV16 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

15. Air Quality Mitigation Measures

The mitigation measures to ensure that there are no odour or emissions from any part of the site operation that would cause any amenity concerns or impact on the surrounding environment as detailed in the Air Quality Assessment document dated July 2010 submitted as part of the planning application reference number 1/D/10/001372 shall be implemented throughout the life of operation of the site.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal does not result in any adverse impact on the amenities of the surrounding area and nearby residential properties and in accordance with Policy ENV16 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

16. Remove plant if no production

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Should the plant fail to generate any methane gas for a period in excess of 12 months then the fermenter, feed hopper, digestate store, gas storage balloon, biogas engine, CHP container, flare and the control building implemented as part of the planning application reference number 1/D/10/001372 and those items of plant above ground implemented as part of the current application 1/D/2011/2113 shall be removed from the site.

Reason: To minimise any impact on the surrounding landscape character and in accordance with Policy ENV1 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 14 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

17. Surface Water Drainage

The surface water drainage scheme as shown on the Drainage Layout Drawing number 16569/006 revision B and agreed in writing with the Waste Planning Authority in the letter dated 22 February 2012 shall be retained and maintained in effective order throughout the use of the site.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, and to protect water quality for the benefit of the local habitat and in compliance with Policy ENV 5 and ENV 9 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 17 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

18. Floodlighting

No further external lights shall be installed on the application site unless details of their location, height above ground, power and measures to reduce light spillage including the use of movement sensors and timers are submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Agreed lighting shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the surrounding area in accordance with Policy ENV16 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

19. Community Liaison Group

Within one month of the date of this permission, the operator shall submitted to, and agree in writing with, the Local Planning Authority terms of reference for and membership of a Community Liaison Group. The group shall invite at least representatives from parish and town councils and members of the public as a minimum and shall meet at least twice a year until such time that the Local Planning Authority is notified in writing that the Anaerobic Digester Plant has ceased to be in use.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the surrounding area in accordance with Policy ENV16 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015 and Policy 13 of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019.

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Informative Notes:

1. Informative: National Planning Policy Framework Statement

In accordance with paragraph 39 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.

The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

- The applicant/agent was updated of any issues and provided with the opportunity to address issues identified by the case officer.
- The applicant was provided with pre-application advice.