

**5 DCNC2003/1895/N - PILOT PLANT AND ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS FOR ACCELERATED COMPOSTING OF ORGANIC MATERIAL FOR 5 YEARS AT WHARTON COURT, WHARTON, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR6 0NX****For: Bioganix Ltd at the same address****Date Received:****1st July 2003****Ward:****Leominster South****Grid Ref:****51022, 55925****Expiry Date:****26th August 2003**

Local Member: Councillors R Burke and J P Thomas

**1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The application site is at Wharton Court, about 3.1 Km south of the centre of Leominster immediately off the A49(T). Wharton Court is a Grade II\* Listed Building dating principally from the 17th century. Two barns close to the Court are themselves separately and specifically listed as 16th century and combined 17th and 18 century respectively. The nearest houses are at Wharton Court (about 35m to the south-east), Stone Farm (350m to the west) and around Wharton Bank (13 houses 250 - 400m to the south-west).
- 1.2 The River Lugg SSSI/cSAC is about 250m to the east of the site.
- 1.3 The application site itself is irregularly shaped about 80m x 90m along the longest dimensions.
- 1.4 The proposal is retrospective and is for the retention of a Pilot plant for the accelerated composting of organic material for 5 years. The applicant operates a novel in-vessel feather composting business. The operation is carried out on a Pilot scale to determine the efficacy of the process for degrading feather in accordance with the requirements of the Animal Byproducts Order. The site has been operational since February 2002. During this time a number of odour complaints have been made. The application has been submitted as a result of an investigation by the Council's Enforcement Officer and amended as a result of inspections by the Council's Environmental Health Officer. The operator has made a number of alterations to the process to meet these. Permission is now sought for the retention of use of new and altered buildings, the process equipment, external abatement facilities and an external bio filter until 1 July 2008.
- 1.5 The process itself uses a loading shovel and mixing vessel to mix poultry and stable manure (20%), poultry (feather) waste (61%), separated kitchen waste (8%), paper (5%) and green waste (5%) within an enclosed building. These materials are mixed and fed into a processing vessel circa 20m long x circa 4m in diameter, rotating under heat, at 4 revolutions per hour. Treated compost is then screened and dried before being loaded into bulk trailers for delivery to farms where it is used as a composting material. Loading and processing take place within a corrugated iron building under negative air pressure. External equipment consists of 3 air scrubber towers, to clean

exhaust air of dust, particles and odours, a series of chemical treatment tanks and a large external bio filter from which treated air discharges to atmosphere.

## 2. Policies

Policies will be included in the future report.

## 3. Planning History

Lengthy, will be included in the future report.

## 4. Consultation Summary

### Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 The following organisations have been consulted, responses will be summarised in the future report:

English Nature  
Environment Agency  
English Heritage  
Water Authority  
Highways Agency  
Network Rail  
Hereford Nature Trust  
DEFRA  
River Lugg Internal Drainage Board

### Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Internal consultations are also being undertaken with:

Highway Engineers  
County Ecologist  
Historic Buildings Officer  
County Landscape Officer  
Environmental Health Officer

Responses will be summarised in the future report.

- 4.3 The application was advertised in the Press and on site and 30 neighbour notification letters have also been sent out.

## 5. Representations

- 5.1 At the time of writing 16 letters of objection, including a petition of 7 names, and representations from Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Group Parish Council and Leominster Town Council have also been received.

- 5.2 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Planning Services: Minerals & Waste, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

**6. Officers Appraisal**

- 6.1 At the time of writing a number of matters are still outstanding. This is therefore only a preliminary report. Officers hope to be able to bring a further report for determination to the meeting of the Sub-Committee on 21 April 2004. The scale and character of the proposal, the proximity of listed buildings and of the River Lugg SSSI and of the public interest in it are such that officers consider that Members would find it useful to inspect the site and its surroundings before determining the application.
  
- 6.2 Members should also be aware that another application for retrospective planning permission for the continuation of use of an agricultural yard as a waste transfer station for demolition and excavation materials (ref. NC2003/0753/N) is also outstanding and adjoins this application site. The different sites and differences between them will be made clear at the site inspection.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That members hold a formal site inspection to consider the possible effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.**

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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