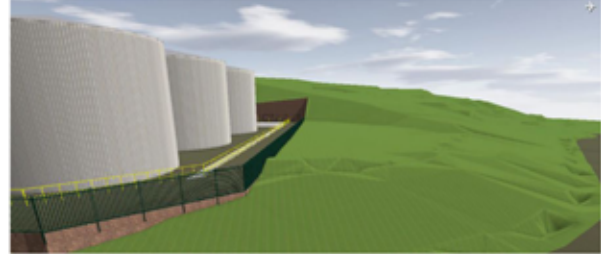


**Case Study>> Type of Development>>UK Coal Disposal Point, Follingsby Lane, Wardley, South Tyneside**

**Client>>Tamar Energy Ltd**

**Project>>Anaerobic Digestion Facility to generate renewable energy through the treatment of by-products of the food industries.**



**The site is part of the former Wardley Colliery and UK Coal Disposal Point with stocking yard and associated railway sidings that form part of the UK Coal infrastructure.**

The land associated with the Wardley Colliery was used for the location of colliery spoil tips, which have created a dramatic landscape legacy around the site, particularly to the east and west. With this, the site and surrounding land developed ecologically with emerging brownfield grassland. The site is part of the Wardley Local Wildlife Site which is designated for its emerging brownfield grassland and there are a number of important Biodiversity Action Plan targets. It is crossed by two Wildlife Corridors and the Green Belt Strategic Green Infrastructure Corridor. The site is situated within an area 'washed over' by Green Belt and is within an area designated as the Great North Community Forest.

The site is in an urban fringe location, not situated close to any main residential areas. To the north properties are greater than 600m from the site boundary, and greater than 600m from the site boundary to the south east. The closest properties are commercial premises at Follingsby Business Park, greater than 95 metres from the nearest boundary to the west.

The AD Facility will take in by-products of the food industries, and through anaerobic digestion produce biogas and digestate. The digestate will be used as a soil improving material and fertiliser substitute, and the gas will run gas engines, generating up to 3MW of electricity per annum. This will be fed into the local distribution network, or be provided directly to nearby industries. The process is entirely enclosed from start to finish in order to comply with appropriate regulations.

A planning application was submitted in August 2013, and was accompanied by an Environmental Statement, following a comprehensive assessment of environmental impacts, including a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. An assessment of alternative sites was included with the application, which demonstrated that no suitable alternative site was available within the Council's boundaries or the wider region. The development was classed as inappropriate development in the Green Belt, therefore the planning application set out a number of very special circumstances to outweigh the policy objection.

The Planning Officer concluded that the development complied with all of the Local Development Plan policies except those relating to the Green Belt, because the sustainability of the development had been demonstrated. It was also concluded that the harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Following a decision by South Tyneside Council to issue planning permission and due to the non-compliance with Green Belt policy, the application was referred to the National Planning Casework Unit for consideration. The Unit decided not to intervene in the decision. Following signing of a S106 Agreement, planning permission was issued in December 2014.