

[News story: Defence Minister opens first military airbase to be powered by green energy](#)

Defence Minister Tobias Ellwood made the announcement today during a visit to a Norfolk biogas plant, where he officially opened the new site that will provide energy to the airbase.

Electricity will be fuelled by fermented locally grown crops, providing 95% of RAF Marham's energy needs and saving the MOD nearly £300,000 every year.

The facility, built by Future Biogas, will generate 4.5 MVA of electricity every day, which can power 350,000 LED bulbs. This project has been delivered by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) with government and private sector colleagues.

Minister for Defence People & Veterans Tobias Ellwood MP said:

RAF Marham is leading the way as Britain's first green military airbase. The biogas fuel is a truly green and sustainable solution, helping us tackle climate change, support the local economy and save taxpayer money.

I hope that this plant can act as a model and we can see more sustainable energy schemes rolled out across other military bases.

The process, known as Anaerobic Digestion, produces gas which is collected and used to power multiple generators that produce electricity and will reduce the Ministry of Defence's carbon emissions by 14,000 tonnes of CO₂ annually. The waste residue from this process can then be dried and used as fertiliser to help grow local crops.

The plans have been in development since February 2015 and DIO, the part of the MOD which manages the Defence Estate, has been hard at work with colleagues in Crown Commercial Service (CCS), Future Biogas and energy company EDF to develop an electricity supply that is green and sustainable as well as providing financial savings.

Sam Ulyatt, Crown Commercial Services, Buildings Strategic Commercial Director, said:

This is an excellent example of how CCS can work with forward-thinking public sector partners like DIO, and suppliers like EDF and Future Biogas, to source power supply solutions for the Royal Air Force which provide resilience and strong green credentials, while boosting the local economy and providing energy security for

the UK.

Philipp Lukas, Future Biogas Managing Director, said:

It's fantastic to see the UK military join the green revolution. If we are to combat the imminent global threat of climate change, everyone, from all walks of life, needs to transition to renewable, sustainable energy as quickly as possible.

The AD plant in Swaffham now powers a significant local institution. In doing so, it not only helps secure the energy supply of a strategic national asset, but also takes the pressure off the local electrical infrastructure, which has been really struggling to keep up with growing regional demand.

A feasibility assessment was undertaken by DIO to determine what benefits could be derived from this supply of clean energy. As well as saving money and reducing carbon emissions, it was determined that the new plant would increase power resiliency at RAF Marham by providing multiple pathways to electrical resources.

The project was sourced through frameworks put in place by the Crown Commercial Service, which helps the entire public sector to save time and money when buying common goods and services. CCS continues to work with the RAF on demand management and renewable energy.