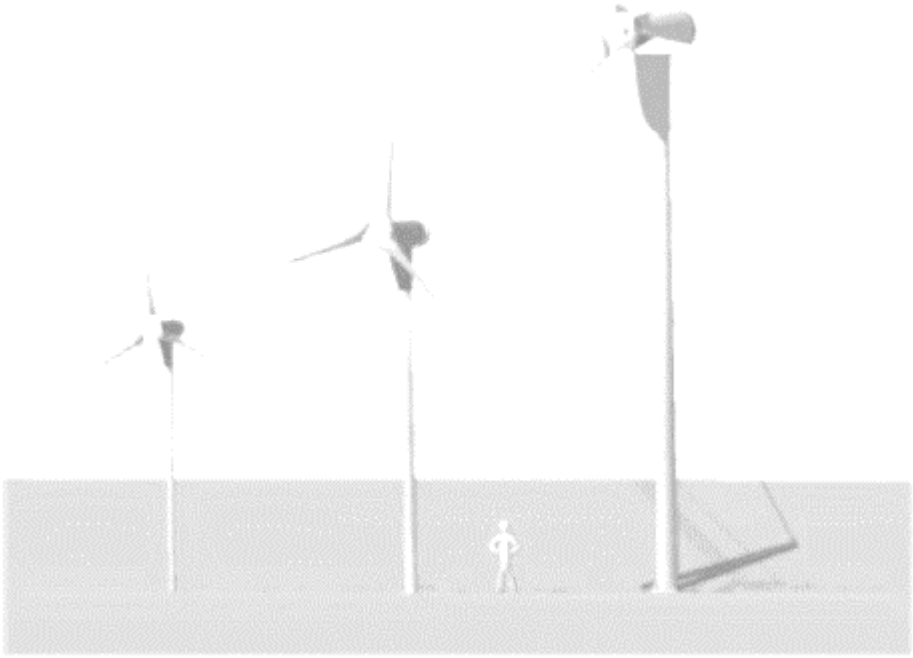
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Chartered Building Surveyors
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Planning Statement

Wind Turbine at Little Doubting Farm, Hartcliff Hill Road, Penistone, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S36 9FS



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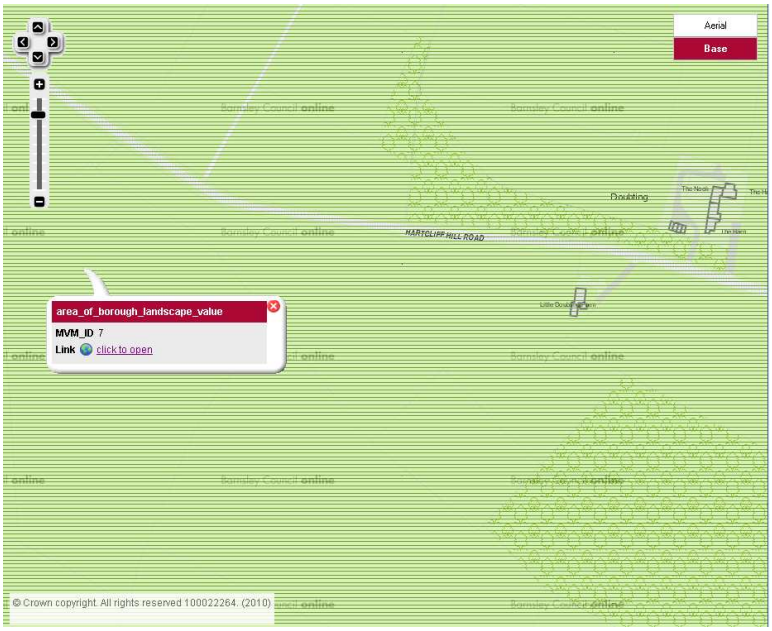
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1.1 Introduction

Philip S. Ryley & Co. have been instructed by Mr & Mrs Pinson to make a submission for planning permission for a 6kW, 15m domestic wind turbine at land adjacent at Little Doubting Farm, Hartcliff Hill Road near Penistone.

Section 42 of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires that a statement detailing design principles and outlining access issues must accompany an application for planning permission. Similarly section 3 of DCLG Circular 01/06 outlines that a supporting statement must demonstrate how these considerations have been assessed in the proposal, outline the underlying principle applied and how this relates to the local context.

1.2 RUDP Designation



The site is designated as an Area of Borough Landscape Value within the Barnsley Local Plan.

1.3 Planning Policy Review

The following Policies are deemed relevant to this application:-

1.4 National Policy

- **NPPF**

The key national policy in relation to this proposal is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF is a material consideration in planning applications and seeks to support a pro-growth agenda. It is underpinned by a 'golden thread', that is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Within the NPPF, sustainable development is determined to have three dimensions:

> *"• **an economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;*
> *• **a social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and*
> *• **an environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy."*

In relation to this proposal, the economic dimension relates to the use of the wind turbine to reduce the operating costs and support this existing rural business. Support for a rural business such as this forms part of the economic argument for the proposal and reflects further guidance in the NPPF, particularly paragraphs 19, 20 and 28:

> *"19. The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. **Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth**.*
>
> *20. To help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century.*
>
> *28. Planning policies should **support economic growth in rural areas** in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:*

> • ***support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas****, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;*
> • *promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
> • *support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres; and*
> • *promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship."*

Finally the proposal contributes a significant environmental benefit by providing a renewable source of energy for the farm operations; utilising the natural resource of wind which is prevalent in the area. This in turn will help to minimise the CO_2 footprint of the farm and supports the wider shift towards a low carbon economy which is encouraged by central Government.

This approach is emphasized by paragraph 93 of the NPPF, which reiterates the centrality of supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy to what constitutes sustainable development:

> *"93. Planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development."*

- **Special Circumstances**

Notwithstanding the principles of the proposal in relation to NPPF and its definition of sustainable development, the site lies within the Green Belt and within an Area of High Landscape Value. Consequently very special circumstances needs to be demonstrated to outweigh any harm to the Green Belt created by proposal, in accordance with paragraph 88 of the NPPF:

"88. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations."

In relation to the very special circumstances of the proposal which outweigh this harm, they reflect those articulated in relation to the definition of sustainable development. The proposed wind turbine will help to reduce the operating costs and support this existing rural business. The proposal will also result in the reduction of the CO_2 footprint of the farm which uses significant amounts of energy from the national grid. This small-scale project will make a valuable contribution the broader aims of cutting greenhouse gas emissions. These wider environmental benefits constitute very special circumstances which outweigh the minimal harm to the Green Belt caused by the introduction of a small turbine in this location.

- **Other Impacts**

Consideration has been given to other impacts from the proposal as per paragraph 98 of the NPPF:

"98. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should:
• not require applicants for energy development to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and also recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and
• approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should also expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas."

These impacts relate to noise generation and impact on biodiversity. In relation to the former, noise data from the turbine supplier is enclosed as part of this submission. The nearest third party properties are a significant distance to the north east of the site. For these reasons it is not expected that noise generated from the turbine will impact on any local amenity.

With regard to biodiversity impact, a survey has been enclosed as part of this submission detailing any potential impact from the proposal. In line with paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework, any conditions suggested within the biodiversity survey can be accorded to in order to conserve and enhance any local biodiversity.

1.5 Local RUDP Policy

The Barnsley Unitary Development Plan articulates policy in the local area. Of relevance to this proposal are the following extracts:

> *"Policy GS9*
> *DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE GREEN BELT, OR CONSPICUOUS FROM IT, SHOULD NOT BY REASON OF ITS SITING, MATERIALS OR DESIGN RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT HARM TO THE VISUAL AMENITY OF THE GREEN BELT."*

The justification of the proposal is the capacity to generate 6kW of energy from a renewable source which will help supply the chicken farm on site. The generation of energy in this form is a material consideration to which significant weight must be attached. The site achieves 6.2m/s wind speed and could generate in excess of 15,000 kWh of energy per annum.

The design of the turbine is that which has a fairly utilitarian and simple appearance. The materials used are black and grey matte finished metal which will have a fairly benign impact on its surroundings.

> *"Policy GS13*
> *IN AREAS DESIGNATED AS BEING OF BOROUGH LANDSCAPE VALUE ON THE PROPOSALS MAP CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE LANDSCAPE WILL BE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS. SUBJECT TO POLICY GS8,*
> *DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED IF:*
> *A) THERE IS NO LOSS OF VALUABLE LANDSCAPE FEATURES*
> *B) THE NATURE, FORM AND DESIGN OF THE DEVELOPMENT IS SYMPATHETIC TO THE AREA*
> *C) THE OVERALL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA IS CONSERVED AND WHEREVER POSSIBLE ENHANCED."*

Whilst the above policy has been deleted, Policy PE8 covers the same issues and is relevant here:

> *"Policy PE8*
>
> *IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY GS13, WITHIN THE AREAS SHOWN AS*

BOROUGH LANDSCAPE VALUE ON THE PROPOSALS MAP CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE LANDSCAPE WILL BE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS."

In relation to Policy GS13, the proposal lies within the Borough Landscape Value Area and consequently visual impact is a key material consideration for development such as this. Notwithstanding the benign appearance of the turbine there are Appeal precedents which state that even in areas of significant landscape value the generation of renewable energy is a material consideration to which considerable weight should be attached.

"Policy ES12
PROPOSALS FOR WIND ENERGY GENERATION WILL BE ASSESSED WITH REGARD TO THE FOLLOWING FACTORS :

A) THE EFFECT BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND CUMULATIVELY ON LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY OF THE AREA

B) THE IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO NOISE, VISUAL OUTLOOK, AND SHADOW FLICKER AND FLASHING FROM TURBINE BLADES

C) THE PROVISION OF A SATISFACTORY ACCESS TO THE HIGHWAY NETWORK HAVING REGARD TO VISUAL AMENITY AND THE SAFETY OF ROAD USERS AND THE EFFECT OF THE PROPOSALS ON ROAD USERS INCLUDING LIKELY DISTRACTION TO MOTORISTS

D) THE EFFECT ON WILDLIFE, ECOLOGY AND ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE IMMEDIATE AREA

E) THE EFFECT ON AGRICULTURAL LAND USES

F) ELECTRO-MAGNETIC EFFECTS

G) THE PROVISIONS FOR CONNECTION TO THE ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION AND SUPPLY SYSTEM

H) THE EFFECT OF SHADOW FLICKER OR FLASHING FROM THE TURBINE BLADES THE COUNCIL WILL EXPECT A DETAILED STATEMENT WHICH HAS REGARD TO THESE ISSUES, TO ACCOMPANY ANY APPLICATION FOR WIND POWER.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS, WHERE SUCH AN APPRAISAL IS DEEMED NECESSARY IN VIEW OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL."

The individual impact of the turbine is lessened by the presence of existing telegraph poles and pylons in the vicinity of the proposal. Relative to these items nearby, the turbine is of comparable scale and/or smaller and consequently any impact of the turbine will be reduced.

A pre-application submission was made to begin discussions with the Local Authority to determine a preferred siting for the wind turbine that would address concerns in the previous refusal that the turbine would appear isolated in the landscape. As such, the wind turbine has been positioned closer to the farm buildings at Little Doubting Farm however care has been taken to maintain a suitable buffer zone to third party properties to ensure their residential amenity is not affected. Furthermore the proposal will have no impact on highways safety given its siting away from the highway.

Finally the proposal will not affect any nearby agriculture (it will in fact provide a boost to the existing operations on site) nor will it create any electro-magnetic effect. With reference to the latter, a number of installations of similar turbines have been approved in sensitive locations (such as nearby to Airports) and this demonstrates that electro-magnetic interference is no longer an issue for this type of installation. The proposal will be connected to the nearby property by cable and there will be no potential for shadow flicker given the small-scale of the turbine and its orientation.

1.6 Landscape Comment

The site lies within the 'F2 Penistone Upland Farmland' in the Barnsley Borough Landscape Character Assessment. The following extracts from this document are pertinent to this proposal:

> *"**Strength of Character***
> *F2 Penistone Upland Farmland is a good example of the Upland Farmland landscape type as a result of its strong topography, intact network of stone walls, rural upland character and panoramic views. The presence of these characteristics ensure that the overall strength of character is considered to be **strong.**"*

In relation to the above, given the other objects of similar scale on the landscape in the vicinity of the site, it is not expected that a small-scale single turbine such as this compromises the character of the area.

> *"In view of the above, landscape sensitivity to built development is judged to be **high** and landscape capacity is considered to be **low**."*

As stated above, it is not expected that the proposal compromises the character of this area.

> *"The wind farm at Spicer Hill (in the adjacent F1 Ingbirchworth Upland Farmland character area) is a prominent feature in views."*

The nearby area of similar landscape character (Ingbirchworth Upland Farmland) has a large-scale commercial wind farm and this has successfully integrated itself into the landscape. This is despite comparable levels of character and sensitivity of the landscape. Whilst each proposal must be judged on its individual merits, it is expected that a significantly smaller single turbine in this context will not be deemed to have a detrimental or even minimal impact on the wider area.

1.7 Appeal Precedents

As stated above, the key material consideration for wind turbines is visual appearance and impact. There has been an Appeal Decision within the Yorkshire area which is pertinent to this proposal – APP/W4705/A/09/2118825. The proposal was for a similarly scaled turbine within a Green Belt context. Furthermore the Appeal site was within a Special Landscape Area – a high level of landscape character and visual value. The Appeal was upheld and implications for this proposal are twofold:

(1) *The Inspector recognised the "diluting effect" other factors have in reducing any visual harm of a turbine of identical scale to this proposal and that any harmful visual effect would be reduced to an acceptable level on both the Green Belt and the Special Landscape Area. The factors identified were telegraph poles, pylons, dwellings, hedges, the backdrop of higher land and presence of large vegetation. All these factors are present on and around this proposal and therefore any impact on wider view is diluted. The photomontages demonstrate that the effect of the turbine is minimal and no harm is caused to the landscape.*

(2) *The Inspector identified the value of small-scale renewable energy installations such as this and attached significant weight to this, in line with PPS22. Whilst the innate inappropriateness and harm of the development in the Green Belt was acknowledged, the environmental benefits of production of energy from renewable sources "clearly outweighed" the harm to the Green Belt and constituted very special circumstances.*

1.8 Context

The context is a proposal wind turbine on the chicken farm site. The proposal will provide an on-site source of renewable energy which will be utilised by the farm, significant reducing operating costs and providing a clean source of energy.

1.9 Design

The design of the turbine is utilitarian and simple and formed from materials which will mean it is not conspicuous on the landscape.

2.0 Amount

The amount of development proposed is appropriate to serve the needs of the farm (which is 60 acres) and will provide a boost for a local employer.

2.1 Use

The use of the proposal is to provide a renewable source of energy to supply existing operations on site.

2.2 Scale

The scale of the proposal is akin to a small telegraph pole or single tree and therefore would not appear incongruous within its landscape context.

2.3 Landscaping

No landscaping changes are proposed.

2.4 Appearance

The turbine is formed from matte materials and has a benign and utilitarian appearance.

2.5 Conclusion

In light of the above, the proposal accords with policy and should therefore be acceptable to the LPA.