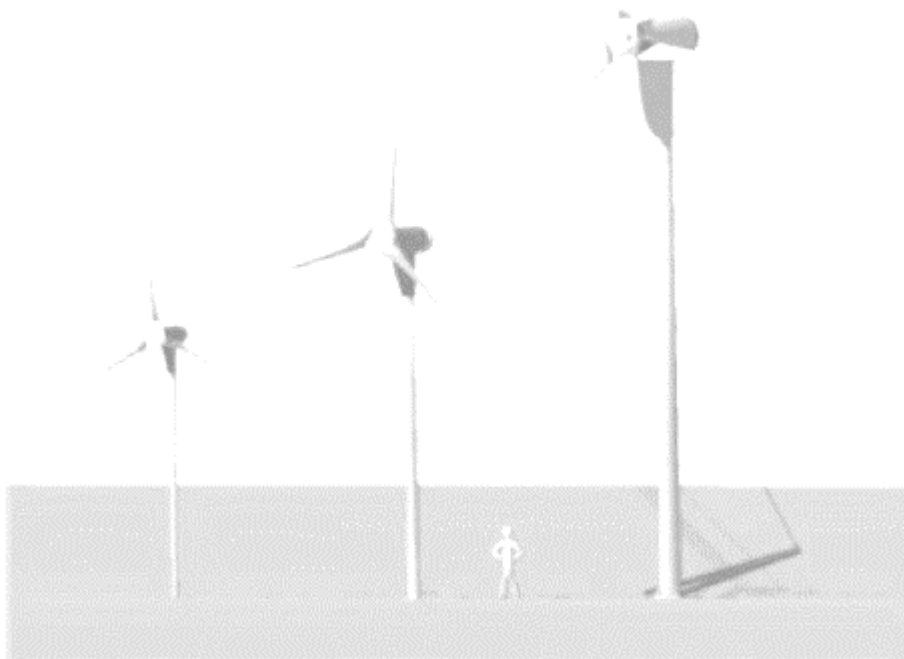


Planning Statement

Wind Turbine, Lower Bellactive Farm, Hartcliff Road, PENISTONE, S36 9FE



Wards End Chambers,
Wards End, HALIFAX.
West Yorkshire. HX1 1BX

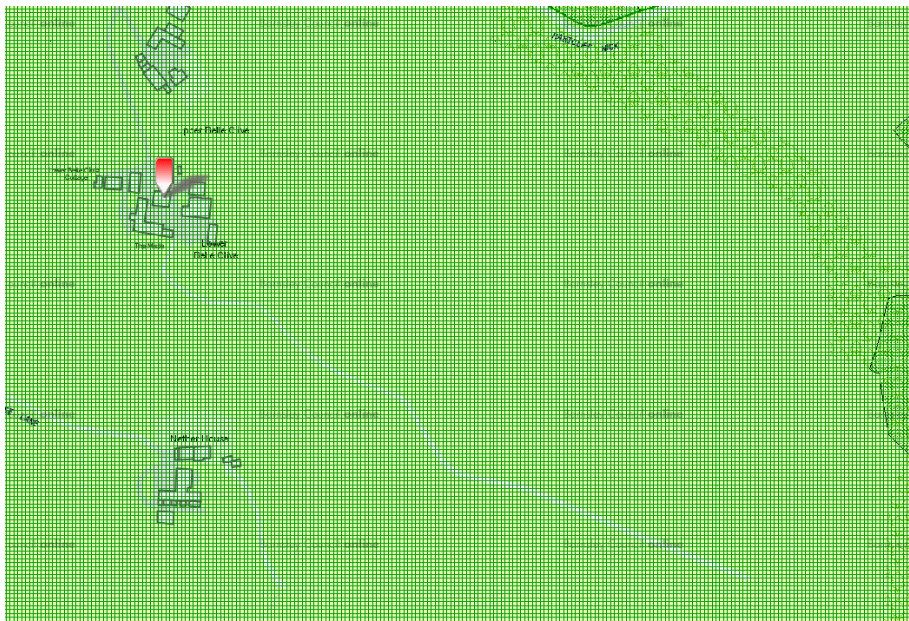
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1.1 Introduction

Philip S. Ryley & Co. have been instructed by the applicant to make a submission for planning permission for a 10kW, 15m domestic wind turbine at Lower Bellacliffe Farm, Hartcliff Road, in 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 Local Plan Designation



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

1.3 Planning Policy Review

The following Policies are deemed relevant to this application:-

1.4 National Policy

- PPS22

PPS22 outlines national policy objectives in relation to renewable energy and considerations relevant to the determination of planning applications of this sort. Of relevance to this proposal are the following extracts:

“(vi) Small-scale projects can provide a limited but valuable contribution to overall outputs of renewable energy and to meeting energy needs both locally and nationally. Planning authorities should not therefore reject planning applications simply because the level of output is small.”

This development represents such a small-scale project which will provide a renewable source of energy, providing energy for the site itself and also supplying the National Grid where possible.

“Landscape and Visual Effects of Renewable Energy Developments

20. Of all renewable technologies, wind turbines are likely to have the greatest visual and landscape effects. However, in assessing planning applications, local authorities should recognise that the impact of turbines on the landscape will vary according to the size and number of turbines and the type of landscape involved, and that these impacts may be temporary if conditions are attached to planning permissions which require the future decommissioning of turbines.”

The proposal is for a domestic scale wind turbine sited approximately 2 miles to the southwest of Penistone. The primary land use in the area is agriculture. The site is located in a setting which contains a number of individual trees, telegraph poles and farm buildings within a varied topography. Looking at the information and the enclosed photographs and drawings, it is clear that the turbine will not have a significant impact on the surrounding area, certainly no more so than a telegraph pole or similar installation. Indeed a number of small pylons straddle the valley near to the proposed turbine site, and the presence of these significantly larger structures mitigate against any visual impact from this proposal.

“21. Planning authorities should also take into account the cumulative impact of wind generation projects in particular areas. Such impacts should be assessed at the planning application stage and authorities should not set arbitrary limits in local development documents on the numbers of turbines that will be acceptable in particular locations.”

As stated above, photographs and drawings of the proposal within its landscape context are enclosed as part of the planning submission and this demonstrates the impact of this proposal and also the lack of other turbines in the vicinity. As such there is no cumulative impact.

"Small Scale Renewable Energy Developments

18. Local planning authorities and developers should consider the opportunity for incorporating renewable energy projects in all new developments. Small-scale renewable energy schemes utilising technologies such as solar panels, Biomass heating, small-scale wind turbines, photovoltaic cells and combined heat and power schemes can be incorporated both into new developments and some existing buildings. Local planning authorities should specifically encourage such schemes through positively expressed policies in local development documents."

As stated above, the LPAs should generally support small-scale renewable energy developments subject to the standard material considerations.

"Green Belts

13. Policy on development in the green belt is set out in PPG2. When located in the green belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development, which may impact on the openness of the green belt. Careful consideration will therefore need to be given to the visual impact of projects, and developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances that clearly outweigh any harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources."

The visual impact of the proposal is not of sufficient levels to impact on the openness of the Green Belt in a detrimental manner. Consequently it is felt that any minimal visual impact of the proposal, as shown in the photographs and drawings, is significantly outweighed by the special circumstances of on-site renewable energy generation.

▪ **Draft National Planning Policy Framework**

The new National Planning Policy Framework is material to decision-making as it indicates the direction planning policy will be moving to. The generation of renewable energy is acknowledged as a very special circumstance to justify inappropriate development and the draft NPF reiterates this point in the following extract:

*"146. When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the **wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.**"*

1.5 Local Policy

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

“Policy GS7

WITHOUT PREJUDICE AND SUBJECT TO THE APPLICATION OF POLICIES GS8, GS8A, GS8B, GS8C, GS8D, GS8E AND GS9 IN THIS PLAN, DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE GREEN BELT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT MAINTAINS THE OPENNESS OF, AND DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH THE PURPOSES OF INCLUDING LAND IN, THE GREEN BELT.”

The proposal is a single wind turbine of typical linear appearance and form. It is not expected to impact on the openness of the green belt.

“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 10kW of energy from a renewable source. The generation of energy in this form is a material consideration to which significant weight must be attached. The site achieves wind speeds of around 4.8 m/s on average and could generate in excess of 25,000 kWh of energy per annum. This would result in excess of 15.2 tonnes of CO₂ being saved per annum.

“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.”

Whilst Policy GS13 has been deleted, PE8 covers the same issues and is relevant here. In relation to Policy PE8, the proposal lies within the Borough Landscape Value Area and consequently visual impact is a key material consideration for a development such as this. Notwithstanding the benign appearance of the turbine and also the enclosed photographs and drawings, 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 pylons in the vicinity of the proposal. Relative to these items nearby, the turbine is of a smaller scale and consequently any impact of the turbine will be reduced. One pylon in particular is extremely close here and it is expected that this mitigates against any visual impacts.

Furthermore the proposal will have no impact of highways safety given its siting in a relatively isolated location.

1.6 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.

1.7 Landscape Comment

The site lies within the green belt in the Barnsley Borough Landscape Character Assessment. Within the assessment, the Landscape Evaluation regards the strength of character of the area to be strong, with the landscape in a good condition. The landscape sensitivity to built development is considered to be high and landscape capacity judged to be low. However, as stated above, the impact of the proposal will be benign in regards to landscape character due to the proximity of a much larger pylon nearby, and will have no significant impact on the landscape condition.

The site is situated close to a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Phase 1 habitat survey has been produced to assess the potential impact on the SSSI and ensure the wind turbine will not have any adverse effects.

1.8 Context

The context is a proposed wind turbine on a farm in a rural area. The proposal will provide an on-site source of renewable energy, which will be utilised by the farm, significantly 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 and will provide a boost for a local employer. Other renewable energy installations have been considered but wind energy was considered appropriate here due to the high wind levels. Solar panels and photovoltaic cells were one option but they do not provide consistent energy throughout the day/night and also throughout the year. Similarly there are not the natural resources under the control of the Applicant for a waterpower installation and their power output is less consistent throughout the year.

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.