

Design and Access Statement

Site Location: Cockle Edge Farm,
Ingbirchworth

Proposal: Wind Turbine

Applicant: W. H. Brook and Sons

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Introduction

This statement has been prepared by **David Storrie Associates** in support of a planning application for the erection of a wind turbine.

The statement is split into two sections; the first describes the site, the proposal and identifies relevant planning policy; the second indicates how the proposal has taken into account the identified physical and policy restraints.

A conclusion will then be made on the compliance of the proposal with policy.

SECTION ONE - Site Location and Description

The applicant's property is Cockle Edge Farm, Ingbirchworth.

The aerial view below identifies the site location



Planning Policy

Planning policy has recently changed with the Introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This has superseded all national guidance previously contained in Planning Policy Statement 22 on renewable energy. The NPPF makes the following statements relevant to this application: -

On turbines it states

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 application¹⁸ 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.*

On Green Belt NPPF states

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.

On the Rural Economy NPPF states

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:

- *promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses*

Local Plan Policy

The development plan for the area includes the Barnsley Core Strategy adopted in September 2011. The site lies within designated Green Belt.

Policy CPS1 deals with climate change whilst policy CSP6 relates to Development that Produces Renewable Energy.

Saved Policy ES12C relates to wind energy proposals.

It is also important to stress that there are also other material policy considerations relevant to this application found in various national energy policy documents. These documents indicate a strong positive policy favouring wind power and other forms of renewable energy in the UK. This is largely motivated by the Government's international agreements on the reduction in the

emissions of greenhouse gases, as well as the national and local targets that have been identified for achievement by 2010 and 2020.

The Energy White Paper (2007) confirms the requirement for 10% of UK electricity to come from renewable energy by 2010, with an aspiration to double this by 2020. The new PPS 1 supplement on Climate Change builds on this and challenges Regional Spatial Strategies to set targets for renewable energy capacity in line with national targets (see paragraph 2.3.3 below).

In 2009 the British Wind Energy Association (BEWA) compiled a detailed review of the state of progress towards the 2010 renewable energy targets adopted by the English regions and the aggregate 'English' target. It found that, with the exception of London, all the English regions are very unlikely to meet their onshore wind targets by 2010. In fact, at the time the report was completed in April 2009, only half (50.5%) of the aggregate onshore target had been met. This failure to meet the 2010 target puts extreme pressure on all parties concerned (including electricity generating companies, landowners and developers Central Government and Local Planning Authorities) to deliver a greater renewable capacity, more effectively and efficiently.

Wind energy has the potential to be delivered at a shorter timescale to other forms of clean or renewable energy, such as biomass, hydroelectric and combined heat and power. Traditionally, these forms of energy have taken longer to develop and, as such, are unlikely to have a significant impact on reducing emissions in the short term. Therefore, it is paramount that every opportunity is taken to accelerate the development of wind energy projects over the next few years to maximise benefits and help ease the pressure on the delivery of the 2020 targets.

Delivery of these targets will lead to wider economic and environmental benefits, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, provision of a secure and diverse energy supply for businesses and residents and reduced instances of fuel poverty.

On 1st April 2010 the Government introduced new Feed in Tariffs (FITs) to encourage more individuals and small business to invest in small to medium scale renewable technologies such as wind turbines and solar electricity. The aim is to accelerate the delivery of energy from renewable sources and speed up the delivery of national and regional targets.

This application is for a wind turbine which is a renewable energy source and is supported by these guidelines and targets as well as national policy.

The main farmhouse is a grade II* Listed Building and the NPPF states the following: -

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary

We have therefore included a Heritage Impact Assessment in this application



Conclusions to Policy and Physical Restraints

Important issues to address are: -

Green belt policy and the appearance of the turbine in the landscape

Ecology matters and nature conservation

Siting in terms of safety and noise (residential amenity)

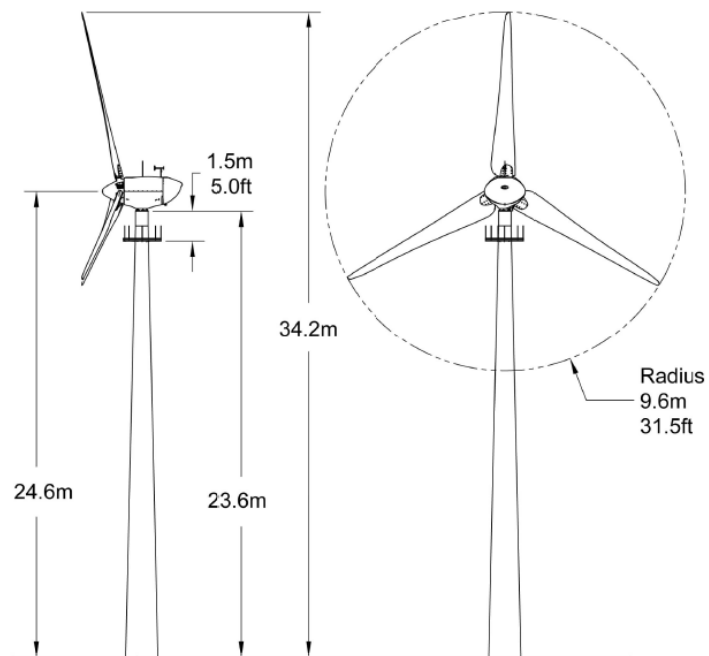
Access

To assist in any decision on these issues specialist reports have been prepared and submitted in support of the application that address the following matters: -

- 1. A Visual Impact Assessment*
- 2. Ecology Survey*
- 3. Noise information for the Proposed Turbine*

SECTION TWO - The Proposal

It is proposed to erect a single 50Kw Endurance turbine on a 24.6m mast, the appearance of the turbine is shown on the plan and the generic picture below: -



Site Location



This has been chosen so as to be as far away from the nearest dwelling that is not in the applicant's ownership as is possible taking into account other restrictions such as generation and other residential properties and ecology. The nearest dwelling is approximately 350m away.

Noise

350m is far enough away for the dwelling so as not to be detrimentally affected by noise from the turbine. Noise levels from turbines are generally low and, under most operating conditions, it is likely that turbine noise would be completely masked by wind-generated background noise.

For turbines of the size proposed it is unlikely that the noise will cause any disturbance over a

distance of 200m – the nearest noise receptor is well above this distance. The generic noise report provided indicates that there will be no disturbance from this turbine in this location.

Power Generation

The site has been chosen as it will provide a reasonable wind speed with non-turbulent air. It is essential that turbines are located correctly if they are to achieve anything anywhere near their optimum output. The applicant's advisors are confident that this siting is correct.

Access

This will be gained across the field, all the land is in the applicant's ownership and access to and from the site can easily be achieved without any detriment to highway safety. The cable run will also all be within the applicant's ownership.

Flicker

This generally only occurs at all within 10 times the diameter of a turbine, in this case there are no properties or other visual receptors within that distance.

Safety

Fall distance plus 10% (51m or so in this case) is generally considered to be an adequate safety area – again there are no footpaths or properties within this distance of the turbine, the nearest road is the main A and this is over 50m away from the siting.

Ecology

A separate report by Quants Environmental has been produced and should be read in conjunction with the comments in this section. The conclusions to that report are that the turbine has been sited appropriately so as not to have a detrimental affect on any habitat or species.

Visual impact

A separate visual impact assessment has been undertaken and this is submitted in support of this application. The conclusions to this report are that the proposal does not have a significant impact on the local landscape.

Justification

The proposal will generate enough electricity to provide a significant proportion of the farms energy. The farm is largely used for a dairy herd and is part of an established farming business run by a local family.



Conclusions

The Government has set in place positive policies in favour of approving applications for renewable energy projects. Indeed in the NPPF it has introduced the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. The siting of this turbine has been very carefully chosen so as not to unduly affect the amenities of the nearest neighbours who are located to the south on the other side of the farm buildings.

The site is relatively isolated and is not prominent in the landscape, nor does it have any particular ecological interest. Access is straightforward.

The impact on the heritage asset has been minimised and is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.

It is therefore our conclusion that this proposal complies with all relevant planning policy and should be granted planning permission.