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Barnsley Council,
Development Management,
Barnsley Council,
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21st January, 2013

Screening Request for a Single Community Wind Turbine at Shafton Two Gates

Dear Sir/Madam,

Energy Prospects Co-operative are considering the potential for a single wind turbine generator of up to 500kW installed capacity on land at a former surface coal mine at Shafton, near Barnsley. It is intended that the project will qualify for the Feed-in-Tariff (FIT) introduced by the Government in April 2010.

The proposed development will consist of a single wind turbine with a hub height of up to 50m and a rotor of up to 56m in diameter (giving a maximum height to blade tip of 78m), a substation and transformer cubicle, electrical infrastructure and an associated access track and crane hardstanding.

The turbine would be located at a location near to co-ordinates 439935, 408630 (please see appended Screening Request plan).

Request for a Screening Opinion

Engena Limited hereby request a Screening Opinion from Barnsley Council following the procedures set by Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 with respect to a proposed single wind turbine.

This Screening Request provides a summary of the proposed development with a site location and site layout plan. The document goes on to evaluate the anticipated effects of the turbine and discuss the determination of whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required following procedures provided within the Department for Communities and Local Government Circular 02/99 that provides guidance on the EIA Regulations. At the time of publication of the 2011 EIA regulations, the Government announced the intent to replace Circular 02/99 with updated web based guidance. This has not yet been published, and so Circular 02/99 has been referred to within this Screening Request.

A summary of the format of any future planning application is provided together with an outline of the non-statutory environmental assessments that would be undertaken and submitted with the application.

The Proposed Development

The proposed development will consist of a single wind turbine (with a maximum height to blade tip of 78m), a substation and transformer cubicle, electrical infrastructure and an associated access track and crane hardstanding.

The final choice of wind turbine to be installed will be dependent on a commercial tendering exercise by the Co-operative and as such a candidate turbine for this site has been identified as the PowerWind 500 machine, which would have an installed capacity of 500kW, a hub height of up to 50m, a rotor diameter of up to 56m and a blade tip height of up to 78m and this will be used for assessment purposes. Any alternative turbine will be required to match or better the environmental performance of this turbine.

Wherever possible existing site tracks will be used to allow delivery of the turbine components and construction cranes to the turbine location and to allow on-going access through operation. Any new or improved tracks will be semi-permeable and will consist of approximately 300mm-400mm depth of compacted stone over a geo-textile membrane with the rough crushed stone finished surface at, or just above, ground level. New or upgraded tracks will generally have a 4.5m wide running surface, widening at bends, junctions and turbines to accommodate the delivery of long turbine components. It is likely that the on-site access track will be in the region of 250m in total length.

A hardstanding area will need to be constructed next to the turbine for use by the construction cranes and other construction vehicles. The hardstanding will be typically 28m by 35m and will have the same crushed stone appearance and general specification as any new access track. It is intended that both the track and hardstanding will remain permanently in place during the operational life of the development, although there may be opportunities to dress back the edges in order to reduce the visible width.

Establishing Whether EIA is Required

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 (the EIA Regulations) implemented Council Directive No. 85/337/EEC, the intent of the Directive being to ensure that, in consenting a development, an authority is able to reach a decision in knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

For certain types of major development (listed in Schedule 1) the regulations stipulate a mandatory requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment to accompany an application. For other types of development (listed in Schedule 2) the requirement for EIA will need to be tested against criteria provided and for the likelihood of significant environmental effects. Other types of development not listed in Schedule 2 or developments which fall below the indicative criteria would not usually require a formal Environmental Impact Assessment to be undertaken.

A formal Screening Process is set out within the EIA Regulations to determine whether or not an EIA is appropriate. Circular 02/99 (2006) sets out guidance to the Regulations for developers and Authorities on EIA and their application including the application of the Screening Process.

The following flow diagram, **Plate 1**, is adapted from a diagram included within Circular 02/99 and includes thresholds and criteria from Schedule 2 to the EIA Regulations and Annex A to the Circular. This presents the methodology for determining if an EIA is required.

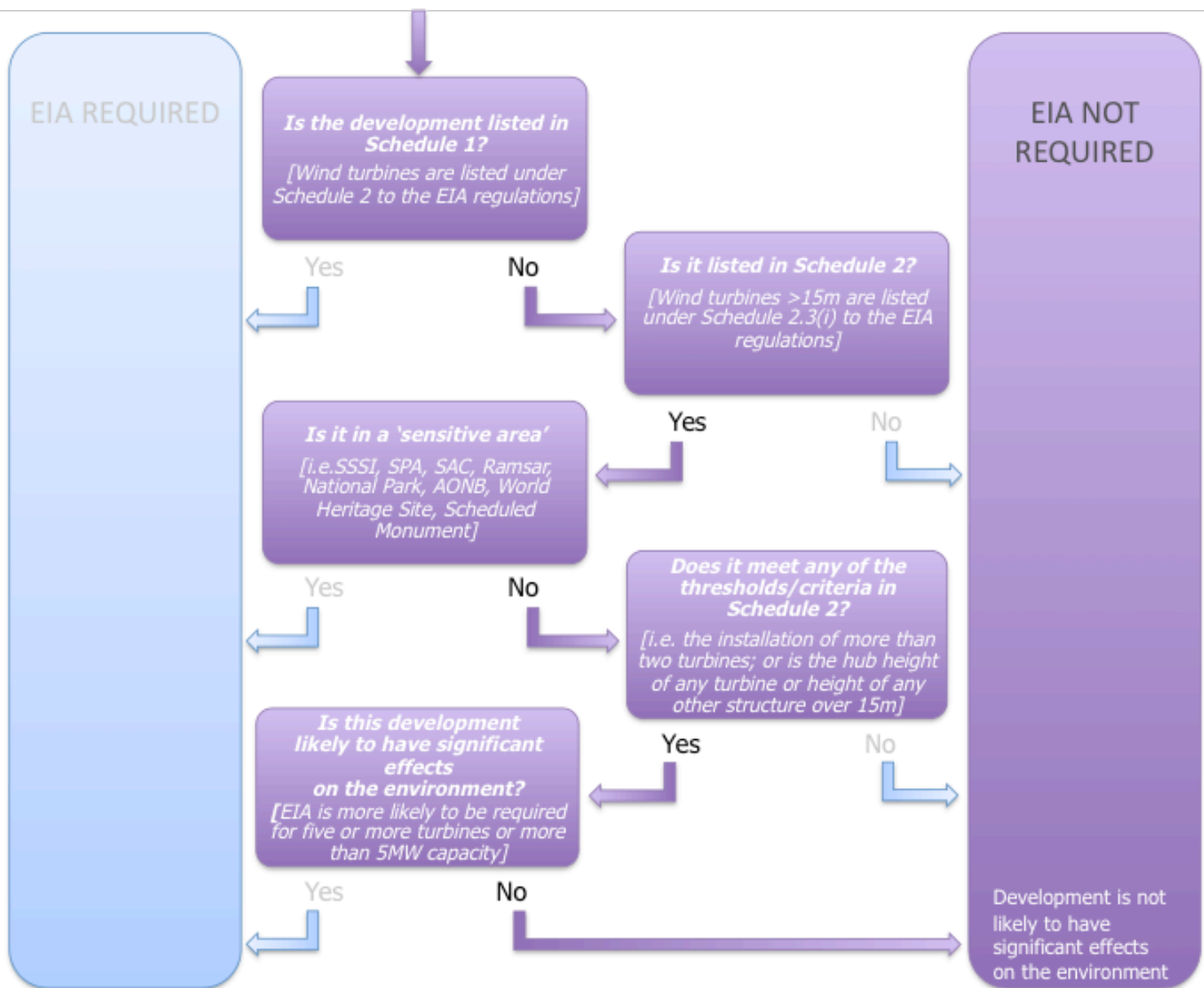


Plate 1 - methodology for determining if an EIA is required – wind turbine developments

In summary, following the flow diagram for this proposed development:

- Is the development listed in Schedule 1?
No – wind turbines are listed under schedule 2.3(i) to the EIA regulations;
- Is the development listed in Schedule 2?
Yes – wind turbines are listed under schedule 2.3(i) to the EIA regulations;
- Is it in a 'sensitive area'?
No – the proposed development is not located within a National Park, AONB, Ramsar, SAC, SPA, World Heritage Site, SSSI, Scheduled Monument;
- Does it meet any of the thresholds/criteria in Schedule 2?
Yes – the installation will be less than two turbines; however the hub height is greater than 15m;
- Is this development likely to have a significant effect on the environment?
No – Schedule 2 states that EIA is more likely to be required for five or more turbines or more than 5MW capacity. This is a single turbine proposal with a rated capacity of 500kW.
- **EIA not required.**

It should be noted that, although Annex A to the circular advises that EIA is more likely to be required for five or more turbines or more than 5MW of capacity, it states that:

It should not be presumed that developments falling below these thresholds could never give rise to significant effects, especially where the development is in an environmentally sensitive location. Equally, developments which exceed the thresholds will not in every case require assessment. The fundamental test to be applied in each case is whether that particular type of development and its specific impacts are likely, in that particular location, to result in significant effects on the environment.

The construction phase of the development is anticipated to take a maximum of four months and the turbine will be in-situ for up to 25 years before being de-commissioned and the site reinstated.

In advance of the Screening Opinion here sought it is anticipated that, given the scale of the proposed development and the fact that the proposed development is for a single wind turbine located outside of any 'sensitive' areas (i.e. national or international designation) and exceeding 500m from the nearest dwelling and with the existing knowledge of the site's base-line conditions as shown in the below table, no significant impacts can be expected. Following the flow diagram above to this conclusion **no EIA would be required.**

Proposed Application Process, Assessments & Documentation

Under the assumption that Barnsley Council advises as an outcome of the Screening Process that an EIA is not required it is proposed that detailed reports on environmental and technical issues will accompany the planning application to ensure that the Council has sufficient information to determine the application.

It is envisaged that the following assessments will be undertaken in accordance with the associated present best practice and guidance as identified below. Where desk-based assessment or survey effort has already identified the baseline that will form part of the assessments, this information is provided:

Topic	Scope	Guidance
Ecology	Desk-based assessment with consideration of potential impacts on legally protected/BAP species and a Phase I Habitat survey.	IEEM, 2006, Guidelines for Ecological Assessment. IEEM, Winchester JNCC, 2003, Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey. JNCC, Peterborough Mitchell-Jones T. & Carlin C, 2009, Bats and onshore wind turbines. Natural England Technical Information Note TIN051 Natural England, 2008, Disturbance and protected species: understanding and applying the law in England and Wales - A view from Natural England and the Countryside Council for Wales Natural England, 2009, Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended): Interpretation of 'Disturbance' in relation to badgers occupying a sett, Guidance note SNH, 2008, Natural Heritage assessments of small scale wind energy projects which do not require formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Topic	Scope	Guidance
Landscape and Visual	10km study area with representative viewpoints selected in consultation with the Local Authority. If required, a cumulative Assessment with wind energy projects within study area, including Marr Wind Farm (and any other projects deemed appropriate within the planning process or consented).	The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 2nd Edition (GLVIA), Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (1995 revised 2002) Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland (Swanwick & LUC, 2002) produced on behalf of the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage SNH, 2006, Visual Representation of Windfarms: Good Practice Guidance
Traffic, Transport and Access	Desk-based assessment of predicted construction traffic. Swept path analysis of pinch points.	IEA, 1993, Guidelines for the Assessment of Road Traffic
Archaeology	Desk-based assessment of local resource.	Department for Transport, 2003, Transport Assessment Guidance (TAG) Unit 3.3.9 - The Heritage or Historic Resources Sub-Objective Highways Agency, 2007, Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (Volume 11, Section 3 Part 2 – HA 208/07) Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2008, Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2008, Standard and Guidance for

Topic	Scope	Guidance
		an Archaeological Watching Brief English Heritage, 2011, The Setting of Heritage Assets
Noise	Assessment of impacts on nearest residences likely to be affected by noise from construction and during operation.	Institute of Acoustics, March/April 2009, Acoustics Bulletin: Prediction and Assessment of Wind Turbine Noise (Volume 34, No. 2) ETSU-R-97, The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms
Aviation	Consultation with MoD, nearby civil aviation interests and NATS.	DCLG, 2012, National Planning Policy Framework DECC, 2011, National Planning Statement EN-1 – Overarching Statement ODPM, 2004, Planning for Renewable Energy – A Companion Guide to PPS22
Television and Telecommunication Signals	Assessment of anticipated impacts on propagation and reception of television and telecommunication signals.	ODPM, 2004, Planning for Renewable Energy – A Companion Guide to PPS22

Throughout, general guidance will be sought from the following documents:

- National Planning Policy Statement (NPPF), DCLG, 2012;
- National Policy Statements: EN-1 (Overarching Statement) and EN-3 (Renewable Energy Infrastructure), DECC, 2011;
- Planning for Renewable Energy - A Companion Guide to PPS22, ODPM, 2004; and
- The Town and Country Planning (England and Wales) Regulations, The Stationery Office, 2011.

A summary of the assessments will be submitted with the planning application together with a description of the proposal, a Design and Access Statement and a full and complete Planning Appraisal of the application that will describe the planning context at the national and local level, as well appraising the development's compliance with the development plan. Figures referenced within the application documents (including photomontages) will be presented as part of the application. Where the assessments

listed above have been summarised for the purposes of the application documentation, the complete reports will be appended in the form of a CD-ROM.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, or if you would like to arrange a meeting to discuss the proposal further. I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours faithfully,

John Fairlie
Director
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