

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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PROPOSED SITING OF 1 X 24.6M HIGH (HUB) WIND TURBINE

Our Ref: P-1161

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CONTENTS **PAGE**

1.0	INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPOSAL.....	3
2.0	THE SITE DETAILS AND BACKGROUND.....	5
3.0	PLANNING POLICY.....	7
4.0	CONSIDERATION.....	12
5.0	CONCLUSION.....	25

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A - METHODOLOGY USED FOR ASSESSING VISUAL LANDSCAPE IMPACT

APPENDIX B – PHOTOMONTAGES

APPENDIX C – SSSI CITATION

1.0 Introduction to the Proposal

1.1 This desktop assessment sets out our analysis of the relevant planning policy principles which need to be considered in support of this application for the erection of one 24.6m (hub) high wind turbine at Bull Haw Hall Farm to the west of Silkstone. The turbine would have an overall height of approximately 32.4m to the tip.

1.2 The development proposal involves the provision of one turbine and associated infrastructure comprising the following specifically:

- Base work to secure the turbine to the site
- Grid connection

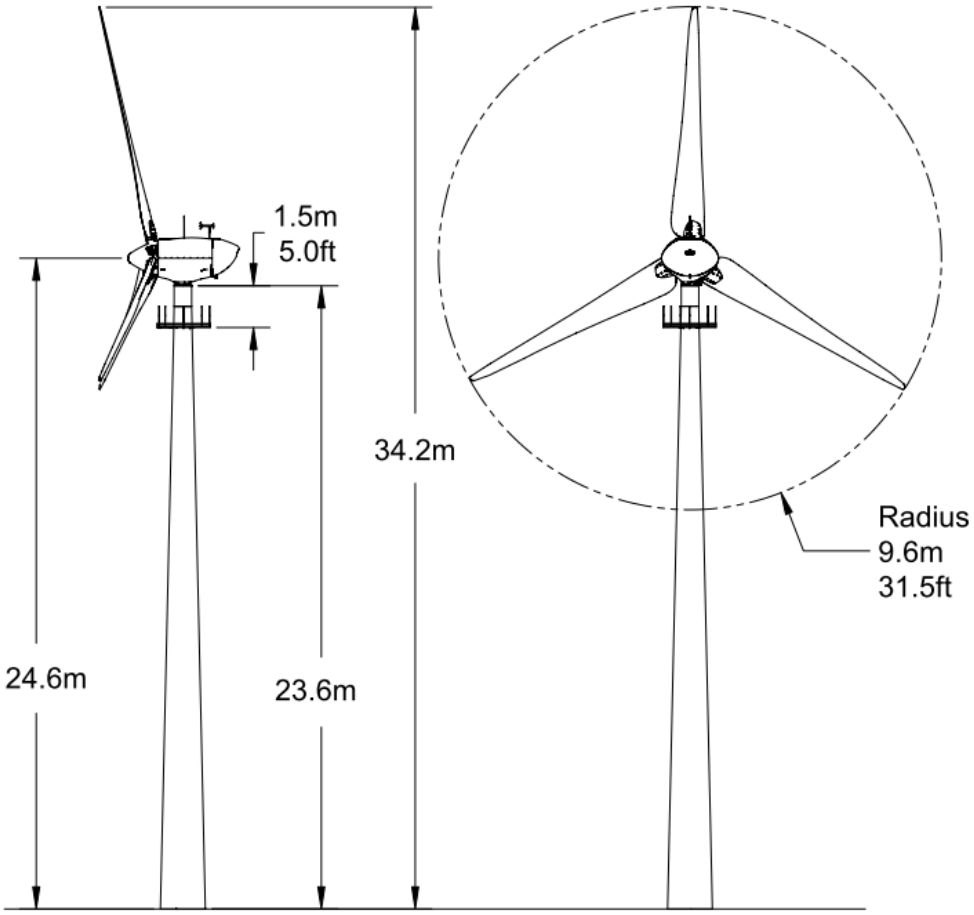


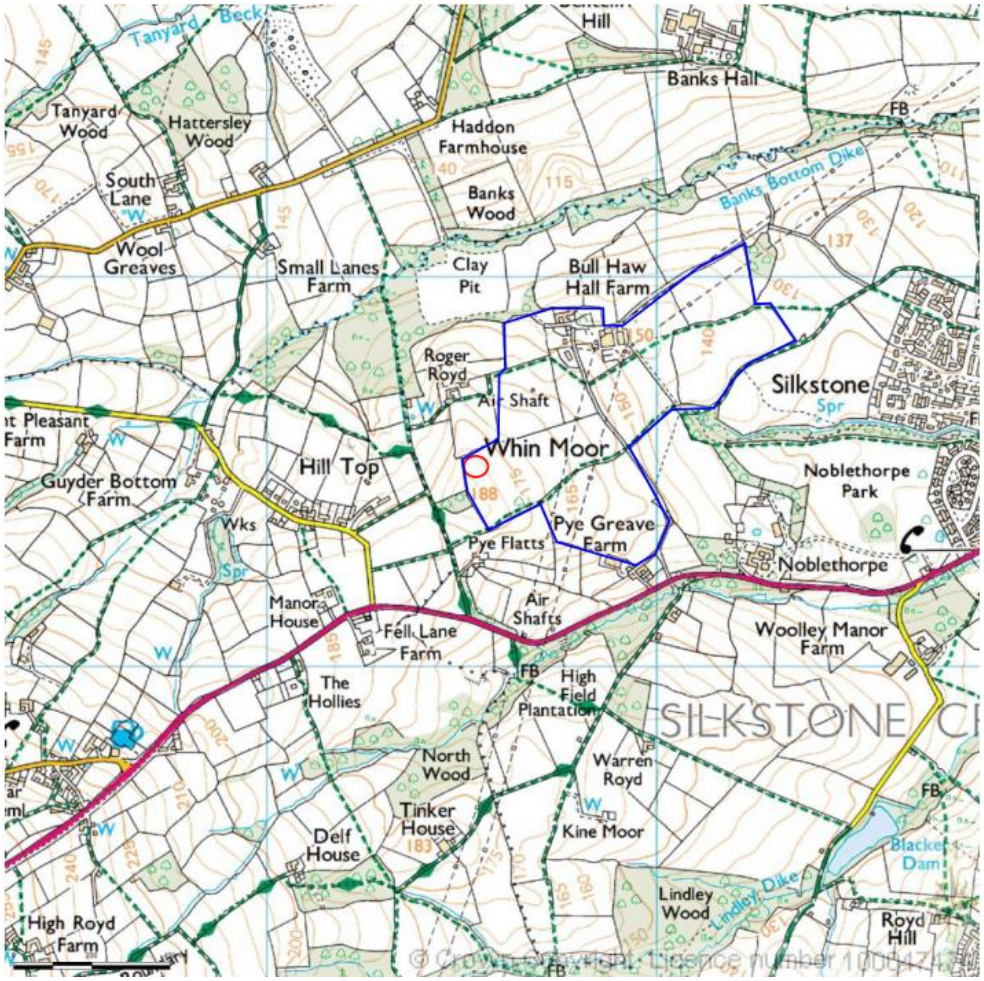
Image 1: Elevation Plan of the Turbine

1.3 From an operational standpoint, the siting of a wind turbine requires maximum exposure to unobstructed wind flow conditions in order to achieve efficient operation. Proximity to ground based obstructions can detrimentally affect the performance of a turbine and it is therefore essential to ensure that a wind turbine is located a sufficient distance away from any such obstacles to provide the necessary clearance. After taking into consideration these factors, the siting point for the turbine has been chosen from both an operational/technical and a visual impact perspective and has been sited in the proposed location to ensure that the turbine's operation is not affected by turbulence caused by the tree belt to the south west. The proposed turbine has also been positioned in the proposed location to ensure that it remains outside of the bat buffer zone associated with this tree belt and is sufficiently detached from the listed building at Bull Haw Hall Farm to ensure that it does not intrude into its setting.

1.4 The main planning considerations are considered within this report in relation to local and national planning guidance alongside relevant planning case law.

2.0 The Site Details and Background

2.1 Bull Haw Hall Farm is located approximately 700m to the west of the periphery of Silkstone. The farm is a large complex consisting of a small number of residential properties, a number of modern utilitarian farm buildings and some traditional L shaped (Grade II Listed) outbuildings. The turbine would be positioned within the land owned by and associated with the farm approximately 350m to the south west of the nearest building. The proposed turbine is indicated in the map below showing the turbine in relation to its surroundings:



2.2 Although agricultural in nature, there are a number of surrounding residential properties in the vicinity including those found within Silkstone. Hill Top to the west consists of a number of properties laid out in a linear manner. There are also a number of isolated properties in the vicinity including Roger Royd, Pye Greave Farm and Noblethorpe. To the south, the A628 passes, running in an east-west alignment and providing a link between Silkstone and Penistone.

2.3 The surrounding landform is undulating in nature with the immediate topography around the turbine site sloping to the east. This landform is characterized further by a number of tree belts which aid in softening the surrounding built development. Pylons pass close to the site and dominate the vista from the A628.

2.4 Access to the site is from an access off the A628 to the south of Bull Haw Hall Farm and south east of the proposed turbine. The actual siting of the turbine is over 300m from this road and set behind a tree belt providing some cover.

3.0 Planning Policy

3.1 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted on 27 March 2012 and represents the principal national guidance document and a material consideration which must be taken into account, where relevant, in determining planning applications. This framework replaces all previous national policy statements, which were superseded on its adoption. Statements contained within cannot make irrelevant any matter which is a material consideration in a particular case, but where such statements indicate the weight that should be given to relevant considerations, decision makers must have proper regard to them. One particular consideration which will be teased out in this report is the weight which should be given to the appropriateness of development both within the countryside and any specific landscape designation versus the weight associated with the wider environmental benefits of a wind turbine.

3.2 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. Sustainable Development encompasses concepts of sustainable economic, social and environmental development which run concurrent with the spatial approach to planning. Key to this application, the following excerpts are applicable to proposed a wind turbine for this site:

Renewable Energy

3.3 To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources. They should:

- Have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources;

3.4 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 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.

Heritage Assets

3.5 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Protecting Green Belt land

3.6 The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Green Belt serves five purposes:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

3.7 Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

3.8 As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 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.

3.9 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.

3.10 Officer consideration of this application should give full weight to the NPPF as a material planning consideration and the thrust of this framework is alongside the saved policies of the local plan, which also remain relevant (as the plan was adopted post 2004).

3.11 Consideration on the local level with regards to the Green Belt issue is given to Policy NE7 and links back with the now replaced PPG2. The most recent guidance within the NPPF is considered to offer a more relevant policy framework when determining this type of application within the Green Belt. As highlighted, the site is allocated under Policy PE5 as forming part of the Green Belt. Policy PE5 defines the extent of the Green Belt around the settlement of Silkstone and Penistone. Policy GS7 seeks to safeguard against inappropriate development in this locality and specifies that development will not be permitted within the Green Belt unless it maintains openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. Policy GS9 requires that development within the Green Belt should not by reason of its siting, materials or design, result in significant harm to the visual amenity of the Green Belt. As highlighted the thrust of policies PE5, GS7 and GS9 all align with the provisions of PPG2 which has now been replaced with the NPPF. The new guidance within the NPPF does better align with the guidance contained within case law that wind turbines in principle are acceptable in Green Belts as the green energy produced can represent 'very special circumstances'.

3.12 Of particular importance to the assessment of this application is policy ES12 which sets out the Council's requirements for proposals that seek to develop wind energy generation. Such proposals will be assessed with regard to the following factors:

- Effect both individually and cumulatively upon landscape and the visual amenity of the area;
- The impact on residential amenity with reference to noise, visual outlook, shadow flicker and flashing from the turbine blades;
- Provision of satisfactory access to the highway network having regard to visual amenity, highway capacity and safety;
- Effect on wildlife, ecology and archaeology;
- Effect on agricultural land uses;
- Electro-magnetic effects;
- The provision for connection to the electricity transmission and supply system;
- The effect of shadow flicker or flashing from turbine blades.

3.13 Policy ES12A outlines the importance of using appropriate technology and design for all wind generator proposals. Policy ES1C states that the council will control development in the vicinity of existing wind generation installations so as to safeguard these from a reduction in local wind speeds.

3.14 Finally of more general relevance is policy BE6 which sets out design standards for all development. Proposals will be assessed in terms of:

- The quality of layout and the suitability of the scale of the development;
- The use, quality, design and landscape treatment of open land within the site and the area around buildings;
- The standard of detailed design and facing materials of proposed buildings;

- The suitability of the whole development for its proposed context and its relationship with adjoining land uses.

3.15 The Core Strategy was adopted in September 2011 and sets out the proposed policies, spatial options and strategic objectives for the future development of the Barnsley Borough to 2026. The Core Strategy Preferred Options document was published in October 2005. This was updated by the Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options, published in June 2009. CSP 6 Development that produces renewable energy encourages renewable energy and states:

We will allow development that produces renewable energy as long as there is no significantly harmful effect on:

- The character of the landscape and appearance of the area
- Living conditions
- Biodiversity, geodiversity and water quality
- Historical and cultural features and areas
- Highway safety, and
- Infrastructure including radar

Proposals must be accompanied by information that shows how the local environment will be protected, and that the site will be restored when production ends.

3.16 The council have established, under the above mentioned policies, that proposals for wind turbines in Green Belts can, in principle be acceptable, having previously approved a similar application serving the Penistone ALC approximately 5km away. Notwithstanding this, the assessment of this application must still be assessed on its own planning merits and how it relates to the relevant planning policies and the assessment of such effects are discussed in this report.

4.0 Consideration

4.1 As previously identified, there is a presumption in favour of renewable technologies and significant weight should be attributed to this issue in line with government policy. This issue should be balanced against other main considerations including the impact upon the character and appearance of the area, archaeological and nature conservation issues and any adverse impact upon the electromagnetic field. Each issue will be considered individually within this desktop assessment.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Harm to the Green Belt

4.2 The proposed wind turbine would be positioned to the south west of the farmstead and would measure 24.6m high to the hub, with the blades extending to reach a tip height of 32.4m. In this location and at this height the turbine would be visible and would to an extent change the appreciation of this site within its surrounding rural context. However, this does not necessarily equate to unacceptable harm and this change in vista must be balanced against policy expectations and guidance encouraging renewable energy. The process of assessing the impact of this application has been guided by the document 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment'(2002) and Appendix A of this report outlines the approach taken here within this assessment.

4.3 As previously outlined the principle of a wind turbine would not accord with the forms of development deemed acceptable in the Green Belt and its very nature is therefore deemed inappropriate in principle within the Green Belt under the new framework. However as highlighted previously the NPPF states that '*such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources*'. This is a material planning consideration and does align with appeal decisions relating to small scale renewable energy devices such as this which considered applications for wind turbines within the context of the now replaced PPG2. Although PPG2 is now no longer relevant the thrust of the discussions within these appeal decisions does provide a context which remains pertinent in the assessment of applications. This issue was recently discussed in an appeal at land adjacent to Ramsgill, Otley Road, Bingley (APP/W4705/A/09/2118825). This appeal related to a 15 metre high wind turbine within the Harrogate Green Belt and the Planning Inspector in allowing the appeal accepted that Green

Belt planning policy principles would dictate that the principle of a wind turbine was inappropriate by definition and would, to an extent, result in some loss of openness. Nevertheless, in reaching the decision to allow the appeal the Inspector concluded:

4.4 *'I attach substantial weight to the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. As there would be a modest loss of openness within the Green Belt, I find only a limited degree of other harm. Set against this is the significant weight that I give to the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources. When weight against one another, the other considerations do clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and the other harm in relation to openness within the Green Belt. In my judgement very special circumstances do therefore exist and justify a grant of planning permission'.*

4.5 This appeal decision does set the issue of Green Belt principles versus renewable energy principles into context and the overriding conclusion is that the principle of renewable energy provision does represent 'very special circumstances' that justify planning consent. With the new NPPF underlining this conclusion there is therefore considered to be no bar from a planning policy perspective to the consideration of this planning application in principle. This is further underlined within the specific policies relating to wind turbines within the NPPF which does not resist wind turbines in principle in the Green Belt. The main consideration must therefore be what harm is caused by the wind turbine and whether such harm results in a significant detrimental landscape impact or significant loss of openness. This impact is discussed below.

Landscape Character Assessment

4.6 The application site lies within Character Area 37 'Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe' as defined in The Countryside Commission's Countryside Character, 'The character of England's natural and man-made landscape', Volume 3: Yorkshire and The Humber (Ref. 11.3). The key characteristics of area 37 'Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe' are as follows:

- Eastern slopes of the Pennines, dropping from upland in the west down to the east, dissected by numerous steep-sided valleys;
- Extensive urban influences from the matrix of large and small towns;

- Close conjunction of large-scale industry, urban areas and transport routes with open countryside;
- Predominance of local sandstone and 'gritstone' as a building material notably in large and dominant industrial buildings;
- Urban development mainly confined by valleys creating dramatic interplay of views between settlements and the surrounding hillsides;
- Predominantly pastoral farming with strong linear patterns of walled enclosures on plateaux;
- Predominantly broadleaved woodlands on steep valley sides forming important backdrops to industrialised areas;
- Impression of a well-wooded landscape even though tree cover is relatively sparse overall;
- Dense network of roads, canals and railways.

4.7 In terms of local character the site sits within Character Area E1: 'West Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland' as defined in ECUS and Land Use Consultants 'Barnsley Borough Landscape Assessment' (Ref 1.4). The key characteristics of this area are:-

- Gently rolling landform with hills and broad valleys;
- Small, medium sized and large woodlands, mainly deciduous and some coniferous;
- Substantial areas of intact agricultural land, both in arable and pastoral use;
- Stone farmsteads, often with large modern outbuildings;
- Villages and hamlets set in open countryside;
- Large stone country houses set within designed parkland landscapes;
- Urban encroachment visible to east, outside the character area.

4.8 There would be some changes in the landscape character of the area, but these would be relatively minor and confined to the micro scale. The introduction of the 1 no. wind turbine will have a negligible impact on both the broad and local landscape character of the area due

to the relatively small scale of the turbine in relation to the existing built form within the site and surrounding area and the presence of other wind farms of larger scale within the broader landscape character area. The key characteristics of the overall landscape would remain intact, for example the landform which predominantly slopes to the east, the pattern of sporadic farmsteads punctuated by settlements such as Hill Top and larger settlements such as Penistone and Silkstone, the vegetation consisting of tree belts and stone wall treatments and the openness associated with the green belt. Site specific features would also be protected and maintained in situ, for example the tree belt to the west of the proposed turbine. The significance of the effect of the wind turbine on the landscape character is concluded as being 'No Change', as the small negative change with the introduction of a single turbine would not in essence change the key characteristics of the landscape.

Landscape Visual Impact

4.9 An assessment of the visual impact of the proposed turbine has been made, utilising photomontages as guiding tools. These photomontages are attached as Appendix B. The following table demonstrates this assessment of these photomontages:

Table Detailing the landscape and visual impact					
Site/Feature	***Location and Distance from Turbine***	***View and Assessment***	***Receptor Sensitivity***	***Magnitude of Impact***	***Impact Assessment***
Photomontage 1 and 2 – highway leading to Hill Top	400m to the west	Although there are residential properties within Hill Top these appear to be orientated north-south and as such would not be directed towards the wind turbine. Subsequently the receptor has been given a medium sensitivity value. The proposed turbine would be visible but would be well related set between the tree line and pylons in the rear of the vista. It is the pylons that would continue to dominate and there would only be	Medium as attractive rural lane	Low	Slight Adverse

		a limited change in the vista as a result of the proposed turbine.			
Photomontage 3 – Hill Top	570m to the west	Due to the intervening buildings in close proximity views out of the village are precluded and the proposed turbine would not be visible having a negligible impact.	High as residential properties here	Negligible	Negligible
Photomontage 4 – Haigh Lane	1.3km to the west	Although the landform is undulating providing potentially expansive views, positioned in between the receptor and the proposed turbine are a number of tree belts including mature trees which all serve to restrict views of the turbine and ensure that any effects are negligible.	Medium as attractive rural lane	Negligible	Negligible
Photomontage 5 –Haigh Lane, Hoylandswaine	1.5km to the west	The land drops from this vista affording expansive views to the east. Positioned in between the receptor and turbine are large stretches of mature trees which aid in assimilating the turbine into its setting. At this distance the turbine would be lost within the existing landscape features and any effects would be negligible.	High as residential properties in Hoylandswaine	Negligible	Negligible
Photomontage 6 – Barnsley Road in Hoylandswaine	1.3km to the south west	The land drops from this vista over the stone wall affording views to the settlement Silkstone. The proposed turbine would be visible in this view but only protruding beyond the tree belt with its hub and blade. In this context it would not appear intrusive and would only result in a limited change in the vista.	High as residential properties in Hoylandswaine	Low	Slight Adverse
Photomontage 7 – Silkstone	2.2km to the north east	The land rises from this vista and the pylons dominate the landscape. The proposed turbine would be set some distance to the	Medium as attractive rural lane	Negligible	Negligible

Lane		rear of these pylons and to the rear of trees and as such the turbine would not dominate the vista and would result in a negligible impact.			

4.10 Therefore having regard to the above assessment, whilst there is some harm within the slight adverse categories, this does not necessarily equate to unacceptable harm and this change in vista must be balanced against policy expectations and guidance encouraging renewable energy.

4.11 Due to the narrowness of the turbine and the relatively modest height in comparison with large scale commercial wind turbines, it is considered that main views would be contained to local views. There is unlikely to be any longer distant view of the turbine which would have a significant effect and the undulating landscape coinciding with the number of tree belts all ensures that this remains the case. This aids in ensuring that any harm is minimised and constrained to the local scale.

Cumulative Landscape Impact

4.12 Although there are wind farms within the wider landscape and indeed a number of individual wind turbines, the proposed turbine at Bull Haw Hall Farm is of a scale and location whereby its function as a renewable energy device serving the needs of the farm would be readily understood. It would not visually be understood in conjunction with other commercial wind farms and a visual distinction would be evident for residents and visitors within the area. The proposed turbine would subsequently result in minimal cumulative landscape impact in these circumstances.

4.13 Based on the above assessment the turbine would not significantly alter the character of the local landscape as previously defined, thus the character of the landscape would be retained and the turbine would not result in a significant loss of openness. Visual impact has been mitigated through the careful siting of the turbine to the north east of the tree belt so as to ensure the development can be sensitively accommodated within the landscape.

4.14 The majority of vantage points would see a limited impact due to the combination of the topography, tree belt and pylons. When this is balanced against the positive benefits associated with the introduction of the renewable energy provision, it is considered that this

application should be considered favourably and can be accommodated without compromising the overriding characteristics of this landscape and the associated planning policies.

Neighbour Impact

Shadow Flicker

4.15 Shadow flicker is defined as obstructions to light incurred when the blades of the wind turbine cause light pollution when sited in close proximity to buildings, typically to the west or east of the turbine. Shadow flicker has only been known to occur within 10 rotor diameters of a turbine 130 degrees either side of north. The chosen siting point of the turbine is over 160m from the nearest residential property Pye Flatts, which is orientated to the south south west of the proposed turbine. In the case of this turbine model, shadow flicker could only theoretically occur within 192m of the turbine and although this property is within this threshold given the distance and its orientation the extent of shadow flicker is unlikely to be significant.

Noise

4.16 Attached with the application documents is a noise survey undertaken in relation to the Endurance E-3120 Wind Turbine according to IEC 61400-11 at East Ash Farm, Bradworthy, Devon, to measure the sound power level and tonal characteristics. The apparent sound power level of the wind turbine was calculated over a range of wind speeds from 3-12m/s together with the one third octave band levels for wind speeds of 6-8 m/s. It was not possible to calculate the 1/3 octave sound power levels above 8m/s due to the contrition of background noise. The tonal output from the Endurance E-3120 turbine has been assessed using the methodology prescribed by IEC 61400-11 for wind speeds of 6-10 m/s and has been determined to be not tonal, except at a wind speed of 6m/s where tones were identified.

4.17 The ETSU-R97 is a guidance note widely used by planners in assessing wind turbines and indicates that a noise limit for night time operation of 43DB(A) is acceptable. This limit is derived from the 35DB(A) sleep disturbance criteria referred to in Planning Policy Guidance.

4.18 The Noise Working Group recommends that day time lower fixed limits can be higher than this at 45 DB(A). They also state that consideration should be given to increasing the permissible margin above background where the occupier of the site has some financial involvement in the wind turbine, meaning that it can be acceptable to have higher noise readings where the applicant's property is the primary affected residence. In the case of the siting point of the wind turbine, the nearest residential property is approximately 170m from the wind turbine ensuring a reasonable distance between the turbine and nearest noise sensitive receptor.

Visual Impact from Neighbours

4.19 In terms of the visual impact from neighbouring properties, the turbine by its very nature has a vertical presence in the landscape however it is also a narrow structure allowing views past either side of the turbine. In this location Pye Flatts and Roger Royd are likely to be the most affected due to the close proximity in comparison to other residential properties. The residential property at Pye Greave Farm is positioned to the south east of the turbine but has a series of farm buildings located in between providing screening. To the north, Roger Royd would have views of the turbine primarily from its garden curtilage due to the orientation of its main facades and at approximately 170m the turbine would not appear overly intrusive.

Electromagnetic Interference

4.20 The wind turbine's switch gear has been fully tested to ensure compliance with the UK standards, thus ensuring that the main source of electromagnetic interference from other wind turbines is avoided. The digital TV network in the UK is not affected by electromagnetic interference which was previously associated with analogue TV services and transmission stations. The scattering and disruption of signal is a rare occurrence in any event, associated with very large utility scale wind turbines and there have been no recorded instances of electromagnetic interference occurring from wind turbines less than 45m high. Subsequently, this wind turbine is unlikely to cause any electromagnetic interference in the area.

Proximity to Electrical Power Lines

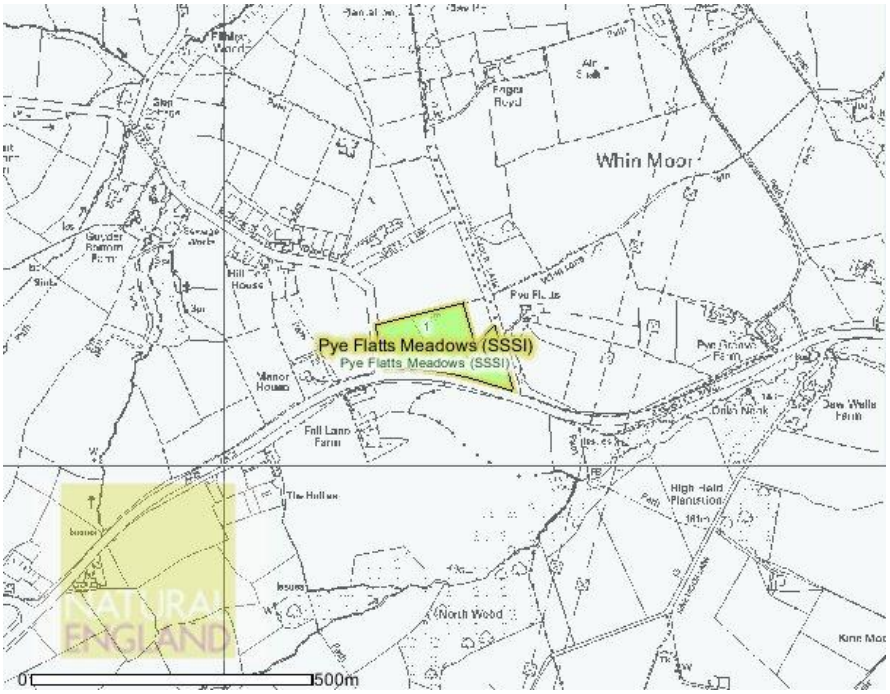
4.21 The guidelines set out by NEDL (Distribution Network Operator) indicate that the installation of a wind turbine is acceptable at over 10m from any power line. As can be seen on site, this application would therefore fully comply with these expectations and the proposed wind turbine would have no impact on the distribution network.

Proximity to Airports and Flight Paths

4.22 The nearest commercial airport is Leeds Bradford and Doncaster Sheffield which are located approximately 18nm from the site, whilst the nearest small independent airfield is Nostell Priory which is still some 7nm from the proposed turbine. Due to the undulating landform and the limited height of this turbine in comparison with larger commercial turbines it is considered that the proposed turbine would be unlikely to have a significant impact on flight paths or the operations of airports in the wider region.

Ecological Issues

4.23 An appraisal of nearby designated sites has found the nearest SSSI with potential ecological linkages with the application site is Pye Flatts Meadows, which is identified in the map below some 250m from the application site.



4.24 Attached with Appendix C is the citation for this SSSI and it is clear that the designated site has been designated due to its flora rather than the presence of fauna. The site comprises of three meadows which are established on loamy brown earths overlying the sandstone, coal seams and ironstone bands of the Lower Coal Measures, where they outcrop at this exposed, hilly location. They contain a uniform and mature stand of neutral hay meadow. The diverse list of plant species suggests the present plant cover is a product of a long period of consistent traditional agricultural management. The site was last assessed in August 2010 and was noted with the meadows in very good condition. Approximately 14 species were found per m2. No undesirable species were present. All meadows had required levels of indicator species present and overall the site has around 70% wildflower cover. Site in HLS management and educational visits are now being carried out on the site as part of that agreement. Crucially the proposed turbine would not directly impact this designation with no excavations proposed within the confines of the SSSI. Furthermore as this designation relates to the sites flora rather than any fauna it is considered that the two can sit comfortably in this locational context.

4.25 Any ecological impact is likely to be associated with the habitats found within or adjacent to the application site only rather than this nearby designated asset. The installation of the proposed wind turbine would result in no significant trees being removed due to the form and nature of the installation process and as such there would be no direct habitat loss.

4.26 Collision risk and disturbance displacement are therefore considered the two predominant effects likely to occur. Clearly with an individual turbine the potential for collision and disturbance with birdlife is reduced from a commercial wind farm. Different species groups vary in terms of susceptibility to collision, with larger birds such as raptors being particularly susceptible. The RSPB generally consider that smaller more agile birds such as sparrows or finches are better equipped to avoid collision with wind turbines. Given the habitats around the site, including the SSSI, it is considered that the smaller more agile farmland bird species found within hedgerows would be the more predominant of birdlife.

4.27 Taking into account the habitats on site, given the relatively low height of the turbine in comparison with large scale wind turbines and as this application relates to an isolated turbine rather than a wind farm, it is considered that the risk of bird collision would be

minimal. Comparably disturbance is likely to be contained to the micro scale around the turbine itself rather than from the wider area.

4.28 Natural England has produced a Technical Information Note TIN051 in light of the Eurobats Agreement, entitled 'Bats and Onshore Wind Turbines'. This report summarises the potential impacts of wind energy developments on bats and TIN051 recommends that wind turbines are unlikely to affect bat populations where a 50m buffer is maintained from foraging habitat. In this location the most likely foraging area is the tree belt to the west of the turbine and the field boundaries. This wind turbine is positioned outside of the buffer zone required by Natural England and it is thus clear that the proposals would not result in any significant impact on possible bat populations.

4.29 Both the RSPB and Natural England are generally supportive of wind turbines and the role they play in sustaining the country's energy demands. Naturally site specific conditions must still be given due consideration and in this location it is considered that the provision of one individual wind turbine can be sensitively sited so as to ensure that the proposals would not result in any adverse impact on ecological issues.

Archaeological Implications

4.30 The proposals will involve some ground excavations when the foundations are laid and turbine installed. A review of the information within the PastScape database has been undertaken which is taken directly from the NMR's national historic environment database containing nearly 400,000 records on the archaeology and buildings of England and its territorial waters. A search of sites within 500m of the proposed turbine has found the one record relating to an oval enclosure, measuring c.600 by 400ft., visible as a crop and soil mark (SE 273053] to the west of the field containing the proposed turbine. The record within Pastscape states that there are possibly remains of a ditch and bank on the south side. The size and situation of the earthwork suggest that it may belong to the "Hill Forts of the Peak" series.

4.31 The presence of the above record does not indicate a particular strong risk of archaeological findings associated with the limited amount of earthworks being proposed as part of this application. Nevertheless, if any findings are discovered during ground work appropriate steps as required will be taken to ensure that no damage occurs.

Heritage Assets

4.32 As with any application, consideration should be given to any impact on the character of heritage assets, be they listed buildings or conservation areas. The nearby listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments are identified in the following map.



4.33 There are few listed buildings in the immediate vicinity with the exception of Noblethorpe to the south east of the turbine and most notably the out buildings at Bull Haw Hall Farm to the north east of the proposed turbine. The outbuildings within the application site are Grade II Listed and are an L shaped range of barns at the north side of the yard at Bull Haw Hall Farm. The building is dated to the 16th Century and is constructed of traditional materials with stone and a slate roof. The proposed turbine has been sited outside of the setting of this listed building which is considered to relate to the farm yard and its agricultural farming context which would remain unaffected by the introduction of the proposed turbine. Noblethorpe Hall is quite a significant distance from the siting point of the proposed turbine and is considered to remain unaffected by the proposal and it is thus considered that the impact on heritage assets is appropriate.

Loss of Agricultural Land

4.34 The area of the application site is limited due to the diameter of the turbine and subsequently it would have a no more than a negligible impact on the agricultural use of the land which would for the main part continue whilst the turbine is in operation.

Installation of the Turbine and Access Arrangements

4.35 The temporary works required to install the turbine are limited. If granted we would be happy to accept a condition that any works to the land be reinstated following the installation of the turbine. In order to install the cabling for the turbine to connect to the grid some ground disturbance will be needed, however this will be temporary works, no trees would be removed and again the ground will be reinstated to its original condition upon laying the cable. The farm is served by an existing access which would be reused for the purposes of installation and any maintenance and access vehicles would then travel through the field to the siting point from there.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 In assessing this application in relation to policy and environmental context, it is considered that the application should be granted for the following reasons:

- The proposed wind turbine would be positioned to the south west of the farmstead in a location where the visual intrusion would be minimised and the turbine seen against the context of tree belts, pylons, the undulating land form and farm buildings which would all ensure that the turbine would have not have a significant landscape and visual impact.

- The proposed turbine would not be seen as an isolated feature within the countryside but would clearly relate to the farmstead and the function would be readily appreciated. However, the distance to the farmstead would also be such that a balance has been struck ensuring that the turbine would not intrude into the setting of the listed outbuildings at Bull Haw Hall Farm.

- It is acknowledged that under strict Green Belt guidance, a wind turbine is considered inappropriate development in principle, however, in line with recent appeal decisions and the changes with the introduction of the NPPF, there are exceptional circumstances in the form of providing renewable energy and assisting the UK's commitment to addressing climate change which outweigh Green Belt planning policy.

- Although there is a SSSI within close proximity to the application site this appears to be designated for its flora rather than the presence of any fauna. Whilst there would likely be birdlife and potentially bats within the area, the proposed turbine has been positioned in a location detached from the nearby habitats such as the small tree belt to the west thus reducing the risk of collision and displacement.

- There are no other material planning considerations that would outweigh the overriding benefits of this proposal in providing a renewable energy source and the long term environmental benefits this brings.

5.2 Having regard to the above and all other matters, it is considered that the proposed development meets the expectations of policies of the Development Plan and other policy

guidance including specifically the provisions of the recently introduced NPPF. It is thus felt that this application should be granted subject to reasonable and appropriate conditions.

APPENDIX A METHODOLOGY USED FOR ASSESSING VISUAL LANDSCAPE IMPACT

The process of assessing the impact of this application from a visual amenity perspective has been guided by the document 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment'(2002). To accompany the description of baseline and assessment information, a series of classifications have been applied to the landscape character of the site and each visual receptor. These act as a summary and place a defined value on; the sensitivity of the character area/visual receptor, the magnitude of change and the subsequent significance of the effect of the development.

The sensitivity of existing Landscape Character/Visual Receptors is the degree to which landscape character or a visual receptor can accommodate change arising from a particular development, without a detrimental effect. It is dependent on its importance, quality, value and contribution and the degree to which it can be replaced or substituted. The sensitivity of landscape character/ a visual receptor is defined as being High/Medium/Low, where High is the most sensitive. For visual receptors and views the sensitivity will depend on the location and context of the viewpoint, the expectations and occupation or activity of the receptor and the importance of the view. The most important receptors are usually users of outdoor recreational facilities, where the interest may be focused on the landscape. Also, occupiers of residential properties where views may be affected by the turbine are considered important. Other receptors that have been included are people travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars, on trains or other transport routes. The magnitude of change to a landscape character area or visual receptor will be dependent upon the nature of the proposed development itself and its size, location, and individual forms and pattern in relation to the character of the proposed development site and the surrounding area. Magnitude of change is categorised using the terms Low, Moderate and High, which can be generally defined as:

- Low - a limited number of changes to any of the key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline landscape or views. This would equate to a discernable but non-material change to the landscape character or view;
- Moderate - a moderate number of changes to any of the key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline landscape or views. This would equate to a material change in the landscape character or view;

- High - a large number of changes to any of the key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline landscape or views. This would equate to a fundamental change in the landscape character or view.

For visual receptors the criteria adopted for classification of sensitivity and magnitude of impact are as follows:

Sensitivity:

- High sensitivity e.g. residential properties, Public Rights of Way and passive recreational activities, scenic drive;
- Medium sensitivity e.g. play areas, sporting and active recreational facilities, attractive rural lanes;
- Low sensitivity e.g. industry, general road users.

Views from faster roads (e.g. 'A' and 'B' class roads and motorways) are normally considered to be of low sensitivity to change due to the transitory nature of such views. Views from minor country lanes, which potentially have a higher recreational value, have been assessed as being of medium or high sensitivity.

Magnitude of Impact:

- High magnitude e.g. major change in view character;
- Medium magnitude e.g. moderate change in view character;
- Low magnitude e.g. minor change in view character;
- Negligible magnitude e.g. a development is visible but forms a barely perceptible component of the view

Due to access restrictions, the magnitude of effect on view character for all receptors, including residential property, is assessed on the basis of ground level views (e.g. from ground floor and garden level in the case of residential property).

An assessment of the significance of an impact can be derived from the combination of the 'sensitivity' of a landscape or visual receptor and the 'magnitude' of the impact. This has been interpreted as follows:

Sensitivity		**Magnitude**		**Significance**
High	+	High	=	Substantial
High	+	Medium	=	Moderate
High	+	Low	=	Slight
Medium	+	High	=	Moderate
Medium	+	Medium	=	Moderate
Medium	+	Low	=	Slight
Low	+	High	=	Moderate
Low	+	Medium	=	Slight
Low	+	Low	=	Slight

Impacts are described as being either beneficial or adverse.

Negligible impacts can be derived from high, medium or low sensitivity combined with negligible magnitude.

Landscape character is defined as a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape. Patterns in the landscape, activity or tranquillity, heritage and cultural associations, vegetation, land use and connectivity combine together to create landscape character. It is important this is considered so a full understanding of the site and its surroundings can be achieved. England has been divided into areas with similar landscape character, which are called National Character Areas (NCAs) and the characteristics of the application site are considered within this application.

An assessment has been made of the visual impact from key settlements and public vantage points around the site. A table has been prepared which demonstrates the envisaged impact from key areas around the site of the proposed turbine.