

HOUGH ON THE HILL PARISH COUNCIL

**Rose Cottage, Honington Road, Barkston, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG322NE
Telephone: 01400 251459
E-mail: abaparishclk@hotmail.co.uk**

Chairman: Councillor Mrs S Morgan

South Kesteven District Council
Development Management
Council Offices
St. Peter's Hill
Grantham
Lincolnshire
NG31 6PZ

NOTIFICATION OF PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS

Application No: S11/1922/FULL/PWM/PC1
Applicant: Mr Dick Baines
Proposal: Two wind turbines (hub height 26.9m, rotor diameter 20m and total ground to tip height 36.9m) and associated works
Location: Lodge Farm, Main Street, Carlton Scroop, Grantham, NG32 3AU
App Type: Full Planning Permission

Your notice regarding this application was received on 27th September 2011.

The Parish Council's representations are as follows:-

Hough on the Hill Parish Council object to this planning application for several reasons.

There is much information in the Design and Access statement that is either misleading or incorrect.

Locality

The list of nearby dwellings (para 3) should also include Hough Lodge, the Red House and the last properties in Carlton Road, Hough-on-the-Hill. These are all as near to the site as Lodge Farm, or nearer.

To state that these wind turbines will be as close to the farm buildings as practicable is somewhat misleading. They are about as far from the applicant's farm as is possible to get on his land.

The statement that other dwellings '*do not face directly onto the proposed site*' is meaningless and the assertion that they '*are well screened by mature trees*' is unproven. The turbines are likely to be visible from in and around all of these properties.

Similarly, the statement that mature trees '*dotted throughout the gently undulating landscape*' will effectively screen the turbines is only correct if the observer stands directly behind one of these isolated trees (as in one of the photos).

Access

Access is said to be along an existing track from Carlton road. The only track visible on the ground is a grubbed up field headland. This does not seem suitable for heavy plant, so a new road may be required. There was a permissive bridleway leading from Carlton Road, past the site; but this has very recently been closed by the landowner. It is thus now possible to state that there are no recreational routes in the immediate vicinity, though horse-riders (including disabled riders) regularly use Carlton Road, just north of the site.

It is not clear how the generated energy will be supplied to the farm and thus whether any suspended cables or excavations would be required. The introduction implies that the power will be supplied directly to the applicant's property, whereas para 7.4 implies that the turbines will be connected to the national grid via '*high voltage power lines*' to the west and south of the site.

Visual Impact

We dispute claims that the visual impact will be minimal and that the character and quality of the landscape

will be unaffected. The applicant's own map ZV1 shows the wide area of visibility to include Hough-on-the-Hill, which is also a Conservation Area and therefore contrary to the statement towards the end of para 7.2. There will certainly be an impact here and to the closer dwellings listed in the application and above.

The location of the '*large pylon structures already present in the surrounding landscape which are considerably more visually intrusive on the landscape*' is not clear. There is a single large radio mast on the hill to the east of Carlton Scroop, but the nearest pylons we are aware of are some 5.8km to the south west.

Photo 4 from the site is supposed to imply that the topography will absorb the turbine. Rather it shows a smooth landscape where the turbines on top of the ridge will be very obvious.

The suggestion that a hedgerow along the property boundary will provide '*adequate screening*' for the turbines is also surprising given their relative height. The claim that the site will only be visible from 'certain directions' is not supported by map ZV1. The map also shows that the site will be visible at various ranges, both near and far, so to suggest that all views would be '*distant views*' is nonsense.

We do not accept the statement that wind turbines have to be '*expected and accepted*' as part of the rural landscape. In this area turbines are not '*an aspect of the landscape*'.

Cumulative Impact

Cumulative impacts are dismissed; however, there are currently 3 planning applications for wind turbines in this locality on the SKDC website. We assume that the 2 applications for Lodge Farm are the same site, but that for the nearby Howdale Farm is an additional application. We consider that the cumulative impact of the 2 proposals must be considered in terms of visual and noise impact and the effect on the character of the area.

Noise

The statement in para 7.3 that there are no residences nearer than the applicant or 750m is incorrect and is contradicted by para 3 (see above).

The supplied noise survey has few details and no explanation. It is therefore difficult to confirm its accuracy or assess the implications of its results. However, we have the following initial observations:

- The turbine noise is calculated at 4m, but would not 20m (the lowest height of the blade tips) or 30m (hub height) be more appropriate?
- The same wind value seems to be used for the turbine and for its impact at ground level. But the wind speed 30m above the ridge (which determines turbine speed) will be significantly higher than the surface wind speed at the nearby dwellings.
- The ambient noise levels used for comparison are fixed, not based on site surveys. Given that this is a quiet rural area, generic figures may not be accurate. Also, the reason for adding a 5dB margin is not clear.
- There is no indication whether the comparison figures apply to day or night hours. Not only are atmospheric conditions different at night, ambient noise levels are much lower. A distinctive and repeating noise pattern from the turbines could be quite noticeable, and annoying, at night even at a relatively low dBA value; certainly lower than the arbitrary '*acceptable*' level used in the survey.
- There are some figures for different noise frequencies ('octave data') in the assumptions but nothing in the comparison data between turbine and ambient noise. So we cannot tell if the turbine noise will be particularly noticeable at a certain frequencies.
- It is not clear whether the calculations are for 1 or 2 turbines. If for 2 turbines then there seems to be no allowance for the beat frequencies that could be produced from their unsynchronised rotors.

The claim that will be no negative impact with regard to noise is unproven. We suggest that these figures are checked by an independent expert, or that an independent survey is commissioned. These should include the cumulative impact of any nearby proposals.

Other Issues

We would have thought it vital to obtain comments from the RAF regarding interference with their flights and/or radar.

Also, if the turbines are required by the CAA to display obstruction lights, there is likely to be a strobe effect from the blades passing in front of the lights.

There is local concern about the possible effect on wildlife as it is believed that there are, for instance, bats and owls in the area. There is no evidence that the appropriate agencies e.g. RSPB have been consulted.

Conclusion

We object to the erection of these turbines on the grounds that they will have a significant visual impact on the surrounding landscape, in particular the conservation village of Hough-on-the-Hill.

The application lacks detail, with no ecological survey and no evidence of any consultation with the local community. Other aspects of the application are unclear, the noise implication for nearby dwellings is unproven and the cumulative visual and noise impacts of other planned installations have not been considered.

We do not dispute the 'green' credentials of wind power, nor that in some other cases the benefits to a community may outweigh the disadvantages. However, in this case the benefit is solely for the applicant (in terms of energy costs and subsidies) and to the national government (as a minor contribution to renewable energy targets). The local community, whom the parish and district councils represent, will see no benefit but will bear all the disadvantages.

Signed: _____

A B Anderson MBE
Clerk to Hough on the Hill Parish Council

Date: 11th October 2011