



ANGELA SMITH MP
Penistone and Stocksbridge Constituency

The Arc, Town Hall
Manchester Road
Stocksbridge S36 2DT



14 October 2013

Maria Duffy
Interim Head of Planning
Sheffield City Council
Howden House
Union Street
Sheffield S1 2SH

Dear Ms Duffy

Re: 13/02433/FUL | Siting of two wind turbines with a tip height of 34.5M | Hollin Edge Farm Common Lane Deepcar Sheffield S36 2UD

I am writing to you with regard to the above application for two wind turbines at Hollin Edge Farm, Deepcar. I have a number of concerns with regard to this application, and would submit an objection to the application for the following reasons.

The application site is in close proximity to the Townend Common Local Nature Reserve, one of 17 in the Sheffield local authority area. The 5.2 hectare site, which contains a few ponds and several boggy areas due to its permanent natural springs, contains a rich diversity of vegetation and fauna. I am highly concerned that the rotating blades of the turbines present a danger of bird/batstrike and that the variations in air pressure caused by the rotation may cause unacceptable disturbance to bird life. Whilst the applicant has stated that it is unlikely that the development constitutes a risk to local ecology, no evidence seems to have been presented to support this conclusion.

I am also concerned with regard to the construction phase of the proposed development. Whilst the site is in reasonable proximity to the A616 and A6102 for the transportation of turbine components and base materials, these would have to be transported a considerable distance along Common Lane, a narrow lane which is not suitable for heavy traffic. The construction of deep foundations for the turbine will also add a significant amount of additional weight in an area already susceptible to boggy conditions, and concerns have been expressed locally that there may be another landslip caused by long-term effects of rotor vibration or in the event of heavy rain as there was further along the valley in 2007. I would therefore ask that the Planning Department satisfies itself that the proposed development's construction plans are sufficiently robust to prevent such an occurrence.

WORKING FOR YOU IN PENISTONE AND STOCKSBRIDGE

0114 283 1855 • fax: 0114 283 1850 • e: smithac@parliament.uk • w: angelasmith-mp.org.uk

The proposed development is situated on the border of an Area of High Landscape Value. As such, any development in this area should only be allowed if it clearly enhanced the character of the AHLV, however my constituents and I would argue that the siting of two wind turbines in such an exposed location would clearly be significantly detrimental to the character of the area. Indeed there is a public right of way running between the proposed positions of the turbines in the form of a Byway Open to All Traffic. I also feel that Sheffield City Council should robustly defend areas of Green Belt, such as the application site, and examine very carefully any application which affected the openness of the green belt. On these grounds, I believe that the application constitutes inappropriate development.

I understand that the applicant's agent has referenced an appeal decision by the Planning Inspector in support of the application. I do not believe that the cited appeal decision provides a precedent upon which to base a decision on this application, as the application in question was for a single turbine less than half the height of the proposed turbines at Hollin Edge and indeed with only 6% of the total energy capacity of the Hollin Edge development. The Planning Inspector did however attach significant weight to the material consideration of inappropriate in the Green Belt.

The proposed development site sits at approximately 1000ft above sea level, and as such is one of the higher points in the area. Indeed Hollin Edge is visible from Skye Edge on a clear day. Consequently the site is exposed and any structure, especially a moving structure over 100ft in height, will be highly conspicuous and visible for a considerable distance.

Whilst I understand that the Ministry of Defence does not object in principle to the construction of the proposed wind turbines, my understanding is that the Defence Infrastructure Organisation has recommended that an aviation-grade 25 candela light is fitted to the top of the turbines, flashing at a rate of 60Hz. I further understand that this is required to be visible for 5 miles which, I believe, will cause significant evening disturbance when ambient light levels drop, particularly in less-developed such as the Peak District National Park.

The *Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy* (DCLG, July 2013) is clear that local authorities have a role to play in increasing the use and supply of green energy, but is equally clear that this criterion does not automatically override other material considerations and environmental protections. The guidance also indicates that the views of local communities likely to be affected should also be listened to, and a number of my constituents have expressed their concern with regard to the impact they feel the proposed turbines would have upon their quality of life.

The guidance also makes clear that cumulative impact may be considered not only as a result of the visibility of more than one wind turbine development from a single location, but also those developments which can be seen in quick succession during a short journey. The national guidance also stipulates that key viewpoints should be considered as part of the landscape assessment, however I understand that certain key views, valued by the local community and visitors to the area, have not been robustly analysed.

A number of properties will be sited comparatively close to the site of the proposed turbines. In addition to the visual impact and potential infrasound effects upon residents of these properties, a thorough examination of the potential impact of noise on these residents should be performed. I understand that the application contains references to a noise assessment conducted in Devon under IEC 61400-11 (2006) *Wind Turbine Generator Systems – Part 11: Acoustic Noise Measurement Techniques*. I would ask that the Planning Department satisfies itself that this provides at least the same level of protection afforded by the ETSU-R-97 *The assessment and rating of noise from wind farms* measurement system advocated by the most recent national planning guidance on renewable energy. I would also ask that an assessment is made of the potential impact of shadow flicker upon nearby properties and, if necessary, suitable controls are put in place to mitigate this through planning conditions.

In conclusion I would express my serious concern with regard to the proposed wind turbines at Hollin Edge Farm, which would present a visual intrusion for several miles in all directions and negatively impact upon the character of the Peak District National Park and the Bolsterstone Conservation Area. I would contend that this application, in close proximity to a Local Nature Reserve and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, constitutes inappropriate development and does not satisfy the exceptional conditions required to justify encroachment into the Green Belt, and I would therefore urge the Planning and Highways Committee to refuse planning permission for this development.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Angela Smith MP
Penistone and Stocksbridge
Constituency MP of the Year 2011-12