

MICKLEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The Chief Officer
Planning Services
Leeds City Council

Development Department
The Leonardo Building
2 Rossington Street
Leeds
LS2 8HD

Ms. Joanne Hebden
Clerk & RFO to the Council
Micklefield Parish Council

6 Churchville Avenue
Micklefield
Leeds
LS25 4AS

Date : 2nd April 2008

PLANNING APPLICATION : 08/01118/FU/MIN

Applicant : Banks Renewables Ltd. ,
of Inkerman Road , Tow Law , Bishop Auckland , Co. Durham , DL13 4HG .

Location : Land in the vicinity of Hook Moor , to the east of the Great North Road and the A1(M) and to the north of Micklefield , Leeds , LS25 4 .

Description : Full Planning for the Erection of 5 Wind Turbines , Control Building , Meteorological Mast , Site Tracks , Improvement to Highway Access , underground Cabling , Temporary Compound and Associated Development .

Dear Sir ,

At an Extraordinary Meeting of Micklefield Parish Council on Friday 28th March 2008 , at which Councillors M. Auty , D. Backhouse , M. Chapman , G. Craven , J. Crossley , M. Devey , N. Duff and C. Staddon were present ; and following a thorough assessment of the documents submitted in support of the application , viz a vis , in particular :

- Detailed drawings of the Site Layout , Wind Turbines and the Control Building
- The Planning Statement , Statement of Community Involvement and the Environmental Statement
- Appendices 3 to 9 , relating to Landscape & Visual Impact , Ecology , Ornithology , Noise , Shadow Flicker , Archaeology and Agricultural Land Classification

It was Resolved (Unanimously) that Micklefield Parish Council OBJECTS to this Planning Application and :

- A) Recommends that the application be REFUSED;**
- B) Requests that the application is not approved by officers under delegated powers and is instead brought to a meeting of Plans Panel East and determined by Panel Members;**
- C) Requests that consideration of the application by Plans Panel East includes a Site Visit by Panel Members**

The Parish Council's considered view is based on the following primary issues of objection :

- 1 Inappropriate Development in the Green Belt**
This wind farm proposal amounts to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and , as advised by PPG2 , the development would be harmful by definition .
- 2 The 'Very Special Circumstances' described are not sufficient to warrant an Approval**
The renewable energy target advocated for Leeds in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy is merely indicative and an aspirational figure. The target of 11 Megawatts by 2010 is not mandatory and does not constitute an overarching reason for this specific application to be approved .

3 Detrimental Impact on Visual Amenity

The 5 wind turbines would be enormous solid structures in an area where no built development currently exists . At a height of 80m to the hub and 125m to the tip of the blades at full vertical rotation , they would have a significant adverse impact in terms of their height , cumulative effect , and their proximity to the Special Landscape Area . The Secretary of State's proposed changes to the Draft Revised RSS for Yorkshire and the Humber confirms , under Policy Env 9 , that : "Plans , strategies , investment decisions and programmes should conserve the distinctive elements of the historic environment , enhance their character and reinforce their distinctiveness [including , *inter alia*] prehistoric landscapes , especially the Southern Magnesian Limestone Ridge". The proposed wind turbines would be situated within this defined historical environment and clearly would neither conserve it , nor enhance its character , and would , in fact , radically alter its distinctiveness .

4 Detrimental Impact on the Amenity of Footpath Users

Two Definitive Public Footpaths are in very close proximity to the proposed wind turbines . The central column of the turbines would be only 50m away from Public Footpath No.11 and thus only 5m away from the extent of the blades at full horizontal rotation . Walkers may be deterred from using these footpaths if they are in such close proximity to moving operational machinery on this scale.

5 Between 2 - 3 MW of Renewable Energy is already being generated from the Methane Emissions from Peckfield Landfill Site south of Micklefield

6 Noise

One dwelling lies within the 40 decibel noise contour emanating from the 5 turbines and a considerable number of properties in both Micklefield and Aberford lie within the 35 - 40 Db noise contours .

7 Unknown and Unquantifiable effects of Low Frequency Noise Vibration on Residential Amenity

A significant number of dwellings in Old Micklefield lie within 1km of the nearest proposed wind turbine . Empirical evidence suggests that low frequency noise vibration resonating from large wind turbines can create exceptional and unacceptable effects on certain residences , depending on rock strata and the arrangement of surrounding buildings .

8 Potential Effect of Shadow Flicker from rotating Blades

The plan drawing showing the shadow flicker effect from the wind turbines indicates that Hook Moor Cottage will experience approximately 100 hours of shadow flicker each year . Between 100 and 200 hours of shadow flicker will occur each year in the vicinity of the trailing junction of the A1(M) and M1 and this shadow flicker may have an undue effect on the occupants of Hook Moor Cottage and drivers at the motorway junction .

9 Sudden Distraction Effect of Wind Turbines on drivers

Drivers travelling southbound in the vicinity of the junction of the A1(M) and M1 may be unduly distracted by the sudden visual impact of the wind turbines when changing lanes at the trailing junction . Drivers travelling northwards on the A656 may be unduly distracted by the sudden visual impact of the wind turbines to the north east immediately as they approach the junction with Church Lane . This potential impact on road safety needs to be assessed .

10 Potential Conflict with Aircraft Movements and Air Safety

Some of the proposed wind turbines are in the line of sight of the Ministry Of Defence Radar at RAF Linton-on-Ouse . If erected , these wind turbines might compromise the ability of aircraft to properly utilise this vital MOD radar guidance and surveillance system . Furthermore , the Parish Council is concerned that the wind turbines may conflict with the safe use of the airstrip at Sturton Grange , by light airplanes flying over Micklefield , irrespective of the statements made in para. 13.54 of the applicant's Environmental Statement .

11 Significant and Adverse Effect on Lotherton Hall and its Registered Garden

Paras. 6.245 - 6.248 of the applicant's Environmental Statement acknowledge that "the turbines would become the main focus of the view" when looking to the south from the Registered Garden at Lotherton Hall, thus "introducing an incongruous element to its makeup". The Environmental Statement suggests that this adverse and significant effect would result in a substantial impact on the amenity of visitors to the Lotherton Hall Registered Garden and Lotherton Hall itself.

12 Detrimental Impact on Bats

Paras. 7.56 - 7.58 of the applicant's Environmental Statement acknowledges that the population of bats found in the wider study area is of Medium (Regional / County) Importance. The potential for bat collisions with the moving turbine blades, leading to injuries or fatalities, is quantified as a moderate and adverse impact of the development. Together with the "poorly understood" interaction between the sub-sonic noise emitted by wind turbines and the ultrasound used by bats to 'see' at night and locate prey, the potentially detrimental impact on the local bat population gives the Parish Council some concern.

13 Detrimental Impact on Birds, in particular Golden Plover

Para. 8.52 of the applicant's Environmental Statement acknowledges that there would be a moderate adverse impact on one of the 'target' species of bird, Golden Plover, which is listed in Annex 1 of the EC Birds Directive 1979 (79 / 409 / EEC). The recorded movements of large numbers of Golden Plover, as shown on the accompanying plot drawing, indicates that the predicted mortalities of this important bird species, due to collisions, over the 25 year life of the proposed wind farm, would be appreciable and of great concern to Micklegate Parish Council.

14 Overhead Line Connection to the National Grid

Although this particular element of the development has to be subject to a separate planning application, the applicant has provided a plan drawing indicating the route of the electricity connection to the National Grid. This would be by a new overhead line connection eastwards from the application site, towards and beyond Huddleston Hall. The overhead line would actually run through a part of the Special Landscape Area which is completely unspoilt and should be resolutely opposed.

This consultation response is intended to form a concise account of the issues upon which Micklegate Parish Council's primary objection is founded. However, please note that the above list of objection points is not necessarily exhaustive and it is the Parish Council's intention to submit a more detailed and definitive representation, expanding on the above issues, in due course.

In case this planning application is ultimately approved, either by Leeds City Council or by the Planning Inspectorate, the Parish Council will also be submitting a separate document outlining a range of Conditions which would be considered appropriate to such an approval.

Yours sincerely,

Joanne Hebden (Clerk & RFO to the Parish Council)

Telephone : (0113) 287 5829