GEORGE F.WHITE

RESIDENTIAL . COMMERCIAL . RURAL . DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING STATEMENT

Boythorpe Farm, Butterwick YO17 8HF

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 George F. White (Planning, Architecture and Development) have been instructed by Allison Wold Power Ltd (the 'Applicant') to submit a full planning application for the repowering of 2 existing wind turbines at Boythorpe Farm, Butterwick YO17 8HF.

1.2 Having regard to section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this planning statement considers the application's conformity with the Development Plan, relevant national planning policy and other material considerations.

1.3 In addition to this statement, the application also comprises the following;

- Site Location Plan
- Existing and Proposed Site Plan
- Wind Turbine Specifications

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 OFGEM and the UK Government are actively encouraging the development of renewable energy schemes, with plans to boost UK energy independence and tacking the cost of rising energy prices. Under the proposed plans up to 95% of the UKs energy could come from low-carbon sources by 2030.

2.2 There is clearly an identified need to reduce carbon emissions, and ensure the security of energy supply, with renewable energy sources playing a key role. The applicant is therefore seeking to repower two existing turbines in order to maximise energy generation and efficiency, whilst minimising the environmental and visual impact.

2.3 In December 2021 it is understood OFGEM announced they are actively supporting and encouraging wind turbine operators to replace existing turbines with larger turbines and can do so without loosing the Fee-in-Tariff. It is understood the government also released an energy support scheme which includes onshore wind development for the first time since 2015.

2.4 Wind Turbine output increases with average wind speed and rotor size known as swept area. Wind speed tends to increase with height in most locations, a phenomenon known as wind shear. This variation in velocity with altitude is most dramatic near the surface. Further, the energy in wind is proportional to the cube of the wind speed. Consequently, a small change in wind speed produces a much larger change in wind energy. For example: increasing the height of a turbine rotor, from 9m to 18m will increases the expected wind speeds by 10% and the expected power generated by 34%.

2.5 The swept area relates to the wind energy captured, the proposed turbines will generate over twice as much renewable energy, and this is all captured at low wind speeds. This in turn will help the farm and lower its electricity consumption from the national grid.

3 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

3.1 The application site ('the Site') is located at Boythorpe Farm, Butterwick. The farm is located between the hamlet of Butterwick and the village of Foxholes, with Scarborough approximately 12miles to the south.

3.2 The site is detailed on the submitted Location Plan. There are currently two wind turbines located on site measuring 46m high, with a hub height of 31.5m.

3.3 The holding is under the ownership of Rivis Partners which operates the agricultural enterprise on site. The closest access road to the site is an unclassified and located to the south of the farm.

3.4 The land is considered to be at very low risk of flooding, as currently identified on the Environment Agency Flood Risk Map.

3.5 The site is located in an Area of High Landscape Value as identified in the Ryedale Plan policies map.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

4.1 Permission was granted in August 2013 for the erection of 2no. 31.5m high (overall tip height 46m) 250kw wind turbines to generate electricity for on farm use together with associated electrical sub-station building. Application reference 13/00534/FUL.

5 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

5.1 No formal community consultation has been carried out prior to submission of the application. As per footnote 54 of the NPPF where the proposal involves the repowering of existing wind turbines the applicant is not required to demonstrate the proposal has the backing of the local community. It is however understood the applicant has informally notified some of the local residents regarding their intentions to submit an application for the works, and have received no objections.

6 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

6.1 This application is in full and includes all necessary supporting information.

6.2 Planning permission is sought for the repowering of the existing wind turbines at Boythorpe Farm. This includes replacement with 2 new turbines of different specification.

6.3 Full details of the proposed turbine can be found within the accompanying plans. It is proposed the turbines will have a hub height of 40.7m and a maximum tip height of 64.2m.

6.4 The proposed development will enable the applicant to generate sufficient power for the existing holding more efficiently. The turbines will generate approximately 2,159,610 kWh of renewable energy per annum. The current turbines generate an average of 816,841 kWh per year, therefore despite the increase in hub height there would be an 164% increase in electricity generation.

6.5 The applicant intends to utilise the energy produced on site as the farm and its tenants consume large amounts of electricity. However it is anticipated the neighbour may also be able to benefit from the power generated.

7 PLANNING POLICY

7.1 Planning law (section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.2 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government released the new National Planning Policy Framework in July 2018 (The Framework), with further alterations in February 2019 and July 2021. The Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied

7.3 The Government have confirmed that the Framework is a material planning consideration and should be taken account of when making decisions. It is therefore anticipated that the planning application will be considered against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with regard being had, where relevant, to the statutory development plan.

Statutory Development Plan

7.4 The statutory development plan for the site consists of the Ryedale Local Plan Strategy (2013). It is anticipated that the following policies would be considered in the determination of this application:

- SP1 General Location of Development and Settlement Hierarchy
- SP12 Heritage
- SP13 Landscapes
- SP14 Biodiversity
- SP18 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

8 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

8.1 Based upon an assessment of the planning policy and material considerations, this section will assess the following key issues:

- Principle of Development
- Scale and Visual Impact
- Site Access and Highways
- Noise

Principle of Development

8.2 The starting point in assessing all planning applications should be to establish the principle of development, followed by an assessment of all other material considerations. In this instance the principle of development must consider the provision of 2 replacement wind turbines to increase energy efficiency on site. Policy SP1 of the local plan highlights the locational requirements for development within the area. It is stated that development in the open countryside should be restricted to that:

- *Which is necessary to support of sustainable, vibrant and healthy rural economy;*
- *Which can be justified in order to secure significance improvements to the environment or conservation of significant heritage assets in accordance with the National Enabling Development Policy and SP12 of the Plan; or*
- *Which is justified though the neighbourhood planning process.*

8.3 Whilst the proposed development is not in direct conformity with policy SP1 it is considered such developments are supported by SP18 of the plan which specifically relates to renewable and low carbon energy. It is stated at SP18 that development which generates renewable and/or low carbon sources of energy will be supported providing the individual and cumulative effects can be acceptably mitigated. Most notably this includes ensuring such developments can be assimilated into the landscape or built environment, would not adversely impact the local community or nature conservation.

8.4 Further, paragraph 152 of the NPPF seeks to support renewable and low carbon energy associated infrastructure. This is further echoed at paragraph 158 which states that when determining applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should:

Not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and recognise that even small scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and

Approve the application 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 expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas.

8.5 The application proposes to replace 2 existing turbines which were installed in March 2014. Renewable technology has progressed significantly in the last 8 years therefore the replacement of these older turbines will enable greater efficiency and power generation.

8.6 Ultimately, benefits arising as a result of the proposed development include the provision of additional renewable energy and the resultant reduction in carbon emissions on site and within the surrounding area. It is the applicants intention that the electricity generated will be used by the agricultural holding with any access being offered to the neighbouring farm and tenants, and/or exported to the national grid. It is therefore anticipated that this will lead to a significant reduction in CO2 emissions.

8.7 The development can therefore be considered acceptable in principle, and any other material considerations should be assessed against the benefits generated as a result of the proposed development.

Landscape and Visual Impact

8.8 Both local and national planning policy place great emphasis on the design of the built environment highlighting that good design is a crucial element of sustainable development. Paragraph 174 further recognises that planning decisions should contribute to and enhancement the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

8.9 Policy SP13 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure the quality, character and value of Ryedale's diverse landscapes will be protected and enhanced by ensuring new developments reinforce the distinctive elements of landscape character within the districts broad landscape character areas including the Yorkshire Wolds.

8.10 The surrounding local area is rural in nature and is largely characterised by rolling hills and valleys. The immediate topography of the surrounding area and existing development on site ensures the potential visual and landscape impact of the development will be localised in its extent. As a general assumption it is often not possible to screen the visual impact of a wind turbine therefore the assessment of landscape impact should consider whether such a development would be detrimental to the character of the surrounding area.

8.11 In this instance there are 2 existing wind turbines located on site therefore it was previously considered the landscape had capacity to accommodate such development. The officer report for application 13/00534/FUL states *whilst the turbines will have some obvious impact on the landscape by virtue of their scale and moving parts, when viewed in the context of other decisions within the Wolds and the site specific factors in this case it is considered that the proposals will not have a significant adverse effect upon the surrounding landscape.*

8.12 The proposed replacement turbines will increase the overall height with a tip height of 64.2m. Given the existing turbines on site it is considered a degree of visual intrusion and landscape impact has already been experienced. The applicant considers the visual effects will be localised and will not have a material adverse impact on the surrounding landscape. It is considered that the degree of harm to which a wind turbine can have on the landscape is somewhat subjective. In this instance the turbines will be viewed within the context of the existing farmstead thus reducing the landscape and visual impact.

8.13 Ultimately it is the subject to the views of the decision maker to weigh the potential landscape impact against the benefits of the proposal. However it is the applicants view that given the surrounding landscape has capacity to accommodate the development, and the benefits of generating additional renewable energy outweigh the potential landscape impact.

Site Access and Highways

8.14 Paragraph 111 of the NBPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there were unacceptable impacts on highways safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

8.15 It is anticipated that vehicle movements associated with the proposed development would be minimal. It is considered the majority of vehicle movements would be associated with the installation phase and thereafter movements would remain as existing.

8.16 Having reviewed the application site it is considered existing access can accommodate the proposed development and as such the works would not have an impact on the surrounding highways network. Previously larger turbines have been transported to site and stored temporarily prior to progressing to their final destination.

Noise

8.17 The nearest residential property which is not within the ownership of the applicant is approximately 426m from the proposed development site. It is however anticipated that the neighbours are to be benefiting from the additional power generated as a result of the proposed development, which will in turn reduce their energy costs. The Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) sets out the long term vision of Government noise policy. Noise Policy aims are:

Through the effective management and control of environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development:

- *Avoid significant adverse effects on health and quality of life;*
- *Mitigate and minimise adverse effects on health and quality of life; and*
- *Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life*

8.18 The first aim of the NPSE is to ensure significant adverse effects are avoided, taking into account the principles of sustainable development. As of July 2019 the government updated Planning Practice Guidance in relation to noise, advising on how planning can manage the potential noise impacts in new development. The NPPG when determining application the LPA should consider the following:

- Whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur;
- Whether or not adverse effect is offering or likely to occur; and
- Whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved.

8.19 A noise assessment was submitted as part of the original application in 2013 to demonstrate the proposed turbines would be within acceptable noise limits when considering the nearest receptors. The applicant has advised that whilst the turbines are to be of increased height they will be derated to a similar kW output of the existing, therefore noise levels are anticipated to be similar to that of the existing development.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 The planning application documentation demonstrates that the proposed development is an acceptable form of development and is in accordance with the development plan where the development plan is considered to be up to date.

9.2 The proposals will enable the repowering of 2 existing wind turbines and a review of the above informing suggests there are unlikely to be any adverse impacts arising as a result of the proposed development. Similarly, there are clear benefits of the proposals including the generation of additional renewable energy thus reducing carbon emissions. The main objective of sustainable development is to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The proposed works are considered to comply with the principles of sustainable development.

9.3 On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development complies with both national and local planning policy and this application should therefore be found to be acceptable.


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