



PLANNING SERVICES
Long Stratton Norwich Norfolk NR15 2XE

Our Ref: JT/AM/2007/1342

Please Contact: John Tomlinson
Please Dial Direct: 01508 533831
Please e-mail: jtomlinson@s-norfolk.gov.uk

25 July 2007

Dear Mr Bacon MP

Thank you for your letter of the 16 July setting out your concerns regarding the potentially adverse impacts that large scale wind turbine developments can have on the landscape and your constituents' quality of life. The adopted South Norfolk Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

UTL 13 - 'Renewable energy' acknowledges the need to balance the national benefits of renewable energy against demonstrable local harm.

IMP 10 - 'Noise' seeks to avoid exposing sensitive uses e.g. housing to significant noise disturbance.

ENV 1 - 'Protection of landscape' seeks ensure that the important assets of the South Norfolk landscape are protected from significant harm. This policy is supplemented by the South Norfolk Landscape Assessment which describes and quantifies the distinctive landscape types and character areas throughout South Norfolk. The Landscape Assessment is also the basis for a Wind Turbine Sensitivity Study. The Sensitivity Study takes the defined characteristics and assets of the various South Norfolk landscape types and examines their sensitivity to varying scales of turbine development e.g. single turbine, groups of 2-6, 6-12 etc. In this way the Council believes it has a robust and transparent methodology that will aid the members of Planning Committee in their deliberations regarding the potential landscape impact of turbine schemes.

The Council received a request for a 'scoping opinion' on the potential environmental effects of constructing seven wind turbines within the parishes of Dickleburgh, Pulham Market and Pulham St. Mary on the 18 June. In addition a planning application was received on the 18 July seeking planning permission for the erection of an 60m high Anemometry mast in order to measure wind speeds on the site for a period of 18 months.

The potential development of seven wind turbines within the parishes of Dickleburgh and the Pulhams has certainly prompted a number of residents to contact the Council seeking clarification and further information on a range of issues.

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Richard Bacon MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Head of
Planning Services
John Tomlinson



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



In the first instance the Council has been reassuring people that a scoping opinion is not a planning application. A scoping opinion seeks to establish what the significant environmental issues are that need to be investigated as part of the Environmental Statement that will accompany any subsequent planning application. Whilst the prospect of seven wind turbines in the vicinity will have undoubtedly come as a surprise to the local community the request for a scoping opinion provides a useful mechanism with which to raise the profile of the potential development and consult the community about what issues they would like addressed in the Environmental Statement.

In the interest of providing further clarification and information to members of the public regarding planning policy (including details of the South Norfolk Landscape Assessment and Wind Turbine Sensitivity Study), the planning process generally and what a request for a scoping opinion entails (and what it does not!) the Council will be sending a representative to the following meetings:

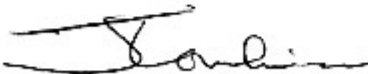
- Dickleburgh village centre on 25 July at 7pm
- Pulham St. Mary village hall on 2 August at 7.30pm.

I would also draw your attention to the fact that following numerous representations the deadline for responses to the Scoping opinion has been extended until 9th August.

As you may be aware the Council received a similar scoping opinion request for seven (120m high turbines) in the parish of Hempnall during the latter part of 2006 which continues to generate significant local interest. Please find attached a copy of the Council's formal scoping response to the Hempnall scheme.

If you require any further details please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



John Tomlinson
Head of Planning Services