

I Need Planning Permission
Planning and Building Consultant
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Mr Colin Godfrey
Northumberland National Park Authority
Eastburn
South Park
Hexham
Northumberland
NE46 1BS

11 December 2017

Dear Mr Godfrey,

**Proposed Installation of Two Domestic Wind Turbines at Longsyke Farm
Haltwhistle Northumberland NE49 9PR
Planning Reference 17NP0123**

Further to your email of the 6 December 2017 I confirm that a site specific noise assessment and shadow flicker assessment has been commissioned. After discussions with my clients they would like to outline the following in respect of the NNPA Landscape and Forestry Officer concerns.

We thank Northumberland National Park Authority for their swift response to our application to build two 5Kw wind turbines at Longsyke Farm, Cawburn, Haltwhistle. We appreciate the responses provided to the Planning Department by other Departments within the Park and respect the views given. Given those views, we feel some background to this project is required.

Longsyke Farm is a small, working hill farm of extensive and out-wintered cattle and sheep. It is under Higher Level Scheme management and has contributed to the National Park's agri-environment goals and targets, particularly in its management of upland hay meadows. The farm has diversified and contributes to the local community by running a holiday cottage of 5 star, gold standard. While livestock, agri-environment subsidy and diversification contribute to the business, energy costs are high (projected to rise) and jeopardise the economic viability of the business. As part of a strategy to reduce energy costs, the farm seeks planning approval for two wind turbines that will contribute to the farm's energy requirements. Over time, the farm seeks to become carbon neutral (a rarity in the National Park). This is for both economic sustainability and also a matter of environmental priority. As such, we believe the proposed development meets the sustainability criteria as laid out in the Park's Local Development Framework and Supplementary Planning Documents. We are surprised that the Park has indicated a likely refusal of consent based on an objection of 'visual clutter.' This is a mistaken conclusion and seems to ignore the importance of renewable energy generation in combating climate change and maintaining economically viable agriculture within

the Park. These are both priorities laid out in the Park's planning strategy documents.

With regard to the specific objections (turbine colour and number):

We are happy to paint the turbines in a subdued colour scheme and are happy to liaise with the Park in determining specifics. We believe the turbines will be unnoticeable at distances over 500m (and unintrusive below that) as they will not break the skyline. Unless training binoculars on the farm, the turbines will not be noticeable from Hadrian's Wall.

Regarding a likely objection on the number of turbines, we respectfully disagree and challenge the Landscape and Forestry Officer to reconsider. The farm requires a 12-15Kw wind energy solution to provide sufficient energy to farm buildings, one domestic dwelling and one holiday cottage (the Park's SDF advises all renewables should be 'sufficient' in scale to meet energy needs). We anticipate electricity requirements to increase as Longsyke Farm transitions off oil (conserving scarce resources is also mentioned in the Park's SDF), meaning electricity will meet heating needs and be used to charge domestic vehicles and the new breed of agricultural machinery. As such, the Farm has ambitions to extend its public reputation as an exemplar of environmentally sustainable farming. We believe this is an ambition the Park Authority should support, not hinder.

The simplest means of generating this power is one 15Kw turbine mounted on a 15m mast. However, while this would meet the Park's recommendation of masts not exceeding by 50% the height of the nearest buildings, we believe that two smaller turbines mounted on 12m masts is less intrusive (and requires less intrusive and invasive footings) and we have proceeded on that assumption. This is a more expensive option and has been chosen solely based on reasons of reducing visual impact on the open countryside. We note that two local properties immediately south of the Park's boundary at Once Brewed also run (considerably larger) twin turbine setups. This is not unusual if the purpose of the development is actually to provide a sustainable and sufficient source of energy, as is the case here.

We trust that the above background and justification helps the Park put the application into perspective and context. We trust that the arguments prove the scheme is within the keeping of the Park's special qualities; also that it is necessary to ensure the environmental and economic sustainability of a farm that contributes to the Park's environmental targets and its landscape and biodiversity value. We are happy to host a meeting to provide further background and explanation, should the Park wish, but must voice our determination that this application will be successful.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Newman

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