

Margaret Telfer

From: DC Consultation
Sent: 30 January 2018 14:52
To: Colin Godfrey; Margaret Telfer
Subject: FW: Planning Application Consultation 18NP0003 Longsyke Farm, Haltwhistle, Northumberland, NE49 9PR

From: Robert Mayhew
Sent: 30 January 2018 11:49
To: DC Consultation
Cc: Colin Godfrey
Subject: RE: Planning Application Consultation 18NP0003 Longsyke Farm, Haltwhistle, Northumberland, NE49 9PR

Colin,

18NP0003 - Proposed installation of two Domestic wind turbines to generate electricity at Longsyke Farm, Haltwhistle, Northumberland, NE49 9PR

Thank you for consulting me on the above proposed development. I would like to make the following observations with respect to the landscape and Dark Sky Park implications for the National Park, of the proposals as set out in the applicant's documentation.

The proposed development site for these two 15.05m. to tip turbines (12m. to hub) lies approximately 1.3 km from Hadrian's Wall and the Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail, the principal receptor site within this part of the National Park. The chosen site lies not only within the Northumberland National Park but also the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, this central section being visited by some 1.2 million visitors annually.

Other notable publicly accessible receptor sites would include, Melkridge Footpaths 25 and 26 that meet at Longsyke Farm and the minor county roads between Caw Gap and Edges Green and Edges Green to Wealside. The proposed development would be clearly visible from the footpaths but are set far enough away that they would not hinder their safe use by the public. Having spoken to the National Park Access Officer it is not thought that these two footpaths receive substantial use. The turbines would be approximately 800m. and 480m. from the minor county roads respectively.

Longsyke Farm is set within an agricultural landscape of improved in-bye land and mixed semi-improved grassland rising to unimproved moorland and a backdrop of conifer forest, the southern edge of Kielder Forest to the north. The Whin Sill ridge dominates views to the south. The application site is set within a generally open landscape, characterised but traditional stone wall boundary features. A mature broadleaved copse/shelterbelt, approximately 25m. high, is situated to the south-west of the farmstead and this vertical feature will help mitigate the effect of the vertical nature of the proposed development.

I welcome the applicants supporting letter setting out the rationale for proposing two turbines as opposed to a single unit and fully support the aspirations to manage Longsyke Farm as a carbon neutral facility. Whilst the two turbine proposal does present a situation of additional visual clutter, the alternative renewable energy wind option would have been a single unit of greater bulk and height.

With Longsyke being set close to the Caw Burn, the development site sits relatively low down within the surrounding landscape. As such, many of the views gained from nearby receptor sites tend to be from a raised elevation and the turbines would therefore be set against a backdrop of semi-improved agricultural fields rather than the skyline. I see this as benefiting the application as the vertical structures are less likely to be viewed against the horizon and therefore should appear less visually prominent within the landscape. However, I would therefore suggest that the proposed turbine colour Papyrus White, would be inappropriate for these turbines. I would suggest that the turbine

blades, hub and supporting tower should be sprayed an earthy/green colour, (to be agreed by the Authority) so as to best match the backdrop vegetation that they would be viewed against from the key receptor sites to the north and south.

I would disagree with the applicant's statement in the supporting letter dated 11th December in which they state that the turbines will be unnoticeable from distances over 500m. and, that they will not be visible to the naked eye from Hadrian's Wall. I know that the quality of everyone's eyesight differs but based upon my experience, turbines of a lesser height, particularly if painted Grey/White, are visible at distances well over 1000m. Particularly so as the rhythmical blade movement generally clashes with the landscape character and catches one's eye within the setting of the largescale landscape.

In relation to the effect upon the scenic quality of the landscape, precedent has already being set within the Worlds Heritage Site with wind turbines having previously been approved at other properties such as Barron House, Cairny Croft and at Town Shields. These units have on the whole been sensitively sited and demonstrated that renewable energy technology can play a significant part in energy provision for the residents living within this highly sensitive landscape.

One aspect to consider with any mast or wind turbine application is that of longevity of the feature, and what should happen should the structure cease to undertake its primary function. I would recommend that, if this application is approved, a condition be placed upon the decision notice that in this case, should either of the wind turbines cease to function or produce electricity for a period of six months, then the turbine, foundations and all associated infrastructure should be removed from the landscape in the interests of visual amenity and the landscape character.

There are no external lighting implications of this proposed development and as such there will not be a detrimental impact upon the Dark Skies Park status of the National Park.

Having reviewed this application and if the recommendations identified above were to be conditioned, namely

- The colour of the wind turbine and tower,
- Removal of infrastructure if not functional for a period of six months;

on balance, I do not believe that this proposed development would have a substantial effect upon the views or landscape character of this part of the National Park.

I therefore do not propose to object to this application.

If you have any questions with the points raised above or require any further information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Regards

Robert Mayhew
Landscape & Forestry Officer

-----Original Message-----

From: DC Consultation

Sent: 16 November 2017 12:18

To: Robert Mayhew

Subject: Planning Application Consultation 17NP0123 Longsyke Farm, Haltwhistle, Northumberland, NE49 9PR

Please see the attached consultation regarding a planning application which has been received by Northumberland National Park Authority. Full details can be viewed at <http://nnpa.planning-register.co.uk/plaPlanningAppDisplay.aspx?AppNo=17NP0123>

DC Consultation, Development Control Consultation

Tel: (x)

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