



DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

Application Reference Number	18NP0003
Description / Site Address	Proposed installation of two domestic wind turbines at Longsyke Farm, Haltwhistle, Northumberland, NE49 9PR
Expiry date of publicity / consultations	14 February 2018
Last date for decision	12 March 2018

Details of Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the construction of two 5kw domestic turbines within an agricultural field to the north-west of Longsyke Farm. The farm is relatively isolated, being located approximately 600m along a private access leading from an unclassified road which links with the B6318 to the south.

Both turbines would be within a field currently used for grazing, approximately 120m from the closest part of the farmstead. The site is within largely open countryside, punctuated by a few scattered farms, the closest of which is approximately 350m to the south-west of the application site. The landscape of the area consists of rolling hills with the application site set towards the valley bottom, the land gradually rising up to both the north and south. The site is within the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and in close proximity to the Roman Aqueduct (to Great Chester from the Cawburn) Scheduled Monument.

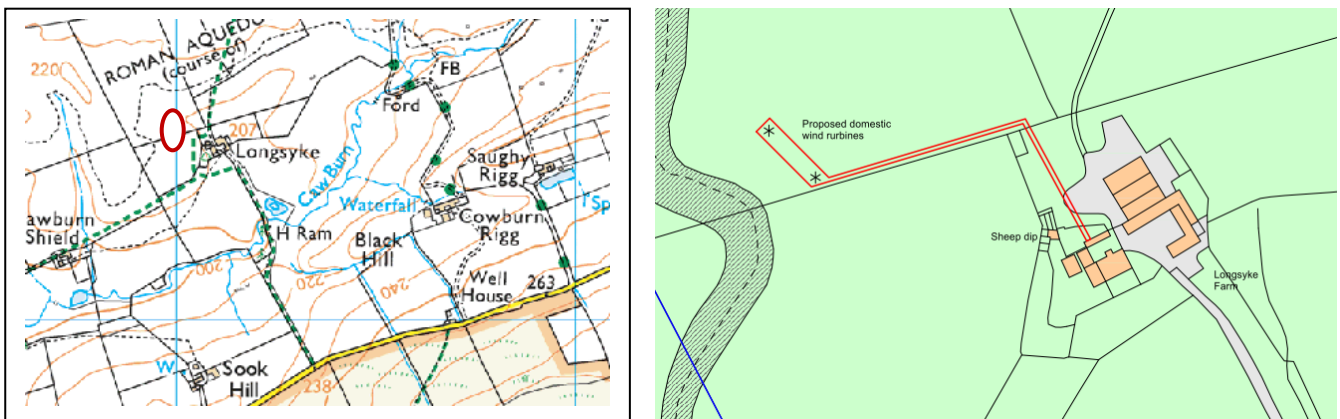


Figure 1: Site Location

The turbine towers would be constructed from galvanised steel with UPVC rotor blades and covers and have a hub height of 12.3m with a maximum height to tip of 15m. Cabling for the development would run eastwards from the turbines, parallel with an existing stone wall before turning south and entering the farmstead. The turbines would provide electricity for the farmhouse, farm buildings and holiday cottage, all in the applicant's ownership.

The application is a resubmission of application 17NP0123 which was withdrawn by the applicant to enable a further noise assessment to be undertaken.



National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

National Planning Practice Guidance

House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS42): Local Planning

Local Policies

Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy and Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) (2009)

Policy 1	<i>Delivering Sustainable Development</i>
Policy 2	<i>Climate Change</i>
Policy 3	<i>General Development Principles</i>
Policy 14	<i>A Sustainable Local Economy</i>
Policy 15	<i>Sustainable Tourism & Recreation Development</i>
Policy 17	<i>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</i>
Policy 18	<i>Cultural Heritage</i>
Policy 19	<i>Tranquillity</i>
Policy 20	<i>Landscape Quality and Character</i>
Policy 21	<i>Farming</i>
Policy 25	<i>Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency</i>
Policy 28	<i>Utilities and Infrastructure</i>

Supplementary Planning Guidance

NNPA Building Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Design Guide SPD)

NNPA Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (Landscape SPD)

Relevant Planning History

- 09NP0053** Conversion of farm building into holiday letting accommodation. *Conditional Planning Permission Granted 23.12.2009*
- 03NP0019** Construction of single-storey extension and porch extension and change of use of outbuilding to ancillary domestic accommodation. *Conditional Planning Permission Granted 06.06.2003*
- 17NP0123** Proposed installation of two domestic wind turbines at Longsyke Farm, Haltwhistle, Northumberland, NE49 9PR. *Withdrawn*

Consultation/Representations



Melkridge Parish Council: No objection: Continue to support the application as per response to 17NP0123.

Historic England: No objection: Comments as per 17NP0123.

The development is in an area of archaeological sensitivity because of its position in relation to the Roman aqueduct, a component part of the Hadrian's Wall Roman Frontier. However, it is not considered that the development will harm any nationally significant archaeological remains and therefore no objection is raised on these grounds.

With reference to the setting of the World Heritage Site, although visible from the aqueduct and wider World Heritage Site, the development would not have sufficient impact on its setting to be said to be harmful to its setting.

Given these conclusions, which are that this proposal would not cause harm to either archaeological remains relating to the Hadrian's Wall Roman frontier or its setting, it is our view that the NPPF paragraphs 132-134, which address planning and development which would cause this kind of harm, do not apply in this case, and that there is no in-principle historic environment reason within our remit for planning permission to be refused in this case.

NCC Public Protection: No objection. In principle Public Protection are in agreement with the proposal subject to appropriate conditions ensuring noise levels at neighbouring properties are within acceptable limits and procedures are in place to address any subsequent noise complaints.

NNPA Historic Environment Officer: No objection. Verbally advised comments as per response to 17NP0123.

I have no objection to the proposal on historic environment grounds. The application states that the turbines and associated structures will be located 23m from the aqueduct buffer zone (the feature appears to be visible on aerial photographs), however a previous survey did not identify any features on the ground north of Longsyke Farm.

NNPA Access and Recreation Officer: No objection: Comments as per response to 17NP0123.

In terms of public access, there is one public footpath in close proximity to the proposed location. The proposed route of the underground cable trench crosses Melkridge public footpath 25 to the south east of the proposed mast location, however I would envisage that the proposals should not impact on this public right of way or other access opportunities in the area.

Whilst any construction works are on-going, care should be taken to not obstruct access to this right of way or in any way prevent or deter public use of the path without the necessary legal diversion or closure order having been made.



NNPA Ecologist: No objection: The turbines (and cabling) are proposed on an area of fell ground outside any protected areas and the farms hay meadows. They are positioned more than 50m from any features that are likely to be used by bats as per current guidelines.

NNPA Landscape and Forestry Officer: No objection: On balance, I do not believe that the proposed development would have a substantial effect upon the views or landscape character of this part of the National Park, subject to conditions requiring;

- The wind turbine and tower to be of a colour agreed in discussion with the NNPA
- Removal of infrastructure if not functional for a period of six months;

Public Response

The application was advertised by means of a notice displayed at the site on 24th January 2018 in addition to three neighbour notification letters issued on 16th January 2018. Two representations have been received, one objecting and one raising concerns, with the comments summarised as follows:

- Concern over potential noise impacts and the difficulty of interpreting the technical aspects of the noise assessment;
- Concern over impacts on the natural look of this section of the Park to the north of Hadrian's Wall;
- Disagreement that the turbines will blend into the landscape;
- Concern that the blades, by virtue of their movement, will attract the eye and appear alien to the local landscape;
- Loss of unspoilt view from property;
- Impact on holiday business

Assessment

The main issues to be taken into consideration in the assessment of this application are:

The principle of the development;
Renewable energy
Design and amenity;
Impact upon National Park special qualities

The principle of the development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places emphasis on a presumption in favour of sustainable development to guide decision making. One of the 12 core planning principles within Paragraph 17 of the NPPF is to ensure planning decisions encourage the use and development of renewable energy. Policy 1 of the NNPA Core Strategy Local Development Framework (Core Strategy) seeks to ensure that development '*Reduces the causes and impacts of climate change, particularly by maximising renewable energy generation.*' while ensuring that proposals will conserve or enhance the special qualities of the National Park. The effects of the proposed scheme on these qualities are discussed in more detail later in this report.



In addition, it is not considered that the proposals conflict with HCWS42 as support for the development has been received from Melkridge Parish Council and all material concerns / objections raised by neighbouring properties have been fully addressed within the supporting documentation and where considered necessary, measures to mitigate impacts can be secured by condition. This is discussed in more detail later in the report.

Core Strategy Policy 5 states that new development in the open countryside will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the development cannot take place in an identified Local Centre, Smaller Village, or through the reuse of an existing building. As the application is for the installation of turbines to provide electricity for the applicant's home, farm and holiday lets, it is considered acceptable for the turbines to be located within the open countryside due to the need to be close to the facilities which they are intended to service. Policies 14 and 15, which relate to '*A Sustainable Local Economy*' and '*Sustainable Tourism and Recreation Development*' respectively, also recognise that it not always possible for new development to be located within identified settlements. The principle of development is therefore considered acceptable subject to consideration of impacts on the special qualities of the National Park.

Renewable energy

The proposed development would be used to generate electricity for the farmhouse, farm buildings and on-site holiday cottage and to help future-proof the business in terms of supermarket requirements for carbon footprint labelling. The applicant has stated that the long term goal is for the farm to become carbon neutral both for environmental and economic sustainability reasons.

Part (e) of Core Strategy Policy 1 states that applications should demonstrate a reduced impact on climate change by maximising renewable energy generation. Policy 2 (e) states the National Park will support proposals which increase small scale renewable energy regeneration with Policy 25 (c) requiring new development to realise the potential for generation of on-site renewable energy. Policy 21 is supportive of appropriate development proposals which enable farming and farmers to become more competitive and sustainable. As the proposal is for small scale renewable energy generation aimed at increasing the long term competitiveness and sustainability of the business, it is considered to accord with the relevant requirements of the above policies. The proposal is also considered to accord with paragraphs 17 and 94 – 98 of the NPPF.

Design and Amenity

Design

Core Strategy Policy 3 requires new development to be of a '*high quality design and construction*' which includes ensuring that '*materials are appropriate to the site and its setting*'. The turbines are of a standard design, consisting of a three blade rotor on a 12m tower with a maximum height to tip of 15m. It is considered that both the design and scale of the turbines is small scale and therefore appropriate to the setting. The proposed colour of the turbines is discussed later in the report.

Residential Amenity



Core Strategy Policy 3 requires new development to ensure that ‘*amenity is not adversely affected in terms of visual impact, pollution, noise, and waste*’. Given the nature of the proposals, the amenity of neighbouring properties needs to be assessed both in relation to shadow flicker and noise.

The application is supported by a Report which concludes that no neighbouring properties would be adversely impacted by shadow flicker. The nearest residential property outside of the ownership of the applicant is Cawburn Shield, located approximately 350m to the south-west with all other residential properties a minimum of 500m away. NCC Public Protection has been consulted on the proposals and concurs with the Report that shadow flicker would not be an issue for this application.

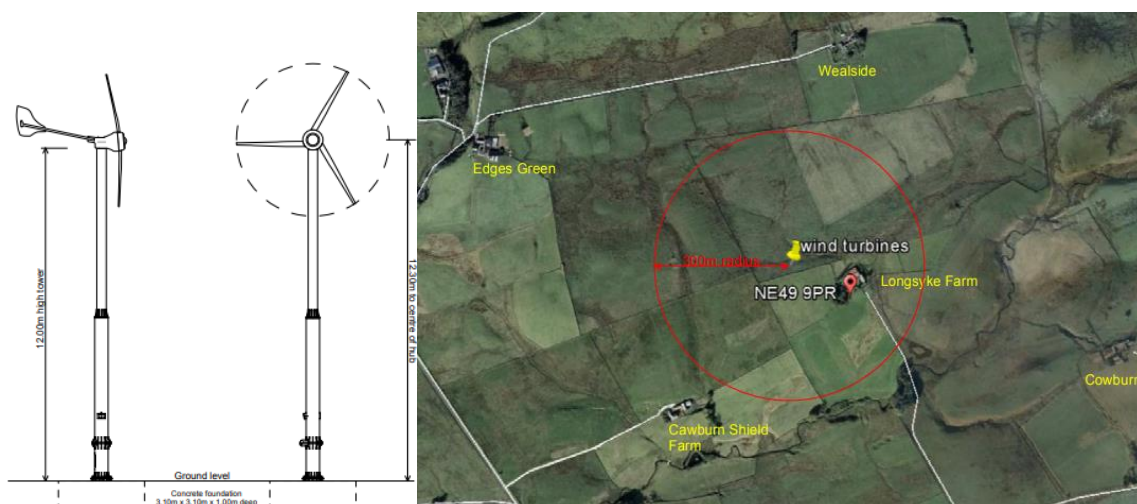


Figure 2: Turbine Design and Relationship with neighbouring properties

The occupiers of Cawburn Shield and The Forge, Sook Hill have raised concern over potential noise nuisance. In this regard, the application is supported by a noise assessment which indicates that noise levels at all neighbouring properties will be within acceptable limits. Again, Public Protection has confirmed that they concur with the findings of the report. The Public Protection Officer has however requested that a number of conditions are attached to the permission to ensure noise levels are maintained within the calculated limits.

Given the distances involved, the modest size of the turbines and the topography of the area, it is considered that the amenity of any neighbouring properties would not be adversely affected by any other means i.e. though loss of light or overshadowing. While a neighbour has raised concerns over the loss of view from his property, this is not a material planning consideration and cannot be taken in to account when determining the application. As such, subject to appropriate conditions, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with the requirement of Core Strategy Policy 3 in this regard.

Impact upon National Park special Qualities

Landscape



Policy 20 of the Core Strategy states that development will not be permitted which would adversely affect the quality and character of the landscape. The Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) identifies the landscape character of the area as parallel ridges and commons with limited habitation and outstanding long distance views. The SPD also notes the potentially damaging impact of man-made vertical structures which could detract from the open expansive character of the landscape and the setting of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site.



Figure 3: View north to the Site from Hadrian's Wall National Trail

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 by traditional stone wall boundary features. A mature broadleaved copse / shelterbelt, approximately 25m high is situated to the south-west of the farmstead.

A neighbour has raised concerns over the potential impacts of the proposal on the setting of Hadrian's Wall and the general incongruity of the scheme with the landscape of the area. Given the sensitivity of the location, the NNPA Landscape Officer has been consulted on the proposals. He has noted that the site lies approximately 1.3 km from Hadrian's Wall and the Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail, the principal visual receptor site within this part of the National Park. Other notable receptor sites have been identified as 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 Landscape Officer has noted that as Longsyke Farm is 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. This is considered to benefit the application as the vertical structures would not generally be viewed



against the horizon, reducing their visual prominence within the landscape. The proximity to the copse / shelterbelt has also been highlighted as helping to mitigate the effect of the vertical nature of the proposed development.



Figure 4: View south from approach to Wealside towards the site

The Landscape Officer has welcomed the applicants supporting letter setting out the rationale for proposing two turbines as opposed to a single unit and is supportive of the aspirations to manage Longsyke Farm as a carbon neutral facility. He has noted that 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.

The Landscape Officer does not agree with the applicant's statement 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'*. This is based on experience that 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

As such, concerns have however been raised in relation to the stated colour of the turbines as 'Papyrus White'. The Landscape Officer considers this to be inappropriate and has recommended that the hub and supporting tower should be sprayed a suitable earth/green colour, so as to best match the backdrop of vegetation that they will be primarily viewed against from the key receptor sites to the north and south.

In relation to the effect upon the scenic quality of the landscape, previous turbine development within the World Heritage Site has been cited at Barron House, Cairny Croft and at Town Shields which demonstrates that sensitively sited renewable energy technology can play a significant part in



energy provision for the residents living within this highly sensitive landscape. It has however been recommended that in the interest of visual amenity and landscape character, a condition is attached to any permission which may be issued requiring the removal of the turbines and all associated infrastructure should the turbines cease to operate for a period in excess of six months.

The Landscape Officer has concluded that subject to appropriate conditions requiring the colour of the turbines to be agreed in advance and the removal of the turbines should they cease to operate for a period of over six months, the proposed development would not have a substantial effect upon the views or landscape character of this part of the National Park. Historic England have also advised that they do not consider that the proposals would cause harm to the setting of the World Heritage Site. As such, subject to appropriate conditions, the proposals are considered to accord with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy 20.

Cultural Heritage

Policy 18 of the Core Strategy states that proposals will be supported which conserve, enhance and promote the quality and integrity of the cultural heritage of the National Park. The proposed turbines and associated cabling are located within the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and in close proximity to the Roman Aqueduct (to Great Chester from the Cawburn) Scheduled Monument. Both the National Park Historic Environment Officer and Historic England have been consulted on the application.

The NP Historic Environment Officer has raised no objection to the proposals or requested any conditions. Historic England, while recognising the site is in an area of archaeological sensitivity, do not consider that the proposals would cause harm to archaeological remains. Although a member of the public has raised concerns over potential impacts on the setting of Hadrian's Wall, Historic England does not consider the impact would be sufficient to cause harm. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy 18.

Biodiversity

The turbines would be located within a field used for grazing. The National Park Ecologist has been consulted and raised no objection in relation to habitat loss or impacts on protected species, noting that the turbines have been sited to avoid the hay meadows to the south and in excess of 50m from any feature likely to be used by bats, as per current guidance.

Tranquillity

Core Strategy Policy 19 requires an assessment of the impacts:

- a) of the level of noise, traffic and light generated as a result of the development;
- b) on the sense of openness of the National Park; and
- c) on the quiet enjoyment of the landscape



Given the nature of the scheme, it is not considered that the proposals would result in the generation of any significant noise, traffic or light. While there is no indication that the turbines would be illuminated – and the Landscape Officer has raised no objections in relation to the Dark Sky Park - as the proposals are within the Dark Sky Park, it is considered appropriate to attach a condition to restrict the installation of any external lighting required in association with the proposed development without approval first being sought from the Authority.

The proposed turbines would be within approximately 110m of a Public Right of Way (PROW) with the cabling crossing the route. While the turbines would be clearly visible from the footpaths, they are set far enough away that they would not hinder their safe use by the public. The NNPA Access Officer has been consulted and raised no objection although the need to ensure that the PROW is not obstructed during construction works has been noted. The Access Officer has also advised that neither of these footpaths are considered to receive substantial use. It is therefore considered that the proposals would be in accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy 19.

Recommendation & Conditions

It is recommended that planning permission is granted, subject to the following conditions and informatives:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To ensure that the development is commenced within a reasonable period of time from the date of this permission, as required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Application form, received 15th January 2018;
- Site Plan Existing, Drawing no: LOC, received 15th January 2018
- Site Plan and Elevations, Drawing no: 001, received 15th January 2018
- Noise Calculation and ETSU-R-97 Report, received 15th January 2018
- Design and Access Statement, received 15th January 2018
- Evancewind, Product Certification Evance R9000 Acoustic Noise Assessment, Issue 05, received 15th January 2018
- Shadow Flicker Report, received 15th January 2018
- Britwind R9000 5kW Wind Turbine Product Specification, received 15th January 2018

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt, to enable the local planning authority to adequately manage the development and to ensure the proposal accords with policies 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 6, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25 and 28 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).



3. The noise emitted from the wind turbines, as measured in accordance with the guidelines stated within ETSU-R-97, at the curtilage boundary of any dwelling (as in existence at the time of this permission), with the exception of Longsyke Farm, shall not exceed 35dB(A) $L_{90,10min}$ at wind speeds of up to 10m/s at 10m height. The measurements shall be made in accordance with the methodology detailed in '*ETSU-R-97: The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms*' and the noise emission values for the wind turbines shall include the addition for any tonal penalty as recommended in the same document.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and to ensure the proposals accord with Policy 3 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

4. The noise emitted from the wind turbines, as measured in accordance with the guidelines stated within ETSU-R-97, at Longsyke Farm, shall not exceed 45dB(A) $L_{90,10min}$ at wind speeds of up to 10m/s at 10m height. The measurements shall be made in accordance with the methodology detailed in '*ETSU-R-97: The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms*' and the noise emission values for the wind turbines shall include the addition for any tonal penalty as recommended in the same document.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and to ensure the proposals accord with Policy 3 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

5. Within 21 days from receipt of a written request from the Local Planning Authority following a written and specified complaint to it alleging noise disturbance at a dwelling, the wind turbine operator shall, at its expense, employ an independent consultant approved by the Authority to assess the level of noise emissions from the wind turbine at the complainant's property in accordance with procedures described in '*ETSU-R-97: The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms*' published by ETSU for the Department of Trade and Industry and submit a report on the consultant's findings to the Local Planning Authority. If noise levels are found to exceed those stated in condition 3, appropriate mitigation measures shall be included within the report and the measures as approved shall be implemented in accordance with a timescale also approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and to ensure the proposals accord with Policy 3 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

6. If the turbine ceases to operate for a continuous period of six months (unless such cessation is due to the turbine being under repair or replacement) then, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, within three months of the end of that period a scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its approval in writing which sets out the following:



- i. Proposed details for the decommissioning and removal of that turbine and any ancillary equipment and structures relating solely to that turbine;
- ii. A restoration scheme for the land where the turbine and any associated ancillary equipment and structures was removed from; and
- iii. Proposals for the management and timing of the works.

The approved scheme shall be implemented within 12 months of the date of its approval by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the turbine provides a source of renewable energy generation whilst in situ, to ensure that it is removed from the land if it ceases to function, and to ensure that the land is reinstated in an acceptable manner in the interests of visual amenity and the landscape character of the National Park in accordance with Policies 1, 3, and 20 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. All cabling associated with the development shall be located underground.

In the interest of visual amenity and for the development to accord with Policies 1, 3 and 20 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document and the National Planning Policy Framework.

8. Prior to the installation of the proposed turbines, details of the colour finish for the proposed blades, hub and tower shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development respects local landscape character in order to preserve the visual appearance and amenity of the area, and the special qualities of the National Park, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 1, 3 and 20 and the NPPF.

9. Prior to the fixing of any external lighting associated with the development, details of the external lighting shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Details should include:

- The specific location of all external lighting units;
- Design of all lighting units;
- Details of beam orientation and lux levels; and
- Any proposed measures such as motion sensors and timers that will be used on lighting units.

The approved lighting scheme shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and shall be maintained as such during the operation of the development, unless removed.



Reason: In order to ensure that there is no harmful impact upon the tranquility and intrinsically dark character of Northumberland National Park and the Northumberland International Dark Sky Park through excessive light pollution, in accordance with Policies 1 and 19 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 125 of the NPPF.

Informative Notes

1. This Planning Permission is granted in strict accordance with the approved plans. It should be noted however that:
 - (a) Any variation from the approved plans following commencement of the development, irrespective of the degree of variation, may constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action.
 - (b) You, your agent, or any other person responsible for implementing this permission should inform the Local Planning Authority immediately of any proposed variation from the approved plans and ask to be advised as to the best method to resolve the matter. Most proposals for variation to the approved plans will require the submission of a new application.
2. This permission is granted subject to conditions and it is the owner and the person responsible for the implementation of the development who will be fully responsible for their compliance throughout the development and beyond. Some conditions may require work to be carried out, or details to be approved prior to the commencement of the development.

Where pre-commencement conditions are not complied with, the whole of the development could be unauthorised, and you may be liable to enforcement action. In some circumstances, the only way to rectify the situation may be through the submission of a new application. If any other type of condition is breached then you may be liable to a breach of condition notice.

3. The effectiveness of the development's design in ensuring that a nuisance is not created is the responsibility of the applicant / developer and their professional advisors / consultants. Developers should, therefore, fully appreciate the importance of obtaining competent professional advice.

In all cases, the Council retains its right under Section 79 of the Environment Protection Act 1990, in respect of the enforcement of Statutory Nuisance.

4. The proposed works must have no effect on accessing footpath 532/025 a designated public right of way. No action should be undertaken to disturb the surface of the path, obstruct the path or in any way prevent or deter public use of the path without the necessary legal diversion or closure order having been made.



5. In relation to Conditions 3 and 4, where wind speed is measured at a height other than 10m, the wind speed shall be converted to 10m height and details of the conversion method used shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority.

Background Papers

Application File 18NP0003

EIA Screening Opinion

	Signature	Date
Planning Officer	C Godfrey	20/02/2018
Head of Development Management	S Buylla	20/02/2018