
Item No: 20

Between 23/02/2013 and 05/04/2013

Appn Ref No:

12/0089

Applicant:

Mr Tom Johnston

Parish:

St Cuthberts Without

Date of Receipt:

17/02/2012

Agent:Aeolus Renewable Energy
Limited**Ward:**

Dalston

Location:

High Burnthwaite Farm, Durdar, Carlisle

Grid Reference:

340943 548170

Proposal: Erection Of A Single Wind Turbine 50m Hub Height, 78m To Tip Height And Associated Infrastructure And Services Including Access Track, External Compact Substation With Underground Cable And Crane Hard Standing

Amendment:

REPORT**Case Officer:** Suzanne Edgar**Decision on Appeals:****Appeal Against:** Appeal against refusal of planning perm.**Type of Appeal:** Written Representations

Report: The appeal site relates to High Burnthwaite Farm which is located approximately 5km south of Carlisle on the eastern side of the main road leading from Durdar towards Penrith. The farm steading is accessed via a track which extends 140 metres east of the road leading from Durdar and comprises a variety of agricultural buildings.

Full Planning Permission was sought for the erection of 1no. 500kW wind turbine (which would have three blades with a 56m rotor diameter, a hub height of 50m and a tip height of 78m) in a field approximately 240 metres to the south-east of the farm complex.

The application was determined by the Development Control Planning Committee on the 17th August 2012 when it was refused on the following grounds:

“The turbine is a tall, man made intrusion that cannot be deemed protective of the intrinsic character and beauty of its surroundings. Due to the size, scale and position of the proposed turbine, it is considered to be

detrimental to the landscape and visual character of the area and that these effects outweigh the potential benefits associated with scheme. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to the objectives of Policies EM1 (A) and EM17 of the Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021, Policy R44 of the Joint Structure Plan 2001-2016, the objectives of Policy CP1, criterion 2 of Policy CP5 together with criteria 1 and 3 of Policy CP8 of the Carlisle District Local Plan 2001-2016.”

The Inspector identified the main issues to be:

1. The effect of the siting of the proposed wind turbine on the landscape and visual character of the area; and
2. Whether any harm caused is outweighed by other material considerations.

With regard to 1) the Inspector considered that the existing pylons and power lines are prominent and intrusive features within the landscape. The pylons and power lines project above the skyline in all views and are distinctive man made features of the landscape that contribute to the visual character of the area. The Inspector noted that the proposed turbine would be seen against a backdrop of the power lines and pylons from Durdar Road, and in views from the other country road to the west the turbine would be beyond the power lines and pylons. The Inspector considered that the turbine mast would be in relatively close proximity to a pylon of a similar height and would not, in itself, undermine the visual character of the area. The Inspector noted that the turbine blades would project higher into the sky than the pylons and unlike the power lines and pylons, would turn with the wind. The Inspector considered that the addition of such a man-made feature into the landscape, despite the nearby presence of the power lines and pylons would harm, through not to a significant degree the visual character of the area. Thus conflicting with policies CP1 and CP5 of the Carlisle District Local Plan 2001-2016.

In relation to 2) the Inspector noted that paragraphs 93 and 98 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) together with addressing the impacts of climate change are material considerations. The Inspector noted that the landscape of Carlisle District is not immune from the effects of climate change and that the landscape, in the vicinity of the proposed mast and elsewhere, will not survive, in the future, unless the serious effects of climate change are addressed. The Inspector considered that a significant factor is the suggested condition requiring the removal of the turbine after 25 years. The Inspector stated that 25 years is a tiny fraction of the history of the landscape and if the landscape is to survive in the long term then consideration must be given to accepting short-term harm to the visual character of the area.

With regard to other matters the Inspectorate indicated that applications should be dealt with on their own merits. The Inspector noted that reference had been made to other turbines within the vicinity of the site however the precise locations were not identified or any photographs

provided to indicate that the proposed turbine would be visible in any views of the existing turbines. With regard to concerns in relation to noise and shadow flicker the Inspector noted that the noise and shadow flicker conditions imposed would protect nearby residents from the adverse consequences of noise or shadow flicker if it should occur.

The Inspector concluded that the proposed wind turbine would cause harm to the landscape and visual character of the area but this harm would not be significant. The short-term harm to the character of the area and the conflict with the Development Plan is outweighed by the long-term environmental benefits of the renewable energy scheme. The Inspector therefore allowed the appeal subject to the imposition of 11 conditions.

Appeal Decision: Appeal Allowed with Conditions **Date:** 26/02/2013