

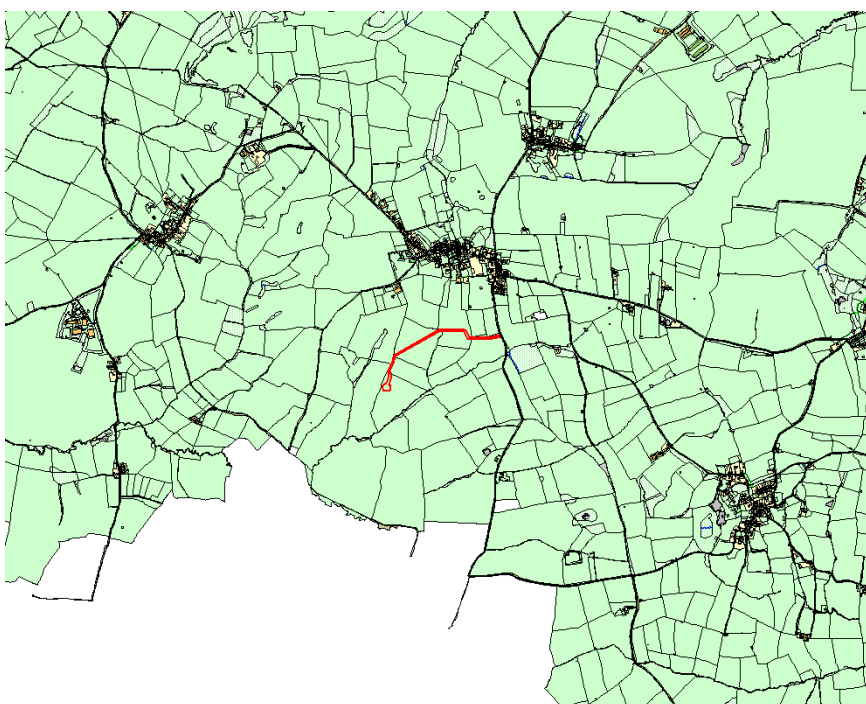
Reference: 13/00540/FUL

Date submitted: 09.08.2013

Applicant: Mark Barnes

Location: Southfields, 10 Church Lane, Somerby, LE14 2PS

Proposal: Erection of a 35 metre to hub height (61 metre to blade tip) single wind turbine generator with associated transformer, foundations, crane hard standing and upgraded access tracks



Introduction:-

This application seeks approval for the erection of 1 no. medium scale wind turbine; EWT DW52 500kW, with an associated transformer together with upgrading works to the access and track, a field track and crane pad. The turbine is to be located within a field belonging to the applicant. The topography in this area is one of hills falling within the High Leicestershire landscape character (NC94) with the position of the turbine being sited on the higher land in order to maximise wind generated power. The turbine will have a hub height of 35 metres with three blades giving a total height from ground to blade tip of approximately 61 metres. The tower will be of galvanized steel and tapered in design and will be painted in a light grey or white colour.

To get access to the proposed location it is required to install 722 metres of new track and upgrade the existing track to a 4 metre width with an improved access to the site from Owston Road. To mitigate the visual impact of the new access track a porous paving system such as Netpave™ or similar is proposed. Once seeded Netpave™ is said to be almost invisible after two to three months of a grass growing season.

It is considered that the main issues relating to this proposal is:-

- **Impact upon the character of the countryside designation**
- **Impact upon existing Rights of Way**
- **Impact upon residential amenities**
- **Impact upon Heritage Assets**
- **Sustainable Development**

The application has been presented to the planning committee due to the high level of public objection to the proposal.

Relevant History:-

13/00108/FUL – Wind turbine with hub height of 55 metres was withdrawn on the 14th June 2013 following an objection based on impacts of the airwaves used by emergency services.

13/00428/EIA - Screening opinion for a single wind turbine generator (Tower height up to 55m, Rotor diameter of up to 48m. Tip height up to 79m). It was determined that due to factors of scale, nature and location that the proposal would not be EIA development. 2nd July 2013

Planning Policies:-

Adopted Melton Local Plan

Policy OS2 – planning permission will not be granted for development outside the town and village envelopes except for, amongst other things, limited small scale development for employment, recreation and tourism which is not significantly detrimental to the appearance and rural character of the open countryside.

Policy C2 - planning permission will be granted for farm based diversification proposals provided:

- the activities would be ancillary to the main agricultural use and would not prejudice the future operation of the holding;
- the proposal should reuse or adapt any suitable farm building that is available. if a new building is necessary it should be sited in or adjacent to an existing group of buildings; e proposed development is compatible with its rural location in terms of scale, design and layout;
- there is no significantly adverse impact on the character and appearance of the rural landscape or conservation of the natural environment;
- access, servicing and parking would be provided at the site without detriment to the rural character of the area; and
- the traffic generated by the proposal can be accommodated on the local highway network without reducing road safety

Policy UT7 has not been ‘saved’

The National Planning Policy Framework introduces a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ meaning:

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

The NPPF offers direction on the relative weight of the content in comparison to existing Local Plan policy and advises that whilst the NPPF does not automatically render older policies obsolete, where they are in conflict, the NPPF should prevail. It also offers advice on the weight to be given to ‘emerging’ policy (i.e the LDF) depending on its stage of preparation, extent of unresolved (disputed) issues and compatibility with the NPPF.

The NPPF introduces three dimensions to the term Sustainable Development: Economic, Social and Environmental: It also establishes 12 core planning principles against which proposals should be judged. Relevant to this application are those to:

- not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives
- support the transition to a low carbon future.....by encouraging the development of renewable energy
- recognising the intrinsic beauty of the countryside
- contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment

On Specific issues relevant to this application it advises:

Climate Change:

Planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. (Paragraph 93)

Paragraph 97 states that to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources.

Paragraph 98 states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should;

- not require developments to demonstrate overall need for renewable or low carbon energy
- approve the application (unless material considerations indicate otherwise) if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

- Recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, and;
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment:

- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes
- Apply great weight to protection of designated landscape and scenic areas (e.g. National Parks)
- Avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts
- Minimise other impacts on health and quality of life through conditions
- Identify and protect areas of tranquillity

This National Planning Policy Framework does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. (NPPF para. 12)

Planning Practise Guidance for Renewable & Low Carbon Energy

Guidance was issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in July 2013 to offer advice on the planning issues associated with the development of renewable energy, and should be **read alongside** the guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF – above). The guidance is material consideration in planning decisions and should generally be followed unless there are clear reasons not to.

The document states that energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses. The NPPF states that all communities have a responsibility to help increase the use and supply of green energy, but this does not mean that the need automatically overrides environmental protections and the planning concerns of local communities.

When considering impact of renewable technologies the document states that landscape character areas could form a basis for considering which technologies at which scale may be appropriate in different types of location. For consideration whilst dealing with planning applications it is important to be clear that:

- The need for renewable or low carbon energy does not automatically override environmental protections
- Cumulative impacts require particular attention, especially the increasing impact that wind turbines can have on landscape and local amenity as the number of turbines in an area increases
- Local topography is an important factor in assessing whether wind turbines could have a damaging effect on landscape, and recognise that the impact can be as great in predominantly flat landscapes as in hilly areas.
- Great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting.
- Protecting local amenity is an important consideration which should be given proper weight in planning decisions.

Advice regarding cumulative landscape and visual impacts states that these are best considered separately. Cumulative landscape impacts are the effects of a proposed development on the fabric, character and quality of the landscape; it is concerned with the degree to which a proposed renewable energy development will become a significant or defining characteristic of the landscape. Cumulative visual impacts concern the degree to which the proposed renewable energy development will become a feature in particular views (or sequences of views), and the impact this has upon the people experiencing those views. Cumulative visual impacts may arise where two or more of the same type of renewable energy development will be visible from the same point, or will be visible shortly after each other along the same journey.

Consultations:-

Consultation reply	Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services
<p>Environment Health Officer – No objection</p> <p>Included within the initial supporting information relating to this development was a document described as “Amended Sound Power Levels”.</p> <p>The document is titled “Sound Power Warranty Levels DW52/54 500kW.</p>	<p>Under ETSU R 97 guidance, wind turbine noise (expressed as $L_{A90,10min}$) should not be greater than 5 dB above the prevalent background level ($L_{A90,10min}$) at that wind speed, except where the background level is very low.</p> <p>With reference to the ETSU document minimum typical daytime targets fall within the range of 35-40</p>

<p>Information was also provided advising that noise from the turbine, a DW52, would produce 35dB(A) at 570m, although this was not justified by any calculation.</p> <p>Additional information has now been provided in the form of a Noise Impact Assessment EWT/DW54.</p> <p>This was prepared by Wardell Armstrong upon a commission from Pure Renewable Energy and was in order to establish the minimum separation distance of a noise sensitive property from the turbine. It is a generic impact assessment, as opposed to one specifically tailored to the circumstance at Somerby.</p> <p>Wardell Armstrong are described as an independent engineering consultancy specialising in environmental development and management.</p> <p>In the methodology and guidance reference is made to the ETSU-R-97 report, The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms and BS 4142: Method for Rating Industrial Noise Affecting Mixed Residential and Industrial Areas. Reference is also made to the contents of paragraph 25 of the ETSU report, as follows: <i>For single turbines or wind farms with very large separation distances between the turbines and the nearest properties a simplified noise condition may be suitable. We are of the opinion that, if the noise is limited to an LA90 10min of 35dB(A) up to wind speeds of 1 0m/sec at 10m height, then this condition alone would offer sufficient protection of amenity, and background noise surveys would be unnecessary.</i></p> <p>The submitted Noise Impact Assessment involved the use of CadnaA Noise Modelling Software. The software calculates the propagation of noise according to the procedures contained in ISO 9613-2 “Acoustics-Attention of Sound During Propagation out of doors.” The noise modelling software calculation involves the input of various data. Including:</p> <p><u>Topography</u></p> <p>For the purpose of the calculation the topography has been assumed to be flat. (In the case of this application the land at base of the turbine tower would be lower than the nearest receptors).</p> <p>The sound power level measurements are distilled from measurement data of a DirectWind 54 turbine, located at Oude, Tonge, the Netherlands. The measurements were performed according to International Standard IEC 64100-</p>	<p>dB L_{A90}. For properties with financial involvement, a target of 45 dB L_{A90} can be used.</p> <p>The night-time noise limit (expressed a L_{A90,10min}) is an absolute minimum target level of 43 dB L_{A90,10min}</p> <p>The application provided information to show that the EWT DW52 would not exceed the permitted 35dB at a distance beyond 570 metres. A noise contour map confirms that there are no residential properties within 570 metres of the turbine and noise would therefore not exceed the ETSU guidelines. The Environmental Health Officer has been consulted and visited a site with an operational EWT DW52 turbine in order to base his assessment.</p> <p>The turbine is to be located within a parcel of land which is free from buildings or structures, although due to the topography the landform varies. There are a number of residential dwellings within a 1 kilometre distance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 670 metres (W) Dwelling on Newbold Lane, Burrough on the Hill • 670 metres (N))The Equestrian Centre on Burrough Road, Somerby • 962 metres (southwest) Newbold Farm, Newbold Road • 982 metres (NNE) 14 Manor Lane, Somerby • 982 metres (NNE) 7 Chapel Lane, Somerby • 995 metres (NNE) 10 Westview, Somerby, • (N) Southfields Farm Cottage, 14 Church Lane, Somerby <p>It is concluded that the predicted noise levels using the manufactures guidelines and Sound Power Warranty Levels for an EWT DW52 would be within the ETSU-R-97 guidelines.</p> <p>Criticism on the use of no site specific noise data has been put forward in a number of objections. Using the manufactures data it has shown that a 500kW rated turbine would not exceed the 35dB noise limit outside of a 570 metre radius for all wind speeds. As there are no dwellings within this range it is concluded that noise levels will not be breached and that it would not be necessary to conduct noise assessments at the boundary of the dwellings. It is not considered that the residential amenities of nearby properties would be reduced to an unacceptable level and conditions can be used to safeguard residents.</p> <p>An appeal decision at Tilton has been referred to where the Inspector refused a turbine on noise</p>
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<p>11, December 2002.</p> <p>The ground cover had been modelled as semi-soft/semi-hard, giving a ground absorption factor G of 0.5, in accordance with ISO 9613-2. The softer the ground surface the more noise it will absorb, the harder the surface, paving for example, the less it will absorb. A hard reflective surface may have an absorption factor of 0. A ground absorption factor of 0.5 for the purpose of this application is appropriate. The noise source had been calculated as being at 50m height (whereas in this application the hub height is 35m).</p> <p>A tonal correction factor has been allowed for in the manufacturer's sound power levels for the turbine. An uncertainty factor of 1.1dB has been allowed for in accordance with IEC 64100-11 (an international standard relating to wind turbines). The predicted separation distances at different wind speeds are reproduced in a table and included in the Summary and Conclusions. It concludes the EWT DW54 can be installed at a minimum distance of 570m from the nearest noise sensitive property and comply with the noise limits specified in the ETSU R 97 report.</p> <p>The Noise Impact Assessment described above relates to an EWT/DW54 Turbine, as opposed to an EWT/DW52, however, warranted sound power level data for both of these turbines shows the sound power level from both to be virtually the same. These warranted sound power levels are based on actual measurements.</p> <p>In conclusion Wardell Armstrong have produced a generic Noise Impact Assessment for the EWT/DW54. Its use in the context of this application is appropriate and it demonstrates the turbine can be installed at a minimum separation distance from noise sensitive properties of 570m and a noise level of 35dB(A), that is, it will comply with the simplified noise assessment as set out in paragraph 25 of the ETSU-R-97 Report-The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms.</p>	<p>impacts. Whilst manufactures data was used it did show that a residential property would experience noise levels of 35dB. The Inspector considered that to be acceptable but concluded that as no details of the sites used to validate the supplier's figures, modelling calculations or acoustic data were provided to backup these predictions, it had not been adequately demonstrated that there would not be harm to neighbouring occupiers by reason of noise.</p> <p>It has been shown that no residential dwelling would be within the noise contours for noise levels up to 35dB at a 570 metre radius and, with dwellings being located a significantly greater distance away, the noise assessment concludes that no residential dwelling will be unduly affected by noise.</p>
<p>MBC Conservation Officer –</p> <p>The English Heritage guidance document entitled Wind Energy and the Historic Environment advocates a sustainable approach to renewable energy generation which requires a balance to be drawn between the benefits it delivers and the environmental costs it incurs. Therefore whilst recognising the need to invest in renewable energy</p>	<p>The site has no national landscape designation and does not lie within a green belt.</p> <p>The proposed turbine would be located in an area of the Leicestershire countryside known as the High Leicestershire landscape character area. The character of the area has been assessed in various documents. It forms part of the wider 'High</p>

it recognises the potential implications for the historic environment.

The guidance adds that high quality design is the key to minimising the adverse effect of projects such as the siting of wind turbines in the landscape and suggests that considerable weight should be given to ensuring the reversibility of renewable energy projects and their associated infrastructure

Due consideration must be given to the following factors:

- Impacts of the proposed development on the historic environment (archaeological remains, historic structures and buildings, designed landscapes, designated sites/areas)
- The setting of historic sites
- The visual amenity of the wider landscape that may detract from its historic character, tranquillity and remoteness

This can be further broken down into the following elements:

- Visual dominance –
- Scale
- Inter-visibility
- Vistas and sight lines

Archaeology

It is my understanding that the foundation of a wind turbine would typically comprise in excess of 100 cubic metres of concrete in a block of up to 16 m diameter and 3.5 m depth. Whilst I am unable to find any references to underground works in relation to this turbine any potential archaeological potential should be ‘flagged up’ as this turbine may have the potential to damage underlying archaeological remains.

Landscape Character

Historic Landscape

The definition of the historic landscape is:

Landscape is the product of millions of years of geological evolution combined with thousands of years of human settlement and activity. The ways in which people in the past and the present have and continue to shape our physical environment is not just a matter of academic interest it affects us all both in the way we identify with our surroundings and with our quality of life.

The Leicestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation, recently completed places the wind turbine site within the area Landscape Character Area known as Fields and

Leicestershire’ Landscape Character Area defined at the National Level in the Countryside Character Map of England as Area 93, in the East Midlands Regional Character Assessment as Area 5c: Undulating Mixed Farmlands and at a local level by the Melton Landscape Character Assessment where it forms part of the ‘LCA 15 High Leicestershire Hills. These documents describe the area as an area of mixed arable and pasture land with widespread features of historical interest and a quintessential lowland English pastoral landscape.

The immediate landscape where the turbine would be installed can be described as one that is unspoilt by modern interventions and represents a ‘virgin’ landscape characterised by the rolling hills and patchwork of arable fields. There are some isolated farmsteads and dwellings scattered around the site with the village of Somerby sitting to the north north east at a distance of approximately 980 metres and the village of Owston (Harborough District) sitting to the south approximately 1.4 kilometres away. The church spires of both Somerby and Owston can be seen above these conservation villages. The Conservation Officer considers that the setting of the Somerby church, when viewed from distance, would be affected to some degree but due to the separation distances involved it would not be significantly affected. The same conclusion is reached in consideration of the settings of Conservation Areas and listed buildings in the vicinity.

Whilst there are pylons in the wider area they would not be viewed directly alongside the proposed turbine which will sit along the ridge when viewed from the west. The turbine whilst it has been reduced in height is not considered to have lessened its impact upon the landscape. The mast has been reduced from the height of 55 metres to 35 metres yet in order to still have a 500Kw output the blades have been increased from 24 metres in length to 26 metres. This has increased the blade sweep by approximately 17% giving an increased motion within its visual appearance in the landscape. It will also only have a 9 metre ground clearance giving the turbine a more ‘squat’ appearance.

In this rural setting the proposed turbine is considered to impose itself as a result of its height and turbine blades movement and would be seen in the landscape generally and from many local roads and footpaths. In addition to the turbine being widely visible within the landscape it is considered that there are several key prominent views where the turbine would be highly visible and intrusive within the landscape:

Enclosed Land, a classification which dominates rural Leicestershire. The countryside south of Melton Mowbray and around Somerby and associated villages is typical of this classification where there has been little change in landform, apart from some hedgerow loss, since the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy (2001 Revised 2006) places the wind turbine in the area known as High Leicestershire. This area consists of a hilly plateau dissected by radiating watercourses which have formed moderate to steep sided valleys separated by broad ridges. The central part of the area reaches over 210m. This is a very rural area. Land use is a mixture of arable on the flatter and more gently sloping ridge areas and grassland mainly on the steeper slopes and in the valley bottoms. Ridge and furrow is fairly well distributed throughout the area and reflects the intensity of arable cultivation here in the early Middle Ages. Field ponds are also characteristic. The field pattern is mainly one of regularly shaped fields bounded by thorn hedges with mainly ash, and in a few places oak, as hedgerow trees.

The Landscape Character Assessment of Melton Borough (2006) prepared by ADAS, places the wind turbine in Area LCA15 High Leicestershire Hills. This is further described as *'Classic landscape influenced by the requirements of sporting estates with attractive stone villages amongst rolling pastoral hills and escarpment, and a range of field shapes and sizes enclosed by well-managed often chamfered hedges, woodland, parkland, copses, green lanes, wide grass road verges and some more intensive arable land'*

Settlements

Somerby

Somerby lies to the north of the proposed wind turbine site and is the closest village being approximately 1 Km away. Somerby benefits from conservation area status, the boundary being drawn around the historic core of the village. The CAA is also prepared

There are several listed buildings within the village, many of which are situated south of Main Street and several other historic assets, many of which are situated south of Main Street so in effect closer to the turbine. Clearly the Church is the most important and is some 975 metres away from the turbine. As such I have some concerns the Church and other building will be able to view the turbine to the south and as such their wider settings will be somewhat compromised in that regard.

Pickwell

- Bridleways D71A and D73 - The Leicestershire Round, a nationally recognised walking route with circumnavigates the County.
- Newbold Lane – single track lane to the west of the turbine. Views up towards the turbine
- B6047 – Tilton Road (west) – From this viewpoint the turbine would sit in the higher landscape which is devoid of vertical structures
- Cox's Lane (HDC boundary) – sits on the same topography as the turbine giving advantage views across the landscape in which the turbine would sit.

The submitted revised Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) states that the vast majority, estimated to be 80%, of the surrounding area the turbine would not be visible. This is said to be reduced when added to the vegetation and the built environment. This may be the case when viewing from the centre of the villages however when travelling the rights of way and local roads the turbine would be highly visible and appear as a dominant structure. It is also admits that significant visual effects would be localised and goes on to say that between 500-1000 metres the turbine will be highly prominent but because of the open character of the landscape it can be absorbed.

To support the ZTV assessments viewpoints have been provided from various locations. However it is considered the viewpoints from the west (V3,V4) and along the Leicestershire Round (V7), emphasise the harm a turbine, of this size, in this location would have on the landscape. Whilst it is accepted that turbines by nature are sizeable structures some landscapes are capable of absorbing them and have a less of an impact, for example when near man made structures such as pylons and industrial landscapes. In this instance the impact upon the unspoilt landscape is considered to be significant and that the turbine of 61 metres high would have a detrimental impact which cannot be mitigated.

In addition to the proposed turbine 722 metres of track is required to transport the turbine to its desired location. This track would pass through a Local Wildlife Site (please see commentary on Ecology), transverse the Leicestershire Round and will run through a Ridge and Furrow field.

Mitigation of the new track has been proposed in the form of a porous paving system such as Netpave™; or similar, once the construction period is over it would be seeded which over several months it is said

Pickwell is to north east of the proposed wind turbine site. The village has a designated conservation area and CAA. It benefits from three listed buildings and other historic assets. It is approximately 1.8 kilometres away from the wind turbine but I remain concerned that despite the distance the wider settings of those listed buildings could potentially be somewhat compromised.

Knossington

Knossington lies some 2.2 kilometres to the south east of the turbine site. It benefits from some listed buildings, heritage assets and a conservation area with CAA. It is a well treed village which will break up direct views towards the turbine and as such in my opinion the settlement is sufficiently distant so as not to be directly affected by the proposal.

Cold Overton

Cold Overton is some 2.9 kilometres to the north east of the turbine site. Another village that benefits from listed buildings, heritage assets a designated conservation area and CAA. Another well treed village that in my opinion is not unduly affected by the turbine.

Burrough on the Hill

Another village blessed with a collection of listed buildings and associated heritage assets. Also with a conservation area and CAA. The village occupies a hill top location some 2.7 kilometres to the north west of the turbine site. There will be extensive views of the turbine from the ridge where the land falls away which will surely adversely affect the conservation area setting as well as potentially some of those of the listed buildings which do give cause for concern. Likewise view from Burrough Hill Iron Age Hill Fort.

Owston and Newbold

Both these villages which are in Harborough District benefit from conservation areas. Whilst I am unfamiliar with both settlements I note that villagers have objected to this proposal on the grounds that heritage assets will be affected.

Conclusion

Wind turbines by their nature are tall and slender in appearance. In that regard some may consider them as graceful structures that may add a certain character to a landscape rather than detract from it

The balance that needs to be drawn is between the

would become almost invisible. Concerns have been expressed in regards to the methodology for installing a track over the ridge and furrow and it has been stated by the applicant's agent that the track would follow the contours and no levelling out would be needed. With the absence of this methodology it is not certain how the track will impact upon the ridge and furrow however this could be secured by means of a condition should approval be granted.

There are several Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments within the area. Some are located with the district of Harborough (see commentary from Harborough District Council) The Conservation Area of Somerby being within 1 kilometre of the site and the Grade I listed church being the closest designated heritage assets. Concerns have been expressed by the Conservation Officer that the setting of the Church may be affected by the presence of the turbine in this location. The turbine would be sited on the other side of a hill which reduces its visual impact affording only a partial view of the turbine. In this regards it is considered that whilst there would be harm to the heritage asset it is considered of lesser significance.

One important scheduled monument within the borough of Melton is the Iron Age Fort at Burrough Hill. Burrough Hill forms the highest view point within the Borough. Views from here stretch over the Borough and neighbouring authorities. It lies approximately 3 kilometres from the proposed turbine which would be sited on a ridge 160 metres above sea level. A viewpoint from Burrough Hill Fort (V1) has been provided which demonstrates that turbine would be screened by trees however there are other vantage points on the hill where the turbine would be visible in the distance and because of the unspoilt landscape this has the potential of being harmful to the setting of the designated heritage asset.

The NPPF is clear in its guidance that Local Planning Authorities should approve planning permission unless "any adverse impacts of doing so would **significantly and demonstrably** outweigh the benefits" (emphasis added). Therefore, when considering the impact on the surrounding landscape of the proposal this needs to be the key consideration.

The NPPF then sets out guidance in relation to conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by; 'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils'. Paragraph 115 states that great weight should

<p>necessity for measures to meet the challenge of climate change and the importance of conserving the significance of heritage assets including listed buildings, conservation areas and the wider historic landscape.</p> <p>Comments on the Amendments</p> <p>It is noted that as a result of an objection from the MOD the hub height has been reduced by 20 metres although the blades have been increased to 26 metres. That said terms of conservation the turbine will still be highly visible within the local landscape.</p> <p>In this instance the proposed location of the wind turbine is in an area classified in historic landscape terms as Fields and Enclosed Land.</p> <p>The landscape in the immediate area of Southfields Farm has apparently undergone minimal changes throughout the years. The area as a whole displays subtle variations which include unchanged remote and pastoral landscapes.</p> <p>Clearly there must be concerns that the introduction of a wind turbine within the local landscape will present an ‘alien’ feature.</p> <p>Concerns are expressed that in the built historic environment terms, the turbine could potentially have an effect on any heritage assets in the vicinity, south easterly from the ridge of the village of Burrough on the Hill. Likewise the concerns remain in regards to the relative close proximity to Somerby Village and the associated listed buildings and heritage assets.</p> <p>In landscape terms similar concerns exist that, although reduced in height, the turbine will still affect the local landscape, which is almost entirely unspoilt ,and as such will introduce an alien feature.</p> <p>In consideration of these factors it is concluded that the impact on the historic landscape is sufficient to advocate refusal in this case.</p>	<p>be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.</p> <p>In determining the planning application the Local Planning Authority are advised that they should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets (paragraph 131, NPPF), in this particular case – their setting. The NPPF also states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to its conservation, and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be (Paragraph 132, NPPF).</p> <p>This application requires a balanced judgment as to the impacts on designated heritage assets, landscape and the benefits of the proposed development. The turbine has been reduced in size to overcome a former objection from the MOD and not to lessen its impact upon the landscape which was considered to be harmful. Nevertheless the reduction in height whilst going some way towards mitigating against its visual impact it is still considered to have a harmful affect upon the unspoilt landscape which cannot be mitigated because of the topography. The energy production is considered to weigh in favour of installation in this location but due to factors discussed above and it is recommended that the application is refused because of its significant harmful impacts upon the historic landscape.</p>
<p>Somerby Parish Council – Objects</p> <p>Somerby Parish Council completely opposes this application. It deposits a 79 metre turbine in a very visible site in an area as yet unspoilt by any major structures. The turbine would dominate the skyline for many miles around and adversely affect the character and appearance of the countryside. In addition it will adversely affect local business and livelihoods including some of the most vulnerable in society.</p> <p>To put all this at risk for a purely money making venture which offers nothing to the local community would be</p>	<p>Please see commentary above for considerations in regards to impact upon the landscape and heritage.</p> <p>The turbine would produce 1,373 MWh of energy which is said to be equivalent to 306 homes. The energy produced would be transported to the National Grid and the money earned from the Feed in Tariff would aid the farm’s long term sustainability.</p> <p>The proposal is not considered to comply with the local plan which is silent on energy proposals. The application is considered to be contrary to Local Plan Policy OS2. However, the application needs to be</p>

wrong; which is why we oppose the application and would urge that Melton BC do likewise.

- It is contrary to planning policies – OS2 and C2
- It will have a detrimental impact upon the landscape
- It will have a negative impact upon Heritage Assets in the area – Five Conservation Areas, Schedule Monuments and Listed Buildings
- It requires re-routing of popular bridleways
- Its going to greatly affect the running of the two equestrian business – resulting in job losses
- Impact upon the Health and Safety of the disabled riders from shadow flicker
- The expanse of track will leave a scar on the landscape
- There will be no gain to the community
- The energy production is misleading
- Photomontages do not give an accurate and true reflection of the local landscape and are misleading.

The Minister of State for Communities and Local Government's recent guidance makes it clear that the concerns of local people regarding the adverse impact on the environment, traditional landscape patterns, heritage and local amenity must be given proper weight against the relatively small benefits which will derive from this single turbine. We know there are many objectors in the parish and outside. We hope that this will be taken into consideration both when Planning are making their recommendations to the Development Committee and when they in turn are considering the application.

It is considered that there are a number in inaccuracies contained within the submitted information such as the amount of electricity to be produced and the number of homes it could power.

Response to Revised Application Submitted November 2013

Our objections to the application still apply and hence the original comments are appended below. The new application, whilst reducing the height a little, worsens the danger/effect in that, by keeping the turbine blades the same length the same, their effect at ground level is much worse. It will be more dangerous for those travelling close to it and will have a correspondingly greater effect on horse riders, especially RDA riders as has been mentioned previously by many others. Finally, to say that the visual impact will be lessened as the turbine will be screened by nearby foliage and trees and existing man-made structures is manifest nonsense; it's still going to be an intrusive presence for miles around.

considered in terms of the Development Plan as a whole and the NPPF. The issue of compliance with Policy OS2 is required to be balanced against the need for Local Planning Authorities to support the delivery of renewable energy.

In the case of this proposal it is not considered that the energy production outweighs the environmental and social harms identified within the report.

<p>Knossington Parish Council – Object.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact upon the character of the landscape – its too high • Impact upon the Economics – loss of jobs from the equestrian businesses • Its not a true diversification project and therefore contrary to planning policies <p>Comments on the Amendments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size and height are excessive for the power output. As it is only to produce 5/9th of the turbine capacity why does it need to be so high? • No positive contribution to the local economy may result in job losses in the equestrian sector due to the rotating blades and its affect n riders using the adjacent bridle way. • Would still have an impact upon the landscape character due to its scale without opportunity for natural screening. • This isn't farm diversification, its industrialisation and breaches planning policies on such matters. 	<p>Noted – see assessment above (pages 7 -10)</p>
<p>Owston Parish Council – Object</p> <p>Taking into account the negative impact on nearby communities, rural business, the disabled members of our community, the rural landscape, the ecology and our cultural and preserved heritage, we urge you to reject this Planning Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact upon the villagers of Owston and Newbold as its closer to these villages. • Impact upon the conservation areas • Loss of amenities and impact upon health • Discriminates against disabled persons participating in the riding activities • The infrastructure required to get access to the proposed site is utterly inappropriate in this beautiful countryside • The industrial size is totally in appropriate to this part of Leicestershire • Will destroy local wild life 	<p>Noted – see assessment above (pages 7 – 10)</p>
<p>Harborough District Council – Object</p> <p>This application has raised a number of concerns from residents of Harborough District, particularly those in the Owston / Marefield area close to your boundary. As the Planning Officer representing these residents, HDC would like to take this opportunity to voice our concerns over the scale of the proposal, and the impact that this could have</p>	<p>Noted. No comments have been received in regards to the amended proposal for a turbine of a reduced height.</p> <p>The appeals referred to by HDC were for proposals for similar types of development to that proposed. The turbine dismissed at Tilton On the Hill was for a 100 kW rated power turbine with a hub height of 36.7</p>

upon the landscape of the surrounding area. HDC would point you in the direction of applications and appeal decisions that we have had in the same High Leicestershire landscape character area as this proposal at Tilton on the Hill (10/00020/FUL) and Ingarsby (11/00713/FUL), both of which were refused and dismissed at Appeal on the grounds of landscape / visual harm. One further application of a similar scale that we have approved within the High Leicestershire LCA was at Skeffington (11/01090/FUL), however, the landscape in this locality was already dominated by a set of large electricity pylons which passed in close proximity to the site, and as such it was not considered that a refusal on landscape impact could be sustained in this area.

HDC trust that these comments will be of benefit to you in making a recommendation on the application and members of your Planning Committee in determining the application. Please inform Harborough District Council of the decision on the application in due course.

metres with an overall tip height of 47.6 metres. The Inspector considered there was insufficient information submitted in respect of noise to conclude that the turbine would not be harmful to residents living close by. A further reason for refusal was the harm the turbine would have on the historic landscape. The Inspector considered that due to the dominant size of the turbine it would have the effect of dwarfing the church spire (grade I) and would therefore affect the setting of the Heritage Asset.

The decision was issued pre NPPF however the provisions of PPS 5 Planning for the Historic Environment still remains a key focus in chapter 11 of the NPPF with a strong focus to preserve and protect heritage assets of significance.

The appeal decision at Keyham concerned a proposal for two 250kW turbines with hub heights of 55 metres and a blade tip height of 71 metres. In dismissing the appeal the Inspector considered that the turbines in the High Leicestershire character area due to the rural area being relatively free from intrusive artefacts, that the turbine would appear intrusive and would disturb the intimacy that is strongly characteristic of this landscape. HDC have an adopted Core Strategy and policies relating to renewable energy proposals. Policy CS17 accepts renewable energy in the countryside is appropriate subject to sensitive siting and providing considerations are given to the sensitivity of the landscape settings and sets out particular considerations for the character landscape areas, which includes the High Leicestershire. The Inspector considered the proposal did not comply with the Core Strategy however reference was made to the NPPF and it was considered the energy production did not outweigh the harm to the local landscape considerations.

It is considered that the appeal decisions are material considerations to the proposal being situated along the border with HDC and being proposed within the High Leicestershire character area, where the characteristics as described with in the appeal decision is very much relevant to this location. Whilst there are no local policies, the NPPF seeks to protect valued landscapes and to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF advises that in determining planning applications the Local Planning Authority should take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. **In this instance it is considered that the proposal would be out of character with area and would introduce a**

	visually dominant structure that would have a significant harmful impact upon this locally valued landscape , due to its strong ‘rolling topography’ free from modern intrusions.
Rutland Borough Council -	No comments received to date
<p>NATs – No objection</p> <p>The proposed development has been examined from a technical safeguarding aspect and does not conflict with our safeguarding criteria. Accordingly, NATS (En Route) Public Limited Company ("NERL") has no safeguarding objection to the proposal.</p> <p>If any changes are proposed to the information supplied to NERL in regard to this application which become the basis of a revised, amended or further application for approval, then as a statutory consultee NERL requires that it be further consulted on any such changes prior to any planning permission or any consent being granted.</p> <p>No comments to make on the amended information</p>	Noted.
<p>Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) –</p> <p>The CAA has no responsibilities for safeguarding sites other than its own property, and a consultation by a Council is taken as a request for clarification of procedural matters. Councils are reminded of their obligations to consult in accordance with ODPM/DfT Circular 1/2003 or Scottish Government Circular 2/2003, and in particular to consult with NATS and the Ministry of Defence as well as any aerodromes listed in Annex 3 of the above documents, taking note of appropriate guidance and policy documentation. Should the Council be minded to grant consent to an application despite an objection from one of the bodies listed in the circular, then the requisite notifications should be made.</p> <p>Whilst the CAA recommends all aerodrome operators/license holders develop associated safeguarding maps and lodge such maps with local planning authorities, the CAA additionally encourages councils/planning authorities to undertake relevant consultation with known local aerodromes regardless of status or the existence of any aerodrome/council safeguarding agreement, including local emergency service Air Support Units (e.g. Police Helicopter or Air Ambulance).</p> <p>There is an international civil aviation requirement for all structures of 300 feet (91.4 metres)* or more to be charted on aeronautical charts. However, on behalf of other non-regulatory aviation stakeholders, in the interest of Aviation Safety, the CAA requests that any feature/structure 70 feet in height, or greater, above</p>	Noted. No comments received to the amended proposal.

<p>ground level is notified to the Defence Geographic Centre ICGDGC-ProdAISAFDb@mod.uk, including the location(s), height(s)* and lighting status of the feature/structure, the estimated and actual dates of construction and the maximum height of any construction equipment to be used, at least 6 weeks prior to the start of construction, to allow for the appropriate notification to the relevant aviation communities.</p> <p>Any structure of 150 metres* or more must be lit in accordance with the Air Navigation Order and should be appropriately marked. Although if an aviation stakeholder (including the MOD) made a request for lighting it is highly likely that the CAA would support such a request, particularly if the request falls under Section 47 of the Aviation Act.</p>	
<p>East Midlands Airport:- no objection.</p> <p>The proposed development has been examined from an aerodrome safeguarding aspect and does not conflict with safeguarding criteria. Accordingly, this department has no safeguarding objection to the proposal.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Ministry of Defence – Object</p> <p>The turbine will be 24.8 km from, detectable by, and will cause unacceptable interference to the ATC radar at RAF Wittering.</p> <p>Wind turbines have been shown to have detrimental effects on the performance of MOD ATC and Range Control radars. These effects include the desensitisation of radar in the vicinity of the turbines, and the creation of "false" aircraft returns which air traffic controllers must treat as real. The desensitisation of radar could result in aircraft not being detected by the radar and therefore not presented to air traffic controllers. Controllers use the radar to separate and sequence both military and civilian aircraft, and in busy uncontrolled airspace radar is the only sure way to do this safely. Maintaining situational awareness of all aircraft movements within the airspace is crucial to achieving a safe and efficient air traffic service, and the integrity of radar data is central to this process.</p> <p>The creation of "false" aircraft displayed on the radar leads to increased workload for both controllers and aircrews, and may have a significant operational impact. Furthermore, real aircraft returns can be obscured by the turbine's radar returns, making the tracking of conflicting unknown aircraft (the controllers' own traffic) much more difficult.</p> <p>If the developer is able to overcome the issues stated above, the MOD will request that the turbine is fitted with 25 candela omni-directional red lighting or infrared lighting with an optimised flash pattern of 60 flashes per</p>	<p>The objection has now been removed following the submission of a reduced height turbine.</p>

<p>minute of 200ms to 500ms duration at the highest practicable point.</p> <p>MOD Safeguarding wishes to be consulted and notified about the progress of planning applications and submissions relating to this proposal to verify that it will not adversely affect defence interests.</p> <p>Consultation on Amended Proposal.</p> <p>No Objection to the amended application for 1 turbine at 61 metres to blade tip subject to conditions requiring the MOD to be informed of the date construction of the turbine(s) starts, the maximum height of the construction equipment and the latitude and longitude of every turbine.</p> <p>This has been assessed using the grid reference below as submitted in the planning application or in the developers' pro-forma. In the interests of air safety, the MOD requests that the turbine is fitted with aviation lighting. The turbine should be fitted with 25 candela omni-directional red lighting or infrared lighting with an optimised flash pattern of 60 flashes per minute of 200ms to 500ms duration at the highest practicable point.</p> <p>Subject to conditions requiring the MOD to be informed of the date construction of the turbine(s) starts, the maximum height of the construction equipment and the latitude and longitude of every turbine.</p>	
<p>LCC Archaeology –</p> <p>The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) notes the site lies within an area of archaeological potential, situated approximately 1km to the south-west of the medieval and post-medieval village of Somerby (HER ref.: MLE8617). The development comprises the erection of a wind turbine, some 55m to hub height, formation of a crane base and installation of a substation, the scheme also entails the creation of an access track connecting the turbine site to the Owston Road.</p> <p>The turbine will require the excavation of a substantial foundation (Planning Statement suggests a gravity or piled foundation solution) and a soil strip of the area of the crane base. Together these are likely to amount to ground disturbance of c. 400m². The affected area lies at the crest of a ridge overlooking a tributary stream of the Gaddesby Brook. Whilst no recorded archaeological remains are noted within the affected site, Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age and Roman remains including a barbed and tanged arrowhead (MLE9800) and a Republican denarius (MLE9799) have been recovered from the vicinity. In addition, ridge located sites such as this, situated in close proximity to watercourses appear to retain a higher potential for preserved archaeological remains.</p>	<p>Ridge and furrow earthworks are considered to be a significant and vanishing component of Leicestershire rural historic landscape. It is stated that they have their origins in the restructuring of the agrarian environment during the later Saxon period, and provide evidence for the open field, champion landscapes of the English Central Midlands. In this regards there is a desire to preserve ridge and furrow.</p> <p>There are strict regimes for the ploughing of ridge and furrow and there may be a requirement for works within a ridge and furrow to apply for an Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (England) (No.2) Regulations 2006 so that full considerations can be given. Natural England have confirmed that an EIA under this regulation is not required for the installation of the track. The Farm is part of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and is therefore regulated.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place with the Archaeology Officer and the applicant's agent and whilst a revised track location has been put forward that suggests that it will follow the contours of the ridge and furrow. It is not known how this would be achieved. The Track would need to be 4 metres wide and capable of withstanding the heavy loads. It is suggested that</p>

<p>It is recommended that the developer is required to make provision for an archaeological investigation of the turbine foundation and crane base. This should comprise an initial geophysical survey of the site (a 1ha area centred on the turbine foundation) followed by archaeological soil strip and sample excavation of any significant exposed remains. The fieldwork should be completed prior to the start of development on site. All the above archaeological works can be secured by condition on an approved planning application.</p> <p>The proposals also envisage the formation of an access track around 1155m in length, of which approximately 390m already exists, the remaining 765m will be constructed across two areas of good quality ridge and furrow and open area of more degraded remains. Ridge and furrow earthworks are a significant and vanishing component of Leicestershire rural historic landscape. They have their origins in the restructuring of the agrarian environment during the later Saxon period, and provide evidence for the open field, champion landscapes of the English Central Midlands.</p> <p>The construction of the track will truncate and disrupt the character of the surviving earthworks, it is therefore recommended that the route is redesigned to avoid the area of the significant ridge and furrow and/or to limit the impact of the scheme by respecting their coherence and form. In the latter context, a possible option might include the track following rather than cutting across the pattern of earthworks. In its present form the trackway is unnecessarily damaging and consequently unacceptable, as such we object to the scheme in its present form and would urge the planning authority to seek amendments to the submitted proposals.</p>	<p>hard core would be used.</p> <p>In view that sufficient information has been submitted to allow a full assessment of any potential harmful impacts it is recommended that should a refusal be granted that the lack of methodology forms a reason for refusal.</p>
<p>English Heritage –</p> <p>We draw your authority’s attention to our guidance on the setting of historic assets which may be of assistance to your authority in establishing the extent of any harm to the significance of historic assets such that you may weigh this against the public benefits of development. With regards to direct impacts upon archaeological remains from the construction and accessing of the development, Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council.</p> <p>It is recommended that the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.</p>	<p>Noted. In determining the planning application the Local Planning Authority are advised that they should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets (paragraph 131, NPPF), in this particular case – their setting. The NPPF also states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to its conservation, and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be (Paragraph 132, NPPF).</p> <p>An assessment on the heritage assets surrounding the proposal is contained above within the report.</p>
<p>LCC Footpaths – no objection</p> <p>You will note that public bridleways D71A and D73 run in close proximity to the proposed development.</p>	<p>The proposal has been amended which reduces the overall height of the turbine from 79 metres to 61 metres which in turn reduces the required fall over distance to footpaths and bridleways. The turbine</p>

Bridleway D73 carries the Leicestershire Round, a nationally recognised walking route which circumnavigates the County. The applicant has recognised the bridleways in the Planning Statement but I do have several comments to make on what is proposed.

Despite its replacement, PPS22 is still considered to provide the most appropriate guidance regarding the proximity of wind turbines to Public Rights of Way. There are two relevant paragraphs:

- Developers should seek to achieve at least fall over distance from any public right of way for maximum safety (PPS 22 para.57).
- The recommended minimum distance from a bridleway is 200 metres (PPS 22 para.56).

Having taken measurements from the plan I am satisfied that the proposed turbine location does achieve the minimum fall-over distance from bridleway D71A. Bridleway D73 is just outside the 200m recommended minimum distance.

The proximity to D71A does give me cause for concern. However, I have noted the constraints which prevent the proposed location being further south or west and have taken account of the proposed permissive “alternative” route for riders. This is in line with the British Horse Society Advice on Wind Turbines (January 2013) and therefore I will not object provided the following conditions are imposed for reasons of public safety requiring the positioning of gates along the bridleway is reviewed and agreed prior to the turbine being operational and the permissive bridleway be instated and clearly signed.

The British Horse Society also suggests in their Advice that developers provide some facility which allows local riders to familiarise themselves and their horses with wind turbines. Consideration should be given to this in view of the local riding schools in the area.

would be located approximately 220 metres to the west of the Leicestershire Round, D73 and approximately 120 metres from the gated bridleway D71A. A ‘permissive’ alternative route for equestrian use has been put forward which is in line with the British Horse Societies advice on Wind Turbines. In order to safeguard the users of the gated bridleway (D71A) further details on how the gates will operate has been requested. This could be secured by means of a condition requiring the information to be agreed.

No comments have been received in regards to the acceptability of a turbine or the impact it may have on the amenity or enjoyment of the recreation facility. The Leicestershire Round is a 100 mile circular walk around the county connecting many places of historical and geographical interest. The route was devised by the Leicestershire Footpath Association to celebrate the centenary of their founding in 1887 and published in sections between 1980 and 1983. It is stated that it is treasured by local walkers and is used by charities to form sponsored walks. It is the county’s main long-distance footpath and considered to be a flagship for the local rights of way network.

There is no evidence to suggest that walkers and riders would be deterred from using a footpath/bridleway due to the presence of a turbine. However as discussed elsewhere within the report this part of the landscape is undisturbed by modern intrusion and is relatively free from noise. From a site visit and a walk along the Leicestershire Round it can be described as an area of attractiveness. Understandably it is easy to see why this would be a tourist attraction and a well used route with walkers and riders.

The bridleway is well used by the neighbouring Equestrian Centres, some of those visitors are disabled and are members of the Riding for Disabled Associations which has a partnership with the Mount Riding Group on Oakham Road. Some of the visitors have health related problems and may no longer be able to enjoy the routes should the turbine be erected however no evidence has been submitted to suggest that this would be the case. The turbine would be located within the BHS’s recommended separation distance of 200 metres and a permissive ‘alternative’ route for riders will be provided which will fall outside of the recommended separation distance.

The turbine would be visible from approximately 900 metres stretch of the Leicestershire Round D73 and approximately 700 metres of the bridleway D71.

	<p>From approach along the Leicestershire Round from the South and North the turbine will be in direct view. Viewpoint 7 is provided from the closest point of the Leicestershire Round and whilst taken within a dip it still shows that the turbine would be prominent.</p> <p>With the exception of the farm machinery working in the fields there are no apparent noise sources in the area. The area is quite and relatively free from modern day traffic noise. The noise from the turbine therefore will be audible being within 120 and 200 metres from either bridleway.</p> <p>The NPPF paragraph 123 advises that policy and decisions should aim to identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason. In the absence of any local policy designation it is not known if this would be an area considered for its ‘tranquillity’ however it is clear that it does have a high recreational amenity value which is well used.</p> <p>The presence of a turbine in this landscape is considered to have a significant impact upon the character of the area to warrant a refusal. It is equally considered that the turbine would have an impact upon the recreation facilities and will diminish the amenity value currently enjoyed by visitors and residents due to its intrusiveness.</p>
<p>LCC Highways Authority – No Objection.</p> <p>The existing field access from which it is proposed to serve the site is substandard and therefore improvements should be made to improve this access. Due to the adverse horizontal alignment of the road, it would not be possible to improve the access to current standards required for visibility splays, nevertheless improvements to its width, radii, surfacing, visibility splays should be made.</p> <p>These revised highway observations follow the submission of amended details showing improvements to the access under covering email from Agent to the Planning Officer dated 10th September. The email trail includes details of the proposed surfacing, location of gates, provision of visibility splays etc. These details are considered acceptable subject to conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access improvements • Set back of gates • Construction site traffic plan to be submitted and approved • A traffic management plan detailing the construction routing to the site. 	<p>Noted. The existing access is to be modified and a new track created to aid transportation of the turbine and components to the proposed siting.</p> <p>The Highways Authority has requested that a Traffic Management Plan be submitted prior to commencement of the proposal and this can be conditioned.</p> <p>It is considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact upon the highway users. All works within the highway will need to be agreed by the Highways Authority.</p>

<p>Natural England – No objection</p> <p>Based upon the information provided, Natural England advises the Council that the proposal is unlikely to affect any statutorily protected sites or landscapes.</p> <p>It is noted that a survey for European Protected Species has been undertaken in support of this proposal. Natural England does not object to the proposed development. On the basis of the information available to us, our advice is that the proposed development would be unlikely to affect any European Protected Species.</p> <p>We have not assessed the survey for badgers, barn owls and breeding birds, water voles, white-clawed crayfish or widespread reptiles. These are all species protected by domestic legislation and you should use our protected species standing advice to assess the adequacy of any surveys, the impacts that may result and the appropriateness of any mitigation measures.</p> <p>Local wildlife sites</p> <p>If the proposal site is on or adjacent to a local wildlife site, eg Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) or Local Nature Reserve (LNR) the authority should ensure it has sufficient information to fully understand the impact of the proposal on the local wildlife site, and the importance of this in relation to development plan policies, before it determines the application.</p> <p>The Authority should seek to gain biodiversity and landscape enhancements where possible in line with the NPPF para. 118.</p> <p>Consultation response on the amended plans</p> <p>The proposed amendments to the original application relate largely to layout and plans and are unlikely to have significantly different impacts on the natural environment than the original proposal.</p> <p>Should the proposal be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment then, in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Natural England should be consulted again.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Please see commentary below in regards to the Local Wildlife site.</p>
<p>LCC Ecology – No objection</p> <p>The current planning application does not require an ecological survey, as the exact location of the turbine allows a 50 meter buffer between the turbine and nearby</p>	<p>Noted. The application has been supported by protected species reports which have been independently assessed by LCC Ecologist and Natural England and no objections has been received. No further survey work has been requested.</p>

ecological features, such as the hedgerow and trees. This is in accordance with Natural England Technical Information Note TIN059 Bats and single large wind turbines. The details of the turbine submitted with the application indicate that the base of the turbine will need to be at least 62 meters from the hedgerow in order to satisfy this criteria (assuming hub height is 55m, blade length is 24m and nearby trees are 15m). The actual distance within the proposals is 66 meters. This is based on the formula provided in Natural England's Technical Information Note TIN051 Bats and onshore wind turbines.

The proposed turbine location is not in the vicinity of any sites protected for their bird assemblages or populations and, for a single turbine, a bird survey is not required.

Further clarification should be sought from the applicant in regards to the data searches and the presence of designated sites and non statutory sites. Also require a badger survey as a sett is recorded nearby although it is not known if it is still active.

The first section of the access track in the field adjacent to the road is within a grassland currently identified as a Local Wildlife Site. Should the proposed development involve the upgrading of the access track in the field adjacent to the road, we would request further details of the proposals.

Consultations following amendments to the track.

Badgers - satisfied with the comments from the applicants ecologist (Curious Ecologists, September 2013) concerning the badger survey for this site. It is noted that the site and the proposed area of the access track have been surveyed for badger setts and no evidence was found. We therefore have no further requirements regarding this species.

Details of the construction of the track has been provided and I am now satisfied with the proposals, subject to a suitable pre commencement condition being forwarded, should planning permission be granted. This should include a requirement to submit a construction method statement (to be approved by the LPA) covering the following:

- The entrance and access track must be limited to the area and route shown on the Access Improvement Plan.
- No construction spoil is to be deposited or disposed of anywhere in the area of the Local Wildlife Site.
- No construction machinery or equipment to be laid down within the Local Wildlife Site.
- Details of how the working area of the access track will be kept to a minimum (a 5m working area alongside the track).

The access track will pass through an area which has been recorded as a Local Wildlife Site. Details of the construction of the track have been provided to the Ecologist who is satisfied that there will not be any adverse impact upon the designation.

<p>Consultation response to the amended height of the turbine.</p> <p>It appears that the initial section of track (through the first field from the road) is unchanged and therefore is unlikely to have a greater impact on the Local Wildlife Site than previously discussed. Previous recommendations concerning this matter remain applicable. (reported above)</p> <p>We note that there the proposed turbine has now changed. The proposed turbine has a hub height of 35m and a blade length of 26m. The Natural England Technical Information Note TIN059 states that there should be a buffer of at least 50 meters between any part of the turbine and nearby ecological features (hedgerow and trees in this case). Natural England's Technical Information Note TIN051 provides a formula to calculate this distance and, assuming nearby trees are 15m tall, the turbine base should be 73m from the hedgerow. Our aerial photographs suggest that the turbine appears to be sited just on the edge of this guidance and is therefore satisfactory.</p>	
<p>Environment Agency -</p>	<p>No comments received.</p>
<p>Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) – Object</p> <p>CPRE has always recognised that the countryside and its landscapes will change over time in response to human needs. The countryside as a source of energy is one such example. In principle, CPRE will accept wind turbine proposals where they are appropriately located, and will oppose proposals where the balance between energy output and landscape and amenity harm is judged to be unfavourable. It is our view that the benefits from the proposed wind turbine at Southfields Farm will not be so significant as to outweigh the very adverse impact on the historic and tranquil landscape of this part of High Leicestershire.</p> <p>CPRE objects on the following grounds that it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a significant adverse impact on the landscape character • Cause a loss of amenity for residents and visitors • Have a significant adverse impact on the setting of a nationally important scheduled ancient monument – Burrough hill Iron Age Hill Fort. <p>The planning appeal decision at Ingarsby should be given great weight in determining this planning application. It is contrary to National and local policies.</p>	<p>Noted. The landscape concerns are covered elsewhere within the report (pages 7 – 10 above).</p>
<p>BT</p> <p>We have studied this revised proposal with respect to</p>	<p>Noted</p>

<p>EMC and related problems to BT point-to-point microwave radio links.</p> <p>The conclusion is that, the Project indicated should not cause interference to BT's current and presently planned radio networks.</p>	
<p>Joint Radio Company (JRC)</p> <p>JRC analyses proposals for wind farms on behalf of the UK Fuel & Power Industry. This is to assess their potential to interfere with radio systems operated by utility companies in support of their regulatory operational requirements.</p> <p>In the case of this proposed wind energy development, JRC does not foresee any potential problems based on known interference scenarios and the data you have provided. However, if any details of the wind farm change, particularly the disposition or scale of any turbine(s), it will be necessary to re-evaluate the proposal.</p> <p>In making this judgement, JRC has used its best endeavours with the available data, although we recognise that there may be effects which are as yet unknown or inadequately predicted. JRC cannot therefore be held liable if subsequently problems arise that we have not predicted.</p> <p>It should be noted that this clearance pertains only to the date of its issue. As the use of the spectrum is dynamic, the use of the band is changing on an ongoing basis and consequently, developers are advised to seek re-coordination prior to considering any design changes.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Arqiva – No objection.</p> <p>Arqiva is responsible for providing the BBC and ITV's transmission network and is responsible for ensuring the integrity of Re-Broadcast Links ,and also protect its microwave networks. We have considered whether this development is likely to have an adverse affect on our operations and have concluded that we have no objection to this application.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Airwave Solutions</p>	<p>The previous application 13/00108/FUL was withdrawn following an objection from Airwaves Solution as the turbine would have impacted upon the Emergency Services transmissions. The applicant has worked with Airwaves Solution prior to this latest submission for the revised location. Airwaves Solutions therefore have no objection.</p>

Representations:

A site notice was posted and the immediate neighbouring property consulted. As a result 334 letters of representation and 228 pro forma letters from 308 households have been received to date (560). 1 letter of support

has been received. Following amended plans a further 77 letters and 79 pro forma letters of objection have been received. (157) and 1 letter withdrawing their previous objection.

Representation	Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services
<p>STOP (Somerby Turbine Opposition Plan) :- object</p> <p>STOP is fully supportive of the need to increase the amount of renewable energy generated but renewable energy developments are only of long term value if the benefits outweigh the adverse impacts</p> <p>Planning Policy Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application is contrary to NPPF, Local Plan policies OS2, C2 and BE8 and policy CS17 of the Harborough Core Strategy. • Whilst at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development the policy makes clear that this does not give carte-blanche for all so called ‘sustainable developments’ to be approved irrespective of any adverse impacts. • The NPPF is clearly stating that any development where the adverse impacts outweigh the benefits should be refused planning permission. • The NPPF is maintaining the strong lead in previous national planning policies that protects the countryside, local residents and the strong cultural heritage that pervades this country. • Paragraph 98 of the NPPF confirms that when determining applications for energy development, local planning authorities should approve the application ‘unless material considerations indicate otherwise’ and ‘if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable’. Again this reinforces the need for a planning balance between benefits and harm to be the key determinant in arriving at a decision on a particular renewable energy planning application. • The NPPF, when talking about conserving and enhancing the natural environment states that the aim should be to minimise adverse effects on the local and natural environment • Planning Practice Guide for Renewable Energy give local communities more say on where onshore wind should go • The area of Harborough Council that will be impacted by this turbine lies within the High Leicestershire LCA. Although the turbine does not sit within HDC there will be significant visual impacts on the landscape character and this policy is a material consideration in the determination of this application. <p>Need for the development</p>	<p>The content of this objection is noted and matters relating to landscape, heritage, public rights of way, and ecology are discussed above.</p> <p>The development plan consists of the ‘saved’ policies of the Local Plan and the NPPF. Policy BE8 is not a saved policy. In regards to renewable energy the Local Plan is ‘silent’ and the NPPF is the prevailing policy.</p> <p>The NPPF is clear in its guidance that Local Planning Authorities should approve planning permission unless “any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits” (emphasis added). Therefore, when considering the impact on the surrounding landscape of the proposal this needs to be the key consideration.</p> <p>In the case of this proposal it is considered that the energy production <u>does not</u> outweigh the harm it would have on the landscape and heritage considerations.</p> <p>The application has attracted a considerable amount of correspondence and members of the public have had the opportunity to voice their concerns.</p> <p>Please see the commentary above in regards the Harborough District.</p> <p>The Government targets are not maximum but</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is clear guidance from Government that the 2020 energy targets are likely to be met then there will be no pressing need for this scheme and the weight that can be given to the limited benefits that will accrue from this turbine will be reduced. • The Planning Statement does not contain any analysis of progress to date on the UK's energy and the latest Government position is ignored. Both of these omissions undermine the factual basis on which the conclusions are drawn. • The latest published report from DECC 2011 states that the required targets can be achieved with the current pipeline of schemes already in planning eight years ahead of 2020. – this proposal is not needed to meet targets. • It must be concluded that there is little need for this scheme to support the UK's legally binding commitment to deliver 15% of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2020. Thus the weight that can be given to the benefit of renewable electricity from the turbine is also reduced. • The weight is also further reduced by the very low capacity of the proposed turbine. At 0.5MW it is insignificant in the national picture and not needed locally 	<p>minimum targets. Where renewable proposal are or can be made acceptable they should be approved.</p>
<p>Landscape Character</p>	<p>The NPPF clearly states that Local Planning Authorities should not require applicants for energy developments to demonstrate the overall need.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient landscape assessments have been submitted with the proposal • There is no attempt by the Applicant to assess the sensitivity of the receiving landscape. The Companion Guide to PPS22 notes that there is a distinction between overall landscape sensitivity and landscape sensitivity to a particular change and highlights that ‘a particular landscape character area may be more sensitive to change resulting from one renewable technology than another.’ • STOP show that the landscape in which this turbine is located is a small scale, intimate landscape with a strong historical time depth and virtually no large scale vertical objects, whether man-made or natural, and hence has a high sensitivity to commercial scale wind turbine development • The landscape has not been denuded and there are very few detracting vertical features in the landscape or other intrusive modern development such as pylons, grain stores or large agricultural buildings which are common in many other parts of the country • The turbine sits in the national Landscape Character Area 93 - High Leicestershire and within the more detailed MBC Landscape Character Area 15 - High Leicestershire Hills. This latter local LCA states that it is perhaps the quintessential landscape type in the Borough. So there is recognition that this area is not 	<p>Landscape considerations are considered at length elsewhere within the report (see pages 7 – 1-0 above). The application was supported with ZTV's and photomontages this along with the site visits enable sufficient assessment of the proposal. Photomontages are one technique amongst many in the assessment process.</p>

<p>just a particularly attractive landscape but stands above other such attractive landscapes in the Borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no assessment of the cumulative impact of the turbines at all in this application . We would argue that there is no credible analysis of the cumulative impact on the village of Somerby and that there is a significant risk of an overall adverse cumulative visual impact. • HDC have successfully defended appeals in the High Leicestershire character area – this site is equally as important being on the border with HDC <p>STOP argue that the erection of a 79m wind turbine will introduce an alien rotating structure into the landscape and that the significant harm caused to the historic landscape and the current landscape character would be in conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies OS2 and C2 of the Melton Local Plan and Policy CS 17 of the Harborough District Core Strategy.</p> <p>It is clear that the adverse impact on landscape character is extensive and sufficient to warrant refusal of this planning application even when weighed in the planning balance against the benefits of the scheme.</p> <p>Visual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo montages/wireframes are not a reliable method for assessing visual impacts and should only be used as a guide. • With significant visual effects reaching up to 2km then the villages of Somerby, Burrough on the Hill, Pickwell, Owston, Marefield, Knossington, Newbold and Cold Overton are all recipients of significant visual impacts. • The dwelling at Somerby Equestrian Centre will be greatly impacted upon – applying the ‘Lavender Test’ this property will become an unattractive place to live. • It will impact upon residential amenity reducing the amenity from many homes • No visuals have been produced form those homes affected by the turbine. <p>Public Rights of Way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The enjoyment of the unspoilt countryside is one of the key amenities available to both local residents and visitors. The removal of this enjoyment through the visual and noise intrusion of a massive industrial wind turbine with rotating blades in the countryside is an adverse impact on people’s quality of life. • There can be no doubt that the ability of people to 	<p>It is not considered that cumulative impacts would arise given that the landscape is considered to be one void of modern structures. Whilst there are smaller turbines of various sizes within the wider area they are considered to be too distant to have a cumulative effect.</p> <p>Noted – please see comments above. Site visits taking in viewpoints from local and wider landscape settings that are not the subject of photomontages etc have been carried out in order to consider the impacts upon the landscape.</p> <p>The dwelling sits to the north separated by a distance of approximately 670 metres and is the closest residential dwelling to the turbine. It will have views across the landscape and will view the turbine over the ridge. It is not considered that the residential amenity would be severely affected that it would have a significant detrimental impact.</p> <p>Noted. Please see commentary contained within the Public Rights of Way assessment.</p>
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<p>enjoy the attractive countryside and use the PROWs would be significantly debased by the introduction of this wind turbine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its within 200 metres of the bridleway forcing the applicant to provide an alternative route to mitigate harm • The alternative route and the Leicestershire Round still fail the British Horse Society Guidance which recommends a separation distance of four times turbine height for national trails, such as the Leicestershire Round and three times for normal bridleways. This equates to 316m and 237m for this turbine. • People’s enjoyment of the local PROW network by this turbine is substantial and significantly adverse • The RDA will be severely disadvantaged by a turbine in close proximity to the bridleway. Equestrian businesses in the area will suffer at the hands of one turbine. <p>Cultural Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Planning Statement contains no assessment merely an incomplete list of heritage assets and a single line saying that given the size and scale of the turbine the effect on the setting of the identified assets is not considered to be significant. – Despite an appeal at Tilton being dismissed on impacts upon the church. • The immediate area contains a high density of heritage assets which span time periods which include the Bronze and Iron ages, the Roman period, both the early and late Medieval periods (10th to 16th centuries) and many buildings from the Great Rebuilding (late 16th/early 17th centuries), including Vernacular homesteads and high status buildings. The heritage assets affected include nine Scheduled Ancient Monuments, four SSSIs, and thirty listed buildings of Grade I and II designation. • The alien rotating turbine will affect a rare survival of heritage assets in a virtually unaltered historic landscape at two topographical levels: those assets sited upon the widely visible continuous ridge and assets sited in the valley and other areas below the ridge • This application by virtue of the significant adverse impact on heritage assets that are not outweighed by the benefits of the scheme is in conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy BE8 of the Melton Local Plan • The construction of the 1km access track across the whole site will, by its very nature require the historic features of the ridge and furrow to be dug through to accommodate the weight of the vehicles using the track. This will not only destroy the traditional and 	<p>Noted. Please refer to the commentary reported under the Conservation Officers comments and narrative opposite (7 – 10).</p>
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<p>ancient grassland but also, disturb the local wildlife</p> <p>Noise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assumptions and experience from which ETSU was drawn up, being based on turbines of much smaller height and blade diameter (generally up to 30/40m to blade tip), have limited relevance to the size of the turbine being proposed for this scheme. Yet there has been no attempt to update ETSU in the thirteen years since its introduction. • There are a number of issues, such as excessive aerodynamic modulation and wind shear that are now recognised to be significant factors in wind turbine noise, that are not taken into account by ETSU. • The key issue is not whether the scheme will conform to ETSU but whether it will create unacceptable noise impacts on local residents, particularly with regard to sleep disturbance and resulting health problems • The fact that even if a proposed wind farm scheme does comply with ETSU-R-97 there is no guarantee that a noise nuisance will not occur is amply illustrated in the case of Jane Davis. (Deeping) • No background noise limits have been taken from the neighbouring properties – if these are low even if the noise produced from the turbine falls within the ETSU guidelines noise complaints will arise. • There is no credible noise impact assessment at all in the application. All that is provided is a table from the manufacturer of the illustrative turbine used, which may not be the one actually used on site, indicating sound levels at different distances. • The applicant may argue that by accepting a 35dB noise condition it does not matter that a proper noise impact assessment has not been carried out but that is to miss the point. Conditions cannot be used to solve a potential problem. • It is of fundamental importance that the noise impact assessment is rigorous and thorough and meets the ETSU methodology, and that use of conditions should be seen only as a final line of defence not as a means of trying to ensure that significant adverse noise impacts do not occur. • No evidence that wind shear will not be an issue • Children with Autism living in the area will be more affected by the noise nuisance from the turbine. <p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and studies have shown that turbines can have an impact upon health to those residents living in close proximity • MBC has a clear and over-riding legal responsibility to ensure the protection of public health in respect of any decisions it makes. In situations where the 	<p>The NPPF includes footnote 17 which states that in determining application for wind developments Local Planning Authorities should follow the approach set out in the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure. This guidance states in very clear terms that ETSU R 97 “should be used” and states also that the Government is satisfied it is “a sound basis for planning decisions”.</p> <p>Please see full response by the MBC Environment Health Officer on page 5.</p> <p>The medical evidence referred to has not been put forward to support this statement.</p> <p>Concerns are noted. No evidence has been presented to show that this turbine would have an impact upon health. Applications can only be refused if there are “sound and clear cut” reasons for refusal. Accordingly, issues where doubt remains are considered to be insufficient grounds to form a</p>
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<p>evidence is not yet 100% proven, as here, it has an equal duty to apply the precautionary principle in favour of rejection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleep deprivation is well recognised as a source of stress related illness and with so many turbines so close to residential properties there is a possibility that, particularly noise sensitive, residents will be significantly affected by this proposed development. • There are residents in the village that suffer from Autism. The closeness of the property and its orientation will mean that noise, shadow flicker and visual intrusion will create a toxic cocktail of potential harm for child x which on its own is sufficient to outweigh the very limited benefits. (medical reports are being prepared) <p>Ecology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that it is not deem EIA development means that full environment surveys have not been carried out. • The ecological report noted that an area of rough grassland and stream 200m to the east of the site was a Local Wildlife Site but no attempt was made to survey what is obviously an important local site. <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STOP believes that the benefits produced from renewable energy installations and developments must be clearly shown to outweigh any harm to the surrounding area and the quality of life and residential amenity of those residents living nearby • No site specific wind data has been calculated which means the exact benefits of energy production cannot be weighed against the dis-benefits. Calculations from NOABL have been quoted which are no longer updated. • The energy claimed to be produced is estimated as no wind data has been collected and in truth the production would be lower • The turbine has the potential to generate more electricity however it is being derated to capitalise on the subsidiaries. It is for profit and not for contributing to Governments national targets. <p>In conclusion there can be no doubt that the very limited electricity generation is a material issue and the fact that the adverse impacts totally outweigh these limited and over exaggerated benefits lead to the inevitable conclusion that this application should be rejected.</p> <p>Public Opinion</p>	<p>refusal.</p> <p>The application has provided an Ecological Survey which has been independently assed by Natural England and LCC Ecology who have no objection to the proposal nor requested further survey work.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>The amended proposal seeks consent for a 500kW power rated turbine. It will not be de-rated.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public polls show that people are in favour of renewable energy but in the right locations The people who are in the best position to fully understand the overall, balance of a scheme are those who live in the area and fully appreciate the values attached to the local amenity that will be impacted by the turbine. The Localism Bill, National Planning Policy Framework and the new practice guidance recognises the importance of effective consultation on onshore wind proposals There has been virtually no meaningful consultation through either this application or the previous one. Indeed the fact that none of the issues raised in our first objection response have even been addressed is a clear reflection of the lack of consultation. The strong local opposition is confirmed by the fact that all 3 local parishes consulted, representing over 1000 local residents, have recommended refusal of this planning application The Riding for the Disabled, Somerby Equestrian Centre, Stapleford Park, Hambleton Hall, Barnsdale Lodge, The Grange Therapeutic School and The Shires have all submitted strong objections. This has achieved much greater significance following the publication of the new planning guidance for renewable energy. If this guidance is to be followed then the weight of public opinion against this scheme shows that it is not wanted and given that the acknowledged significant harm outweighs the benefits then together there is a cast iron case for refusal. <p>Grid Connection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Planning Policy Statement EN1 clearly states that the grid connection should be considered as part of this application and if it is not then clear reasons should be given,. There is no adequate assessment of the grid connection from this scheme apart from a comment that it is anticipated that the grid connection will be at a point approximately 400m north of the turbine. This is twice the distance of the first application. <p>Electromagnetic Interference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 279 homes could be affected. No assessment has been carried out. Whilst it is stated works would be undertaken to rectify there is no details of mitigation or time required. <p>Socio Economics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an adverse socio-economic impact on a local 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The application has attracted a very large quantity of representation from across a broad area. Consultation measures have followed the requirements precisely and the quantity of representations suggest it has been effective.</p> <p>Developers are not required to engage in public consultation for single turbines. Public consultation is triggered by the planning application.</p> <p>The strength of opposition does not provide a reason for refusal nor automatically render that planning proposal should be refused. The objections have to be objectively assessed against planning policy and against any potential harmful impacts. The requirement is that planning issues must form any reason for refusal, rather than levels of popularity.</p> <p>The Practise Guidance is to be read alongside the NPPF and does not override or replace planning policy.</p> <p>The policy is written for consideration for large strategic wind developments and not single turbines as proposed. Connection to the grid is not a planning consideration and requires consent under a different regime.</p> <p>No objections have been received from the Arqiva who are consulted on behalf of BBC transmissions. A condition can be imposed requiring mitigation and methodology should impacts arise.</p> <p>Noted. There is no evidence to suggest that the</p>
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<p>business, namely the Somerby Equestrian Centre and Mount Group Riding School (RDA). The family live in the village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This socio-economic harm to local businesses and their customers must be considered as a material factor in the planning balance. <p>Planning Balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A turbine of this size will have significant adverse impacts upon • There are tensions with national, regional and local policies in promoting green energy • A balance of benefits against the dis-benefits must be undertaken • The only benefit is the production of the energy (which is questionable without site specific data) – no other benefits will arise • The land owner will benefit from the generous subsidiary but this should be given limited weight • There would be significant harm to the landscape, ecology, heritage and residents • It will degrade the recreational amenity for both local people for whom it is a valued and well used asset and for people using the Leicestershire Round • It would force the family of child x to move out of the area <p>STOPs objection has been supported with an independent landscape assessment and visuals to support the objection.</p> <p>Comments on the Amendments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amended scheme reducing the height of the mast but increasing blade has not overcome STOP’s well founded objections • It still fails to address the inadequacies of the assessments and takes no account of the objections raised by STOP and members of the public • EWT DW52 500kW turbine for which the smallest tower is 35m. This is the lowest tower available for a 500kW turbine and it is clear that whilst the height of the turbine has been reduced this has not been carried out to find the most appropriate size of turbine to create the least visual intrusion in the specific circumstances of this location but has been driven by the desire to retain a 500kW turbine • A 61m turbine in its own right is still a large turbine which will be out of scale with every natural and manmade object in the surrounding area. The viewpoints shown in the application illustrate this point perfectly. • Changing turbines has had the effect of increasing the diameter swept out by the blades from 48m to 52m. The rotating blades are the most visually intrusive 	<p>turbine would have a detrimental impact upon the local businesses. The economic benefits go far reaching than local employment. There is the construction of the components and job creation through the construction phase.</p> <p>There proposal has been assessed by statutory consultees on matters relating to heritage, landscape, residential amenity, ecology, aviation, telecommunication, public rights of way and highways as a result it has been concluded that the proposal would have substantial harm upon the landscape and recreational amenity that cannot be mitigated against. Therefore the harm is not outweighed by the energy production that would arise from the proposal.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
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<p>element of any wind turbine with the tower being a less significant element from a visual perspective. This increase in blade diameter means that the new turbine will sweep out an area 17% greater than the previous scheme, resulting in greater visual intrusion which largely removes the mitigation provided by a 23% reduction tower height.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a likelihood of aerodynamic modulation being significantly increased by the proposed change in turbine specification. • The applicant has still not responded to the new Government Practice Guidance - Recent appeal decision show a clear shift in Government thinking giving more weight to public concerns over the energy benefit. • It should also be noted that the recent 5% reduction in onshore tariffs in favour of offshore wind reflects the Government's response to mounting public concern about the proliferation of onshore wind turbines. • The Applicant still makes no attempt to assess the sensitivity of the High Leicestershire landscape which, as our independent expert confirms in our original objection 	
<p>Visual Impact and Landscape</p> <p>The application considerably understates the proposals visual intrusion upon the area, the use of comparative, wire frame landscapes and limited selection of view points suggests a less than thorough depiction of the real visual impact</p> <p>This parish and surrounding is one of outstanding natural beauty in which this extremely large and inevitably noisy industrial structure will not sit comfortably</p> <p>The proposed siting of an industrial scale turbine in this location would be both disproportionate and detrimental to the open countryside and surrounding environment.</p> <p>The landscape is unspoilt and noise free and the turbine will spoil this tranquil natural landscape.</p> <p>High Leicestershire is an outstanding beautiful part of England so far largely un-blighted by the eyesores that are without question these large wind turbines.</p> <p>The fact that this area has no specific landscape designation is an oversight and almost an irrelevance. This is one of the most traditional relatively unspoilt landscapes for miles around. It is highly valued by walker, riders and other visitors to the area</p> <p>It is free from pylons</p> <p>The accompanying infrastructure, i.e. 1 mile of road to be</p>	<p>Noted: please see commentary above (Conservation, pages 7 - 10) for detailed assessment.</p> <p>The landscape has no national designation but is consider to have unique characteristics which is not capable of absorbing a turbine development of this size. Designation is of significant because it attracts a stronger level of protection under the NPPF than the countryside in undesignated locations.</p>

taken across green fields, would also be a further desecration of open countryside.

The path way will destroy ancient Ridge and Furrow land

It will blight the landscape

The relatively unspoilt nature of the location will be lost forever. In addition the construction of a one mile access road will be an equally ugly scar on the landscape

The proposed construction of a white 79m turbine in this valley is intrusive and inappropriate, out of scale with any other feature and hence totally unsuitable for this rural environment

It will dominate the sky line and be intrusive in this area of exceptional beauty

It will have a dominating affect on the visual amenity of the area.

It would totally dominate views from all directions and spoil what is a pleasant an area of exceptional beauty, unaltered for centuries and with only the church spires of Somerby, Owston and Tilton being clear landmarks.

It will have a devastating visual impact upon the rolling countryside of High Leicestershire

The landscape is unspoilt with only the Somerby and Twyford church spire visible

The turbine would be the focal point of everyone using the roads in the locality. It would be the defining feature in the landscape for miles around.

The turbine due to size and scale will destroy the amenity of this area for visitors and residents

The wind turbine is excess in height and would have a devastating impact upon the rolling countryside

Positioned on the ridge it will be highly visible for miles

It will sit on an exposed ridgeline approx. 163 metres above sea level within a rural area that is characterised as rolling landscape and large open arable grass lands – it will dominate the landscape.

It will ruin the natural landscape and this part of Leicestershire

The turbine at this scale is out of proportion with other structures in the landscape

<p>It is totally unsuitable for this rural location</p> <p>It would down grade the pleasurable views over the countryside</p> <p>The manmade structure will be totally out of character with the outstandingly beautiful and tranquil countryside around Somerby</p> <p>The mile of track required to transport the turbine will scare the historic pasture lands and will be a blot on the untarnished landscape</p> <p>The construction of the track to cater for heavy vehicles will leave a permanent scar across the landscape</p> <p>The loss of the countryside will be exasperated by the construction of a kilometre long road way</p> <p>It will introduce an alien structure in an unspoilt part of Leicestershire</p> <p>The turbine would ruin this part of the High Leicestershire it would be compromised and ruined for generations</p> <p>The Council is the custodian of the Countryside and must protect the High Leicestershire and refuse the application</p> <p>The area is unspoilt please leave it that way!</p> <p>It will have long term effects the statement says that the operational life of the turbine is 25yrs and after that further application for continued use would be sought.</p> <p>Harborough District council have designated this area as being 'particularly attractive countryside'. The turbine's height, colour and stark mechanical form will dominate the surroundings completely invalidating Harborough's classification. My understanding is that the proposed location is in Market Harborough so I am very surprised that Melton BC are dealing with this application.</p> <p>Appeals have been won for other turbine developments in the High Leicestershire area due to harm on landscape and visual harm (Tilton and Ingarsby)</p>	<p>Harborough District Council has an adopted Core Strategy and this contains policies relating to landscapes and wind energy. Whilst the turbine is close to the boarder it does sit within the Melton District and is therefore required to be determined by this authority under the relevant polices for the area, not alternatives that relate to other areas.</p> <p>Each application has to be determined on its own merits however in the case of this location the appeals are deemed to have some relevance and have been discussed above.</p>
<p>Impact Upon the Enjoyment of the Countryside:</p> <p>The area attracts a great number of tourists because of the Leicestershire Round Public Rights of Way and attractive landscape – the turbine will affect this enjoyment which will be blighted by the large turbine.</p> <p>Walkers may chose not to visit the area which would be</p>	<p>Noted. Please see commentary above in response to Public Rights of Way (pages 18 and 19).</p>

detrimental to businesses

The public right of way forms part of a nationally important long distance footpath (LDP). It is well established that LDPs are a financial asset to the local economy and bring in additional business. It is also well established nationally that where wind turbines have been constructed hikers and recreational walkers avoid the area

It would diminish the attractiveness of the area for walkers, cyclist, riders and visitors

It affects the enjoyment of local rights of way where saved policies of the Local Plan would be in conflict.

Walkers following the Leicester Round footpath will see it as soon as they emerge from Owston wood, and it will continue to loom over them for two miles or more as they walk towards Somerby

So many people now treasure walking the Leicestershire Round. It's the County's flagship for the local Rights of Way network and connects many places of historic and geographical interest – it would be ruined if the turbine is approved.

Its too close to the public footpaths and bridleways

Negative impact on amenity – The area has a strong equestrian tradition

The track would dissect the well used Leicestershire Round and the proposal will destroy the tranquil enjoyment of the public footpaths for all that visit.

The turbine will ruin the tranquil enjoyment of the Leicestershire Round – popular with walkers and ramblers

The tranquillity of the area will be affected. Paragraph 123 of the NPPF advises planners to take into account a proposal on the tranquillity of the area.

The turbine will completely destroy one of the most important parts of rural Leicestershire. The siting of such a structure in this part of 'Higher Leicestershire' adjacent tot he Leicestershire Round with its unique rolling hill countryside will alter the character and nature of this landscape forever and reduce the attractiveness for the community.

The Birstall Walking Club object to the proposal which will ruin the enjoyment of the tranquil footpaths and bridleways, especially the Leicestershire Round which attracts many walkers.

It will have a negative impact upon the tourism and

<p>visitors to the area reducing the enjoyment of the countryside</p> <p>It will be a distraction and ruin the enjoyment of walking and riding in this part of the countryside</p> <p>Object to any closure of the bridleways and footpaths during construction.</p>	
<p>Impact upon Heritage:</p> <p>Somerby is a Conservation Area Village, which previously enabled undergrounding of overhead cables to preserve this designation. The implementation of a wind turbine of this magnitude which will over shadow Somerby seem contrary to such preservation.</p> <p>The turbine of this scale in this position will be out of character with the historic village of Somerby which has properties dating back to the 1600's.</p> <p>The proposed turbine will be highly visible from the historical Burrough Hill Iron Age Fort and will disrupt views of the Grade 1 listed churches at Somerby and Owston.</p> <p>Built around 1160, Owston church is the only survivor of the four Leicestershire abbeys built in the 12th century</p> <p>The submitted ZTV confirm that the turbine will be highly visible from Burrough Hill Iron Age Fort</p> <p>There are a number of historic buildings in the area that will be adversely affected by a turbine of this size</p> <p>The turbine will impair this historic landscape</p> <p>A turbine in this location will alter the historic character of the landscape indeed our precious historic sites. It will change the landscape forever.</p> <p>It will have a detrimental impact upon the Conservation Areas in the location.</p> <p>It will significantly affect the schedule monuments of Iron Age Fort Burrough Hill, Augustine Abbey and Fish Ponds at Owston and other assets such as moated settlement near Knossington and will be totally out of character.</p> <p>It would be a monstrous modern giant in an unspoilt area with important historic features.</p> <p>Somerby church spire will be dwarfed by this size of turbine</p>	<p>Matters relating to Heritage have been addressed above in the assessment of the Conservation Officer comments. (pages 10 – 17 above).</p>

<p>The fields are of ancient ‘ridge and furrow’ the creation of the track will scar the landscape having a negative impact upon heritage</p> <p>The turbine would add to the cumulative impact upon the existing heritage assets in the area.</p> <p>Somerby is a Conservation area where there are tight controls on what can be done to properties and surroundings. Allowing a turbine in this location is at odds with the whole concept of conservation areas.</p> <p>The Grove and its Conservation area is 1013 metres from the turbine and is an Heritage Asset. It is not listed in the application nor assessed for adverse impacts. The area is rich in ecology. The turbine would have a damaging impact upon the historic site and will devalue the property which would reduce investment in the historical property.</p>	<p>The dwelling is not a listed building but sits within the Somerby Conservation Area. A existing treed boundary would screen the turbine from view. In winter months glimpses may be had but it is not considered that a turbine at this distance would have a significant detrimental impact upon this part of the Conservation Area. (see conservation section for full commentary) or ecology (see ecology for full commentary)</p>
<p>Impact upon Residents</p> <p>Residents could be affected by shadow flicker being so close</p> <p>Its too big and too close to residents – recommended separation distances places them much further away 2 kilometres is suggested</p> <p>Increasingly it is accepted across Europe that wind turbines of this size simply should not be built within 2km of people homes. Although our planning guidelines on such matters appear to be uniquely outdated this should not prevent planners and councils from taking this into account.</p> <p>It is too close to many settlements and will undoubtedly have a detrimental impact upon those living in Somerby, Marefield, Tywford, Pickwell, Owston, Knossington and Burrough on the Hill.</p> <p>There will be a loss of residential amenity to the surrounding residents</p> <p>Amenity will be diminished for many residents.</p> <p>Graden spaces will no longer be enjoyable due to noise from the turbine being audible</p>	<p>Potential for shadow flicker cannot arise at any property beyond ten rotor diameters nor can it affect any closer property unless it is within 130 degrees either side of north relative to the turbines. It only occurs within buildings and is further dependent upon the existence of a suitably orientated, narrow window, and is weather dependent. It is not considered that shadow flicker will be created in this location.</p> <p>There are no set separation distances specified in any policy. The considerations are whether a turbine would have an unacceptable impact upon residential properties. Given the separations distances and the compliance with ETSU it is not considered that it would reduce the residential amenity to an unacceptable level.</p> <p>The planning system exists to regulate the use and development of land in the public interest and there is public interest in responding to the effects of climate change. The outlook from private property is a private interest not a public one and there is not a ‘right to a view’. However, Planning Inspectors have concluded that where the visual impact of a proposal is such as to cause unreasonable living conditions/amenity for the occupants of individual homes, and might be widely regarded as making the property an unattractive place in which to live, that can be regarded as being a legitimate matter of public interest. It is not considered that the residential amenities would be unduly impacted upon by the presence of a turbine due to topography and separation distances.</p>

<p>Being position on the highest point between Owston and Somerby the turbine will have an unacceptable impact upon the residents.</p> <p>There is limited tree coverage to mitigate the turbine from the residents of Somerby and Owston</p> <p>The location is totally unsuitable for a turbine of this magnitude so close to villages</p> <p>People chose to live in rural villages for the quiet life and should not have that blighted by an industrial size turbine with no benefit to the community</p> <p>The proposal will impact upon the residents quality of life</p> <p>Noise will be an issue</p> <p>People have a right to live in peace and quiet, in houses that they purchased in good faith and planners and councils have a moral duty to defend such rights.</p> <p>It will blight our lives and undoubtedly impact our quality of life for the remainder of our natural lives.</p> <p>It will reduce the visual outlook from many properties.</p> <p>The turbine will be constantly present when viewing from the property</p> <p>A turbine in this location will reduce house property prices.</p> <p>A site specific assessment as to impacts positive and negative should be carried out.</p> <p>Our home is due west of the proposed wind turbine on Marefield Lane, in Burrough-on-the-Hill. It will be visible from our property and will have an unacceptable impact on the rural beauty of the area. The sun rises behind the site of the wind turbine and I have no doubt this will create a flicker effect at that peaceful time of the day.</p> <p>The turbine will have zero benefit to the local residents who will be blighted by it.</p> <p>The benefits are disproportionate to the harm to the local residents</p>	<p>.</p> <p>The loss of a view or devaluing of property is not a planning consideration</p> <p>The energy production will be transport to the National Grid. Whilst not a planning consideration a community fund has been suggested with an indexed link sum of £2,000 per annum.</p>
<p>Noise</p> <p>The residents of Somerby will be affected by noise from the turbine being only 700 metres away and down wind.</p> <p>Site specific noise levels should be used to ensure the turbine will not create noise problems</p>	<p>Please refer to commentary above in respect of noise assessment.</p> <p>The NPPF includes footnote 17 which states that in determining application for wind developments Local Planning Authorities should follow the approach set out in the National Policy Statement for</p>

<p>The area is quiet with only disturbance from the wildlife – the turbines constant drone will be heard all night.</p> <p>The guidance is out of date and produced 16 years ago when turbines were much smaller.</p> <p>Howard Price, CIEH principal policy officer and official consultee on wind farm noise guidance has warned that: ‘Confidence has been lost in the ETSU model and it is good that this has now been recognised. ‘Neither the government nor the energy providers could afford to risk planning consents being overturned because they were based on inadequate guidance. Hopefully, something everyone agrees on will emerge soon’. (<i>Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Environmental Health News, 4th June 2010</i>).</p> <p>Noise impacts have been well documented and recommended separation distances of 1.5 kilometres is proposed - this is only 600 metres away for the nearest resident and 700 metres from the village of Somerby</p> <p>It is well documented that the noise impacts do arise and greater distances to those permitted in guidance – they must be taken into account.</p>	<p>Renewable Energy Infrastructure. This guidance states in very clear terms that ETSU R 97 “should be used” and states also that the Government is satisfied it is “a sound basis for planning decisions”.</p> <p>MBC Environmental Health Officer, in association with the applicant’s Agent, concluded that the noise level at the nearest residential receptor will comply with the noise limit recommended in ETSU –R – 97 for a single turbine. A condition has been suggested in the interest of residential amenity.</p> <p>There are currently no policies relating to separation distances. The ETSU-97-R contains the appropriate methodology for assessing noise impacts upon residents (see above – MBC Environment Health on page 5)</p>
<p>Cumulative with other turbine development</p> <p>Whilst accepting that each planning application has to be dealt with ‘on its own merit’, the cumulative effect with other similar developments must be taken into consideration. Notwithstanding Thorpe Satchville and Pickwell, other applications falling within the Market Harborough District which borders this application, could well be in the pipeline, thus resulting eventually in a situation whereby cumulative vibration/noise would have serious impact on residents, Grade Listed buildings etc.</p> <p>It may set a precedent for more turbine developments which would destroy the rural vista</p> <p>There is already a turbine at Thorpe Satchville with another planned which sticks out like a sore thumb</p> <p>It would add yet another massive structure to the landscape following the recent installations of turbines near Great Dalby Thorpe Satchville and Pickwell which are all visible from the immediate area.</p> <p>The number of turbines erected in the surrounding area is quiet high and another one would be inappropriate and harmful over an even wider area of our special environment</p>	<p>Cumulative Landscape Impacts are concerned with the degree to which a proposed renewable energy development will become a significant or defining characteristic of the landscape. It is considered that the cumulative landscape impact of these proposals when considered with those turbines which have already been permitted and are operational are sufficiently distant and separated by landscape features that they will not be viewed together so as to have a combined impact on the countryside and sufficiently apart in terms of distance to offer ‘respite’ from their sight when travelling.</p> <p>The harm discussed elsewhere in the report is based upon the unspoilt landscape which is devoid of other manmade structures. It is not considered that cumulative impacts would arise due to the separation distances between them.</p>

<p>The turbine is within 2 miles of a turbine in Pickwell a further turbine at Thorpe Satchville and two smaller ones at Moscow Farm, Pickwell the area is being ‘pepper potted’ with turbines</p> <p>There has been no cumulative assessment with the operational turbines at Sconsborough Farm, Bay Tree Farm, Hall Farm or Park Farm, Thorpe Satchville. This is reason to refuse alone.</p>	
<p>Impact upon Ecology</p> <p>The environmental report is flawed. It was completed in a single day which I am sure was not from dawn until dusk when much of the wildlife activity would take place. There are many birds in the area including Buzzards, Red Kite, Curlews, Lapwing to name but a few – all of which struggling with numbers nationally</p> <p>Whilst the report found no evidence of protected species many have been seen in the area. The report is flawed.</p> <p>It will threaten the wildlife that live and forage in the area</p> <p>The Council has a duty to protect the wildlife from inappropriate development</p> <p>The construction of the track and concrete base will disturb the wildlife and their habitats damaging the eco-system</p> <p>Bird strike will occur – killing many birds and bats.</p> <p>Wind turbines kill millions of birds and bats each year.</p> <p>The Ecology survey did not mention the Buzzards and other birds of Prey that range over this area. The height and size of the turbine proposed will place the swept area of the blades directly in their habitual flight path. Nor did it cover the migratory birds passing throughout different times of the year. A number of species such as Golden Plovers are endangered and ground feed on grassland such as this site</p> <p>The turbine is relatively close to Rutland Water and can only be detrimental to local nature conservation efforts. Noise and moving blades will damage local wildlife.</p>	<p>The site has been assessed both by Leicestershire County Council Ecology and Natural England and meets the requirements of their policies with regards to the separation distances between turbines and hedgerows. No further ornithology surveys have been required and Natural England has also responded (above).</p> <p>The turbine has been sited taking into account the recommendation separation distances from hedgerows (1 x fall over distance)</p> <p>It is considered that matters relating to ecology have been addressed and subject to conditions the proposal is considered to be acceptable.</p>
<p>Equestrian</p> <p>Somerby Riding school employ 17 people across the two sites and have around 100 ponies. Strong links have been established with other tourist business and attract regular visitors from Normanton Hall, Ragdale Hall, Barnsdale Hall, Barnsdale Lodge, Stapleford Hall and Hableton hall to provide their guests with an activity that allows them to</p>	<p>Concerns are duly noted and impact upon the bridleways is discussed above under the Rights of Way section.</p> <p>Understandably, concerns are expressed in regards to the impacts a turbine may have on less-abled bodied riders. It is mentioned that a rider may be slower to react, experience issues with noise from the turbine</p>

<p>experience the unspoilt beauty and tranquillity of the local countryside. These partners have expressed concerns about the proposal and we are nervous and anxious that they may seek to send their guests elsewhere if it goes ahead.</p> <p>Somerby Riding School is heavily dependent upon the ongoing use of the facility by the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA). A sufficient number of participants are autistic – if the RDA disband the group after more than 27 years due to the turbine this would leave 200 disabled riders without anywhere to ride and the business would become unviable.</p> <p>The RDA is a charity organisation reliant of volunteers. It has severe reservations over the proposal. Recently the charity has introduced Endurance Rides which the Bridleways where to be used. The short 2/3 mile ride would be a huge achievement for disabled riders and is under threat - losing a valuable amenity for disabled riders.</p> <p>Disabled riders do not easily adapt to change. This change can be as little as changing horse or the weather on the particular day. These riders will not be able to cope with such a massive change as a 259ft wind turbine and not of the ability to ride the horse confidently pass the turbine.</p> <p>The British Horse Society recommends a separation distance of 4 times the height of the turbine (4 x 79 = 316m) the proposed 220 metres is not sufficient.</p> <p>I reference the BHS survey carried out in 2012 which concluded that nearly 30% of horses reacted adversely on approach to one or more turbines and 22% of riders had difficulty controlling the reaction. This was not related to the temperament of the horse or the competence of the rider. The survey also found that horses were seen to react to blade shadows, blades that start to turn in the horses sight line and noises from the blades to name just some.</p> <p>It will have a detrimental impact upon both riding schools – turbines and horses do not mix. Could result in job loses at both establishments</p> <p>The turbine due to flicker and noise would spook the horses and make riding no longer a safe activity for vulnerable riders</p> <p>The Riding Schools will undoubtedly be affected. The school serves the disabled community and many attend the school. A turbine will affect the safe environment need for these vulnerable riders and may see the numbers decrease resulting in closure.</p> <p>A turbine could deter people from using the riding schools if they feared for their safety as a rider.</p>	<p>and that the rotating blades may cause emotional reactions. These fears and concerns have not been founded on medical evidence in relation to this proposal, which could be different for each individual. The applicants are to provide an alternative bridle route which is in accordance with the British Horse Society’s guidance and the separation distance also complies.</p> <p>The Riding for Disabled Association operates mainly from the equestrian centre on Oakham Road approximately 1.4 kilometres away on a Monday to Friday. From inside the arena views of the turbine would be obscured. From outside of the indoor arena glimpses of the turbine in the distance may be achieved. The mounting steps used by some riders are positioned here and it has been explained that riders, led by volunteers, went on rides through the fields to the south towards Sconsborough Farm. (The turbine would be to the west). There are two small turbines at Sconsborough Farm which haven’t appeared to have any adverse impacts upon the riders or school since their operation.</p> <p>It has been explained that some of the RDA’s members will use the Somerby Equestrian Centre (SEC), which is to the north of the proposed turbine on a Saturday. A visit to SEC confirmed that inside of the arena the turbine would not be visible and the concerns expressed is due from the riders using the bridleways, which are used as a short circuit for some of the disabled riders.</p> <p>As mentioned above there has been no medical evidence submitted to support the fear and concerns that a turbine would have server impacts upon members. It has also not been demonstrated that the operations of either riding centre would be duly affected. The British Horse Society has published guidance in relation to wind development and horses, which confirms that the two can co exist.</p>
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There are no similar establishments which cater specifically for the disabled rider in the Melton area and if it is forced to close the disabled community will lose an amenity.

Disabled riders will be at a disadvantage and may result in a loss of the facility if the turbine goes ahead

The turbine could put the riding schools at risk of closure if riders did not feel safe

The turbine would have a harmful impact upon the equestrian centre, not only affecting its peaceful ambience, but more importantly, its social and recuperative benefits when acting as a Riding for the Disabled facility.

I keep a young horse in the field close by and I am concerned that the turbine will cause stress to the animal.

The safety of the riders should be paramount for the council.

The turbine would only be 650 metres away from the bridleway that my sons ride along both suffer from autism having a high sensitivity to visual and auditory stimuli – if the turbine is erected they would no longer be able to ride which has therapeutic benefits to both.

The area is popular with horse riders who may not be so willing to come to the area should the turbine be erected which will affect the equestrian businesses in Somerby.

Many riders come to this area because of the beautiful undisturbed landscape and tranquillity of the area away from the din associated with urban areas – the turbine would reduce the attractiveness of the bridleways.

Not all horses would get accustomed to the presence of a turbine and some may get spooked throwing their rider.

The two bridleways will be affected and would put riders at risk.

I believe that even a re-routed bridleway would still be too close to the proposed wind turbine to not potentially adversely affect the health and safety of those horse riders using it.

The roads in the area are narrow and winding and the bridleways offer a safe riding experience to riders of all experiences the turbine could put riders at risk if they are no longer able to use the bridleway for fear of their horse taking flight.

The turbine would spook the horses in the neighbouring

<p>fields.</p> <p>The area has been promoted by a Government Initiative called Ride Welland because of its beautiful unspoilt landscape and for its tranquillity and safe off road riding the turbine would be slapped right in the middle of it.</p> <p>An Appeal decisions (APP/R3325/A/11/2162443 – adjacent Race ground nr Wincanton, Somerset) was dismissed on safety impacts on horses travelling at high speeds and concluded it was inappropriate to take such risks. – the bridleways and roads around Somerby are used very day of the year by riders exercising their horses.</p>	<p>The circumstances of the appeal are different to that being considered with this proposal and the reasons for the refusal cannot be transferred to this site.</p>
<p>Efficiency and Economics</p> <p>Purely for financial gains with no respect to the surrounding area and its population</p> <p>Motivated purely for financial gain with no consideration to the environment or the character of the area.</p> <p>Only the applicant gains.</p> <p>Why has no business plan been submitted for this commercial venture.</p> <p>It claims to provide power for 328 homes in Somerby – it will not it is purely an income stream for the farmer</p> <p>The applicant stands to make a considerable amount of money and the offer of a community sum of £2,000 per year is an insult.</p> <p>A single turbine is ineffective in addressing the energy crises and will not satisfy the demand.</p> <p>Single Turbines are not cost effective</p> <p>The renewable benefits are not considered to outweigh the harm to the rural landscape</p> <p>A smaller turbine could generate the electricity needed for the farm</p> <p>The turbines are manufactured in other countries subsidised by our electricity bills and tax payers and are another expensive EU directive. A total waste of money.</p> <p>Not sustainable development they are costly to manufacture, transport, erect and maintain and use more electricity than they produce.</p> <p>The vast length of track and concrete outweighs the benefits of the green energy production so not sustainable development</p>	<p>The NPPF advises at paragraph 97 that local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources.</p> <p>The NPPF encourages Local Planning Authorities to consider renewable energy proposals in a positive light. This proposal would produce additional renewable energy which would help to meet the Governments renewable energy targets which aims to reduce the UK’s carbon dioxide emissions by some 60% by 2050 with real progress by 2020.</p> <p>Regardless of these comments it should be noted that the NPPF clearly states that Local Planning Authority should not require applicants for energy developments to demonstrate the overall need.</p>

<p>It is a short term fix to an ongoing problem which the Government needs to tackle not at the cost of the tax payer and local residents who have their lives disrupted by the presence of a turbine.</p> <p>It will fail to generate any extra employment locally.</p> <p>Concern is expressed regarding the negative impact the proposal will have on local businesses, i.e. the Somerby Equestrian Centre, Riding School for the Disabled, Village Hall, Village Shop and Public House</p> <p>Lack of business due to a decrease in tourism would have a knock on effect to the local economy</p> <p>Should the riding schools close this will result in job losses to local people.</p>	<p>Noted. There is no evidence to suggest that turbines would have a negative impact upon the businesses locally. It is however recognised that the amenity value of the countryside would be diminished.. The consideration for the Committee is to judge how severely this would occur and whether any such harm outweighs the benefits of the proposal in terms of carbon free energy generation.</p>
<p>Access and Highway Safety</p> <p>It is understood that the local roads will need to be altered or having passing bays installed. This level of expenditure or disruption will have no benefit to the community or the council.</p> <p>Concerned amount the large delivery vehicles using the rural roads and the dangers that may bring.</p> <p>There will need to be changes to the road infrastructure which will still be there when the turbine has been erected further eroding the character of the rural area.</p> <p>None of the local roads is capable of accommodating the large vehicles needed to transport the components of the turbine.</p> <p>The volume of heavy vehicles will pose a safety risk to riders, cyclist, walkers and residents</p> <p>Object to moving the ancient right of way – this is used by many people.</p> <p>The application fails to appropriate acknowledge or explore the traffic and infrastructure implications (disruption, nuisance, etc) – more information is required.</p>	<p>Any additional costs associated with improvements to the highways will be borne by the developer not the Council or its community.</p> <p>The Highways Authority have requested a traffic management be submitted should approval be granted.</p> <p>Any modifications to the highway infrastructure are not considerations for this proposal and will require direct consent from the Highways Authorities concerned.</p>
<p>Impact upon Health and Safety</p> <p>Light Flicker/Noise from the blades causing health and safety issues to horse and rider when traversing the bridleways etc is completely unacceptable with a serious negative effect to the existing business.</p>	<p>Shadow flicker occurs when the sun travels behind the blades of the turbines and causes moving shadows to be cast over large areas. This can create a strobe or pulsing effect. Under certain combinations of geographical position and time of day, the sun may pass behind the rotors of a turbine and cast a</p>

<p>It will create safety issues for the walkers, rambles, cyclist and horse riders using the bridleways and public footpath</p> <p>As a foster carer I have concerns over the impact it would have on children suffering with Autism. Some fostered children have had sensitivity to electro-magnetic frequencies from the TV/Radio they can be controlled by turning them off – not possible for a turbine which could have devastating results on a child suffering with autism causing the child to ‘zone out’ or become violent and distracted from normal living. Should the turbine go ahead I may have to rethink my fostering commitments.</p> <p>It is well documented that the noise that the turbine creates can affect this very sensitive group of people especially people with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Recently a survey by Davis and Steigler (2010) of over 17,000 children who have Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) shows that over 40% were “hypersensitive to sounds” and that “noise sensitivity is a particular problem” for children with ASD.</p> <p>There are scientific studies produced on the effectiveness of Wind Turbine Syndrome which can be crippling to some residents in close proximity.</p> <p>Studies showed that residents within 1.5-2 kilometres could suffer from WTS – the primary school is only 1250 metres away and children playing in the play ground could be put at risk.</p> <p>The sounds from the turbine will affect my tinnitus, migraines and dizzy spells (all well documented)</p> <p>The structure is too near to dwellings and the health impacts of this have not been considered fully. Health impacts may be physical or mental and should be considered equally.</p> <p>Other authorities have recognised the impacts upon health and have introduced separation distances from habitable dwellings.</p> <p>It will pose a safety risk to the Somerby play ground. Recently an 18 m high turbine blades detached in 40mph wind and landed 60 yards away from a playground causing the council to re-evaluate turbine positions near play grounds.</p> <p>I have concerns that turbine will affect the safety of my child using the bridleways and will look to move her to</p>	<p>shadow on and off. It only occurs inside buildings where the flicker appears through a narrow window opening.</p> <p>The turbine complies with the recommended separation distance.</p> <p>The writer lives at Burrough on the Hill some distance from the proposed turbine.</p> <p>There is no evidence on which to base a rational health fear sufficient to justify the refusal of planning permission, or to seek greater separation between residential properties and turbines.</p> <p>The turbine would be a considerable distance from the playground of Somerby Primary School. It is not considered that children would be put at risk.</p>
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<p>another riding school if this is approved.</p>	
<p>TV and Radio transmitters/Mobile communications</p> <p>Wind turbines have resulted in a significant loss of TV signals in many areas, for example Northamptonshire to the south.</p> <p>Reception within Somerby is either bad or non-existent, a situation that will not be helped by the installation of such a tall structure. It is believed that this may adversely affect the installation of smart meters, a future requirement of Energy Utility Companies, since they use mobile phone technology.</p>	<p>No objections have been received from the safeguarding bodies.</p> <p>Mitigation can be requested should an issue arise.</p>
<p>Aviation:</p> <p>The turbine will create a danger to low flying aircraft</p> <p>Failed to identify and assess the impact upon radar at RAF Wittering – military aircraft are often seen flying low in this immediate area.</p>	<p>There have been no objections based upon aviation safety concerns. (please see above comments from the MOD, NATS, Civil Aviation and East Midlands Airport)</p>
<p>Contrary to local plan policies, NPPF and Government Guidance.</p> <p>Its too large to produce energy for the farm and is merely a money making operation which is contrary to the local plan OS2 and BE1 which seeks to ensure development in the countryside is essential to the operational requirements of agriculture/forestry which would not be detriment to the rural character of the area. – It clearly is detrimental to the countryside</p> <p>The NPPF gives protection to areas of natural beauty and open countryside. This application would transgress these rules by allowing an extremely large industrial structure to be inserted into what is an historic part of rural Leicestershire.</p> <p>The NPPF gives strong protections for the natural and historic environment – a turbine in this location is totally inappropriate the landscape has remained unaltered for centuries and will be seen from the Iron Age Fort.</p> <p>The proposal conflicts with NPPF which states that:- <i>'planning authorities should follow the approach set out in the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (read with the relevant sections of the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy Infrastructure, including that on aviation impacts). Where plans identify areas as suitable for renewable and low-carbon energy development, they should make clear what criteria have determined their selection, including for what</i></p>	<p>The money generated from the energy production would be re-invested into the dairy farm, which in turn supports the long term viability and sustainability of the business. It is considered that the installation of this form of renewable technology does not comply with the local plan policies OS2 or BE1.</p> <p>The NPPF advises that renewable energy proposal should be approved unless “any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits” where harmful impacts can be mitigated against. Therefore an assessment is required as to what the harm would be. In the case of this proposal the assessment has found that the benefits of the proposal have not outweighed its harmful impacts upon the landscape and amenity of the countryside.</p> <p>There are no local policies for renewable developments and preparation is currently underway for formulating a new Local Plan. Members of the public have been encouraged and have been actively involved in the process. Wind turbine developments and site selection will form part of that process. Supplementary Planning Guidance for Wind Development is currently being prepared with</p>

<p><i>size of development the areas are considered suitable.' -</i> The application site has not been identified as such a site.</p> <p>The Minister for State for Communities and Local Government has made it clear in his statement to Parliament that the concerns of local people regarding adverse impact on the environment, traditional landscape patterns, heritage and local amenity must be given proper weight against the relatively small benefits which will be derived from this single turbine. – it is clear from the level of objection that this development is not wanted by the community.</p> <p>MP Alan Duncan has been in contact with the office of Mr. Pickles and their guidance is <i>'that it wouldn't be necessary to wait for the new 'added weight to localism' policy to actually be engrained in the NPPF. The fact that the Secretary of State has indicated that it is emerging policy means that it can be used as a material consideration now. Its just a question of how much importance an individual planning officer is inclined to give it;'</i> – in this case the views of the local people should be adequately taken into account.</p> <p>Contravenes point 10.7 and 10.8 of the Local Development Framework which acknowledges the importance of the High Leicestershire Hills in safeguarding from inappropriate development.</p>	<p>neighbouring Councils.</p> <p>It is considered that members of the public have been properly represented and their views fully taken into account in considering the proposal. The level of opposition does not render an application unacceptable, nor would it do the opposite if it attracted a high level of support. Planning law requires that a proposal is considered against the relevant planning policies, a proposal will either succeed or fail on such grounds.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>The Core Strategy has been withdrawn and no longer forms part of the Development Plan.</p>
<p>Other Matters</p> <p>There is no report demonstrating the need for the proposal.</p> <p>This application offers no benefit to local residents, could result in loss of employment opportunities, health issues and have a negative impact on property prices, the later of which is currently being discussed in Parliament – the Report of which is awaiting publication.</p> <p>Under the Equality Act, the disabled are entitled to equal access to the countryside and I believe that this application will deny my nephew and every other disabled rider that right of access and should therefore be rejected</p> <p>Concerned that the applicant will use his position as a Borough Councillor and former Chairman of the Development Committee to seek to influence his fellow councillors either directly or indirectly. I would hope that appropriate measures have been taken to avoid a situation where the applicants' personal circumstances are allowed to form part of any presentation to the Development Committee.</p>	<p>Applicants are not required to demonstrate the need for a development of this nature.</p> <p>Noted. The planning process cannot be used to protect the interest of private individuals as it is concerned with controlling development in the public interest. Residential amenity can and should be taken into consideration. (see above)</p> <p>It is acceptable for a Councillor (or staff member) to apply for planning permission as a resident of the Borough (they do not forfeit the right to propose development by becoming elected as a Councillor) . In the case of a proposal submitted by a Council employee the application is required to have Committee determination to ensure a transparent and inclusive means of determination.. The procedures for addressing the Planning Committee are no different for a Council employee/representative than that of any other Borough resident. The proposal</p>

<p>Attention is drawn to the recent United Nations legal tribunal ruling in which a breach of Article 7 of The Aarhus Convention was recognised. This requires full and effective public participation on all environment issues and demands that citizens are given the right to participate in the process. It is my belief that this application flouts Article 7 and any recommendation to approve or subsequent permission from MBC would be open to challenge in accordance with this ruling.</p> <p>There has been no public consultation in respect of this proposal. I would have thought that given the very significant visual and functional impact of a turbine of this size, the developer would have consulted widely on their proposal</p> <p>There is so many objections to this proposal that we ask you to listen to our small community.</p>	<p>will be considered on the facts present and not on the identity of the applicant, in accordance with the legislation.</p> <p>There is no requirement for a developer to undertake a public consultation prior to submitting a proposal for a single turbine. The planning application is the correct procedure for consulting members of the public for a proposal of this size, which is not EIA development.</p> <p>A great number of objections have been received and when amendments have been submitted those that have commented have received notification giving them further opportunity to make representation.</p>
<p>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)</p> <p>The Councils view was that an EIA is not required for a single turbine however given its size and the impact on extremely sensitive, unspoilt and tranquil environment a proper EIA seems the least that residents can expect.</p>	<p>There is no requirement for a development of this type to be supported with an Environment Statement however it is considered that sufficient information has been provided to be able to suitably assess environment concerns.</p>
<p>Response to Amended Plans:</p> <p>The reduced height does not address previous objections to a turbine in this location.</p> <p>The amended proposal sees a reduction in the mast but increase in blades only giving a 9 metre clearance from the ground – this poses safety risks.</p> <p>The blades will be closer to the ground and still just as visual in the landscape</p> <p>The rotor diameter will increase for 48 metres to 52, thereby enhancing the width of the moving element accentuating the visual intrusion within the landscape</p> <p>It will still be as visual and dominate this unspoilt landscape free from man made structures.</p> <p>The blades will be lower, sweeping closer to the ground and this is of greater concern to the equestrian community and footpath users</p> <p>The blades will be in more of a risk to horse who will be started and take flight from the moving structure</p> <p>It is claimed that the turbine will be absorbed in the open</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

wide landscape when the photomontages shows that it is clearly a dominating structure

It is claimed that the financial benefit of the farm is a benefit – at the cost to other businesses in the area such as the equestrian centres who would no doubt suffer if this goes ahead

It is claimed that the reduction in height means that the footpath no longer needs resited but the fall over distance is still a safety concern to the users

It is wrong to assume that the existing trees and foliage will screen the turbine – there are no trees of 60 metres here within the area.

It will still be taller than the church spires of Somerby, Owston and Tilton

It will still reduce the desirability of this area as a tourist destination

It will still cause the death of many birds and wildlife

It is still in the wrong place – too close to the villages and would ruin a wonderful part of Leicestershire.

Only generic sound power for the EWT DW52 wind turbine has been provided and no actual noise data specific to this location – it should be refused on insufficient noise information

Shadow flicker will still be an issue

The air ambulance is not an infrequent visitor to Somerby, I recall it landing at least three times within the last year, each time to attend equestrian casualties – the turbine will be a danger to the air ambulance and also poses a risk to an increase in accidents

The limited benefits still do not outweigh the harm to the environment, heritage, enjoyment of the countryside or residential amenity and should be refused.

The area should be conserved for those to enjoy not those that profit.

No photo montages have been provided.

The community does not want it and should be respected

The fact that the application has had to be amended for a third time demonstrates the speculative nature of the application and how ill-conceived it is

Conclusion

The application proposes the erection of a medium scale turbine at a height of 35 metres to hub with tip height of 61 metres, to the south of Somerby. The proposal is considered to be supported in terms of principle by national policy in the NPPF as contributing to the wider aims of encouraging renewable energy and de-carbonising the economy through the production of 1,373 Mw Hours per annum.

However it is considered that harmful impacts will arise from such an installation which cannot be made acceptable. In terms of the landscape, guidance in the NPPF puts the emphasis on protecting international and nationally designated sites such as National Parks but this does not mean that all other locations should accommodate such development. Consideration has been given to the supporting information and it is not considered that this location is capable of accommodating a proposal of this nature.

Concerns raised regarding the impact on residential amenity from noise are considered to be demonstrable, but of limited severity. A series of other concerns (e.g. impacts on wildlife, tourism, aviation, flicker etc) are not substantiated.

It is considered that whilst there is the need for a balance between the interests of renewable forms of energy and landscape issues, in this instance the impact would be significant on the landscape, and the harm arising would be readily visible from numerous public vantage points.

The proposal is considered to be contrary to the local plan policy OS2 and the NPPF and the benefits derived from the energy production do not outweigh other policy considerations. Accordingly the proposal is recommended for refusal due to the harmful effect upon the landscape and the countryside designation.

RECOMMENDATION:- Refusal

1. The proposed wind turbine would, by virtue of their height and movement, introduce a new element into this landscape that would be widely visible. This visibility and presence would exceed that of any existing local features by reason of the height, colour and movement of the proposed turbine. The development would constitute a prominent feature in the open countryside which would fail to protect or enhance its distinctive local character and is not capable of mitigation or adequate compensation. Accordingly the development is contrary to the provisions of Policy OS2 of the adopted Melton Local Plan and the guidance offered in the NPPF. These impacts are not considered to be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal in terms of the generation of renewable energy.
2. The proposal due to its size and close relationship to the 'Leicestershire Round' a flagship for the local rights of way network is considered to diminish the recreational amenity of the facility and countryside pursuit which is a popular destination with tourists, ramblers and the equestrian fraternity. The proposal is contrary to the objectives of sustainable development objectives of the NPPF.
3. Insufficient information has been provided to adequately address how the Ridge and Furrow would be preserved through construction of the access track. The proposal is considered to be contrary to the NPPF in relation to safeguarding heritage.

Officer to contact: Mrs Denise Knipe

Date: 20th January 2014