

APPENDIX E

From: Somerby Parish
Sent: 08 April 2013 12:05
To: Jim Worley
Subject: Cllr M. Barnes

Dear Mr Worley

Further to your letter dated 14th March in response to our letter re Councillor Mark Barnes and, in our opinion, his conflict of interest when addressing the Development Committee Meeting re the Pickwell turbine, I have consulted with other members of the PC and can now respond.

We are concerned that you have not really addressed the substance of our complaint and would seem to be avoiding the fundamental point. We maintain that, as Councillor Barnes was in the process of submitting an application for a wind turbine, he should have at least declared this prior to addressing the committee and preferably not have addressed the meeting at all.

Dealing with the points in your letter: -

12/00723/FUL – this may only be a “screening opinion” but it clearly demonstrates that Cllr. Barnes was intending to submit an application.

It is a very arguable point that Cllr Barnes’ application would be assisted if the Pickwell Turbine was approved by virtue of precedent. As the Pickwell Turbine and his would be separated by ca. 4 km the cumulative impact consideration is, in our view, of no relevance.

However neither of these points, however you argue them, are relevant to our complaint. Simply by virtue of the fact that Councillor Barnes was in the process of submitting an application (12/00723/FUL clearly shows this) means that the outcome of the Pickwell Turbine application would be of relevance to his application. He was intending to submit an identical application (in principle if not in size) in the very near future. If this does not show that he had a real interest in the outcome and hence a conflict of interest that we fail to understand what would. Certainly we as Parish Councillors would have declared an interest in such circumstances.

Once you accept that he had an interest in the outcome of the application then he clearly broke the Code of Conduct and should be dealt with accordingly.

We are, in parallel to this, consulting with our Association of Parish Councils and their legal advisors but would hope that MBC could take the points we raise fully on board.

Regards

Peter O'Connor

Clerk to Somerby Parish Council

email somerbyparish@btconnect.com

www.somerbyparish.org.uk