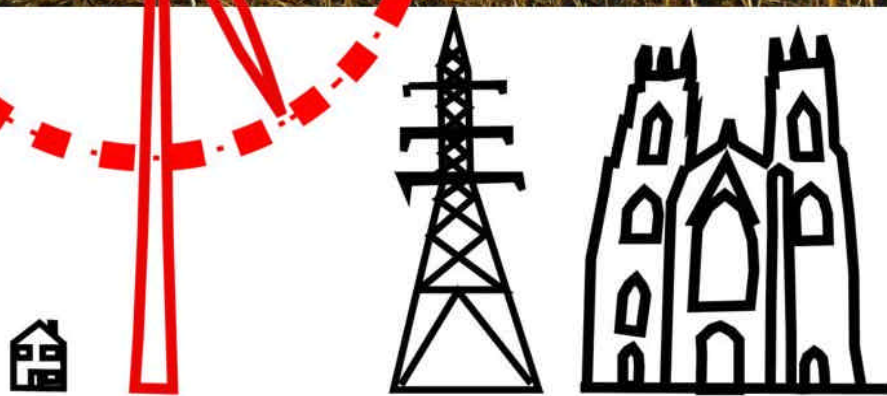




View of Gateforth wood over the proposed site.



Stop Wood Lane Wind Farm

OBJECTION DOCUMENT

Stopwoodlane Action Group (SWL)

Planning Application No. 2009/0393/FUL

**Application for Woodlane wind farm -
Erection of 14 No 125 metre high wind turbines,
crane hard-standings, meteorological mast,
temporary construction compound, tracks,
cabling and associated infrastructure.**





stopwoodlanewindfarm
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Rachael Bartlett
Planning Section
Selby District Council
Civic Centre
Portholme Road
Selby
YO8 4SB

20 August 2009

Dear Rachael

Re: Planning Application No. 2009/0393/FUL

Third Party Objection to the Planning Application for Woodlane wind farm comprising 14 No 125 metre high wind turbines, crane hard-standings, meteorological mast, temporary construction compound, tracks, cabling and associated infrastructure.

Stop Woodlane action group (SWL) was formed to oppose the plans for 14 wind turbines near to the villages of Gateforth, West Haddlesey, Birkin and Hillam.

The proposed turbines are an industrial development stretching for nearly 3km over open farmland and visible from up to 45 miles away. Other renewable energy projects in the Selby area are capable of producing far more energy and of bringing greater benefit to the area. The Woodlane proposal carries a high environmental and social cost for people living nearby. The impact of the wind turbines is huge and should be considered in the context of Local Plans such as Selby Renaissance Charter and the Selby Local Plan.

Public opinion must also be considered. Selby people understand power generation and see some projects as beneficial because they produce quantities of electricity which are meaningful in a National context. They are aware that Selby will exceed targets for renewable because of projects such as biomass and methane based energy production. People see the wind turbines as unsuitable in this area because of poor wind resource and their unacceptable visual impact.

This application would take the uncertain damage to the environment caused by climate change and replace it with the certain destruction of the rural environment close to Selby.

Our objection document is attached and we ask that you give it full consideration. We would be pleased to answer any questions you may have. Equally, in view of the timeframe in which we have been required to respond to this complex planning application, we reserve the right to add to or amend our objection should we become aware of any other matters of concern.

Yours sincerely

Howard Ferguson

PREFACE

This document has been produced by the Stop Woodlane Wind Farm Action Group representing residents of Birkin, Beal, Burton Salmon, Byram, Chapel Haddelsey, Gateforth, Hambleton, Hillam, Kellington, Monk Fryston, Poole and West Haddelsey.

For further information please contact:

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STOP WOODLANE WIND FARM ACTION GROUP OBJECTION DOCUMENT

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STOP WOODLANE WIND FARM ACTION GROUP OBJECTION DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This objection is submitted on behalf of people who live close to the proposed Woodlane Wind Farm by Stop Woodlane Wind Farm Action Group (SWL). SWL was formed to oppose the Woodlane wind farm proposal for 14 turbines near to Gateforth, West Haddlesey, Birkin and Hillam. SWL has over 250 members who live in these villages and who come from a variety of occupations and professions.

Public Opinion and Public Involvement in Local Decision Making

Over 1000 people have attended SWL public meetings in the villages affected by this proposal and by the proposal for Bishopwood wind farm. At these meetings there was near unanimous condemnation of the proposal. Our website has had an average of over 500 unique visitors per month. A Public opinion surveys carried out by Selby Times showed 86% of people were opposed to the proposal. About 1000 people have registered a personal objection to the application. Public opinion should be considered when deciding upon the application.

The Impact of the Proposal on Selby District

The size and scale of the proposed turbines is difficult to comprehend. The opening of Selby coalfield was minor in comparison to the impact that this and the other proposed wind farm developments will have on the area. However the wind farms bring few if any jobs for local people. The recently published Selby Renaissance Charter sets out the vision of a vibrant future for Selby District with new industry and new skills. The core strategy is to make the area an attractive and desirable place to live. The three towns are to be revitalised and we should take pride in the development of the local environment with its resources of water and landscape. There is the vision of creating a "Golden Triangle" between Leeds, York and Selby. Any wind farm with 125 metre high turbines is incompatible with this vision.

Summary of the Proposal

It is proposed to erect 14 wind turbines each over 400 feet high stretching in two lines for nearly 3km, across attractive open countryside between Birkin, West Haddlesey, Gateforth and Hillam Common Lane. An estimated 6.477 km of new roadways would be needed across the fields; over 28,000 cu metres of soil will be removed and disposed of, to be replaced by 28,000 cu metres of crushed rock which will be brought in. An estimated 10,000 tonnes of concrete would be used to provide foundations and this would either be made on site in a batch plant or brought in as ready mixed. The agricultural land that would be lost from production by the project totals 5.75 hectares (14 acres approx).

SWL Objections

Inappropriate Site

Woodlane wind farm site is enclosed on 4 sides by dwellings located as close as 700 metres and typically under 1km from the nearest turbine. Two homes would have 13 turbines within 2km – the distance within which the French Medical Academy recommends there should be no turbines, and the distance at which a single turbine is described as a prominent feature in Scotland's Planning Guide PAN45. The villages around the site all have homes with large numbers of turbines within a 2km distance, on average there are over 7 turbines within 2km of homes in Birkin.

The application should be rejected on grounds of unacceptable proximity to homes.

STOP WOODLANE WIND FARM ACTION GROUP OBJECTION DOCUMENT

Visual Dominance

The Applicant admits that the scheme would:

- ? create a wind farm landscape within 800m
- ? there would be potential for significant effects on parts of the Selby Plain, West Selby Ridge and Hambleton Sandstone Ridge (containing two areas of Locally Important Landscape Areas)
- ? cause significant visual effects on residents up to 6km, including 16 villages

If Woodlane and other wind farms were to be constructed, the cumulative impact would be to create a wind turbine landscape and that the wind farms would coalesce.

Thus the application does not comply with planning policy and should be rejected due to its visual impact.

Impact on Historic Buildings and Their Setting

The site is adjacent to green belt and in close proximity to Listed Buildings and other important historic sites. Gateforth Hall and its historic estate is adjacent to the site and its setting would be materially damaged by the presence of turbines. Birkin Church would be similarly affected. Landscape features such as Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff would also be compromised by the turbines which would be three or more times their height. The Applicant has not considered some important historic sites and has misinterpreted the assessment standards for those which have been considered. **The application does not meet planning policy requirements and should be rejected due to adverse impact on local heritage.**

Noise nuisance

The proximity to homes, the number of turbines and the density of turbines leads to a predicted maximum noise at all four village communities close to statutory limits. Review of the background noise measurement shows that measurement procedures were unsatisfactory and the Applicant has taken an incorrect high baseline to determine limits. **The application does not meet the required standards under planning policy and should be rejected because of the probability of noise nuisance.**

Health Risks

There are reports of people living close to wind turbines suffering a variety of health problems. Where studies have been done the reported symptoms are all very similar. Many professional bodies recommend a minimum offset of 1.5km or 2km. **The proximity of turbines to homes means that the application should be rejected.**

Green belt benefit sacrificed

The turbines will be adjacent to the green belt, visible from it and obstruct the view to it. **The application should be rejected because it contravenes Green Belt regulations.**

Rural Amenity Lost

The area is enjoyed by local residents and also by many visitors to the area. They come for a wide variety of reasons but a common theme is that they enjoy activities that relate to the open countryside, its views and its wildlife. It will impact horse riding, cycling, walking, angling at Birkin and on the River Aire, falconry, shooting, observing wild life and garden visiting. **The application should be rejected because it will cause loss of amenity.**

STOP WOODLANE WIND FARM ACTION GROUP OBJECTION DOCUMENT

Damage to Sensitive and Diverse Local Ecology

The Applicant describes the area as industrial and having poor ecology. The Applicants ES then found 42 species within 500 metres of the proposed turbines. While impressive the Applicant omitted or failed to find a number of Schedule 1 protected birds that live in the area. Much of the wildlife depends on the linear routes across the site provided by water ways and hedges. Migratory birds cross the site every year and over winter on the site. **The application should be rejected because of damage to the ecology of the area.**

Flood Risk

Most of the site is in a Zone 3 Flood risk area shared with two villages (Birkin and West Haddlesey). It is not satisfactory to increase the flood risk by any amount, however slight and to suggest mitigation by raising the turbines and setting up emergency exit routes for construction staff. The site should be rejected by the Sequence Test; there are other sites outside the Flood risk area, especially if the choice is not limited to the Selby Area. **The application should be rejected because the site is a Zone 3 flood risk area.**

Shadow from turbines

This is predicted in all four village communities because the turbines are too close.

Safety risks of turbines

Accidents with turbines are well documented. Worldwide there have been 47 accidents including 14 blade failures in the first 6 months of 2009. Fragments weighing up to a few tons can be thrown as far as 400 metres. Topple distance is often used as the minimum safety zone. Turbines 2, 6 and 7 all have public right of way footpaths closer than this.

Noise and disruption caused by traffic on small rural roads

The roads around the area are used for recreational purposes both during the week and at weekends. Many of these activities do not co-exist with heavy traffic. There will be at least 5570 HGV journeys on minor roads causing disruption and noise plus at least 112 exceptional loads which will cause delays and inconvenience.

Concern about viability

The application does nothing for the prosperity of the District in terms of economic growth and job creation. Indeed it may cause substantial loss to individuals and to the District as a whole. Any change in the financial regime for which the wind farms rely for their profits may lead to those in the areas with poor wind resource, such as Selby District, being most at risk of financial failure.

Summary

In summary we object to the proposal because it will turn an area that the Applicant describes as a *“pattern of historical villages and country mansions with parkland”* into “villages which are coalesced into an industrial landscape characterised by wind turbines”.

Accordingly the application should be rejected.