

Planning Reference No:	10/2091N
Application Address:	Blakelow Business Park, Newcastle Road, Blakelow, CW5 7ET
Proposal:	Proposal for One Small 11Kw Gaia Wind Turbine where The Wind Turbine is Located at 27m AGL Mounted on a Free Standing Tower on a Concrete Base. The Proposed Dual-Blade Rotor has a Diameter of 13m
Applicant:	G V & E Pickering
Application Type:	Full Planning
Grid Reference:	369223 351418
Ward:	Rope
Earliest Determination Date:	3 rd August 2010
Expiry Dated:	16 th August 2010
Date of Officer's Site Visit:	16 th July 2010
Date Report Prepared:	11 th August 2010
Constraints:	Green Gap & Open Countryside

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Approve with conditions

MAIN ISSUES

Principle of Development

Visual impact of the development and the impact upon the character and appearance of the area

The impact upon residential amenity

Highway Safety

The impact upon protected species

Public Right of Way

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application was to be dealt with under the Council's delegation scheme. However Cllr Simon and Cllr Silvester have requested it is referred to Committee for the following reason;

'We wish to call in this application, 10/2091N Blakelow Business Park, Newcastle Road, Blakelow, CW5 7ET, so that it can be decided by the full committee. We wish to call it in on the planning grounds of unacceptable visual intrusion into a residential area, over dominance over adjacent residential properties, the detrimental impact on the visual landscape, noise pollution and shadow flicker which occurs when the sun passes behind the hub of a wind turbine and casts a shadow over neighbouring properties. When the blades rotate, shadows pass over the same point causing an effect called 'shadow flicker' Windows facing a turbine need to be fitted with blinds or shutters'

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is located to the rear of 271 Newcastle Road, Shavington within the Crewe-Shavington Green Gap and the Open Countryside. No 271 Newcastle Road is a large double fronted property with a red brick finish and a red tiled pitched roof. To the rear of the property are a number of modern buildings which are in employment use and a 15 metres high telecommunications mast. The application site itself is an undeveloped part of the site that would be positioned alongside an existing industrial style building.

Newcastle Road is characterised by ribbon development which includes mainly large detached dwellings fronting onto the highway. Nos. 269 and 271 have a number of employment uses to the rear contained within modern utilitarian style buildings.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The proposal relates to the construction of 1 wind turbine which would have a hub height of 27 metres and a dual blade with a diameter of 13 metres. This would give the structure a maximum height of approximately of 33.5 metres.

4. RELEVANT HISTORY

ENQ/10/4362 – Screening Opinion for 1 wind turbine – EIA not required

P05/0438 - 15m Telecommunications Pole with Ancillary Equipment – Refused 31st May 2005 – Appeal Lodged – Appeal Allowed 17th March 2006

P05/0175 - Workshop for Shot Blasting Heavy Goods Vehicles – Refused 7th September 2005 – Appeal Lodged – Appeal Allowed 6th March 2006

P04/1169 - Change of Use from Hay Barn to Maintenance Depot for Racing Cars – Refused 16th November 2004 – Appeal Lodged – Appeal Allowed 4th July 2005

P02/0618 - Change of use from Hay barn to Retailing – Refused 15th October 2002

P00/0870 - Change of Use from Parking Used in Connection with Stables to Car Park Used in Connection with the Adjoining Commercial Premises – Approved 29th June 2004

P00/0869 - Erection of Hay Barn (Retrospective) – Approved 29th June 2004

P00/0471 - Telecommunications Mast – Refused 3rd July 2000

P00/0343 - Telecommunications Mast (GPDO Determination) – Refused 25th May 2000

P99/0197 - Use of land for keeping of horses, erection of stables, tack room and implements building – Approved 24th June 1999

P98/0222 - Replacement portal frame building – Approved 5th May 1998

P92/0166 - Maintenance building for servicing of commercial vehicles – Approved 16th April 1992

7/18640 – Change of Use of land to form additional parking and turning area for commercial vehicles – Approved 24th October 1990

7/08649 - Extension of area to rear of workshop of parking and storing vehicles – Refused 25th February 1992

5. POLICIES

Local Plan policy

NE.2 – Open Countryside
NE.4 – Green Gaps
NE.9 – Protected Species
NE.19 – Renewable Energy
BE.1 – Amenity
BE.2 – Design Standards
BE.3 – Access and Parking

National Planning Policy

PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
Planning and Climate Change: Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1
PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
PPS 22: Planning for Renewable Energy
Planning for Renewable Energy: A Companion Guide to PPS 22
PPG24: Planning and Noise

Other Legislation

EC Habitats Directive
Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994
ODPM Circular 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations within the Planning System

6. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Ministry of Defence: No objection. If planning permission is granted you must tell us the dates of construction, height of equipment and latitude and longitude of each turbine

Environmental Health: The Environmental Health Department is satisfied with the contents of the Noise Assessment especially when compared to the World Health Organisation guidelines. However the wind turbine is required to be inspected and maintained on a regular basis in order to ensure that no other potential sources of noise occur and if any faults are identified that they are rectified immediately.

Manchester Airport: No objection

Civil Aviation Authority: In this case, having reviewed the location in question, I do believe that the CAA would wish to record any site-specific observations. This does not negate the need for the Council to establish the related viewpoints of both NATS and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and as such get a more comprehensive view of aviation issues. Additionally, if more generically, it is worth bearing in mind that:

- There might be a need to install aviation obstruction lighting to some or all of the associated wind turbines should this wind farm development be progressed. This need would depend upon input suggesting such a requirement for other aviation stakeholders. In isolation, the CAA would not make any case for lighting and unless

there is, for example, a local helicopter landing site (perhaps at a hospital), I would not anticipate any related lighting request.

- Due to the unique nature of associated operations in respect of operating altitudes and potentially unusual landing sites, it would also be sensible to establish the related viewpoint of local emergency services air support units.

Natural England: Natural England is unable to provide advice on the mitigation of protected species in this case. However it is recommended that the Local Authority consider the requirements of protected species in the determination of this application. Natural England supports micro-generation and community level generation and welcomes measures to encourage their uptake. Generally small scale generation will have fewer impacts on the natural environment than larger scale generation. However Natural England's general advice in relation to wind turbines is to maintain a 50m buffer around any feature (trees, hedges) into which no part of the turbine intrudes. This means that where possible, the edge of the rotor-swept area needs to be 50m from the nearest part of the habitat feature. Therefore 50m should ideally be the minimum stand-off distance from blade tip to the nearest feature. In this light Natural England recommends that further consideration of the location of the turbine and the potential impact on this European Protected Species is given. Natural England would also suggest consultation with the Council's own Nature Conservation Officer.

Ecology: Bats have been recorded foraging/commuting along the hedgerows/trees adjacent to the proposed development. The level of bat activity is as would be anticipated for this type of environment. The impact of small scale single wind-turbines on protected species (bats) is currently unknown and subject to current research. The submitted bat survey concludes that the turbine is not located on a main foraging route. Considering the small scale of the proposed development, its distance from the hedgerow where the majority of bat activity was recorded and the species of bats recorded, I advise that it is reasonably unlikely that the development will have a substantial impact upon the favourable conservation status of the bat species recorded on site. To further reduce this risk posed to wildlife it is advised that the turbine must be sited as far away from the hedgerow/trees as possible. To inform the determination of future planning applications of this type it is recommended that the following condition is attached to any permission granted: *Any wildlife casualties resulting from the operation of the approved domestic wind turbine are to be reported to the Local Planning Authority*.

7. VIEWS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council strongly objects to the above application on the following grounds.

- Unacceptable visual intrusion into a residential area.
- Over-dominance over adjacent residential properties.
- Detrimental impact on the visual landscape.
- Noise pollution.
- Detrimental impact to neighbouring properties from shadow flicker effect of rota blades.

8. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of objection have been received from the occupants of 262, 269, 271A, 272, 273, 277, 277A, 277B, 279, 293, 299 Newcastle Road, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 13, 15, 19, 24, 27, 33 Main Road, Puseydale Farm, The Ridings, Puseydale Farm, Main Road, 81 & 95 Greenfields Avenue, 28 Burlea Drive, 27 Stock Lane, 6 Wessex Close, 2 Page Grove, 5 Huntersfields, Heath Shield Friendly Society Ltd Electra Way, Crewe and 7 unknown address raising the following points;

- The impact upon the landscape
- Existing noise caused from the site
- Existing traffic problems at the site
- The occupants should move to an industrial estate
- Radiation from the turbine
- Impact upon house prices
- Visual impact
- Noise
- The address of the site should not be Blakelow Business Park
- The site is a residential area and this type of development should be sited away from residential properties
- The development would scare livestock and horses in the surrounding fields
- Impact upon bats
- Greater consultation required
- The turbine would dominate the surrounding area
- There will be no benefit to the local community
- Shadow flicker
- Proximity to residential properties
- The low amount of energy produced does not outweigh the high impact upon the area
- The development will overshadow the area
- Impact upon Green Belt
- The weather conditions in the area dictate that the turbine will not be efficient
- Impact upon birds
- This is a rural area not an industrial estate
- The turbine will be inefficient
- Solar panels would be more appropriate
- Insulating the existing buildings would be more appropriate
- Impact upon the Open Countryside and Green Gap
- Contrary to Local Plan Policies
- The impact upon wildlife
- The turbine will be seen from miles around
- No economic benefit
- Impact upon views from residential properties
- The development will not be screened which is claimed in the supporting statement
- Interference with phone and TV signals
- The impact upon local residents health
- Over dominance of the turbine
- Impact upon Barn Owls
- A large turbine has been selected on the basis of economies of return
- Icing of the turbine blade in winter

- The figures quoted in the supporting statement in relation to CO2 have not been explained
- Inaccurate information provided as part of the application
- Highway Safety
- The effect upon Public Rights of Way
- The effect on horse riders

Letters of support have been received from the occupants of Unit 1 271 Newcastle Road and 1 unknown address raising the following points;

- There will be negligible impact compared to the economic benefits
- The proposal will enhance the green credentials of the business

9. APPLICANTS' SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Design and Access Statement (Produced by Patrick Farfan Associates)

- The proposal is for one small wind turbine which will be used to reduce CO2 emissions by over 12 tonnes per year and enable the applicants to reduce their energy bills and to increase their self sufficiency in terms of electricity production.
- The location of the turbine has been chosen to ensure that it has the least visual impact possible on the surrounding area.
- The turbine is minimal in size when viewed in context with the surrounding area and the turbine has the benefit of having a backdrop of the surrounding trees, buildings and telecommunication pole when viewed from multiple viewpoints.
- It is therefore felt that this is an appropriate location for the turbine and that any small impacts that this may have would be greatly outweighed by the economic and environmental benefits.

Gaia Wind Turbine Noise Performance Test (Produced by Hayes McKenzie Partnership)

This concludes that;

- A noise test has been carried out, according to BWEA Small Wind Turbine Performance and Safety Standard on a Gaia-Wind Turbine installed at White Lodge Farm, Melton Mowbray to measure the sound power level and tonal characteristics
- The turbine was calculated to have an apparent sound power level of 85.8 dB (A) + 1.4 dB at a wind speed of 8 m/s at rotor centre height, as measured at the reference position directly down wind of the turbine. The declared apparent emission sound power level for 8 m/s at rotor centre height was calculated to be 88.1 dB (A).
- The tonal output from the Gaia-wind turbine has been assessed using methodology prescribed by the Small Wind Turbine Performance and Safety Standard. Based on the methodology prescribed in the ISO 1996-2 Acoustics (Description, measurement and assessment of environmental noise Part 2: Determination of Environmental Noise Levels) Annex D no tonal characteristics were found.

Ecological Report (Produced by Darwin Ecology and dated 6th May 2010)

- The position of the proposed wind turbine is on the edge of the area of fields used by foraging bats. Although it cannot be ruled out that bats will occasionally fly through the area of the proposed turbine it appears from the results of this survey that the turbine is not directly situated on a main foraging route.
- Any possible bat strikes that could occur in the future would be incidental as there are no particular features that would attract bats to that exact location of the turbine.

The location of the large floodlit workshops directly behind the proposed turbine may help to steer bats away from this area. It is understood that alternative locations have been considered but are not possible due to the proximity of residential dwellings.

- The turbine will have a small footprint and there are no predicted impacts upon the surrounding habitat and the suitability of the adjacent hedgerows and fields for foraging bats.

- On the basis of this assessment there is no reason to believe that situating the turbine in this location will result in higher incidence of bat disturbance or mortality than if it was in any other location. As there will be no loss of habitat the risk of significant negative impact to the local bat population is low.

10. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

Policy NE.19 of the Crewe and Nantwich Borough Local Plan states that proposals for the generation of power from renewable energy sources will be permitted where:

- The development would cause no significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area;

- Highway safety standards would not be adversely affected;

- The development would have no unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers by reason of noise, disturbance, pollution, visual intrusion or traffic generation; and

- The proposal includes effective measures to safeguard features or areas of particular landscape or nature conservation interest.

The site is located within the Green Gap and Open Countryside. Within the Green Gap Policy NE.4 only restricts the construction of new buildings or the change of use of existing buildings or land that would result in the erosion in the physical gaps between the built up areas or adversely affect the character of the landscape.

In terms of Central Government Policy, the Government's objectives state that 'increased development of renewable energy resources is vital to facilitating the delivery of the Government's commitments on both climate change and renewable energy' and key principle (vi) of PPS22 states that '*Small scale projects can provide a limited but valuable contribution to overall outputs of renewable energy and to meeting energy needs both locally and nationally*'.

In relation to local designations such as Green Gap, PPS22 advises that '*Local landscape and local nature conservation designation should not be used in themselves to refuse planning permission for renewable energy developments*'. As a result it is considered that the principle of a wind turbine on this site is acceptable and that the renewable energy outputs it would bring would outweigh any harm caused to the Green Gap.

The main issues in the consideration of this proposal therefore, are the visual impact of the proposal, highway safety, residential amenity and nature conservation as referred to within Policy NE.19.

A Screening Opinion for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been submitted as the development falls within the definition of Schedule 2 development. It was determined that an EIA would not be required for this development.

The applicants' agent has predicted that the site will have an annual average wind speed at 10m of 4.5m/s which will result in an output of 23.93MWh of electricity per annum which will represent an annual CO2 saving of over 13 tonnes.

Design and Visual Impact

PPS22 states that of all renewable technologies, wind turbines are likely to have the greatest visual and landscape effects. The PPS, however, goes on to advise that in assessing planning applications, local authorities should recognise that the impact of turbines on the landscape will vary according to the size and number of turbines and the type of landscape involved, and that these impacts may be temporary if conditions are attached to planning permissions which require the future decommissioning of turbines.

The proposed wind turbine would have a hub height of 27 metres with a blade height of 33.5 metres. There are no ancillary structures/buildings to be erected on site and the turbine would be erected on a concrete slab of 6 metres by 6 metres.

The surrounding landscape is relatively flat and is characterised by agricultural fields which are bound by hedgerow with trees positioned sporadically. Given the height of the proposal and the flat nature of the surrounding landscape it is clear that the turbine would be visible from a wide area. This is evident in the supporting information which has been provided by the applicants which shows photo montages of the turbine when visible from further west along Newcastle Road and from the A500 which is approximately 580 metres to the north of the site. The proposal would also be visible from Public Footpath Rope FP4 which is approximately 200 metres to the north of the site.

The turbine would generally be viewed against the sky and the grey colour of the turbine would help minimise its visual impact. Whilst the proposed development would undoubtedly have an impact on the character and appearance of the landscape it is not considered that the overall impact would be so significant as to warrant the refusal of this planning application given the scale of the development proposed and the colour finish of the turbine. Furthermore there are no international designated sites or national landscape designation which would afford greater protection. PPS22 states that *'Planning Authorities should also take into account the cumulative impact of wind generation projects in particular areas'*. The proposed development would be the only wind turbine in this locality and would not contribute towards any cumulative impact on the landscape.

It is recommended that a condition be applied to any permission to ensure the removal of the turbine once redundant.

Residential Amenity

All residential properties surrounding the application site are more than 100 metres away (the nearest is a converted barn at Puseydale Farm). The acoustic noise levels provided show that the noise levels would begin to reduce to below 45 dB(A) at 4 metres high at 35 metres from the proposed development being less than 40 dB(A) after approximately 60 metres.

It is appropriate to relate these figures to the World Health Organisation (WHO) – Community Noise 1999 guidelines in order to achieve a level of appreciation of the levels that are detailed above. Night time noise levels should not exceed 45 dB LAeq, 1 metre from the façade of the property thereby allowing individuals to sleep with their windows open. Outside living spaces during the daytime shall not exceed 55 dB LAeq. Indoor guideline values for bedrooms are 30 dB LAeq for continuous noise and 45 dB LAm_{ax} for single sound events.

Having considered the noise survey provided by the applicants, the Environmental Health Division is satisfied with its contents especially when compared to the WHO guidelines, however they do require that the wind turbine is inspected and maintained on a regular basis in order to ensure that no potential sources of noise occur and if any faults are identified that they are rectified immediately. A condition is recommended accordingly.

In the event of complaints being received following the completion of the development, the Environmental Health Division will expect, at the reasonable request of the Council, the operator of the development, at its own expense, to employ an independent consultant approved by the Council to measure and assess the level of noise emissions from the wind turbine in accordance with the BWEA Small Wind Turbine Performance and Safety Standard Feb 2008.

Under certain combinations of geographical position and time of day, the sun may pass behind the rotors of a wind turbine and cast a shadow over neighbouring properties. When the blades rotate, the shadow flicks on and off; the effect is known as shadow flicker.

Shadow flicker can be mitigated by siting wind turbines at sufficient distances from the properties which could be affected. PPS22 advises that *'flicker effects have been proven to occur only within ten rotor diameters of a turbine'*. Therefore in this case the rotor diameter of the turbine is 13 metres and the potential shadow flicker could be felt up to 130 metres from the turbine.

In relation to the orientation of the properties the Annex to PPS22 advises that *'only properties within 130 degrees either side of north, can be affected at these latitudes in the UK – turbines do not cast long shadows on their southern side'*. When taking this into account together the only properties which are within 130 degrees of north and within 130 metres of the site are Puseydale Farm and the converted barns on this site. Puseydale Farm and the converted barn on this site are 125 metres from the proposed turbine, whilst another barn on this site which has planning permission for conversion is 100 metres from the site of the proposed turbine.

PPS22 advises that the further from the turbine that the residential properties will be then the effect of shadow flicker will be less pronounced as there are fewer times when the sun is low enough to cast a long shadow, when the sun is low it is more likely to be obscured by cloud or intervening trees/vegetation and that the centre of the rotor's shadow passes more quickly over the land reducing the duration of the effect. When taking this into account it is considered that the residential properties to the north are on the edge of the area that could be affected by shadow flicker and as a result it is considered that any impact would be minimal and would not warrant the refusal of this planning application.

A number of concerns have been raised over the proximity of the turbine to residential properties. There are no statutory distances set out in relation to this issue but it should be noted that the Annex to PPS22 advises that a safe separation distance would be the fall over distance (i.e. the height of the turbine to the tip of the blade) plus 10%. As the nearest property is approximately 100 metres away it is considered that the development would not have an impact upon resident safety.

A House of Commons Document from January 2010 has been submitted which refers to the introduction of a minimum separation distance for wind turbines. This document is not part of any adopted PPS or any other Governmental Guidance and cannot be given any weight in the determination of this application.

The Environmental Health Division has commented that the colour of the turbine has an impact with regards to shadow flicker and therefore the Division has recommended that the turbine should have a surface finish of light grey semi-matt. A condition is recommended accordingly.

Given the existing nature of the site which includes small business units, the separation distance, and the fact that the development would not cause such significant harm to the landscape as to refuse the application it is considered that the development would not have a detrimental impact upon residential amenity through overbearing impact or visual impact.

Highways

The access to the site is considered to be adequate and is currently used by a number of large vehicles. It is therefore considered that the delivery of the turbine to the site would not raise any significant highway safety implications. After its installation any maintenance of the turbine would be limited and would not raise any highway safety concerns.

Concern has been raised over the turbine causing a distraction to motorists, in relation to this issue the Annex to PPS22 advises that *'Drivers are faced with a number of varied and competing distractions during any normal journey, including advertising hoardings, which are deliberately designed to attract attention. At all times drivers are required to take reasonable care to ensure their own and others' safety. Wind turbines should therefore not be considered to be particularly hazardous'*. As a result it is not considered that this issue would warrant the refusal of this application.

Ecology

Article 12 (1) of the EC Habitats Directive requires Member states to take requisite measures to establish a system of strict protection of certain animal species prohibiting the deterioration or destruction of breeding sites and resting places. Art. 16 of the Directive provides that if there is no satisfactory alternative and the derogation is not detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species at a favourable conservation status in their natural range, then Member States may derogate "in the interests of public health and public safety or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social and economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment" among other reasons.

The Directive is then implemented in England and Wales by the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994 ("the Regulations"). The Regulations set up a licensing regime dealing with the requirements for derogation under Art. 16 and this function is carried out by Natural England.

Regulation 3(4) of the Regulations provides that the local planning authority must have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive so far as they may be affected by the exercise of their functions.

It should be noted that since a European Protected Species has been recorded on site and is likely to be adversely affected by the proposed development, the planning authority must have regard to the requirements for derogation referred to in Article 16 and the fact that Natural England will have a role in ensuring that the requirements for derogation set out in the Directive are met.

If it appears to the planning authority that circumstances exist which make it very likely that the requirements for derogation will not be met then the planning authority will need to consider whether, taking the development plan and all other material considerations into account, planning permission should be refused. Conversely if it seems from the information that the requirements are likely to be met, then there would be no impediment to planning permission in this regard. If it is unclear whether the requirements will be met or not, a balanced view taking into account the particular circumstances of the application should be taken and the guidance in paragraph 116 of PPS9.

This effectively gives 3 tests which need to be met. However in this instance it should be noted that the protected species survey provided by the applicants states that the turbine would not directly be sited on a main foraging route. This view is accepted by the Council's Ecologist and it should be noted that the turbine would not affect any bat roost and as a result the risk to the bats is low.

In terms of the 3 tests, it is considered that;

- There are no satisfactory alternatives as any alternative location would bring the turbine closer to residential properties.
- The derogation is not detrimental to the maintenance of Bats as it would not affect a bat roost or foraging area.

- There are imperative social reasons of overriding public interest as the development would contribute towards renewable energy targets.

It has been noted that the Council's Ecologist and Natural England have advised that turbines should be 50m from any trees or hedgerow. However this is not possible on this site and as this has not formed part of an objection it is considered that this should not form part of a reason for refusal.

The letters of objection have referred to the impact upon Barn Owls and birds in general. In relation to this the application site offers little in terms of habitat for Barn Owls and is therefore not considered to be a sensitive location. There is no research to show that single wind turbines would impact upon Barn Owls or other birds and as a result it is considered that the development would have a low incidental risk to Barn Owls and breeding birds.

One of the letters of objection has raised issues in relation to Badgers. However the applicants' Ecologist did not pick up on this issue on the site and given that the development on the ground would be limited to a concrete slab which would measure 6 metre by 6 metres it is not considered that the development would impact upon Badgers.

Public Rights of Way

Public Footpath Rope FP4 is approximately 200 metres to the north of the site. Given this distance it is not considered that the development would have any impact upon this Public Right of Way. This is in line with the Annex to PPS22 which advises that *'there is no statutory separation distance between a wind turbine and a public right of way. Often, fall over distance is considered an acceptable separation'*. The Public Right of Way would not be within the fall over distance.

Aviation

Due to the size of the wind turbine there is a potential for the development to impact upon aviation. As part of this application Manchester Airport, the Civil Aviation Authority and the Ministry of Defence have raised no objection to the development.

Other issues

Issues raised in relation to the existing activities on the site and the name of the site are not considered to have any impact upon the consideration of this application.

A number of the letters of representation refer to the impact upon property prices. This issue is not a material planning consideration and as a result cannot be considered as part of this application.

The issue of emissions from the wind turbine and its impact upon human health has been raised as a point of objection. This point is raised within the Companion Guide to PPS22 which states that *'Wind turbines contain electrical machines producing power. They will therefore also produce electromagnetic radiation. This is at a very*

low level, and presents no greater risk to human health than most domestic appliances'. This is therefore is not considered to be a material issue.

The letters of representation make reference to alternatives such as solar power and insulation should be considered by the development. In response to this the Local Planning Authority has to determine the current proposal which has been put forward which is considered to be acceptable in principle as discussed above.

Questions have been raised over the efficiency of wind turbines as an energy source. However guidance within PPS22 is that *'Small scale projects can provide a limited but valuable contribution to overall outputs of renewable energy and to meeting energy needs both locally and nationally'*. As a result this is not considered to be a material issue.

Concern has been raised over the icing of blades and the impact that this may have upon safety. In relation to this issue PPS22 advises that *'The build-up of ice on wind turbine blades is unlikely to present problems on the majority of sites in England. For ice to build up on wind turbines particular weather conditions are required, that in England occur for less than one day per year'* and *'Most wind turbines are fitted with vibration sensors which can detect any imbalance which might be caused by icing of the blades; in which case operation of machines with iced blades could be inhibited'*. As a result this is not considered to be a material issue.

One letter of representation has referred to the impact upon TV and phone signals. The Annex to PPS22 advises that *'Experience has shown that when this occurs it is of a predictable nature and can generally be alleviated by the installation or modification of a local repeater station or cable connection'*. As a result this is not considered to be a determining issue as part of this application.

Concern has been raised in relation to the issue of the impact upon horses and livestock. In relation to the issue of horses, the British Horse Society suggests a 200m exclusion zone around bridle paths to avoid wind turbines frightening horses. As there would be no bridlepaths or equine enterprises within 200 metres of the site this is not considered to be a material issue.

11. CONCLUSIONS

The proposal would bring benefits in terms of the production of renewable energy and it is considered that the benefit of this would outweigh any detrimental impact upon the Green Gap. It is not considered that the development would cause such significant harm to the character of the area and the wider landscape as to warrant the refusal of this application. The development would not have a detrimental impact upon residential amenities through noise, shadow flicker or in any other way. The development would not adversely impact on protected species and the development would not raise any highway safety problems, aviation issues or impact upon any Public Right of Way and is therefore considered to be acceptable.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

Approve subject to the following conditions;

- 1. Standard 3 years**
- 2. Development in accordance with the approved plans**
- 3. Colour of the turbine to be light grey semi-matt – full details to be submitted and approved in writing**
- 4. The wind turbine to be inspected and maintained on a regular basis in order to ensure that no potential sources of noise occur and if any faults are identified they shall be rectified**
- 5. Upon the wind turbine ceasing to be needed by the operator it shall be dismantled and removed from the site**

Location plan : Licence No 100049045

