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Ref: sw\s:\winfarms\sheephouse\objection\_update230509

Ref: Further Submission to the Barnsley Planning Board Planning Application 2008/0838- Sheephouse Heights Wind Farm

Dear Mathew,

I would like to place on record my following further objections to the proposal by Evelop to construct 5 wind turbines on Sheephouse Heights, Barnsley.

This submission should be read in conjunction with my earlier objection dated 30<sup>th</sup> Oct 2008(Ref: sw\s:\winfarms\sheephouse\objection).

This submission will concentrate on 7 main areas which I, and my constituents have further concerns over.

1. **Cumulative impact** - While there are differing views around what constitutes a cumulative impact of wind turbines, there does seem an acknowledgment from all sides that the construction of this particular wind farm, if given permission will significantly increase the circumference of the area within which it is deemed acceptable to develop wind farms. In other words, it could create the potential for a much more significant concentration of wind farms in the Barnsley / north Sheffield area. This would, in my and many of my constituents' view be unacceptable.

2. **Regional Spatial Strategy**- The Yorkshire & Humber RSS page 61, section 4.18 describes the need to protect the environment of the South Pennine fringe. While it does not specifically mention this particular area it does say the following;



*“Development in the western part of the sub area must not prejudice the special qualities of the adjoining Peak District National Park.”*

Considering this, if this proposal is allowed to proceed it will be clearly visible from the Peak Park would have a major negative impact on the landscape character of the Park and therefore would be a serious contravene of section 4.18 of the RSD. I do believe this should have an immense bearing on this application and should be considered carefully when assessing it.

3. **Significant Impact on Individuals** – The applicant concedes that this development will have a significant impact on a number of individual residential properties, with this impact concentrated particularly on properties in the Underbank/Smithy Moor area of Stocksbridge, Midhope and Cubley. Planning guidance suggests that if someone’s outlook is compromised to an unreasonable degree, ie the wind farm would dominate the outlook, then the development may not be acceptable. In deliberations I believe these concerns should not be overlooked.

4. **Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995** – This makes clear that if National Park purposes are in conflict with other uses then conservation must have priority. This is known as the ‘Sandford Principle’ and stems from the Sandford Committee’s recommendation of 1974. This stated that *‘enjoyment of the National Parks shall be in a manner and by such means as will leave their natural beauty unimpaired for the enjoyment of this and future generations’*.

While Barnsley’s development plans make no mention of the need to consider the impact of development on landscapes within the vicinity of the national park, I consider that the Barnsley planning authorities should take into account section Section 62 of the Environment Act. In my opinion this argument that the proposals for Sheephouse Heights would impair the natural beauty of the Peak District national park for the enjoyment of this and future generations is strong. Further, I believe the landscape is an essential element of the ‘natural beauty’ protected by national park status, and that this proposal would impact on the Park’s landscape value and therefore should be refused permission.

5. **Midhope and Bolterstone Conservation Areas** - While it is true that no Sites Special Scientific Significance (SSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA’s) or Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are close to the proposed site in the Barnsley administrative area, this is not the case on the Sheffield side of the border. Within ½ mile of the proposed site lies the village of Midhopestones. The area around Midhopestones is classed as a conservation area

The Environmental Statement (ES) produced for this application recognises a ‘major’ and ‘significant’ effect on viewpoint from the conservation area. The viewpoint described in the ES is taken from quite a high point in the



Conservation area, but even so, it clearly demonstrates that the turbines will be visually prominent.

As stated in the Conservation Area Appraisal (October 2007), one of the features that justifies Midhopestones' designation as a Conservation Area is the open rural character and the setting of terraces on sloping land within a sheltered valley above the River Porter, with extensive views eastwards and westwards along that valley.

I feel the proposals will have a detrimental impact on this setting and the extensive views from the higher and open parts of the Conservation Area.

It will also be possible to see clear views of the proposed turbines from the Bolsterstone Conservation Area, which lies approximately 2.5 miles from the proposed location. I feel in both cases the loss of visual amenity outweighs any special circumstances for constructing a facility on this scale.

Visual impact is a legitimate concern and indeed is recognized as such in the government's planning guidance to local authorities. One particular guidance document, PPG15 is particularly relevant to the Sheephouse Heights application. It points out that the impact of proposed developments outside a conservation area on its setting, or on views into or out of the area, is a material consideration which should be taken into account by the local planning authority when considering the proposal.

6 **Noise Considerations** - I would like to draw to the attention of the planning authorities the independent noise report carried out by Dick Bowdler, Acoustic Consultant, on behalf of the Protect Sheephouse Heights Action Group.

This report has challenged some of the conclusions made in the Environmental Statement. It comments that the turbine noise levels at the surrounding properties have been calculated by a method known to give results that are too low. The real turbine noise levels are likely to be 2 to 3dB higher than those shown in the ES. Accordingly, using the applicant's average background noise levels, there will be 4 locations during the day and ten locations at night that will suffer a major loss of amenity. Furthermore nine locations will fail to meet the ETSU-R-97 limit during the day and six will fail to meet the limit at night.

This report also has concerns about the validity of some of the background noise levels. If the applicant's background noise levels at Mossley House were taken to represent all properties then nine properties in the area would suffer a major loss of amenity during the day with many other properties suffering at night.

I do consider that this report should be seriously considered by the relevant authorities and its conclusions taken onboard.



7. **Barnsley Green Targets** - The Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy has set Barnsley a target of 15mgw of wind-farm generated electricity by 2010 and 34mgw by 2020. Royd Moor will give 6.5mgw; Crow Edge will generate 7.5mgw; and Blackstone Edge, if approval is confirmed, will generate 6mgw. This mean that the authority will more than meet its 2010 target without the need for the 15 mgw the proposed site at Sheephouse Heights will produce. The authority will then have another 10 years to meet the rest of the 2020 target. I consider this shows there is no pressing need for this particular development

Yours sincerely

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