

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

24 October 2012

PRESENT – Councillor Baldwin (The Mayor) (in the Chair); Councillors Cossins, L Haszeldine, Johnson, Knowles, Lee, Long, D A Lyonette, Macnab, Regan, Stenson and J Taylor. (12)

ABSENT – Councillor Cartwright (1)

OFFICERS – Roy Merrett, Development Manager, Adrian Hobbs, Planning Officer and Andy Casey, Highways Engineer, within Services for Place and Andrew Errington, Lawyer (Planning) within the Resources Group.

PA152. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – Councillor D. A. Lyonette declared a prejudicial interest in relation to planning application Ref. No. 11/00128/FUL as a member of the Durham Tees Valley Airport Committee and left the meeting for the whole of the meeting.

PA153. PROCEDURE – The Borough Solicitor’s representative gave a short presentation which outlined the procedure to be followed during consideration of the applications for planning permission before this Committee.

RESOLVED – That the procedure be noted.

PA154. APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION UNDER THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT AND ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION - PLANNING PERMISSION REFUSED

11/00128/FUL - Newbiggin, near Sadberge, Darlington. Erection of 3 wind turbines, one anemometer mast plus associated access tracks, crane pad and control building.

The Development Manager referred to letters received from the residents of Wayside and Pitfield Farm in response to the proposed tree planting mitigation for those properties in which the residents in question stated that they were reluctant to accept the offer of screen planting. He also said that irrespective of the height the trees (Alders) would be planted at, any effective screening would be seasonal, also, in the case of Pitfield Farm, the residents had verbally raised concern that such screening would prevent surveillance of certain areas of land.

The Development Manager commented that the recommended refusal reasons should be modified to include reference to conflict with the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) and that the recommended refusal reason 1 should also refer to Great Stainton.

In addition, the Development Manager made the following clarifications:- that whether the target for renewable energy production in the North East had been exceeded was not material to consideration of the application as this was a target rather than a limit; that a number of issues identified could be adequately controlled through conditions including noise emissions, shadow flicker and the outstanding concerns raised by the airport; also that access to the site for construction vehicles was achievable, that there would be some disruption but this would be for a temporary period and would be manageable and not a sustainable ground for refusing planning permission.

(In reaching its decision, the Committee took into consideration the findings of a site visit, over 100 letters and E-mails of objection, the objections of East and West Newbiggin, Bishopton, Great Stainton, Little Stainton, Sadberge, Morden and Stillington and Whitton Parish Council's, Durham Tees Valley Airport, the Council for the Protection of Rural England, the local Member of Parliament and the Seven Parishes Action Group, two letters of support, the comments of Natural England, the Council's Parks and Development Manager, one of its Environmental Health Officers, and its Countryside Access Officer, Northumbrian Water, the Ramblers' Association, Stockton On Tees Borough Council, English Heritage, the Highways Agency, the BBC, One North East and Durham County Council's Landscape Section all of which had been received. In addition, the Committee also heard the views of the applicants' representative, three objectors, speaking on behalf of a number of residents, the objections of the local Ward Councillor, the objections of various Parish Council representatives and a resident who spoke in support of the application, all of whom Members heard).

RESOLVED - That planning permission be refused for the following reasons :-

1. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the location and scale of the proposed wind turbines would, in combination with existing and permitted wind turbine developments, have an unacceptable impact on the visual environment of nearby villages, in particular Great Stainton, Little Stainton, Bishopton and Sadberge, contrary to Section 10 – Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change of the National Planning Policy Framework, RSS policy 40 and Core Strategy Policy CS3.
2. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the location and scale of the proposed wind turbines would, in combination with existing and permitted wind turbine developments, have an unacceptable impact on the landscape character of this part of the Tees Plain contrary to Section 10 – Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change of the National Planning Policy Framework, RSS policy 40 and Core Strategy Policy CS3.
3. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the location and scale of the proposed wind turbines would, have an unacceptable impact on the visual amenity of the residential properties at Wayside, Pitfield Farm, East Newbiggin, and Gilly Flatts South, contrary to Section 10 – Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change of the National Planning Policy Framework, RSS policy 40 and Core Strategy Policy CS3.