4205 Park Approach
Thorpe Park
Leeds
LS15 8GB

Planning Department
East Staffordshire Borough Council

By Email

13th July 2012

Dear Sir/Madam,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011

Request for a screening opinion in respect of the proposed erection of a single wind turbine on land at Newton Manor Farm, Admaston, Rugeley, Staffordshire, WS15 3PE.

The above site has been identified as a potential development site for a single wind turbine. An EIA screening opinion is requested from the planning authority, under Regulation 5 of the 2011 Regulations, to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required for this proposal.

The proposed site

The proposed turbine is situated approximately 11.6km north-north-east of the centre of Stafford, 450m north west of Newton and 700m west of Dapple Heath. The NGR of the proposed turbine is SK03603 25983.

Description of development

The proposed development is the installation of a single wind turbine and associated infrastructure at the site, with access via the public highway, existing farm tracks and a short section of proposed access track.

Turbine specification

The candidate turbine is an Enercon E48 with three blades. The hub height is 50m and the rotor diameter is 48m. The tip height of the proposed turbine is 74m. The attached turbine specification contains further technical details of the proposed turbine.

Foundations, hardstanding and access

The turbine will sit on a steel reinforced concrete foundation. A hardstanding crane platform will be required to construct and decommission the turbine and to provide safe access for maintenance. This will measure approximately 30 x 20m. Access will be by Newton Lane.

The current access road will be extended by approximately 200m from the existing farm track to reach the proposed turbine site. Surfacing and width will be sufficient to allow road vehicles to travel without crossing unmade areas.

Electrical connection

A substation building located adjacent to the turbine will enable the energy to be exported to the national grid. Grid connection works will be to the specification of the Distribution Network Operator.

Decommissioning

At the end of the operation life of the turbine, which we anticipate to be approximately 25 years, the turbine will be decommissioned. In the event that the turbine becomes inoperational for more than 12 months, it will be decommissioned in accordance with local planning policies. The turbine will be dismantled and removed from the site, with the components being recycled where possible. The foundations would be left in situ and the land reinstated to its former agricultural use if appropriate.

Consideration against Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations

Part 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 provides thresholds for development for which an EIA is a mandatory requirement (Schedule 1) and where it is a discretionary requirement (Schedule 2).

Schedule 2 sets the following advisory threshold at which an EIA may be required.

Description of proposed development	**Applicable thresholds and criteria**
Energy industry	
Installations for the harnessing of wind power for energy production (wind farms);	(i) the development involves the installation of more than 2 turbines; or (ii) the hub height of any turbine or height of any other structure exceeds 15 metres.

The development involves the installation of a single turbine and hence does not exceed threshold (i). However, the hub height of the candidate turbine is 50m, so exceeds threshold (ii) and is therefore a Schedule 2 development. The thresholds referred to in the regulations are advisory only and it cannot automatically be assumed that an EIA is required.

The DETR Circular 02/99 Environmental Impact Assessment indicates that an EIA is more likely to be required for commercial developments of five or more turbines, or more than 5MW of generation capacity.

Schedule 3 of the regulations provides criteria which should be used to assess Schedule 2 projects, together with the applicable thresholds, to determine if an EIA is required. These criteria are summarised as follows:

- Characteristics of the development.
- Location of the development.
- Characteristics of the potential impact.

An assessment of the proposal against these criteria is made in the following tables:

Characteristics of the development	
The size of the development	The development footprint will be small, with only a single turbine proposed. Access will make use of existing tracks where possible. Development components will be located as close to each other as possible to reduce the development footprint.
The cumulation with other developments	There are a number of operational and approved turbine developments in the wider area. Cumulative impacts will be assessed in the full planning submission.
The use of natural resources	Use of natural resources is sustainable with electricity being generated using energy produced by the wind.
The production of waste	The development will produce no waste whilst operational. Upon decommissioning the turbine components would be recycled where possible.
The risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used	No substances are produced by the proposed development that could pose a hazard and the technology has a good safety record.

Location of development	
The existing land use	The land is currently used for agricultural purposes. Outside of the small development footprint, the land will remain in agricultural use.
The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area	The two nearest SSSI sites of Blithfield Reservoir and Chartley Moss are located approximately 1km and 2km distant respectively. Chartley Moss is also part of the Midland Meres & Mosses Ramsar site.
The absorption capacity of the natural environment with particular reference to certain defined areas	The proposed development is located in the Needwood Claylands (Regional Character Area 68). The quality of the landscape in the area suggests it is sensitive to development of this nature. A landscape assessment will be included with the full planning submission.

Characteristics of the potential impact	
The extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population)	The distance to the nearest property is over 500m. Based on the specifications of the candidate turbine, at this distance, there will be no significant impact from noise.
The transfrontier nature of the impact	There will be no transfrontier impacts.
The magnitude and complexity of the impact	As there is only a single turbine proposed, the magnitude of the impact would be limited. Aspects of the environment affected will be limited to localised landscape and cultural impacts; therefore the complexity of the impact of the proposal is low.
The probability of the impact	The impact is predictable and can be reduced

	with careful site selection with regards to visual impact, noise levels and shadow flicker.
The duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	The proposed development has a life span of 25 years, after which the turbine will be removed and the site returned to previous condition. The impacts are therefore limited in duration and reversible.

Planning Application

A detailed planning application will be submitted with relevant supporting environmental information, such as a landscape assessment, ecological survey, archaeology desk study and noise assessment. A planning statement will set out the relevant information relating to the proposed turbine development.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment and therefore an EIA is not required. A Screening Opinion is requested from the East Staffordshire Borough Council to confirm this.

A supporting Environmental Appraisal will accompany a planning application to provide information on visual impacts, noise, etc.

Should you require any further information or clarification to issue a screening opinion, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Sally Walker AIEMA
EIA Consultant
ADAS Leeds

Resolved Renewables

Proposed Turbine
Newton Manor Farm
Admaston Rugeley Staffs, WS15 3PE

Micro-siting

- Turbine location (403681,326003)
- Turbine 540m buffer
- Footpath
- Hedges
- Powerlines
- Roads
- Water
- Footpath buffer
- Hedges buffer
- Powerlines buffer
- Roads buffer
- Water buffer

P/12/00898

Drawn by Ben Hockridge 09/07/2012, Verified by Helen Wyman 09/07/2012

N W E S

0 100 200 300 400

Meters

Scale 1:5,000 at A3 size

ADAS UK Ltd., Pendeford House, Pendeford Business Park, Wobaston Road, Wolverhampton. WV9 5AP. Tel 01902 271300.

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