DESIGN AND ACCESS

AND PLANNING STATEMENT

FOR THE

SITING AND INSTALLATION OF

AN 11kW WIND TURBINE

ON LAND AT

BALLINGTON GRANGE FARM

MOUNT ROAD

LEEK, ST13 7LY

ON BEHALF OF

MR. G. WILLSHAW

BALLINGTON GRANGE FARM

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This document provides information that both explains and supports the proposed installation of an 11kW wind turbine on land at Ballington Grange Farm. The wind turbine will generate electricity that will be either used by the applicant or exported to the National Grid.

- The proposed scheme will provide a renewable source of energy to this small farming business with the key benefits summarised as follows:-

  - The proposed scheme complies with all relevant planning policy
  - National and Local Government supports the production of renewable energy via schemes such as this
  - Detailed pre-application consultation has been undertaken with the local planning authority and this application has been produced in accordance with the recommendations made within the Screening Opinion provided
  - The turbine will be positioned so as to minimise the impact on the surrounding landscape
  - The character on the landscape has been fully considered and the turbine that is proposed should not form an incongruous structure within the wider setting
  - There will be no material impact on any residential properties or any unacceptable loss of visual or other amenity
  - There will be no detrimental impact on local ecology including bats and birds

- There is a justified requirement for this turbine and its benefits are considered to outweigh any negative impacts. As a result of these factors, it is considered that the very special circumstances associated with this proposal through its contribution to the sum of renewable energy produced in the UK and the reduction in Carbon Dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions outweigh any negative impacts including those related to visual impact and landscape character.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Sustainable Development

- Ballington Grange is owned by the applicant and extends in total to approximately 60 acres. In the current economic climate, any investment and opportunity to generate efficiencies and additional income is considered especially vital to ensure a sustainable rural economy. Whilst this is not a large commercial farm, it does provide a valuable contribution to the local economy with the land used for the grazing of livestock and the production of fodder.
- It is considered vital that in order to not only maintain but also support and enhance a sustainable rural community, the Local Planning Authority views proposals like this favourably. This proposed development will contribute to the sustainability of the significant new dwelling in particular, and will comply with the relevant guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- The proposed site is in a location which is considered to be suitable when viewed from the planning authorities' perspective.

1.2 Compliance with Planning Guidelines

- As briefly mentioned above, the scheme that is proposed has been designed in accordance with relevant planning guidelines, and in particular the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposed wind turbine is of a suitable height to ensure that it operates efficiently, whilst minimising the impact on the landscape as much as is possible for what is accepted as a relatively tall vertical structure in the rural landscape. Due to the siting and appearance, there should not be any negative environmental impact associated with this proposal.
- It is worth acknowledging the paradox that exists between planning policy and wind turbines. Planning policy quite rightly seeks to minimise the visual impact of development, but this is inherently difficult for what are vertical structures. As a consequence, relevant renewable energy and landscape and visual impact policies are often difficult to reconcile.
- From a planning perspective, an ideal site for a wind turbine would typically be well away from the top of a hill in a location with a considerable degree of screening, and where the turbine height is an absolute minimum. Conversely, the ideal operational site for a wind turbine is the top of a hill where there is adequate wind and uninterrupted views to the south west in particular.
- Furthermore, an ideal wind turbine needs to be as tall as possible to harness the higher wind speeds at altitude. Therefore despite policies supporting the development of renewable energy installations, the very nature of wind turbines and the fact that they need to be prominent and hence visible in order to work effectively, typically creates issues of conflict.

- Within the above context, then for any wind turbine development to progress it typically requires a degree of compromise from all parties – the applicant; local residents and the planning authority. In this instance, the applicant has recognised the potential for conflict and has sought to compromise in terms of the size and structure of the turbine.

- Whilst the turbine height will mean that it is less efficient in terms of electricity production than a taller structure, it is considered that the landscape impact will be significantly reduced and this will minimise the impact on both local people and visitors to the area. The Applicant therefore considers that this is a compromise that he needs to make in order to be able to produce renewable electricity, something that benefits not only him, but also the wider community and environment.

- Full consideration has been given to the landscape character; and the inter-relationship of the proposal with the landscape and visual impact of the proposal upon visitors to and users of the landscape and for residents. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment including relevant photomontages and wire frame diagrams has been included to provide relevant supporting documentation. Furthermore, the extent and significance of potential cumulative impact has been fully considered taking into account of any existing structures.

- Following this detailed review, it is considered that the positive benefits of this proposal, combined with the very special circumstances which exist, justify it being approved.

2.0 COMPLIANCE WITH PLANNING POLICY

2.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

- The NPPF was introduced on 27th March 2012 to replace many of the previous national planning policy statement and guidance documents. The purpose of the planning as clarified within the Ministerial Foreword to the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. The NPPF sets out the Governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In addition to Local and Community plans, the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The relevant extracts from the NPPF which are relevant to this proposal are detailed below:-

2.1 Achieving Sustainable Development

- **Paragraph 7** of NPPF confirms there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. The planning system therefore has to perform a number of roles:-
- *"An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy*
- *A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities*
- *An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity,* ***use natural resources prudently****, minimise waste and pollution, and* ***mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy****"*.

- P**aragraph 12** confirms that proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved. However, at the heart of the NPPF is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development, "***which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-making"*.

- **Paragraph 14** confirms that for **decision-taking** this means:
  - "*approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
  - *Where the* ***development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission*** *unless:*
    - *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework as a whole; or*
    - *Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted"*.

- **Paragraph 15** confirms that policies in Local Plans should follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

2.1.2 Core Planning Policies

- There are twelve core land-use principles that underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The principles are that planning should:-
    - "*be genuinely plan led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings…;*
    - *Not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*
    - *Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of the area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth…;*
    - *Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
    - *Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;*
    - *Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the use of existing resources including conversion of existing buildings, and* ***encourage the use of renewable energy resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);***
    - *Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution…;*
    - *Encourage the effective use of land by reusing that has been previously developed…;*
    - *Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas; recognising some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation…);*
    - *Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;*
    - *Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport…;*
    - *Take account of land support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all…".*

2.1.3 Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy

- **Chapter 3 (paragraph 28)** of the NPPF states that:-

  "*Planning policies should* ***support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development****. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:*

  - *Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;*
  - *Promote the* ***development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses****;*
  - *Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas…*
  - *Promote the retention and development of local services…".*

2.1.4 Requiring Good Design

- **Chapter 7** of the NPPF relates to the requirement for **good design**. In paragraph 56 it confirms that "*the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people*".

2.1.5 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- **Chapter 10** is titled "Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change". **Paragraph 97** is directly relevant to his application and it states that:

  - "*To help increase the use of and supply of renewable and low carbon energy,* ***local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources****. They should:-*

    - *Have a* ***positive strategy to promote renewable energy*** *and low carbon sources;*
    - *Design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development whilst ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts;*
    - *Consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure where this would help to secure the development of such sources;…".*

- **Paragraph 98** confirms that when determining planning applications, **local authorities should *"not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable energy*** *and should* ***recognise than even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions***".

- Furthermore, this goes on to state that local planning authorities should "***approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable"***.

2.1.6 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- **Chapter 11** relates to "**Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**". Paragraph 1-9 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:-

    - "*protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;…*

    - *Minimising the impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity wherever possible…*

    - *Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability…".*

- **Paragraph 112** seeks to ensure the protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land, none of which will be taken by this proposal.

- **Paragraph 123 relates to noise** and confirm that planning policies should aim to avoid noise from giving rise to significant impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development. As this proposal will not create any detrimental noise or other impact then it is compliant with these requirements.

2.1.7 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- **Chapter 12** relates to the historic environment. The essence of the various planning statements' within this chapter are to the effect that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

- In this case there are is a Listed building situated approximately 350m from the proposed wind turbine. However, neither this nor any other heritage asset should be impacted by the proposal. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been included with this application and should be read in conjunction with this document, with additional brief commentary in 5.6.3 of this report.

2.1.8 Positive Benefits

- The NPPF makes it clear that development should be approved where the positive benefits outweigh any negative impacts. For the avoidance of doubt the positive benefits of this proposal, to the applicant, wider community, and indeed the environment are that there will be:-

    - **A sustainable long-term future**. This proposal will directly:-
        - contribute to sustainability by reducing electricity costs and generating income
        - significantly reduce the amount of electricity required from traditional carbon-burning sources
    - **Reduced carbon emissions** and greenhouse gas emissions through the production of renewable energy and the mitigation of climate change.
    - No long-term impact on the landscape through the installation of what is a temporary structure

- On the basis of these significant benefits, it is considered that they outweigh the negative impact that will be created in terms of visual impact, something that is largely unavoidable with any wind turbine.

2.1.9 Summary

- Based on the information provided as part of this application, then it is considered that on balance, this proposal achieves the criteria set out within the National Planning Policy Framework. This proposal comprises a sustainable development and should therefore be supported by the planning authority. Great consideration has been given to the siting and appearance of this turbine and the applicant has sought to liaise closely with the local authority to ensure an acceptable location has been put forward which does not have a material impact on any local residents, landscape character, and any ecological feature.

- The proposed wind turbine will enable the applicant to produce cheaper electricity at a time when the costs are rising year on year. The turbine will operate extremely efficiently and will consequently provide the applicant with significant benefits during the period in which it will be in operation. This proposal will help to ensure that Ballington Grange Farm is able to produce the vast majority of its own energy requirements and will ensure that its impact on the environment is negligible.

2.2 COMPLIANCE WITH LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

There are a number of policies within Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan which are relevant to this application and these are considered below:-

2.2.1 Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

- Amongst the policies within the local plan which are relevant to this proposal are the following:-

- **Policy N2.** This policy states that:-

  "Except in very special circumstances, there will be a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt, including the construction of new buildings for purposes other than:-

  a. *Agriculture and forestry…"*

- Whilst this site is not located within the Green Belt, the same very special circumstances are considered to exist which justify the proposal being granted planning consent as those which have been found to be present at various other sites in the Staffordshire Moorlands where similar approval has been obtained, typically at appeal. These circumstances include the production of renewable energy, and the contribution to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and other green objectives.

- In the Appeal for two wind turbines at the nearby Chapel Glassworks, Leek road, Cellarhead (Appeal ref: APP/B3438/A/07/2051065), the Inspector concluded that "…*the switch away from a source of energy which contributes to the production of greenhouse gases and climate change* ***represents the very special circumstances required to overcome*** *the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As such, the proposal accords with LP Policy N2 which permits inappropriate development in the Green Belt providing there are very special circumstances".* It is considered that these comments apply to this proposal, as this turbine will contribute to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

- There are four further recent Appeal decisions which are considered both relevant and directly comparable to this site. The Appeals were each allowed and their details are as follows:-

  - Hatchley Farm, Dilhorne (ref: APP/B3438/A/12/2183965)
  - Higher Overton Farm (ref: APP/B3438/A/12/2183303)
  - Kniveden Farm, Leek (ref: APP/B3438/A/12/2187418)
  - Land off Little Blakely lane, Overmoor (ref: App/B3438/A/13/2199950)

- The turbine will be used to provide the applicant with a sustainable source of power and produce electricity that will be used not only on site, but also by others. It will therefore provide a valuable contribution to reducing the reliance on fossil fuel produced sources of electricity.

- This proposal is not judged to cause material harm to the visual amenity and openness of the locality. Unlike the Appeal sites at Hatchley, Higher Overton and Overmoor, this site is not situated within the Green Belt, but like them and also the site at Kniveden Farm, this proposal would create only a slight impact to openness. Furthermore, very special circumstances exist which justify approval.

- The turbine has been kept away from local residents in a location where there is a considerable amount of natural screening, and consequently it would create only a limited interruption to visibility. Given the minimal footprint, and the limited height and the appearance of the structure and the diameter of the blades, the harm to openness would be low. Indeed, it should be noted that this proposed turbine is substantially smaller than the four turbines approved at appeal.

- The Inspectors' in both the Higher Overton and Hatchley Farm Appeals concluded that given the limited height and slim nature of the pole and the swept radius of the blades, that the impact on the openness of the Green Belt would be minimal. At Higher Overton the harm to openness was considered 'limited', whilst at Hatchley it was described as 'slight'. The same minimal impact is considered to be the case at this site.

- For the appeals at Higher Overton, Hatchley and Overmoor, very special circumstances were considered to exist which justified approval to the schemes. As with those appeal decisions, the beneficial factors in this case which include the contribution to the applicant and local economy, and the generation of energy from a renewable source, clearly outweigh the minor harm created. Indeed, in the Hatchley Farm Decision Notice, the Inspector described the contribution of renewable energy as attracting "*very substantial weight*".

- With regard to the impact on the sprawl of urban areas, the Inspector who presided over the Higher Overton Farm Appeal Decision confirmed that with regard to an urbanising effect "*wind turbines are not especially associated with built-up areas; they are more likely to be found in the countryside*".

- For the reasons stated within this report and the Landscape Assessment, this proposal is considered to be acceptable. Due to the limited number of properties in close proximity, the relatively modest scale of the structure, and the limited impact on distance views, the impact of the wind turbine will be acceptable.

- It is noted that this site is within a **Special Landscape Area and hence Policy N8 i**s directly relevant:-

  "*In the special landscape area permission will not be given for development which would materially detract from the high quality of the landscape because of its siting, scale, design and materials, and associated traffic generation. In areas where the special landscape area overlaps the green belt there will be a presumption against most development in accordance with policy N2".*

- Although its location is within the Special Landscape Area, the proposed siting is such that it is considered that the landscape can absorb it satisfactorily, with the positive aspects firmly outweighing the negatives. Furthermore, with regard to the Special Landscape Area, then it is noted that wind turbines are not necessarily inappropriate forms of development. This site is not within the Green Belt.

- For the reasons stated within this report and accompanying documentation, it is considered that the turbine will not materially detract from the quality of the landscape, and the proposed structure will be of significantly reduced scale when compared with other wind turbines in the wider locality at Red Earth, Kniveden, Slate House and Garstones farms amongst others.

- In terms of the existing vertical structure, some comparisons can be drawn with the site at Kniveden Farm, Leek (Appeal ref: APP/B3438/A/12/2187418). Kniveden Farm is a prominent farm situated on the brow of the hill ridge approximately 1km to the north east. Whilst it is set within a rural landscape, it is near to the outskirts of the town and hence like this site, there are residential properties in the locality which will view the turbine. Indeed, Kniveden is considered a much more open, prominent, and less contained site than this.

- At Kniveden Farm, where the Appeal was allowed, the Inspector noted that with regard to views from a nearby lane "*…in these views it would be seen in the context of the adjacent mast, which would appear much more dominant"*. With regard to views from public vantage points not dissimilar to those from similar distance at this site, the Inspector went on to state that "*These views of the turbine would be broken up by trees…"*. This site is better screened and less prominent whilst being smaller in scale than the turbine approved at Kniveden. Consequently it is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact.

- **Policy N9** also relates to the Special Landscape Area and the requirements for high standards of design for development. However, whilst wind turbines are of relatively utilitarian design and with is limited potential to amend it, in this case a monopole structure is proposed to minimise the impact.

- The final policy considered to be pertinent to this proposal is **Policy B13.** This states that:-

  "*Within the plan area development proposals will be expected to:-*

  a. *Demonstrate a good quality of design which takes account of the scale, character, siting alignment, mass, design, colour and materials of their surroundings*
  b. *Provide design and landscaping of the spaces between and around buildings…*
  c. *Provide satisfactory standards of amenity for existing and proposed buildings…*
  d. *Mitigate adverse environmental impacts, including noise, as far as possible, through the location of noise sensitive developments away from existing sources of significant noise…"*

- This proposal complies with the relevant extracts from this policy and in particular, the scale and siting of the turbine is such that it will minimise the impact on the surrounding area. In addition, there should be no impact associated with noise due to the distance from surrounding properties.

- It is noted that there are no specific policies pertinent to renewable energy or wind turbines within the local plan. However, it is considered that the NPPF provides appropriate guidance and that the local authority understands its obligation to comply with Government targets relating to the proportion of electricity which it is obligated to produce from renewable sources. Whilst this is relatively high quality landscape, the application should be considered on its own merits and with due consideration given to the importance that even relatively small renewable energy installations provide.

- Furthermore, it is noted that the local authority is obligated to seek to find ways to make development proposals acceptable, rather than find reasons to refuse them.

2.2.2 Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Energy

- This document acknowledges that renewable energy proposals should consider the impact on local communities, and that such communities have a responsibility to help increase the use and supply of green energy.
- Paragraphs 29 – 45 of the document relate to the planning considerations relating to wind turbines. To summarise this proposal against the various requirements then:-
    - it will not create a noise impact
    - safety will not be an issue
    - it will not create any electromagnetic interference
    - there will be no ecological impact
    - there will be no impact on heritage assets
    - there will not be any issue created by shadow flicker
    - there will be no cumulative landscape impact
    - landscape and visual impacts will be limited
    - a detailed landscape and visual impact assessment has been submitted with the application

2.2.3 SMDC Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Revised Submission Document December 2011)

- Although not yet adopted, the Core Strategy contains a number of policies relevant to this proposal. These are briefly considered below.
- Policy SS1 relates to Development Principles and as the proposed turbine will produce renewable energy and contribute positively to the environmental improvement of the Moorlands, it is considered to comply. On the basis that it is considered to comprise Sustainable Development, then it is considered to comply with policy SO2.
- Policy SD2 states that the District will strive to meet its future energy demand through renewable energy schemes, and on the basis that the landscape impact is acceptable, this proposal would comply with its requirements.
- Policies SO8 and SO9 aim to promote local distinctiveness by means of good design and to protect the character of the countryside. Whilst this proposal will create an additional vertical structure, this will not be to the significant detriment of landscape.

- Policy DC1 relates to design considerations and as with other similar policies, it is difficult for any wind turbine to strictly comply with its various requirements. By nature wind turbines are vertical structures with moving parts and hence are different to most forms of development. Consequently, it will always be the case that planning authorities can argue against such proposals by citing policies such as this.

- Policy DC2 aims to safeguard the historic environment and interests of acknowledged importance. On the basis that similar structures have been previously allowed in locations which are considered to have greater landscape value (the turbines at Morridge and at Calton in particular), then it is considered that this proposal does not contravene this policy as it of reduced scale, and it will be sited less prominently.

- Finally, Policy DC3 seeks to protect local landscape by resisting development which harms the character of the locality or local views. This has been discussed elsewhere within this application, and in particular within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

2.2.4 Public Consultation

- Since 17th December 2013, there is a requirement under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure and Section 62A Applications) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013 that applicants conduct their own public consultation prior to submission of applications where the hub height of the turbine is in excess of 15m.

- As a consequence, relevant consultation has been undertaken. Direct approaches have been made to all neighbours residing within 400m, including the occupiers of Lowe Hill House and Home Farm. In addition, a notice was erected on the bridleway to the south of the farm providing users with an opportunity to request further information. Finally, a notice was placed within the Leek Post and Times newspaper in order to make the wider community aware of the proposals, and allowing them a specified timescale to provide comments.

2.2.5 Summary of Compliance with Planning Policies

- This proposal will contribute to sustainability objectives. Not only will it produce electricity that will save the applicant the ever-increasing costs of procurement, something which is substantial for this property, but it will also provide a valuable contribution to the achievement of national renewable energy and climate change targets. As a consequence, the positive benefits are considered to exceed any negative impacts.

- As a consequence of the above, the proposal is considered to comprise special circumstances which justify development. On the basis that this is a relatively isolated location which is not immediately overlooked by residential properties, and with no other environmental, ecological or other impact, then it is considered that it should be supported by the local planning authority.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- This proposal is for the installation of an 11kW wind turbine at Ballington Grange farm. The turbine will produce electricity to supply the house and outbuildings, with any surplus exported in to the National Grid. In addition and for the reasons listed below, the proposed wind turbine installation is considered to be appropriate proposal, having an acceptable impact on the landscape, environment and local residents.

3.1 Ballington Grange Farm

- Ballington Grange Farm extends in total to approximately 60 acres. In addition to the farmhouse and associated buildings, the land is used to provide both grazing and fodder for livestock.

- Approval to the turbine will enable the applicant to produce electricity significantly more cheaply than the current cost of procurement. A wind turbine should provide much of the power, thus ensuring significant environmental and sustainable benefits by minimising the requirement for fossil fuel produced power. Furthermore, the surplus electricity will be exported into the national grid, thus creating an economic benefit.

- The proposed turbine location has been selected as a compromise from the ideal site in terms of turbine efficiency which is located closer to the ridge of the hill. To the south of the proposed site the efficiency of the turbine is significantly compromised due to the reduction in height and of the influence of the pockets of woodland.

3.2 Financial / Legislation

- The proposed scheme will generate significant savings in electricity costs. The electricity that will be produced will qualify for the Feed in Tariff payment (FiT), with the generation tariff being sufficiently high so as to merit the significant investment that this proposal will require. Based on the predicted income from the FiT over the next 20 years, this will ensure that the development will payback in a number of years and then derive considerable financial savings.

- Over the coming years it is expected that there will be a significant increase in energy prices, and with predicted energy shortfalls, the production of onsite renewable power will ensure continued supply both for the applicant, and the wider community. The farm consumes a considerable amount of electricity and it is important that it is not reliant on fossil-fuel produced power.

- In addition to the above, the proposal will produce ‘green’ energy and this is something fully supported by Government. Renewable energy is key to the UK’s low-carbon energy future and it needs to radically reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as diversify energy sources to do so. The UK has signed up to the EU Renewable Energy Directive which includes a UK target of 15% of energy being produced from renewable sources by 2020. In order to achieve this, it is vital that proposals like this are supported.

3.3 Technical

- A full survey has been undertaken to ensure the suitability of the site for a wind turbine. The wind turbine proposed is a Gaia-Wind 133 11kw model. This turbine is based on an 18.3m mono-pole structure and has two rotor blades with a diameter of 13m. The total height to the top of the blade will be 24.8m. The turbine has a peak electricity generation capacity of 11kwh.

- The proposed location will ensure that the turbine has a good supply of turbulence free wind as it will be largely clear to the south west where approximately 80% of the wind originates from. Based on the NOABL wind speed database, the estimated annual mean wind-speed for the proposed turbine location is well above average, with a predicted 5m/s at a height of 25m.

- At the proposed location and based on recorded information, then using the wind speed average of 5m/s the predicted electricity generation is approximately 28,000 kWh per year. The applicants' own electricity consumption is considerable, and predicted to increase in the future as prices rise yet further.

- The predicted sound pressure at a distance of 60m is only 45 dBA and assuming a windspeed of 8m/s. At a windspeed of 8m/s and a distance of 185m from the turbine then the noise level is only 35 dBA as clarified by the acoustic information provided with this application (on the turbine datasheet and Acoustic report). This noise level of 35 dBA is similar to a quiet bedroom at night. As the nearest residential property is well in excess of 300m from the proposed turbine site then there will be no noise issues created.

- Alternative locations were considered further to the north of the proposed site where the land is higher and where the optimum wind conditions can be found. However, these alternatives were discounted due to the issues that would be created in terms of the visual impact in particular, and the potential for ecological impact. On balance, the proposed site is considered to be the most appropriate and it should enable a development to be installed which minimises the impact on the wider landscape.

- The proposed location has been kept away from potential ecological, Bird and Bat habitats, and it has been deliberately sited in excess of 11m (Natural England's guideline), from any ponds, trees or suitable hedgerows for this reason. The accompanying Ecological Appraisal clarifies this aspect of the proposal.

- The proposed location will ensure that the turbine has a good supply of turbulence free wind as it will be largely clear to the south west where much of the wind originates from. The proposed turbines low start-up wind requirement makes it ideally suited to sites such as this in the UK.

- The turbine itself will be a temporary structure and at the end of its working life will be able to be removed and the ground restored to its former condition. As a consequence, there will be no permanent impact on the landscape.

4.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Appraising the Context

- It is considered important that the context in which the proposed development sits is fully understood, and consequently in this case, this understanding has been used to prepare the application. This appraisal of context included the following process:-

Assessment of the sites immediate and wider context:-

- The existing site was reviewed, as was its location in relation to surrounding settlements, public areas, and residential properties.

Involvement

- Professional input has been provided by various technical experts from within the renewables sector.
- Bagshaws LLP, which has considerable experience in rural planning matters, has ensured that valid planning considerations have been clarified.
- Staffordshire Ecological Services, part of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, has reviewed the ecological aspects of the proposal to ensure that no issues will be created – an Ecological Appraisal is attached.
- In addition, detailed pre-application consultation has been undertaken with the planning officer in order that relevant planning concerns can be addressed as much as possible.

Evaluation

- Using the information that has been collected, the design has been formulated and access principles established.
- This design has taken into account the context of the existing site and its surroundings, and ensures that the site will maintain the same level of visual amenity.

Design

- Utilising the above three elements brought together, the design has been produced
- Through the overall development of understanding around the developments context, it has enabled a design to be produced which will blend in well with the existing site.
- In light of understanding the context of the site, this statement confirms the wider design aspects of the proposed development. Although this proposal will have an acceptable impact on the surrounding area, this document confirms that all relevant factors have been given appropriate consideration. The context of the site has been considered in relation to its physical aspects, and these are discussed briefly below.

4.2 Siting

- The proposed site has been selected so that the turbine will have minimal impact on any residential properties, ecological feature, heritage asset or relevant environmental consideration. Care has been taken to ensure the turbine is positioned to balance the impact and its actual siting has been compromised in this regard.

- The proposed turbine will be sited in a field of pasture / meadow land approximately 175m south east of Ballington Grange Farm at a height of approximately 235m AGL. This land is in relatively close proximity to the homestead, and is on a west / southwest facing slope of Lowe Hill. Whilst the turbine is set away from the buildings, it will still be seen in conjunction with them to distant views from the south in particular, and this is considered to be a benefit of this location.

- The turbine location is on something of a plateau. However, whilst the field is in an elevated position, it benefits from considerable natural screening with extensive trees, hedgerows and woodlands surrounding and providing considerable mitigation to views, particularly those from the north, south and east.

- The proposed site has been selected following detailed pre-application consultation with the planning authority and it is considered to be a suitable location. The location is at the southern end of the containing ridge of higher ground skirting the eastern edge of Leek. The ridge is more prominent to the north east where it is topped by Mount road and forms a hill reaching a height of circa 265m.

- The site is within a Special Landscape Area (SLA). In pre-application consultation, the local planning officer confirmed that the landscape at the proposed location has a bold feel, tilted and exposed to distant views to the south west with fairly large fields, particularly that of the application site. There are some strong hedgerows whilst other field boundaries are low walls or post and wire fences.

- The fringes of Ballington Wood come to within 250m of the site, and to the north-west. It is noted that Ballington Wood is designated as Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland and a County Site of Biological Importance (SBI) as is the valley land of Ladydale north of Balllington Grange. Consequently a site to the south of the farm was considered appropriate in order to maximise the distance from these designated areas. The distance from this woodland will minimise both the impact on any local habitats or ecology residing within the wood, and also reduce the impact of wind turbulence created by the trees.

- The residential Birchall estate and the Britannia Building Society Offices are located 450m to 500m plus from the site but at the markedly lower level of 175m AGL. In order to seek to minimise the impact of the proposal from these locations, a mono-pole structure is proposed which will reduce the impact of views, and particularly those where the turbine will be viewed against the skyline. Great consideration has been given to the impact from these locations, and hence the combination of the siting and structure should ensure that this is acceptable.

- In terms of residential amenity, the nearest property is in excess of 300m from the site and hence there will be no noise issue created. Great care has been taken to ensure that this threshold has been achieved.

- There is a public footpath right of way which follows the track to the north east edge of the application field, and a bridleway borders the south-eastern edge of the field. The proposal can readily meet the guidelines that suggest turbines should be sited at least the equivalent of their height away from a public footpath or highway. Again, these public vantage points have been considered as part of the siting.

- Furthermore, it is noted that the Leek Landscapes walk, part of the Staffordshire Moorlands Walks series uses the footpath to through Ballington Grange and the farm lane to/from Lowe Hill. However, due to the distance from this turbine and the limited size and scale, it is considered that this should not materially impact the enjoyment of walkers.

- Whilst the town of Leek is in relatively close proximity to the north of the site, due to the positioning of the turbine and the presence of significant natural tree screening (Ballington Wood) then there should be no impact created to views from the town. Whilst the turbine location will be visible from certain areas of surrounding residential settlements, the siting combined with the distance and natural screening will all help to reduce the impact on any views. Similarly, to views from the south and east the significant tree and woodland screening (which shields views from the north and west) will act as a backdrop.

- Views to the south and east are across open fields interspersed with tree and hedgerow screening. As a consequence, there should be minimal impact for any residential property or road user. The fields are well hedged with mature trees which minimise roadside views in particular, and there should be only limited views from the A53 Leek to Ashbourne road. Indeed, from the roadside at Lowe Hill to the east then it should be barely visible.

- In addition to the above factors, great care has been given to ensure that the turbine will be sited sufficient distance (over 50m) from any notable tree, hedgerow or other natural feature. Natural England and others advise that turbines should be located appropriately away from any features suitable for foraging and/or commuting bats and hence this location achieves these requirements.

- The siting of the turbine in this location is considered the ideal solution for this site, as it will ensure that the impact on the landscape and any habitats and protected species is minimised. A position further to the north of the proposed site had been identified as preferable from a functional perspective as indeed had a larger turbine, but these options were discounted due to the issues that would be created in terms of visual and ecological impact in particular.

- Finally and as mentioned above, with approximately 80% of the wind being generated from the south-west then the turbine has been sited so that it will operate effectively. It is vital that the turbine has clear views unobstructed by any trees or other physical features which would inhibit the wind speed at the turbine itself. By siting the turbine where it is then it is as close as possible to the homestead, but at the same time it is located so that it has enough wind and is away from trees, buildings and other obstructions. Taking all factors into account, great care has been taken identifying a site which balances the impact on the landscape, environment and local residents whilst providing the required functionality.

4.3 Design

- Following on from understanding the site context, the principles and concepts below have been applied to the design of this proposal to ensure it matches the existing proposal. Although wind turbines are generally relatively utilitarian in design, in this case care has been taken to choose a monopole structure which is considered appropriate.

- Pre-application consultation clarified that the landscape maintenance designation at this location is accompanied by guidance which states that "*substantial emphasis should be placed on ensuring that the development blends unobtrusively into the landscape…*". In this case the proposed mono-pole structure has been utilised in order to ensure that the development blends in as much as is possible for what is acknowledged as a relatively tall vertical structure. The planning officer acknowledged that the proposed turbine is modest in scale for this type of structure, leaving the possibility that its impact might be tolerable. Indeed, this height will be substantially smaller than the telecommunications mast at Kniveden (circa 45-50m tall) and electricity pylons (42m tall).

4.4 Amount

- The proposal is for a single wind turbine to be installed in the field to the south of the farm house and buildings. The turbine will be of steel monopole construction and will have a hub height of 18.3m. The nacelle and rotor blades will both be painted white.

4.5 Layout

- The turbine will be situated within the field and sufficiently away from any tree, hedgerow or other natural feature. The turbine will be orientated such that it minimises and potential landscape for ecological impact, whilst maximising the electricity generating capacity presented by the prevailing winds.

- As stated above, with 80% of the winds power being generated from the south-west, then it is important that it is located to capture as much of this as possible, and with north-east being the other primary direction in which the wind is generated, then it should be possible for the turbine to benefit due to the absence of obstructions.

- The proposed layout will ensure that the turbine has sufficient wind speed and an appropriate supply of turbulence free wind, whilst minimising the visual impact on the surrounding area, and in particular any local residents or road users.

4.6 Scale

- The turbine will have the following key dimensions / measurements:-
    - Overall height to tip of blade = 24.8m
    - Height of the monopole = 18.3m
    - Blade diameter = 13m (6.5m radius)
    - No/ of blades = 2
    - Foundation size = approx. 25 sqm
    - In addition will be a small, stand-alone control cabinet situated adjacent to the turbine.

- Although a larger turbine with a hub height of 25m had originally been considered, the applicant has undertaken considerable research in order to identify a turbine that will provide the required electricity generation in this location, but with a lower hub height in order to minimise the visual impact, whilst also still operating at lower wind speeds.

4.7 Landscaping

- Whilst the site is set some away from any public vantage points and with few immediate views of the site from any residential properties, there is the potential for wider views of the turbine, something that is considered inevitable with a vertical structure. From public roads there will be limited views, albeit that these are generally at distance.

- As this proposal is for a wind turbine in a relatively isolated location then the provision of landscaping is not considered to be relevant. By nature, for a wind turbine to operate it should be of sufficient vertical size and be situated in a location where it can benefit from the prevailing winds.

- The topography of the landscape, roadside hedgerows and tree screening will assist greatly in minimising the impact on any road users and views from the wider areas.

4.8 Impact on the Landscape

- It is acknowledged that the impact on the landscape is likely to be a key determinant in relation to this application. Consequently, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been produced to accompany this application and this includes a number of photo-montages that have been included taken from key locations around the site and wider area. These locations are considered to provide an accurate representation of the likely impact. It is considered that this assessment clarifies that the turbine can be accommodated and absorbed into the landscape without unacceptable impact.

- It is acknowledged that there are various factors which could create the potential for impact including landscape topography; proximity of roads and public rights of way; the popularity of the countryside; and designated and other nature conservation areas. Furthermore, it is also recognised that the impact upon the recreational users of the nearby countryside, particularly within the first 0.5km and the visual impact of the proposal in relation to them could be a concern in this setting. However, due to the modest scale of the structure, it is considered that the proposal is not unacceptable. The Landscape and Visual Impact study is considered to demonstrate this, and provides an objective basis on which to make a conclusive decision.

- The location of the site is outside of any settlement and there are few residential or other properties in the immediate vicinity of the turbine location, and none which will overlook it directly. Similarly, visibility from any roads or public vantage points will be somewhat limited both due to the distance, and the natural tree and hedgerow screening. The majority of views are from distance, and as a consequence much of the turbines impact is consequently reduced.

- Whilst it is noted that whilst there is a generally good network of public footpath rights of way in the vicinity, none are within immediate proximity of the turbine and hence there should be no material impact on any walkers.

- Views from the north and west will be largely screened by Ballington Wood, and this will similarly act as a backdrop to views from the south and east. Views from the east are typically from distance, with limited public vantage points in close proximity. From the A53 and wider views, the turbine will assist greatly in assimilating in to the landscape. Views to the south are across open fields, with large areas of woodland limiting distance views. Consequently again, there should be limited impact created.

- The key area where it is acknowledged there will be a number of views is the residential estate approximately 475m to the south west. However, due to the elevated position of the turbine, it is considered that this will not create an unacceptable impact for occupiers of these properties. This is similarly considered to be the case for users of the local public footpath and bridleway network which will see the turbine for only a short part of their journey.

- Therefore taking all of these factors in to account then there should be no unacceptable adverse impact created.

4.9 Access to the Development

- The existing driveway will be used from the public highway. Access to this development will therefore utilise the existing driveway which is currently used by large agricultural vehicles of similar size to any construction vehicles.

- From the edge of the drive to the turbine site a temporary trackway will be installed (if required) during construction, and it will be removed once the turbine is installed. This trackway will be of metal construction and will be laid on to the ground like a mat. Consequently, no engineering operations will take place.

- The construction of the turbine foundation, will take place over 4-5 days, and this typically involves 1 x 7.5t delivery truck and up to 5 loads of concrete. The concrete trucks are 3m wide and up to 9m long GVW 26t.

- Turbine installation is 4-6 weeks later, and takes place over 2 days. On day one there will be an articulated delivery vehicle, approx. 3m wide x 19m long GVW 26t. There will also be a single mobile crane approx. 3m wide x 12.5m long GVW 58t. These will arrive early on day one and leave at the end of day two.

- Other than these two larger vehicles, then all other vehicles will be smaller vans and cars. It should be noted that this land has large vehicles accessing it on a regular basis and hence the small additional number of vehicles will have no impact.

- There will be no real requirement for on-site parking although any vehicles will be able to park on the yard or adjoining land owned by the applicant.

- As this land has a good access, and as the vehicles required to install the turbine will be no greater in size than those currently utilising the site then there should be no issue created. Access will therefore be extremely straight-forward and have no impact on either highways users or safety.

5.0 ADDITIONAL FACTORS

- There are a number of additional criteria which are pertinent to applications for wind turbines which have been considered in relation to this site. These are discussed more-fully below:-

5.1 Cumulative Impact

- It is acknowledged that the presence of a number of turbines in a geographic area can create an issue due to their cumulative impact. However, as this proposal is for a single turbine at a location where there are few other turbines or vertical structures in the immediate vicinity then there should be no issue. The topography of the surrounding landscape, combined with the distances to roads and the relatively modest scale of the turbine will ensure that it will not appear as overly significant in the wider landscape.

- The nearest existing structure to this site is the large telecommunications tower which sits on the top of the hill ridge at Kniveden Farm, approximately 1km to the north-east. Although slightly lower at approximately 235m AOD, this proposal is effectively on the same topographic ridge line feature which skirts the eastern and south eastern fringe of Leek. However, due to the distance and intervening topography, together with the fact that the Kniveden mast will only be seen in conjunction with this mast from limited views, it will ensure that no cumulative impact is created.

- The closest turbine to this site will also be at Kniveden Farm. The turbine at Kniveden Farm was allowed at appeal although it is yet to be constructed. However, as with the telecommunication mast, the turbines will have sufficient horizontal and vertical separation, and furthermore, they are of different structural characteristics. This site will be viewed as distinctly separate from Kniveden Farm.

5.2 Shadow Flicker

- Shadow flicker can cause problems in properties early in the morning or late in the evening, and is caused by the blades interrupting the light from the sun when the turbine is in the direct line from it. The effect is typically worse on sunny days in winter than in the summer, as in the summer the sun is typically much higher in the sky for a longer period. It is generally understood that some degree of shadow flicker is acceptable but that limits should be imposed to restrict the number of hours per year for which any one property is affected.

- Shadow flicker generally occurs within ten rotor diameters of a turbine. For this proposal, the rotor diameter is 13 metres and there are no residential properties within 130m to be affected by shadow flicker. In this case, as the nearest property is in excess of 300m from the turbine and hence then there will be no impact whatsoever.

5.3 Noise

- Potential for noise disturbance is acknowledged as key concern with regards to wind turbines. PPG24 had previously set out national planning policy with regards to noise and it set out a 35dBA sleep disturbance criteria with allowances made for other noise variations caused by for example an open window, and a day time lower fixed limit of 45dBA. These guidelines also stated that consideration should be given to increasing the permissible margin above background where the occupier of the site has some financial involvement in the wind turbine. This means that it can be acceptable to have a higher noise reading where property in the applicant's ownership is the residence which is primarily affected.

- Government guidance suggests that noise levels of wind turbines should be assessed against the Recommended Good Practice on Controlling Noise from Wind Turbines contained within 'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms' (ETSU for DTI 1997). The document is a Noise Assessment and Rating advice note for wind turbine developments and it recommends that an acceptable level to be fixed in respect of the noise limit at night time should be 43dBA.

- In this case, the location of the site, type of turbine, and distance to any other residential or other property will ensure that no noise issues are created. The nearest dwelling is over 300m away from the turbine location and hence this will enable relevant ETSU guidelines to be achieved. The acoustic report for this model of turbine has been included with this application.

5.4 Aviation

- Large wind turbines, particularly if in proximity to an airfield, can have an impact on the aviation domain. Similarly, rotating wind turbine blades may have an impact on certain aviation operations and more-specifically those involving radar. In this case consultation has been undertaken with Manchester Airport and the Ministry of Defence, neither of whom has confirmed any issue will be created.

5.5 Electro-magnetic Interference

- It is important that wind turbines do not create the potential for any kind of electro-magnetic interference. Some large-scale turbines have the potential to 'scatter' signal, but it is not considered to be relevant in the case of a turbine of the size proposed in this application. Furthermore, as the Digital Switchover process ended in 2012, then it is no longer possible for interference to be caused as digital signals are not subject to this.

- OFCOM has been consulted as part of the pre-application procedure in order to identify whether there are likely to be any objections although none has been received at this stage.

5.6 Ecology and Conservation

- As this proposed wind turbine will have a hub height of over 15m, then it will be classified as Schedule 2 Development under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1990. However, following a request for Screening Opinion request made to Staffordshire Moorlands Council it was confirmed that no Environmental Impact Assessment is required.

- Whilst the land immediately surrounding the site is agricultural with Ballington Wood in close proximity to the north and north-west, it is understood that there are no important bird or other habitats in proximity to the turbine location. The proposed turbine location is within a field of improved grassland, and it has been kept at sufficient distance from any hedgerow, tree or pond in order to minimise the potential ecological impact. An Ecological Appraisal accompanies this application and confirms that this is the case.

5.6.1 Birds

- With specific regard to birds, the British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) states that "Experience and careful monitoring by independent experts shows that birds are unlikely to be damaged by the moving blades of micro wind generators". Additional information can be found out about this from the BWEA Best Practice Guidelines and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) who states "Climate change is the most significant, long-term threat to biodiversity worldwide. To help meet this threat the RSPB also strongly supports moves to increase energy efficiency, reduce energy demand and supply more of our energy from renewable sources, including wind power, provided that they do not harm birds or their habitats".

- Studies of birds increasingly show that the risk from wind turbines to most species is very low, and far greater risks exist from overhead cables and moving cars. Indeed, the RSPB has installed a small wind turbine at their visitor centre at Rainham Marshes and are understood to be considering installing them at other locations. The RSPB position on wind can be found at http://www/rspb.org.uk

- Furthermore, on 20th April 2012 the RSPB confirmed that it is planning to build a wind turbine at its UK headquarters at The Lodge nature reserve near Sandy, Bedfordshire. The turbine will measure 100m at its highest point and Martin Harper, the RSPB's Conservation Director stated that "*We are keen to promote the use of wind energy where it does not result in unacceptable impacts to wildlife and we are confident that this is a suitable location to do so*".

- Due to the location of the turbine within a field of improved grassland, there are no ground nesting or other Schedule 1 birds that will be impacted. This aspect is clarified in greater detail within the Ecological Appraisal accompanying the application.

5.6.2 Bats

- The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) and the Wildlife Trust have issued general advice regarding domestic scale installations and other similar turbine applications and these state that it is good practice for the siting of turbines to avoid close proximity to buildings that could be used as roosts, or groups of mature trees, hedgerows and water bodies such as ponds and lakes, which could be used as foraging and commuting routes. The recommended siting of domestic scale turbines is 11m from any such features, and this has been possible in this case. In view of both the siting and the proposed scale of this turbine then the potential impact of the development on bat populations is considered extremely low.

- Additional guidance published by the BWEA 2001 in conjunction with bodies including RSPB, English Nature and the World Wildlife Fund UK suggests that Bat species in the UK are unlikely to come into contact with blades during their normal movements. There is no published evidence of turbines of this size interfering with echo location calls or causing injuries as a result of atmospheric pressure drops at wind turbine blades, and these problems are more usually associated with the large industrial megawatt generators or wind farms and not the micro level of production proposed by this application. Bats have been observed to avoid rotors on wind turbines with echo-location, and the risk of Barotrauma, which is lung damage resulting from low pressure areas behind the rotor is low. At a Nottinghamshire trial being conducted by English Nature and a number of Ecologists, no bat casualties have been observed from a turbine positioned 25m from bat foraging routes.

- Many conservation bodies support the use of small scale renewable energy installations including domestic turbines on the basis that the environment and wildlife is suitably protected. These bodies include the National Trust and English Nature, and their support is considered to be extremely positive and reflects the benefits that schemes such as this can provide.

- With regards to this application, due to the size of the turbine and its proposed location within a field of improved grassland, there are no boundary habitats within proximity and the impact of the turbine will be minimal.

5.6.3 Cultural Heritage

- Whilst there is a Listed building ay Home Farm which is approximately 350m to the north east, pre-application consultation with the local planning authority has clarified that it would be unlikely that there would be a direct impact upon the setting of the Listed building per se. There are no other Listed buildings or heritage features in proximity to the site which will be impacted.

6.0 SUMMARY

- Having reviewed all relevant factors, it is requested that this proposal be approved. The proposal is for the installation of a single wind turbine which will be used to generate electricity at this site. The new turbine will be of minimal height and design, and it will be capable of generating 11kW of electricity.

- The positive benefits of this scheme, including carbon saving and the production of renewable energy, are considered to provide the very special circumstances required to justify development in what is acknowledged as a high value landscape. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed turbine is a relatively tall vertical structure, the siting, structure, and topography will help to reduce its visual impact and great consideration has been given to the landscape aspect of this proposal, something acknowledged as a key consideration in this case.

- The site for the turbine has been carefully selected to ensure that the landscape can absorb it as much as possible. Where it will be visible from any public vantage points, then the size, scale and appearance of the turbine will ensure that it will not create an overly prominent feature. Indeed, the various positive environmental, economic and social benefits that the turbine will create will far outweigh any negative aspects.

- The turbine itself will generate electricity that will contribute directly to sustainability objectives whilst providing wider benefits in terms of its contribution to the sum of renewable energy produced in the UK.

- The proposal is compliant with all relevant planning policies documented within the National Planning Policy Framework. By utilising the existing features as much as possible and siting the turbine in the proposed location then it has ensured that a proposal has been put forward that is not only sympathetic to the landscape, but which also provides the over-riding functionality to ensure that the turbine produces an appropriate amount of electricity to make it economically viable. As a consequence, it is requested that this proposal is positively supported.

- Finally, the applicant would be pleased to discuss the application with any local resident's, Parish Councillors or other interested parties in order that any concerns are appropriately addressed and the nature of the scheme fully understood.