

Our Ref: MB/3907/2024-06-18

18th June 2024

High Peak Borough Council
Planning Applications Team
Buxton Town Hall
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Planning & Design Practice Ltd
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Dear James,

**RE: ERECTION OF A WIND TURBINE AT COTE BANK FARM, CHINLEY, DERBYSHIRE,
SK23 7NP (ref. HPK/2024/0100)**

Thank you for your email.

In relation to paragraph 163, the Council have not identified or allocated any suitable sites for wind energy development and the High Peak Local Plan is now 8 years old, we have taken the position that Paragraph 11d of the NPPF is therefore applicable.

This means that where there are no relevant development plan policies, the Framework indicates that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be exercised unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. This judgement is supported by Paragraph 8 of the attached Appeal Decision (ref. 3249183) which does a good job of articulating how to approach turbine development in a policy vacuum ('lacuna' was a new word for me!).

It is our view that the consideration of the application should be broadened out to balance compliance with local and national planning policies as a whole. The development should therefore be considered alongside social, environmental and economic factors.

The environmental benefits of the proposals are obviously clear. In line with Paragraph 163a, the benefits of clean, renewable energy should always be welcomed, where other considerations allow. In terms of integration with the landscape, I would also bring your attention to a second appeal decision (ref. 2144542). This relates to another wind turbine located a short distance away from the application site. The Inspector found that due to the small scale nature of the development, a single turbine of moderate size (although larger than what we

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are proposing as part of this application) would have a minimal impact on views to and from the site's surroundings. This is discussed in more detail in paragraph 9 of the decision:

“The site would be seen from a number of viewpoints. But the long distance views from surrounding hills would not be materially altered by the proposal. The height of the development would not be such that any significant prominence in views would result. The movement of the blades would be likely to draw the eye at times, but in my judgement this would be a minor effect from distance, such as when seen from across the valley. Hence I do not consider that views from the surrounding uplands would be significantly altered.”

The result of the LVA suggests that the landscape setting and wider context of the appeal site is broadly comparable to the appeal site. The impact is considered minor as the turbine will primarily be viewed against the back drop of hills rather than against sky (which has a greater impact). The turbine would be set on a relatively slim mast and it would fill a very narrow field of vision. The majority of the sweep of landscape available to view from public areas would remain unaffected.

Similarly, the economic benefits of the development will see the Applicant take advantage of easily accessible energy, at a time when energy prices are at record levels. The maximum power output of the turbine is 15kw, which will provide the farm with electricity and will also feed back to the national grid.

You mentioned in your email the public benefits of generating renewable energy. The UK Government has declared a climate emergency and set a statutory target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050. High Peak has also formally joined the 'Race to Zero', which seeks to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. These emissions targets are also a material consideration.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), on renewable and low carbon energy, states that *“there are no hard and fast rules about how suitable areas for renewable energy should be identified, but in considering locations, local planning authorities will need to ensure they take into account the requirements of the technology and critically, the potential impacts on the local environment, including from cumulative impacts”* (PPG, Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 5-005-20150618).

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The Applicant consulted various local neighbours to discuss the application with them, to which no objections were received. It should be noted that there is also a social benefit to providing small-scale renewable energy, insofar that there are widespread societal benefits in reducing carbon emissions and limiting the impact of climate change.

As the development is located in the Green Belt, very special circumstances need to be demonstrated. Paragraph 156 of the NPPF states that such circumstances can include the wider environmental benefits, as I have discussed above. These should be considered in addition to the benefits which are associated with the farm complex, as you have correctly referred to.

Yours sincerely,



Shaun Hyde MPlan

Planner

For and on behalf of Planning & Design Practice Ltd