



Date: 22 July 2014
My reference: 14/ 135/Wolvey

Mr Nathan Lowde
Planning Department
Rugby Borough Council

BY EMAIL

Dear Mr Lowde,

Application Reference R14/1106
Land at Wolvey Wolds, Wolds Lane, Wolvey, Warwickshire
Erection of a single temporary meteorological mast of up to 60 metres in height for a temporary period of 3 years

I refer to the above application.

I write on behalf of **Wolvey Parish Council** who object to the above application on the following grounds.

1. Visual Impact

The proposed development would introduce a large-scale alien feature into the rural landscape which given its height would be visually prominent from surrounding villages and public rights of way. The proposed development would be out of character and harmful to the rural environs.

The unspoilt enjoyment of the countryside by ramblers and villagers would be significantly affected by this proposed development.

The area surrounding the application site is primary walking territory for residents and visitors and forms part of popular circular walk from the village.

Wolds Lane itself provides a quiet access only road suitable for the elderly and disabled to walk and enjoy the countryside. The area around Wolds Lane undoubtedly contributes to the health and well-being of the village and any development in this area which is detrimental to that must be avoided.

2. Green Belt

One of the five purposes of the Green Belt is to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Keeping land permanently open is a fundamental aim of Green Belt policy along with maintaining their open characteristics and visual amenity.

Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt.

Very special circumstances will only exist if the harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 90 of the NPPF identifies that engineering operations are not necessarily inappropriate development provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

The Parish Council submits that the proposed meteorological mast is an engineering operation which does not preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

This is supported by paragraph 91 of the NPPF which states:

“When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.”

Only 12.5% of England is designated as Green Belt.

The Parish Council acknowledges the benefits in producing green energy but renewable energy projects such as this should be located outside of the Green Belt.

The proposed mast represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt and there are no very special circumstances for it being located here in the Green Belt when there are non Green Belt sites available.

3. Impact on Wildlife

It is common knowledge that the guys associated with the masts are a hazard for birds in flight. Attempts can be made to reduce bird strikes by adding deflectors to the guys but incidences still occur where there is particular bird activity in the area such a migration or feeding routes.

Wolvey is in close proximity to Coombe Abbey which has a significant population of Herons. Herons are seen flying all around the parish including in and around the application site.

There is a genuine concern that the population of Herons at Coombe Abbey will be affected by this proposal.

The views of the RSPB should be sought before this application is determined.

The area in and around the application site is populated by bats. Bats are a European protected species. The precise nature of the local bat population should be identified prior to the determination of the application in line with the Woolley v Cheshire East Borough Council and Millennium Estates Limited judgement. Appropriate mitigation must be provided following the results of the bat surveys.

Planning Conditions

It is requested that if this application is approved by the Planning Committee that appropriate conditions be applied to ensure:

- a) effective decommissioning and removal of the mast after 3 years; and
- b) the site is returned to its original condition upon removal of the equipment.

It is respectfully requested that this planning application for the erection of a 60m high meteorological mast be rejected on the grounds of visual impact, conflict with national planning policy on Green Belts and impact on wildlife.

Yours sincerely,



Neil Pearce BA (Hons) DipTp MRTPI
Director
Avon Planning Services