North East Lincolnshire

Wind Energy
Supplementary Planning Document

June 2019

Working in Partnership

Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this *Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) is to assist developers, members of the public, elected members and officers in the interpretation and application of the policies in the *North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013 to 2032* (2018) in relation to wind energy development.

1.2 The guidance does not form part of the development plan, nor is it intended to provide policies beyond those in the development plan. However, it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The SPD provides guidance on key planning issues associated with wind energy developments and information that should be provided when submitting a planning application for wind energy developments.

1.3 The guidance will support the Local Plan in providing a comprehensive framework to enable wind energy to be exploited in the Borough in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

1.4 This SPD has been produced having regard to the planning policies, procedures and guidance in place at the time. The Council may review the content of this SPD in the future, should there be any significant changes to the policies which underpin it.

North East Lincolnshire context

2.1 The UK has committed to meeting a greater proportion of its future demand for energy through renewables. North East Lincolnshire's wind energy sector is of great importance to both the local economy and the UK's energy security. The South Humber Bank already provides a key operations and maintenance base for offshore wind farms. This role is expected to grow further, with additional sites being developed around the Humber to facilitate the deployment of around 3,000 wind turbines in the southern North Sea, which are needed to meet the national energy targets. The presence of the port, combined with the Borough's infrastructure network that is associated with a long history of industry and energy production, provides excellent foundations for a range of onshore renewable energy technologies, including wind, to continue to be developed.

Permitted Development Rights

2.2 Small domestic wind turbines do not need planning permission, under a general planning permission granted from Parliament in the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*. Some of the criteria for permitted development rights for building mounted domestic wind turbines are as follows:

- No part (including blades) of the building mounted wind turbine should protrude more than three metres above the highest part of the roof (excluding the chimney) or exceed an overall height (including building, hub and blade) of 15 metres, whichever is the lesser.
- The distance between ground level and the lowest part of any wind turbine blade must not be less than five metres.
- No part of the building mounted wind turbine (including blades) must be within five metres of any boundary.
- The swept area of any building mounted wind turbine blade must be no more than 3.8 square metres.

2.3 Criteria to qualify for permitted development rights for a domestic standalone wind turbine are as follows:

- The highest part of the standalone wind turbine must not exceed 11.1 metres.
- The distance between ground level and the lowest part of any wind turbine blade must not be less than five metres.
- An installation is not permitted if any part of the standalone wind turbine (including blades) would be in a position which is less than a distance equivalent to the overall height of the turbine (including blades) plus 10% of its height.

2.4 Full details regarding permitted development rights are set out on the Government's Planning Portal website at: https://www.planningportal.co.uk/. Development should still comply with the Habitat Regulations process.

Policy context

3.1 National planning policy relating to developments for capturing and generating wind energy is set out in several documents, including:

- National Policy Statements EN-1 for Energy; and EN-3 for Renewable Energy Infrastructure - 2011 - Department of Energy and Climate Change;
- National Planning Policy Framework - 2012 (NPPF)[(1)];
- Written Ministerial Statement by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 18th June 2015; and,
- National Planning Practice Guidance on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy.

3.2 EN-1 and EN-3 were written to provide guidance for decisions by the National Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) on applications for nationally significant renewable energy infrastructure. However, the guidance is useful to refer to because the considerations it details are also relevant to planning for wind energy development locally.

National planning statements

3.3 The *National Planning Statement for Energy* (EN1) is part of a suite of *National Planning Statements* (NPS) issued by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. It sets out the Government's policy for the delivery of major energy infrastructure. It examines the potential of renewable energy to improve security of supply by reducing reliance on traditional fossil fuel supplies. It recognises the need to increase renewable energy generation if the UK climate change commitments are to be met. The Policy Statement also includes a list of generic impacts which must be considered by energy development proposals.

3.4 EN-3 should be read in conjunction with EN-1 which covers onshore wind. Most onshore wind turbines require planning permission. Until recently onshore wind turbines >50MW were treated as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). The Planning Act 2008 introduced a new development consent process whereby a developer intending to construct a NSIP must obtain development consent granted by the Secretary of State under the rules provided for in the Planning Act 2008, rather than obtaining planning permission through the local planning authority. The Energy Act 2016 changed the position - legislation removed onshore wind farms over 50MW in size from the NSIP regime and returned decision making powers to local planning authorities.

1 Government Consultation on a Draft Revised NPPF ended 10 May 2018. It is proposed to incorporate the policy approach set out in the Written Ministerial Statement 18 June 2015 into the NPPF.

The National Planning Policy Framework

3.5 The *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) states that all communities have a responsibility to help increase the use and supply of green energy, but this does not mean that the need for renewable energy automatically overrides environmental protections and the planning concerns of local communities. Paragraphs 97 and 98, state that:

"97. To help increase the use 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 energy from renewable and low carbon sources.*
- *design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while 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 secure the development of such sources.**
- *support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside such areas being taken forward through neighbourhood planning and*
- *identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers."*

** In assessing the likely impacts of potential wind energy development when identifying suitable areas, and in determining planning applications for such development, planning authorities should follow the approach set out in the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (read with the relevant sections of the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy Infrastructure, including that on aviation impacts). Where plans identify areas as suitable for renewable and low-carbon energy development, they should make clear what criteria have determined their selection, including for what size of development the areas are considered suitable.*

"98. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should:

- *not require applicants for energy development to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and*

- *approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should also expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas."*

The NPPF makes it clear that when identifying suitable areas for wind energy development, planning authorities should follow the approach set out in the *National Planning Statement of Renewable Energy Infrastructure* July 2011 (EN-3). This guidance sets out the key considerations for site selection including: predicted wind speed, proximity of site to dwellings, capacity of a site, access, grid connection issues, biodiversity and geological conservation, historic environment impacts, landscape and visual impact, noise and vibration, shadow flicker and traffic and transport issues.

National Planning Practice Guidance

3.6 In March 2014, the Government published web-based planning guidance which replaced the 2013 DCLG publication, *Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy*. The guidance sets out the important role of the planning system in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable.

3.7 The *National Planning Practice Guidance* (NPPG) sets out matters that should be considered when making planning decisions about proposals for wind turbines including, the opinions of local people; assessment of noise impacts; safety; interference with electromagnetic transmissions; impacts on ecology; heritage impacts; shadow flicker and reflected light; energy output; landscape and visual impacts (individual and cumulative); and decommissioning. These are all matters considered in the preparation of this SPD, and will be considered when any planning applications relating to wind energy development are being assessed by North East Lincolnshire Council.

Written Ministerial Statement by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

3.8 In a Written Ministerial Statement on 18th June 2015, the Government announced new considerations to be applied to proposed wind energy development so that, 'local people have the final say on wind farm applications'. Local planning authorities are required to take account of the following statement by the Secretary of State when interpreting the NPPF in their own development plans and when considering planning applications.

"When determining planning applications for wind energy development involving one or more wind turbines, local planning authorities should only grant planning permission if:

- *the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan; and*
- *following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.*

In applying these new considerations, suitable areas for wind energy development will need to have been allocated clearly in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. Maps showing the wind resource as favourable to wind turbines, or similar, will not be sufficient. Whether a proposal has the backing of the affected local community is a planning judgement for the local planning authority."

North East Lincolnshire Local Plan

3.9 The Council's policy relating to wind energy developments is contained in Policy 31 of the adopted Local Plan. Policy 31 applies to proposals for all types of renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure, including biomass and biofuels technologies, energy from waste, solar, geothermal energy, wind turbines, hydropower and micro-generation.

3.10 The main purpose of this SPD is to provide guidance relating to paragraph four of that policy, by explaining:

a. which areas of North East Lincolnshire are considered suitable for on-shore wind energy development, and;
b. the criteria against which proposals requiring planning permission will be assessed.

3.11 The Local Plan policy and this SPD will be material considerations when planning applications for wind energy development are being assessed.

3.12 Policy 31 is set out below:

Policy 31

Renewable and low carbon infrastructure

1. The Council will support opportunities to maximise renewable energy capacity within the Borough and seeks to deliver at least 75MW of installed grid-connected renewable energy by 2032.

2. Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy generating systems will be supported where any significant adverse impacts are satisfactorily minimised and the residual harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. Developments and their associated infrastructure will be assessed on their merits and subject to the following impact considerations, taking account of individual and cumulative effects:

   A. the scale and nature of the impacts on landscapes and townscapes, particularly having regard to the *Landscape Character Assessment* and impact on the setting and scenic beauty of the AONB;

   B. local amenity, including noise, air quality, traffic, vibration, dust and visual impact;

   C. biodiversity, geodiversity and nature conservation, with regard given to the findings of the site and project specific HRA and potential impacts on SPA birds, where appropriate;

   D. the historic environment, including individual and groups of heritage assets;

   E. telecommunications and other networks; including the need for additional cabling to connect to the National Grid, electromagnetic production and interference, and aeronautical impacts such as on radar systems;

   F. highway safety and network capacity;

   G. increasing the risk of flooding; and,

   H. the land, including land stability, contamination, soils resources and loss of agricultural land.

3. Where appropriate, proposals should include provision for decommissioning at the end of their operational life. Where decommissioning is necessary the site should be restored, with minimal adverse impact on amenity, landscape and biodiversity, and opportunities taken for enhancement of these features.

4. Proposals for onshore wind energy development will be permitted if:

   A. the development site is located in one of the following identified broad areas:

      i. **Flat Open Farmland** - south of the settlements of Humberston, New Waltham and Waltham;
      ii. **Wooded Open Farmland** - east of the A18, and east and west of the A1173;
      iii. **Open Farmland** - along the A180 corridor; and,
      iv. **Industrial Landscape** - to the north west and south east of Immingham, and within the South Humber Bank employment zone; or,

   B. located in an area that is identified as potentially suitable for wind energy development in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan; and,

   C. demonstrate that the impacts identified through consultation with the local community have been satisfactorily addressed.

Potentially suitable areas

4.1 The NPPF establishes that, in assessing the likely impacts for renewable energy development when identifying suitable areas and in determining planning applications for such development, planning authorities should follow the approach set out in the *National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure* (read with the relevant sections of the overarching *National Planning Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure*, including that on aviation impacts). Where plans identify areas as suitable for renewable and low carbon development, they should make clear what criteria have determined their selection, including for what size of development the areas are considered suitable.

4.2 A 'Borough-wide' approach was taken to identify broad areas of search which would potentially have the capacity to accommodate all types of wind energy development (small, medium and large). The search areas identified in Policy 31 are intended as a general guide to potential developers as each development will be assessed on its own merits, with detailed consideration of landscape and visual impacts, together with siting, layout and design forming part of the planning application process. The paragraphs below summarise the approach taken to defining these areas.

Landscape character

4.3 The NPPG states that there are no hard and fast rules about how suitable areas for renewable energy should be identified, but notes that landscape character areas could form the basis for considering which technologies at which scale may be appropriate in different types of location.

4.4 The findings of the *Landscape Character Assessment, Sensitivity and Capacity Study*[(2)](LCASCS) were therefore considered. Stage 1 of this study involved the review, refinement and broad assessment of Landscape Types within the Borough as identified in the 2010 *North East Lincolnshire Landscape Character Assessment* (NELLCA), highlighting the key characteristics of each landscape type, condition and character. These landscape type classifications have been used to locate the broad areas as listed in Policy 31 and shown on Figure 4.1 'Areas potentially suitable for onshore wind energy development'.

4.5 The study recognises the pressures for wind energy development across all character areas. Areas categorised as Sloping Farmland and High Farmland overlap with the AONB boundary and the landscape guidelines and management strategies that have been identified for these landscape types conclude that: the location of high or bulky structures (including wind turbines) should be avoided. This view is also reflected in the *Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan (2018-2023)*.

2 FPCR Environment & Design Ltd - Landscape Character Assessment, Sensitivity and Capacity Study (2015).

4.6 Stage 2 of the LCASCS comprised a more detailed assessment focusing on settlements in the Borough. Landscape sub-units were identified and the sensitivity of the sub unit and potential capacity to accommodate development (not use specific) was assessed against a set of criteria. As large parts of the Borough's rural area were excluded from assessment, the findings and conclusions presented at this part of the study have limited application to the identification of broad areas for wind energy.

4.7 In view of the AONB's cherished and high value landscape qualities, and its sensitivity to wind energy development – as evidenced through the LCASCS and Management Plan – it was considered reasonable and appropriate to eliminate these areas from the search

Constraints mapping

4.8 In addition to landscape considerations, there are many international and national designations in the Borough which require significant protection. These sites are designated for their national or international natural heritage value, including, Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Ramsar sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

4.9 The South Humber Bank adjacent to the Humber Estuary represents one of the largest potential development areas in the UK. In recent years there has been significant development interest in the area particularly from the emerging renewable energy industry on the Humber. The Humber Estuary is designated as a Special Area of Conservation, a Special Protection Area, a Ramsar site and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. An estimated 175,000 birds visit the estuary every winter. The Humber is one of the top six estuaries for migratory birds in the UK and one of the top ten in Europe.These designations mean that great care is required when undertaking works which may result in negative impacts on the wildlife interest features of the Estuary. Habitat Mitigation sites have been identified on the South Humber Bank which deliver the appropriate habitat for the birds' functional needs whilst allowing the full economic development of the land to be realised. These sites require significant protection and the Council excluded them from the areas of search.

4.10 The following constraints have therefore been mapped, and in some cases a reasonable buffer has been applied:

- Natura 2000 sites, including a 600m buffer from the SPA;
- Proposed Habitat Mitigation Sites;
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- SNCI;
- Local Wildlife Sites;
- Local Geological Sites;

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments;
- Listed buildings and conservation areas;
- Housing areas (including allocated sites), including a 350m buffer;
- A and B main roads, including a 150m buffer;
- Rail network, including 150m buffer;
- Helicopter main routes from Humberside Airport to the North Sea (flight paths can vary so only designated main routes have been mapped);
- Operational Port Area;
- Resort Area; and,
- Landscape Type 5 (Sloping Farmland) and Landscape Type 6 (High Farmland) (as defined in the LCASCS).

4.11 The purpose of the 'Borough-wide' approach is to identify broad areas of search which would potentially have the capacity to accommodate all types of wind energy development (small, medium and large). The search areas are only intended to be a general guide to potential developers. Each development will need to be assessed on its own merits, with detailed consideration of its landscape and visual impacts, together with siting layout and design. It is possible, depending on locally specific conditions to mitigate some constraints appropriately. This is a matter for consideration at the detailed planning application stage. Overall, Policy 31 of Local Plan proposes a positive approach to supporting all types of renewable energy in the Borough. With the evidence available, the most consistent, effective and robust approach is that each wind energy development would be considered on its merits against the criteria of Policy 31. A number of potential 'areas of search' have been identified (see Figure 4.1 'Areas potentially suitable for onshore wind energy development') where there may be potential to develop wind energy projects.

4.12 An assessment of the key issues set out in Section 6 'Key issues' of this SPD will need to be undertaken as part of any proposed wind turbine development.

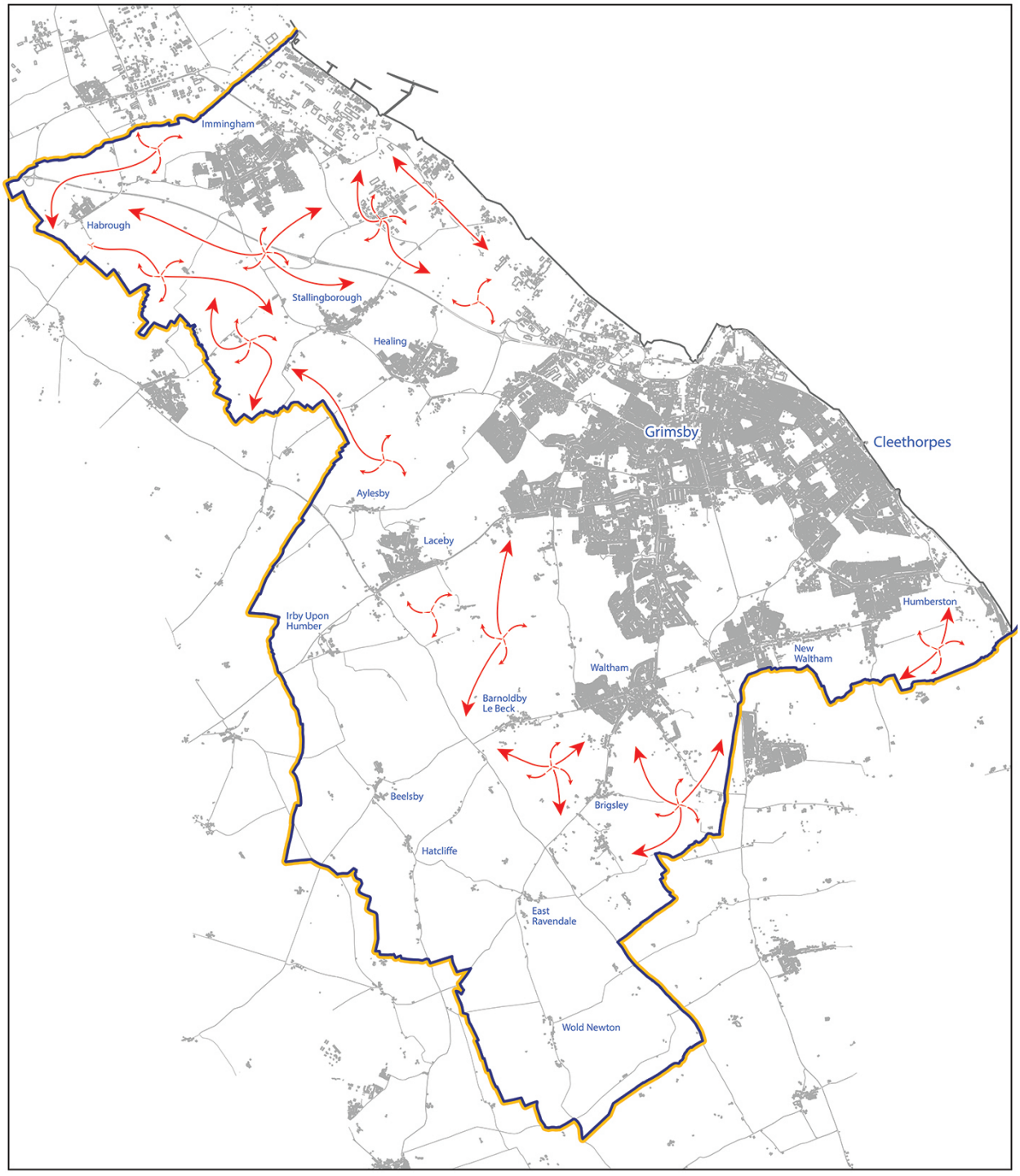

Figure 4.1 Areas potentially suitable for onshore wind energy development

Typical scales of wind turbines

5.1 Wind turbines are rated according to their maximum electrical output in kilowatts (kW) or megawatts (MW). Electricity production is measured in kilowatt hours (kWh) or megawatt hours (MWh). Wind turbines are also defined by their hub height, tip height and the diameter of the rotor blades. There are many different makes and models of onshore wind turbines available. The need for external housing which contain transformers can also vary depending on make and model of wind turbine.

5.2 There are no universally accepted categories to describe the scale of individual wind turbines. Small wind turbines (0-100kW) are commonly single-turbine installations owned by individual homeowners or farmers for on-site capacity consumption. Medium wind projects (100kW-500KW) are larger developments that also supply wholesale energy to the grid and are often investor financed. Most large scale (commercial) turbines are currently being produced in the 1-3MW range. There are considerable variations in turbine heights and outputs depending on the make and manufacture of the machine used. For the purposes of this SPD, the following scales are used:

- Medium and large scale turbines are usually connected to the national grid.
- Small or micro-scale turbines are most commonly deployed as single machines supplying specific buildings or developments (e.g. farm buildings, schools, small businesses, etc.) although they can also be connected to the grid.

Key issues

6.1 In addition to the landscape and constraint mapping there are a number of other factors to consider when considering wind farm projects. This section provides more detail on how the criteria within the Local Plan will be applied in the assessment of future proposals for wind farm and wind turbine development. The guidance in this section covers the following issues:

- Wind speed;
- Residential amenity;
- Landscape and visual impact;
- Noise;
- Traffic and transport;
- Grid connection;
- Biodiversity and geodiversity;
- Historic environment impact;
- Shadow flicker;
- Impact on aviation and electromagnetic interference;
- Public rights of way;
- Flood risk;
- Ancillary infrastructure;
- Site security/lighting;
- Decommissioning.

Wind speed

6.2 The predicted wind resource will be a key consideration for the applicant in identifying a potential site. The electricity generated on the site is directly affected by the wind speed. Wind speed increases with height above the ground and the amount of electricity increases disproportionately with wind speed. This is turn affects the carbon emission savings and the commercial viability of the site. Wind turbines work best in exposed locations, without turbulence cause by obstacles such as trees or buildings. Applicants can install temporary anemometry masts on a site for twelve months or more to ascertain precise onsite wind speeds prior to submitting a wind farm application.

6.3 The Numerical Objective Analysis Boundary Layer (NOABL) wind map is a free resource and gives rough estimates for wind speeds at 10, 20 and 45 metres above the ground. An interactive version of the NOABL wind speed database covering the UK is available on-line (www.rensmart.com/Weather/BERR). The model was applied with a 1km square resolution and takes no account of topography on a small scale or local surface roughness (such as tall crops, stone walls or trees), both of which may have a considerable effect on the wind speed. The data can only be used as a guide and should be followed by on-site measurements for a proper assessment.

6.4 Many of the windiest parts of the Borough lie within the areas of significant protection such as the AONB, the Internationally protected sites and the Habitat Mitigation sites. A policy framework is in place to protect the value of these areas, which limits their potential for wind energy development.

Residential amenity

6.5 In England there are no national minimum separation distances set between wind turbines and housing. However, distance alone does not necessarily determine whether the impact of a proposal is acceptable or not. The NPPG states that local planning authorities should not rule out otherwise acceptable renewable energy developments through inflexible rules on buffer zones or separation distances. Distance plays a part, but only alongside other factors specific to the local context, such as topography, the local environment and nearby land uses. If turbines are of an inappropriate number, scale and proximity to residential properties it is accepted that they can have significant impacts on the occupiers of those dwellings to the extent that they can no longer enjoy living conditions of an acceptable standard.

6.6 The planning system does not provide any specific protection to private views. In general the outlook from each individual property is a private interest and not a public one. However, where a proposed development may affect residents to the extent that their everyday living conditions may be adversely affected to an unacceptable degree, this can be construed as a material consideration in the planning process. In terms of visual effects, this may be the case where views of the proposed development would be dominating to a degree that they are deemed to result in an 'overbearing' effect on the residential amenity of the property. The Planning Portal defines the term 'overbearing' as:

"A term used to describe the impact of a development or building on its surroundings, particularly a neighbouring property, in terms of its scale, massing and general dominating effect."

6.7 An important case in determining the point at which the presence of turbines can make living conditions unacceptable was an appeal decided by David Lavender for a proposal at Carland Cross Wind Farm (Reference: APP/D0840/A/09/2103026). In this case the nearest dwellings were approximately 200 metres and 500 metres from the edge of the turbine field respectively. The inspector concluded that the presence of turbines would be unpleasantly overwhelming and unavoidable from the properties. The property would come to be widely regarded as an unattractive and thus unsatisfactory place in which to live. The test has become widely known as the 'Lavender Test'. In this case, the Inspector also determined that the effects of the turbines would be of a scale sufficient to make a settlement one kilometre from the turbines 'a less satisfactory place in which to live than it is now'. The spacing between the turbines relative to the distance was considered important, as the Inspector felt that it would be unacceptable for the spacing to result in the feeling that the properties

were 'within' the cluster of turbines as opposed to physically detached. The Lavender Test was important in highlighting the significant impact that turbines can have on people's living experience and quality of life.

6.8 Some local authorities are developing their own minimum distances between a wind turbine and housing. Commercial scale wind turbines are large structures and can reach tip heights of 100m plus. Where appropriate, Visual Residential Amenity Studies can be undertaken which present a more detailed appraisal of potential effects to residential receptors identified as likely to be significant and to make a judgement on the degree to which these effects may be considered to affect the residential amenity of the properties in question and their acceptability in terms of the wider planning framework

Landscape and visual impact

6.9 Detailed work on the sensitivity of the landscape to different scales of wind energy development in terms of height and sizes of group is a complex process and has not been undertaken at the time of writing. The "broad areas of search" identified provide an initial indication of the relative landscape sensitivities of different areas to wind energy development. It should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability in landscape terms of an area for a particular development.

6.10 The NELLCA states that planning authorities have an important role to play in the development of wind power, but must balance the requirement for prominent sites with the need to protect landscape quality. There are several landscape principles which selecting sites for wind power generation including:

- Consideration of the design of the structures themselves and the number and layout within each group of structures.
- Consideration of using smaller turbines (but more of them) as opposed to the use of the largest technically possible which is the norm.
- Consideration of local landscape type and its potential to accommodate large vertical structures.
- The impact of skyline development and potential use of background vegetation or ridges.
- Consideration of the zone of visual influence and the possibility of landscape mitigation and integration by off-site planting.

- Attention needs to be given and landscapes of high value such as the Lincolnshire Wolds.

- The need for strategic environmental assessment and the use of professional landscape advice.

6.11 The landscape and visual impacts of wind energy proposals will vary. This will depend on type of development, location and the landscape setting of the proposed development. Landscape effects depend on the existing character of the local landscape, its current quality, how highly it is valued and its capacity to accommodate change. These factors need to be considered in judging the impact of the project on the landscape.

6.12 The most scenic part of the Borough is protected by AONB status. Nationally designated areas such as the AONB have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The *Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023* seeks to ensure that the Wolds retains its unique landscape and special character whilst maintaining and supporting its communities. The Management Plan highlights that there has been an increase in planning applications for wind turbine development on or adjacent to the AONB. The Plan recognises that the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is especially vulnerable to cumulative impacts from medium-large scale developments that lie near the boundary and therefore have the potential to impact upon the panoramic views both from and to the Lincolnshire Wolds, from the neighbouring Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes (to the east) and the Central Lincolnshire Vale to the west. The Management Plan includes a policy (PP7), which ensures a general presumption against wind energy schemes in any location which could cause significant and demonstrably detrimental effects upon the natural beauty and intrinsic characteristics of the AONB. It is for these reasons that the AONB is excluded from the areas identified as being potentially suitable for wind developments.

6.13 In identifying impacts on landscape, considerations include: direct and indirect effects, cumulative impacts and temporary and permanent impacts. When assessing the significance of impacts several criteria should be considered, including the sensitivity of the landscape and visual resource and the magnitude or size of the predicted change. Some landscapes may be more sensitive to certain types of change than others and it should not be assumed that a landscape character area deemed sensitive to one type of change cannot accommodate another type of change.

6.14 In assessing the impact on visual amenity, factors to consider include: establishing the area in which a proposed development may be visible, identifying key viewpoints, the people who experience the views and the nature of the views. The Historic England website[3] provides information on undertaking historic landscape characterisation and how this relates to landscape character assessment.

6.15 Information required to inform landscape and visual impact assessments include the following:

- A base plan of all existing wind farms, consented developments and applications received, showing all schemes within a defined radius of the centre of the proposal under consideration.

- For those existing or proposed wind farms within a defined radius of the proposal under consideration, a plan showing cumulative 'zones of visual influence'. (A zone of visual influence is the area from which a development or other structure is theoretically visible). The aim of the plan should be to clearly identify the zone of visual influence of each wind farm, and those areas from where one or more wind developments are likely to be seen.

- The base plan and plan of cumulative zones of visual influence will need to reflect local circumstances, for example, the areas covered should consider the extent to which factors such as the topography and the likely visibility of proposals in prevailing meteorological conditions may vary.

- Maps of cumulative zones of visual influence are used to identify appropriate locations for visual impact studies. These include locations for simultaneous viability assessments (i.e. where two or more schemes are visible from a fixed viewpoint without the need for an observer to turn their head, and repetitive visibility assessments (i.e. where the observer can see two or more schemes but only if they turn around).

- Sequential effects on visibility occur when an observer moves through the landscape and sees two or more schemes. Common routes through a landscape (e.g. major roads; long distance paths or cycle routes) can be identified as 'journey scenarios' and the proposals impact on them can be assessed.

- Photomontages showing all existing and consented turbines, and those for which planning applications have been submitted, in addition to the proposal under consideration. The photomontages can be annotated to include the dimensions of the existing turbines, the distance from the viewpoint to the different schemes,

3 https://historicengland.org.uk/

the arc of view and the format and focal length of the camera used. Photomontages should also include the proposed development from sensitive receptors.

- At the most detailed level, description and assessment of cumulative impacts may include the following landscape issues: scale of development in relation to landscape character or designations, sense of distance, existing focal points in the landscape, sky lining and sense of remoteness or wildness.

- An assessment of the visual effects on, Scheduled Monuments, driving/recreational routes, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, Public Rights of Way will be requested.

6.16 A range of viewpoints should be chosen which are representative of the issues in the area and are likely to experience significant effects. In choosing viewpoints, applicants should consider the likely effects on residents living, travelling to work on a regular basis and involved in recreation within the area and mode of transport that may be used for example, on foot, train, cycle, train etc.

Noise

6.17 Noise is a key factor in the consideration of separation distances for wind turbine proposals. There are two distinct types of noise generated by turbines, mechanical noise associated with gearbox or generator and aerodynamic noise, produced by the blade moving through the air, which is generally the dominant noise source. All wind turbine or wind farm proposals will require a Noise Assessment. The NPPG states that 'The Assessment and rating of Noise from Wind Farms' (ETSU-R-97)[4] should be used when assessing and rating noise from wind energy developments. The guidance provides a framework for the measurement of wind farm noise and gives indicative noise levels calculated to offer a reasonable degree of protection to the neighbours of wind turbines.

6.18 The recommendations set out in ETSU-R-97 involve applying noise limits at the nearest noise-sensitive locations. The noise levels recommended are determined by a combination of absolute noise limits and noise limits relative to the existing background noise levels around the site at different wind speeds. Separate noise limits apply for day-time and night-time. Noise limits should relate to all the cumulative effect of all wind turbines in the area and any existing turbines should not be considered should not be considered as part of the prevailing background noise.

4 ETSU-R-97 – The Assessment & Rating of Noise from Wind Farms – September 1996.

6.19 In May 2013 the Institute of Acoustics published a Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise[(5)]. The guidance presents current good practice in the application of the ETSU-R-97 assessment methodology for all wind turbine developments above 50kW, reflecting the original principles within ETSU-R-97 and the results of research carried out and experience gained since ETSU-R-97 was published.

6.20 A noise report should be undertaken by a qualified acoustician as part of any wind turbine application. This will enable an assessment of the noise produced by the turbine both on its own and cumulatively with other turbines in the area and whether it will have an adverse effect on the amenity of nearby noise sensitive premises. Noise sensitive receptors are in general, any residential use. However, there will be instances where non-residential uses should be considered, for example, caravan and camp sites and holiday lets in separate ownership. Noise sensitive receptors include developments not yet constructed, with live planning permissions. Live planning permissions will include those applications which have been refused but may still be subject to appeal.

6.21 A site-specific noise impact assessment must provide predicted noise levels at the curtilage of identified noise sensitive properties and, where appropriate, financially involved properties near the proposed location of the turbine. The term 'financial involvement' is used in ETSU-R-97 which allows consideration to be given to increasing the permission margin above background levels to be increased where the '*occupier of the property has some financial involvement in the wind farm*' (paragraph 24). Financially involved properties are usually direct beneficiaries, for example, the occupiers of properties who own the land on which the development is proposed and will receive a direct benefit from the income generated by the turbine. Leasing the land on a long lease or being a shareholder or owner of the development company. Where a property is owned by someone with a financial interest in the development, but is leased to a third party, the occupiers of the property do not have any legal interest in the site and may be protected against amenity intrusions.

Traffic and transport

6.22 The construction of wind projects can have significant short-term impacts on the local road networks. Environmental impacts may result particularly from increases in noise and emissions from road transport. Disturbance caused by traffic and abnormal loads generated during the construction phase will depend on the scale and type of the proposal. Modern wind turbines are large structures and some components, such as the rotor blades, can be abnormal loads. The construction of a wind turbine development will therefore require sufficient access to accommodate such loads.

5 Institute of Acoustics: A Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise – May 2013.

Some individual components of wind turbines can weigh more than 100 tonnes and it is important that all sections of roads and bridges on the proposed delivery route can accommodate the weight of the loads.

6.23 The applicant will be required to provide a Transport Assessment of potential impacts and will be required to show the suitability of the route for construction traffic. Where appropriate, the Transport Assessment should demonstrate the likely impacts of the proposed development on the strategic road network. Where the strategic road network is used to transport turbine components to sit then an abnormal load route assessment should be undertaken. The Transport Assessment should identify the preferred routes to site and any pinch points where mitigation might be required. Swept path analysis should be included.

6.24 Highways England is responsible for the roads in the Borough which are part of the strategic road network (i.e. trunk roads) and should be consulted where any proposed development may affect one of these roads. To mitigate risks to the safety of road users arising from structural or mechanical failure of wind turbines, Highways England normally seeks a setback distance of either the height of the wind turbine plus 50m or height of the turbine multiplied by 1.5, whichever is the lesser distance.

6.25 Applications for wind energy development should consider the impact upon highways and traffic flow of the construction and decommissioning. Once consent has been granted, applicants should liaise with the highway authority regarding the start of the construction and broad timing of deliveries to minimise the disruption to traffic flows. Planning applications will need to demonstrate that site access can be achieved without significant adverse environmental, social or economic impacts. During the construction and future decommissioning phase, the Council will require the preparation of a Traffic Management Plan.

Grid connection

6.26 The capacity of the local grid network to be able to accept the likely output from a proposed wind farm is critical to the technical feasibility of a development and the District Network Operator (DNO) needs to be contacted at an early stage. A control building and a substation will need to be connected to the nearest suitable point on the national grid. The DNO is responsible for establishing the connection between the substation and the grid. This forms part of a separate consenting process. In North East Lincolnshire the DNO is Northern Powergrid.[6]

6.27 Development proposals must provide a broad indication of the grid connection route, with details of underground cables connecting the turbines to the substation. The nature and extent of the connection should be drawn on the site plan. Grid connection

6 https://myservices.northernpowergrid.com/connections/index.cfm.

should avoid areas of high landscape, ecological or archaeological sensitivity. Connection to the grid can cause an accumulation of overhead wiring. If this occurs in sensitive areas, the cumulative impact will need to be assessed.

Biodiversity and geodiversity

6.28 The presence of wildlife, protected species and/or important habitats on and around prospective development sites means that special care needs to be taken when selecting sites and positioning turbines. Development can impact on biodiversity at construction, operation and decommissioning stages. They can arise from any element of the development including the foundations, access roads, moving turbines and ancillary buildings. Several environmental impacts can be generated, for example, on sensitive vegetation and wildlife which may be vulnerable in both ecological and landscape terms and which may not recover easily from construction activity.

6.29 The potentially harmful impacts of wind turbines on ecology arise from the potential disturbance to habitats and species during construction and operation and the risks of bats and birds colliding with the blades. Detrimental effects are less likely with small turbines, although these can still have harmful effects if poorly sited and care should be taken to limit negative effects in all cases.

6.30 Proposals will, therefore, be considered against Local Plan Policy 40 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity'. Where development is necessary, mitigation measures should be used to address any unavoidable adverse impacts, and to improve biodiversity where possible. Consideration will be given to the potential for any proposal to disturb or displace SPA birds for example through the loss of suitable feeding, roosting and loafing sites or have the potential for damage to the Humber Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

6.31 The NPPF (paragraph 118) emphasises that if harm resulting from development cannot be avoided (through locating the development on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated or as a last resort compensated for, then planning permissions should be refused.

6.32 The presence or potential presence of a legally protected species is an important consideration when looking at wind turbine development. If there is evidence that protected species are present on site or will be affected by a development, it is necessary to take steps to establish their presence.

6.33 Ecological surveys should be undertaken before a planning application can be determined. Careful consideration should be given to the seasonality of the surveys required as the need to undertake a survey can have a significant impact on the preparation, submission and determination of a planning application. The Council will expect mitigation to be integrated into the planning and design of the environment.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would be likely to have an adverse impact on protected species unless it can be justified with reference to relevant species legislation.

6.34 Evidence suggests that there is a risk of collision between moving turbine blades and birds and/or bats. Wind energy developments have the potential to impact on birds with some species being particularly vulnerable or sensitive to wind developments. The site identification process should consider any likely impact on birds and undertake any surveys if required. Likewise, wind energy has the potential to impact on bats. It is therefore important to assess local bat populations and their use of the proposed site for foraging and migrating. The siting of the turbine is key to avoiding impacts on bats, for example by distancing the turbine from bat foraging features such as wetland and hedges.

6.35 Natural England, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Bat Conservation Trust provide guidance on ecological surveys as well as mitigation and enhancement for protected species. Development proposals should consider the opportunity for ecological enhancement.

6.36 Where a proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of a designated 'European Site' (also known as Natura sites) an Appropriate Assessment will be required under the Habitats Directive.

6.37 There are opportunities for wind turbine development to introduce environmental improvement and mitigate climate change through the restoration of degraded ecosystems. This can be achieved through changes to land management practices or through active restoration as part of the scheme.

Historic environment impacts

6.38 The historic environment includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, landscaped and planted or managed flora. Those elements of the historic environment that hold value to this and future generations because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called 'heritage assets'. Heritage assets are a finite resource that, once damaged or destroyed cannot be replaced. A heritage asset may be any building, monument, site, place, area or landscape, or any combination of these. The sum of the heritage interests that a heritage asset holds is referred to as its significance.

6.39 There are heritage assets with archaeological interest that are not currently designated as scheduled monuments, but which are demonstrably of equivalent significance. These include:

- Those which have yet to be formally assessed for designation.
- Those which have been assessed as being worthy of designation but which the Secretary of State has decided not to designate.
- Those which are incapable of being designated by being outside the scope of the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*.

6.40 As the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence, but also from its setting, careful consideration should be given to the impact of wind turbines on such assets. Depending on their scale, design and prominence, a wind turbine within the setting of a heritage asset may cause substantial harm to the significance of the asset. The absence of designation for such heritage assets does not indicate lower significance. The potential impact of a wind turbine on the historic environment can be defined in two ways:

- Direct physical impact on identified features of historic interest, including previously undiscovered archaeology. This can be through ground disturbance associated with foundations, trenching for cable runs, fencing and temporary haul routes etc. Generally, proposals should be located away from known archaeological sites.

- Visual impact on the setting of historic assets. Every heritage asset has a setting, defined as the surroundings in which it is experienced and elements of which can make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset. The extent and significance of a setting and the impact of development upon it are not fixed as they change over time and need to be assessed on a case by case basis.

6.41 Where a development site includes, or the available evidence suggests it has the potential to include, heritage assets with an archaeological interest, the applicant should carry out appropriate desk-based assessment and, where such desk-based research is in sufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation. Where proposed development will affect the setting of a heritage asset, representative visualisations may be necessary to explain the impact. The applicant should ensure that the extent of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of any heritage assets affected can be adequately understood from the application and supporting documents. Any assessment should be undertaken by a suitably qualified professional.

Shadow flicker

6.42 The NPPG suggests that under certain conditions, the sun may pass behind the rotors of a wind turbine and create a shadow over neighbouring properties. When blades rotate, the shadow flickers on and off, an effect known as shadow flicker. Problems caused by shadow flicker are rare and only properties within 130 degrees either side of north, relative to the turbines can be affected in the UK. The likelihood of this occurring will depend on a range of factors including direction, distance, turbine height, time of year and prevailing wind direction. It can only occur within ten rotor diameters of a turbine.

6.43 If a wind turbine is proposed within ten rotor diameters of a building, an analysis of the effect of the shadow flicker must be undertaken and submitted with the planning application. Where a proposal could give rise to shadow flicker, the analysis must quantify the impact and where necessary, propose mitigation measure to reduce the effects to an acceptable level. Modern wind turbines can be controlled to avoid shadow flicker and mitigation can also be secured using a planning condition requiring the provision and operation of a system to stop the turbine rotating when shadow flicker occurs.

6.44 The rotation of turbine blades can cause flashes of light to be reflected and this effect can be reduced or eliminated using appropriate blade colours and finishes. When siting wind turbines, consideration should be given to shadow cast.

6.45 Blade rotation and movement has the potential to cause distraction for sport and recreation users and may be a material consideration when assessing the planning balance of wind turbine proposals. The movement of wind turbine blades, potential noise and amplitude, shadow cast and shadow flicker has the potential to distract participants in formal sports.

Impact on aviation and electromagnetic interference

6.46 Wind turbines are a potential threat to air traffic safety because of both the risk of collision and the possibility of interference with radar operation.

6.47 Air traffic safety problems can be caused for low-flying aircraft, near an aerodrome or military airfield. In addition, wind turbines can cause interference with ground-based air traffic control radar and aircraft landing instruments. Developers should engage with aviation stakeholders including the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)[7], Ministry of Defence (MOD)[8] and the National Air Traffic Service (NATS)[9] as early as possible

7 For further information or to contact the CAA please see their website at: www.caa.co.uk.
8 For further information or to contact the MOD regarding windfarms please see their website at: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence.
9 For further information or to contact NATS please see their website at: http://www.nats.aero/windfarms.

in the planning process. Wind turbine development will not be supported in locations which are known to have adverse impacts on instrument landing systems, navigational aids, radar systems and air traffic control.

6.48 Wind turbines can potentially affect electromagnetic transmissions (e.g. radio, television and phone signals). Electromagnetic Interference (EMI) is any type of interference that can potentially disrupt or interfere with the effective performance of an electronic device. Wind turbines can potentially disrupt electromagnetic signals used in telecommunications, navigation and radar services. The degree of interference will depend on:

- The location of the wind turbine between receiver and transmitter.
- Characteristics of the rotor blades.
- Characteristics of the receiver.
- Signal frequency.
- The radio wave propagation in the local atmosphere.

6.49 Interference can be produced by the wind turbine tower, rotating blades and generator. Tower and blades may obstruct, reflect or refract the electromagnetic waves. Interferences to mobile radio services are usually negligible. Interferences to TV signals may occur of the viewer is in the shadow or even within a few kilometres of a wind farm if the aerial is pointing through the wind farm. Effects have been minimized by the substitution of synthetic materials instead of metal blades. However, when wind turbines are installed close to dwellings, TV interference has proven difficult to rule out.

6.50 Microwaves can be affected by reflection, diffraction or blocking if turbines are in the line of sight of the transmitting or receiving station. Siting wind turbines away from radio and microwave signal corridors is the obvious solution, but in some cases, it may be possible to re-route the signal around the development. This is usually undertaken at the developer's expense. The operators of the electromagnetic links typically require 100m clearance each side of the line of sight from the swept area of turbine blades, although individual consultation is necessary to identify each organisation's safeguarding distance.

6.51 Effects on links can usually be resolved through the careful siting of wind turbines. OFCOM acts as a central point of contact for identifying specific consultees relevant to the site. Consultation with the Joint Radio Company (JRC) via OFCOM at an early stage of the project is recommended.

Public rights of way

6.52 Legislation defines Public Rights of Way include footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic. There is no statutory separation distance between Public Rights of Way and wind turbines. However, to ensure public safety and prevent significant detrimental impacts on the amenity of users of Public Rights of Way, it is expected that no wind turbine blades will oversail a Public Right of Way.

6.53 The British Horse Society (BHS) has published guidance on wind turbines and horses. It suggests that a separation distance of 200m or three times blade tip height (whichever is the greater) will be required between a turbine and any route used by horses or a business with horses. The BHS acknowledges that the minimum separation distance may not be appropriate in all situations and a blanket policy for all sites may be excessively restrictive.

6.54 Wind turbines are designed to withstand high winds and to shut down when wind speeds and to shut down when wind speeds increase beyond the design speed, or when ice forms on the blades. Experience indicates that properly designed and maintained wind turbines are a safe technology.

Flood risk

6.55 The NPPF states that inappropriate development in areas at risk from flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. It states that proposals that are in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided, and where proposals come forward, it should pass both the 'sequential test' and the 'exception test'.

6.56 When assessing all development proposals in areas of flood risk, the broad approach of assessing, avoiding, managing and mitigating flood risk will be followed. Wind turbines are classed as essential infrastructure in flood risk terms. Developments that are essential infrastructure are normally considered to be compatible uses within flood zone 1 and 2. Proposals within flood zone 3 should pass both the sequential test and the exception test. Further technical guidance which may assist applicants in addressing development and flood risk can be found in the *National Planning Practice Guidance*. Wind turbine proposals should avoid areas which are likely to be affected by flooding or if the development would increase the likelihood of flooding elsewhere.

6.57 If the wind turbine will feed directly into the national grid, it is important to notify the Environment Agency of the details of the route of the underground apparatus where this is required.

Groundwater protection

6.58 Development of this nature is likely to include works that carry a risk to groundwater quality and resource. These include piling or other foundation designs/ investigation boreholes/ trenching and dewatering. These can have an unacceptable impact on environmental features supported by groundwater such as wetlands, ponds and watercourses and may derogate existing protected licensed water supplies, or lead to deterioration in groundwater quality.

6.59 Promoters will be expected (via the environmental impact assessment process) to identify all the potential sources and risks of pollution to groundwater and apply the best available techniques to mitigate the risks against the pollution of groundwater.

6.60 The Environment Agency (EA) should be fully involved in the scheme development to mitigate groundwater risks via the Environment Permitting Regime where applicable. It is in the interests of the developer to engage with the EA as early as possible in this process.

6.61 Proposals likely to involve brownfield land will require an appropriate site investigation in line with the EA/Defra Contaminated Land Report 11 which sets out Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination.

Ancillary infrastructure

6.62 Details of all accompanying infrastructure with wind turbine development should be submitted with applications. This is likely to include the following:

- Access to the site and on-site tracks. It may be necessary to create a new access into a field or to widen an existing field entrance. If a permanent access/maintenance track is created, this will require planning permission. Service vehicles should can service these facilities without the need to construct access tracks. The installation of additional access tracks should certainly be kept to an absolute minimum and where they need to be provided, permeable tracks should be used, and localized sustainable drainage methods (SUDS) utilised to control any run-off.

- A temporary construction compound and lay down area for the major turbine components.

- A concrete foundation pad for each turbine and an area of hard standing next to each turbine to act as a base for cranes during turbine erection. Any site levelling works necessary to facilitate a wind turbine development should be discussed at the pre-application stage and detailed within any planning application.

Site security/lighting

6.63 The use of lighting should be minimised, particularly in rural locations. If lighting is required for aviation purposes, infra-red lighting should be used to minimise visual impacts at night.

Decommissioning

6.64 Planning permissions for wind turbines are normally time-limited. To ensure that structure is removed after their operational life, conditions relating to decommissioning will be applied to planning permission for wind energy projects. Such conditions would normally require the land to be restored to its previous condition and a decommissioning scheme will be required as part of any planning application. As such, any development must be temporary and capable of being removed from the landscape to enable full restoration of the site to its original state once the installation is decommissioned.

6.65 Each case is different depending on the size and geography of the development. The concrete foundations will need to be dug out to a certain depth to ensure that the use of the site, typically for agriculture can continue. Depending on the scale of development it may be appropriate to negotiate and secure the provision of a Section 106 legal agreement to cover the cost of decommissioning and/or restoration of the site.

Pre-application community consultation

7.1 From 17 December 2013, pre-application consultation with local communities has become compulsory for the "more significant onshore wind applications" by the *Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure and section 62A Applications (England) (Amendment) Order 2013*. This is for onshore wind development involving more than two turbines or any turbine with a hub height exceeding 15m height. The requirements for pre-consultation are set out in full in section 61W of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*:

- The person must publicise the proposed application in such manner as the person reasonably considers is likely to bring the proposed application to the attention of most the persons who live at, or otherwise occupy, premises near the proposed application.
- The person must consult each specified person about the proposed application.
- Publicity under subsection (2) must -

a. Set out how the person ("P") may be contacted by persons wishing to comment on, or collaborate with P on the design of, the proposed development, and;

b. Give such information about the proposed timetable for the consultation as is sufficient to ensure that persons wishing to comment on the proposed development may do so in good time.

7.2 Once this pre-consultation exercise has been carried out, the developer needs to show, when applying for planning permission, how they complied with the pre-consultation requirement, set out any responses that they received and show how they have taken account of these responses.

7.3 The government intended that this would give communities the chance to express their views at an earlier stage and to be able to influence the proposals.

Pre-application advice

8.1 The Council offers a comprehensive pre-application advice service[10] which developers are encouraged to use. This enables applicants to find out whether the Council is likely to support an application, before committing to further work and expense. It also means that we can work with you to reduce the likelihood of the need for changes to the proposal once an application has been submitted.

10 https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/planning-and-development/planning-applications/get-pre-application-advice/.

Environmental Impact Assessment screening and scoping

9.1 Wind energy proposals above certain size thresholds require Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under EIA Regulations which apply the EU's *Environmental Impact Assessment Directive 85/337/EEC as amended by 97/11/EC and 2003/35/EC*.

9.2 The need for EIA is established through the screening process. Whilst the Council will screen all planning applications as part of their validation process, applicants are encouraged to request a screening opinion prior to submitting a planning application or as part of the pre-application process. Establishing the need for EIA prior to submission of a planning application generally reduces the time taken for its determination.

9.3 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) may be necessary as a parallel but separate assessment even when EIA is being carried out. Or it could be that a development is not deemed to be 'EIA development' but still needs a HRA.

Document Availability

If you would like to receive this document in any other language or in another format such as large print, Braille or on audiotape, please contact:

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