

A Scoping Opinion by Teesdale District Council to Arcus Renewable Energy Consulting Ltd, working on behalf of Bolsterstone Innovative Energy (Woodland) Ltd, as part of a prerequisite Environmental Impact Assessment for a proposed windfarm, comprising four wind turbines, at Crake Scar (near Woodland), County Durham.

This Scoping Opinion provides the necessary information that is required in order to direct the EIA consultants which environmental issues are most important in the view of the Local Planning Authority and statutory consultees.

It is recommended that the Council adopt this Scoping Opinion under the

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)

(England and Wales) Regulations 1999 as amended

Determined as Recommended by:

..... *G. Hall* Date *9/1/09*

By or On Behalf of the Interim Development Control Manager



Proposed Wind Farm at Crake Scar (near Woodland)
County Durham

SCOPING OPINION OF TEESDALE DISTRICT
COUNCIL

1.0 Introduction

This is a comprehensive formal scoping opinion as to the information that the applicants are required to include in the Environmental Statement they will prepare to accompany the anticipated planning application for the development of a windfarm, comprising four wind turbines, wind turbine foundations, access tracks, meteorological mast, control building and grid connection, at Crake Scar, near Woodland, County Durham.

The overall height of the turbines would be up to 115 metres, with a hub height of 74 metres and a rotor diameter of 82 metres. An indicative turbine layout had been submitted with the scoping report.

The site is located to the north east of Woodland, with the boundary of the site approximately 100m from the nearest residential dwelling in Woodland and 500m

2.0 Screening

This development requires Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Schedule II of the Environmental Assessment Regulations. This process will primarily be undertaken by the Development Control Officer in receipt of the Planning Application.

3.0 Statutory provisions

It is anticipated that the EIA will encompass:

- A detailed description of the proposed development, comprising information about the design, scale and size of the development
- Data necessary to identify and assess the main effects which the development is likely to have on the environment.
- A description of the likely significant effects, direct and indirect, on the environment of the development.
- Where significant adverse effects are identified, a description of the mitigation measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce or remedy those effects.
- A non-technical summary of the information provided above.

The information required on the site and Environmental Impacts is set out below in tabular form. The table includes the relevant and appropriate information provided by consultees. The full text of the responses made by the consultees and their requirements can be found in a separate appendix to this document.

GENERAL	OPINION
Baseline for effects studies	The EIA must identify the effect of the development based upon thorough assessment of baseline conditions.
Spatial extent of studies	The study area should not be limited to particular local authority areas and should enable the full extent of significant effects to be established, locally, regionally and globally.
Temporal extent of studies	Construction, operation and decommissioning or further land use change.

PLANNING POLICY OVERVIEW	
<p>PPS1 and Planning and Climate Change Supplement; PPS7; PPS9; PPG13; PPG15; PPG16; PPG17; PPS22; PPS23; and PPS24.</p> <p>Development Plan: Teesdale District Local Plan 2002; Durham County Structure Plan 1991; RPG1 and the Regional Spatial Strategy</p> <p>Other planning guidance as relevant</p> <p>Other local and regional strategies, e.g. R.E.S.</p>	<p>Sustainability appraisal required</p> <p>Assessment of proposal in the context of the wind energy development capacity study being undertaken by Arup Associates on behalf of the North East Assembly.</p>
LANDSCAPE, VISUAL IMPACT AND RECREATION	
<p>Durham County Council Landscape section</p> <p>Natural England</p>	<p>Cumulative impact of other potential sites in the vicinity to be included and explicitly dealt with in the consideration of alternatives, including turbine models and sizes.</p> <p>Assessment of impact on the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to be a key consideration</p> <p>More detailed consideration to be given in consultation with the local planning authority as to the selection of viewpoints to be assessed. These should include a sufficient number of both "important" and "representative" viewpoints to assess impacts on character of landscape, on residential amenity, on the special character and quality of the AONB, and on any individually sensitive receptors such as Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.</p> <p>Assessment of viewpoints by photomontage or wirelines to be determined in consultation with the local planning authority. Photomontages to be carried out in accordance with SNH guidance.</p> <p>EIA must include a cumulative impact assessment to include other proposals at scoping stage</p> <p>Potential impacts from Zone of Visual Influence on North Pennines Area of</p>

	assessment of impact. Survey work to be carried out by surveyor with experience of County Durham habitats.
ORNITHOLOGY	
Natural England	Impact of proposals on bird flight lines, breeding and wintering populations. Bird surveys to be undertaken at appropriate times of year to address different scenarios and impacts
HYDROLOGY AND HYDROGEOLOGY	
	An evaluation of the impact of the proposal and future use of the site on the hydrology and hydrogeology of the area and associated ecosystems, having regard to existing water courses and water bodies.
CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY	
Teesdale District Council Conservation Officer	Assessment of both direct and indirect effects on Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and important hedgerows.
Durham County Council Archaeology section	The usual sources of information should be accessed, plus a walk over survey should be conducted. Depending on the results of the assessment some further works may be required pre-determination
NOISE	
Teesdale District Council Environmental Health	Assessment of noise to include effects during both operation and construction phases. Assessment of noise to be carried out in accordance with guidance document ETSU-R-97, The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms.
EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE	
	Assessment of direct and indirect impacts on utilities and telecommunications, including electromagnetic interference.
SHADOW FLICKER AND REFLECTIVITY	
	Evaluation of the potential shadow flicker effects and mitigation measures to be carried out.

SOCIO-ECONOMICS	
	<p>Assessment of impact on agriculture/loss of agricultural land.</p> <p>Assessment for local employment, during construction and operation phases.</p> <p>Assessment of site safety both during the construction and operation phases.</p>
TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT AND ACCESS	
<p>Highways Agency - the planning application and EIA must provide information regarding the commencement and completion of the construction programme. The EIA must include both trip generation and cumulative impact information.</p> <p>Durham County Council Highways</p> <p>Durham County Council Rights of Way</p> <p>Natural England</p>	<p>A detailed analysis of the proposed route from Junction 58 of the A1(M), including any proposed route from a port facility.</p> <p>Vehicle trip generation associated with both the construction and operational phases of the windfarm must be provided and assessed. A comparison with windfarm sites of a similar type should be provided to ascertain the likely level of trips and their distribution.</p> <p>If the development would produce more than 30 two-way link trips or 30 directional slip road trips on the Strategic Road Network, capacity assessments must be undertaken for the relevant junctions.</p> <p>If the construction phase of the development would coincide with the construction and other phases of other developments, the EIA must include an assessment of the potential cumulative impacts.</p> <p>Primary traffic generation is likely to be during construction phase. An assessment of practicability of route options during construction phase must be undertaken. This must include a swept –path analysis of junctions.</p> <p>Repositioning of turbines 2 and 3 be assessed to allow 200m exclusion zone from public bridleway No 42. Potential for access tracks to be used as permissive routes for the 25 year operational period of the windfarm to be assessed.</p> <p>Assessment of effects on access to the countryside, including rights of way and</p>

	<p>Open Access land, and its enjoyment for recreation.</p> <p>Consideration of opportunities for improved or new public access provision, including linking to existing public rights of way and providing new routes and interpretation.</p>
AIR AND CLIMATE	
	Assessment of the impact on greenhouse gas emissions.
PUBLIC CONSULTATION	
Additional consultation should be carried out as listed	<p>Additional consultation to be carried out as part of EIA preparation:</p> <p>Local horse riders</p> <p>North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership and North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority</p> <p>The Coal Authority in respect of any former mineral workings</p>
OTHER	
	Proposals for decommissioning the windfarm at the end of 25 years and proposals for site restoration.
INTERRELATIONSHIP	OPINION
	Details on relationships of above factors including primary and secondary interactions.

It should be noted that the fact that the Local Planning Authority has adopted and issued this opinion in relation to the scope of an EIA, shall not preclude the Authority from subsequently requiring the developer to submit further information as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment or any future planning application.

4.0 List of consultees

Durham County Council:

Neil Thompson – Highways Engineer
Candace Wood – Design and Conservation
Ged Lawson – Landscape
Lee White – Archaeology
Michelle Nolan – Rights of Way
Mike Hein-Hartmann – Conservation Officer seconded to TDC

Evenwood and Barony Parish Council*
Hamsterley Parish Council*
Lynesack and Softley Parish Council
Langleydale and Shotton Parish Council*
Cockfield Parish Council*
South Bedburn Parish Council*
Woodland Parish Council*

Highways Agency
Environment Agency*
Northumbrian Water
Natural England
English Heritage *
Durham Bat Group/Wildlife Trust
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds*
Civil Aviation Authority*

* No formal response received