

The Council RECOMMENDS refusal of the application on the following grounds:

1. **The proposed turbines, by reason of their size and location, would neither respect, retain nor enhance the character of the local landscape, contrary to Development Control Policy NE/4 of the approved Local Development Framework.**

The local landscape is characterised by the presence of rolling ridges and the river valley. It forms a zone of transition between the flatter tablelands of the North East Essex area where the Granta and its tributaries rise, and the lower landscape of the Granta and Cam valleys to the north of the A505. It is a distinctively attractive but relatively fragile landscape which has already been affected to a limited degree by the presence of electricity pylons, and by local agriculture-related enterprises which have particular reasons for being located in the vicinity of the village.

2. **The proposed turbines, by reason of their size and location, would damage the distinctiveness of the individual landscape character of the area within which they would be located, contrary to Development Control Policy NE/4 of the approved Local Development Framework.**

The Granta Valley is a major feature of the East Anglian chalkland character area identified in the Local Development Framework in accordance with Policy ENV2 of the Regional Spatial Strategy. The ridges on either side of the mid-Granta valley, the ridge on which the turbines would be located and the Rivey ridge, are the most significant pair of valley ridges in the county and can be observed from a wide area. The quality of the local landscape has not been significantly compromised by the existing pylons, given their limited height and static nature.

If permission is granted a condition should be imposed requiring the various components of the turbines to be finished in a colour which will minimise their impact on the landscape.

3. **The proposed turbines, by reason of their size and location, would be readily visible from many points within the village conservation area, the only conservation area designated as “Outstanding” within South Cambridgeshire, and from within the curtilage of a large number of the 123 listed buildings within the parish boundaries. The development would damage, and not preserve or enhance, listed buildings and their settings and would adversely affect the appearance and appreciation of the outstanding conservation Area. Approval of the application in those circumstances would be contrary to the advice set out in paragraph 11 of PPS 22, Renewable Energy.**

The Parish Council notes that the photo-montages prepared by the applicant are generally taken from outside the village envelope and requests that an independent assessment is commissioned of the possible impact of the proposals on the Conservation Area, particularly in the vicinity of significant listed buildings. The

setting of the Linton High Street conservation area, with its 75 listed buildings is particularly important and it is believed that full turbine heads will be seen in this area. Whilst Local Plan Policy EN30 has been formally superseded, pending new guidance within the LDF, the spirit and principles of EN30 should be applied to this application, namely that the application should be accompanied by sufficient details to allow the impact of the proposal to be assessed. The application fails to do so.

4. **The proposed turbines, particularly by reason of the creation of low frequency noise and blade flicker, are likely to damage the programme of the Linton Zoo which has for many years been a leading centre for the breeding of rare and endangered species from a variety of habitats around the world.**

The Linton Zoo is also a major tourist attraction and any development which risks endangering the long-term success and popularity of the Zoo is liable to damage the local economy of the village, particularly through the loss of employment opportunities. The Council asks that the District Council obtains technical advice from a recognised national body. It does not appear from the material produced by the applicants that they have appreciated the full stature of the Zoo as a breeding centre.

If permission is granted, a condition should be imposed that if the Zoo subsequently detects that the operation of the wind farm is causing adverse effects on its work and animals, its operation should be required to cease immediately until those problems are satisfactorily addressed.

5. **The proposed turbines are likely to generate noise which will have an unacceptable adverse impact on an area of countryside which is important for countryside recreation contrary to Development Control Policy NE/15 of the approved Local Development Framework.**

The proposed turbines would be close to public bridleway No. 7 which forms one of the major routes between the Cam and Granta valleys, particularly for horses. The British Horse Society recommends a minimum distance of 3 x turbine height between a bridleway and a turbine (formerly 200m). One of the turbines would be within 100 m of the bridleway and four less than 3 x turbine height away.

It is also understood that the Countryside Services Team of the County Council have expressed concern over the use of the bridleway as a haul road. The views of the British Horse Society regarding suitable surfacing material should be sought and if permission is granted a condition requiring the material to be one approved by the Society should be imposed.

In addition the Icknield Way, which links two national long distance trails, runs parallel to the Bridleway 7 and its enjoyment would be measurably reduced by the close proximity of the turbines. The local footpath network is also used by many visitors to the area for shorter distance walks because of its attractiveness and easy access by private car and frequent public transport links.

6. **The proposed turbines are likely to generate noise which will have an unacceptably adverse impact on the environment of existing development contrary to Development Control Policy NE/15 of the approved Local Development Framework.**

The Parish Council acknowledges that although the proposed turbines would meet than the advised minimum separation distance from residential development generally it asks the District Council to check by measurement whether any properties are within 700m of any proposed turbines.

The Parish Council also has the following specific concerns:

- the applicants have failed to demonstrate that their analysis of noise effects complies with the methodology advised in the 1997 ETSU report. The analysis should also be shown to encompass differing atmospheric conditions, times of day and season.
- the Parish Council is aware that in a small proportion of cases, the ETSU methodology has failed to adequately estimate the noise consequences of turbines in particular locations, and existing impacts, including television reception, demonstrate that the local geography possesses unusual characteristics. In the case of Linton, the village is downwind of the prevailing wind which would pass the turbines towards the village, which is encircled by higher ground within its river valley
- the turbines would be only a short distance beyond the recommended minimum distance for pupils studying at the Village College (comprehensive school) and the Linton Granta (special needs) school, for whom peace and quiet when studying is important
- the local community and those schools are already subject to significant noise from the A1307 and the Camgrain drying and grain cooling equipment by reason of their location within the valley. The noise is continuous throughout the day and night, particularly in the case of the Camgrain site at certain times of the year, which site has been the subject of complaint. The District Council should ensure that the interrelationship between existing noise sources and the proposed turbines is adequately investigated

The Parish Council considers that an independent study addressing all these issues should be commissioned and no permission granted unless the report demonstrates that concerns regarding noise are not well-founded or can be adequately addressed by the imposition of conditions.

The Parish Council also requests the local planning authority to commission a study into the possible effect of blade flicker on the large number of children at the Granta School suffering from epilepsy and not to grant permission unless the report demonstrates that the health of those children will not be put at risk.

7. **The proposed turbines will create an unacceptable danger to the safe movement of traffic using the A1307.**

The turbines will create fixated views for drivers travelling westbound on the A1307, particularly in the vicinity of the junction with the Horseheath Road and Bartlow Road junctions in Linton, and eastbound from the Hildersham junction to the Camgrain junction. The A1307, particularly the section between the boundary with Suffolk and the junction with the A11, is a particularly busy road with a very poor safety record; there are many hazards and high peak traffic flows. There have been 29 fatal accidents along this stretch of road during the past 12 years, including 4 in the vicinity of the Horseheath Road and Bartlow Road junctions in Linton, and 3 between the Hildersham junction and the end of dual carriageway to the east of the Camgrain junction. The Hildersham junction requires pedestrians to cross three lanes of traffic to access the westbound bus stop.

In the event planning permission is granted, conditions should be imposed to ensure adequate notice of temporary road and footpath and bridleway closures and arrangements for diverted traffic along appropriate roads.

8. **The parish is in an area which is noted for its unusually poor television and radio reception, for reasons of local geography. Many residents already use high powered aerials to obtain adequate reception. The proposed turbines lie directly between the aerial providing television to the village, Sandy Heath, and the village. Evidence has been submitted by the applicant to demonstrate that the turbines may further degrade the quality of reception.**

The Parish Council notes the proposal of the applicant to look at providing technical assistance, including satellite services, if proved necessary. However, a significant number of houses are in the conservation area and/or are listed, so that the ability to provide satellite coverage is wholly or partly prevented by other planning controls. The Applicant refers to cable connectivity, but there is no cable connection in the village and the proposal to provide a connection was abandoned some years ago. These matters should be addressed the satisfaction of the local planning authority before any permission is granted.

9. **The proposed turbines may have an adverse effect on the ecology and wildlife of the area in which they would be located contrary to the principles contained in Development Control Policy NE/15 of the approved Local Development Framework.**

The Council requests that planning permission will not be granted unless the local planning authority is satisfied that proper studies have been submitted or commissioned which demonstrate that any such concerns are not well-founded.

10. **The proposed turbines are likely to create a hazard for air traffic flying by Visual Flight Rules to and from Duxford airfield.**

The nature and location of controlled airspace for commercial air traffic results in the use of the A1307 corridor by light air traffic working to VFR. The presence of the turbines is likely to cause a hazard to such traffic and lead to the abandonment of the normal “right hand rule” along the A1307 with adverse safety effects.

The Parish Council additionally requests that permission is not granted unless the requirements of commercial and military traffic control are shown to be met.

11. **The applicants have failed to evaluate this site against alternative sites which may be available, or to demonstrate that there are no alternative sites. Alternatively, if they have evaluated this site against alternative sites, they have failed to set out why this site will cause less damage to acknowledged interests of importance than those other sites which have been considered.**
  
12. **If permission is granted the Parish Council would wish that suitable conditions be imposed requiring the closure and removal of the turbines and associated equipment if it becomes apparent during operation that the turbines are unable to operate without causing damage to the interests identified in paragraphs 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10 above, in addition to the normal conditions regarding its decommissioning at the end of its projected operational life.**