

LINTON WIND FARM UPDATE

I would just like to bring you all up to date with the news of the proposed wind farm over the past year.

The application covers 1 turbine in Uttlesford and 7 in South Cambs; Uttlesford turned the application down by a margin of 9-2. South Cambs had asked the developer for additional information, but Enertrag were unwilling to cooperate, and appealed against both applications on the grounds of non-determination inside the statutory period of 16 weeks in the case of South Cambs.

They said that they would rather go to appeal, and were quoted as saying “These matters should never be determined by local authorities as they do not have the expertise to handle them”.

In the meantime, a plan for 13 turbines at Wadlow has been approved at appeal by the Secretary of State.

Our Planning Inquiry started in early Feb this year, and has run for four weeks, covering the impact on landscape, the cultural heritage (listed buildings and conservation areas), ecology and footpaths and rights of way and aviation.

Around 50 local residents spoke with some passion to give their own views to the Planning Inspectors – all but one were against the development.

NATS (UK Airspace Radar) have maintained a very robust objection to the plans, and said that this is the worst location for a wind farm they have seen. They manage to accommodate around 99% of all applications, so they are not easily moved to object. The turbines would be visible to radar from Stansted and Debden, at a location where traffic to and from Stansted and Luton airports converge.

The inquiry has now been adjourned until September 6th, when the issue of noise from the turbines will be covered. Linton Parish Council will also present evidence they are commissioning on the impact on the A1307 and Linton Zoo will be represented.

We expect to have the result of the inquiry around the end of October. It is not possible to say how it will fall, but we know that we have given our best efforts at getting it refused.

This all comes at a cost. Legal and professional costs so far have been around £60,000, which has all been funded by private donations, and many thanks to those of you here who have put their hands in their pockets.

We applied for what is known as Rule 6 status, which means we can present our own evidence, and cross examine that produced by the developer. This means that we have had to hire a barrister. Our barrister has proved to be very good, but he's not cheap.

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With the inquiry now running on to at least 6 weeks, against the initial forecast of 4, our legal fees are going to be increased by at least £15,000. We urgently need help in meeting these additional expenses.

Please see our website, or contact me, Sally Hamilton or any of the committee if you can help in any way, large or small.

Finally I should stress that none of the committee have charged anything for the huge amount of time that we have put into this campaign.

Roger Shaw
Stop Linton Wind Farm