

Stop Linton Wind Farm



Dear Supporter

Over the past two years the SLWF Action Group and its members have campaigned vigorously for the protection of our local environment and quality of life. The local people have spoken out loudly against the wind turbines. Linton Parish Council's survey showed 77 per cent of residents were against the development, and the 12 Parish Councils and two District Councils affected by the turbines voted against the application. SCDC confirmed at its hearing that it received in excess of 1,300 objections, but only 19 letters in support.

The reasons for such overwhelming local opposition to this scheme include:

1. the devastating impact on the landscape, the public rights of way and bridle paths;
2. the blight on our conservation areas and historic listed buildings;
3. the influence of noise-induced sleep deprivation on the health of residents in the surrounding villages;
4. the aching concern over the consequences to the rare breeding programme at Linton Zoo;
5. the effect of the turbines on rare flora and fauna in Hildersham Wood, one of the last remnants of the ancient woodland and a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest; and
6. the fear the turbines might increase the accident rate on the A1307.

However, the democratic planning process counts for nought. Although soundly rebutted by the local communities, the developer has appealed to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, who has convened a Planning Inquiry, which will start on 2nd February 2010 and last 17 days. The Inspector will review the application and the grounds for its refusal against planning law and national policy.

Why are we raising money?

The Action Group are local residents, volunteering their time without charge. However, to ensure that we can effectively voice local opposition at the Inquiry, we require a professional team of legal and planning experts to argue the case against this perverse appeal. Consequently, we need to raise money to fund a Barrister, a solicitor and Expert Witnesses (landscape, noise and zoological).

What if we do not raise enough money?

We can only commission services in line with the money we have raised. So, if we do not have sufficient funds, we must reduce the number of Expert Witnesses who appear to support our case and reduce the time the Barrister spends to prepare his brief. The quality of the case we make at the Inquiry is directly dependent on the funds we raise.

Why not rely on SCDC and UDC to fight the Appeal?

Both SCDC and UDC rejected Enertrag UK Ltd's application to build the wind turbines in our community and will fight the appeal at the Inquiry. Although we believe the District Councils will present a strong case against the turbine development, it is a mistake for us to rely solely on their efforts. For example, they are bound by the need to balance national policy against local fit. One of the strategies deployed by developers is to accept a negotiated reduction in the number of turbines, then build knowing that they will apply to expand the site at a later date. Powerful community groups have a proven role in influencing the Planning Inspector's decision to reject unwanted developments.

What if we raise too much money?

No SLWF volunteer is paid for time or expenses, and all donations are used solely for the campaign. In the event that we raise monies in excess of expenditure, we will refund the surplus to donors on a pro-rata basis (for donations above £250), once the Appeal(s) have been won and the application withdrawn.

Next steps:

We have been given a very short deadline, the first meeting with the Planning Inspector to give an outline of our case was 21st October 2009. Remember, the quality of the case we can make at the Inquiry depends on the funds we have available, so we need to raise this money as quickly as possible.

If you have made up your mind to support the fight against the turbines by donating money to the cause, please do so now. All contributions are welcome and will be a vital investment in the future of our environment.

Please make cheques payable to 'Stop Linton Wind Farm' and send the donation to:
The SLWF Treasurer, Park Farm, Great Chesterford, Essex, CB10 1RN.

On-line Banking: Account Name: Stop Linton Wind Farm, Sort Code: 30-92-76.
Account No: 0773264. Please add your name as the reference on the payment. If your browser form requires eight digits, add an initial zero.



Phil Harrison
Chair SLWFAG

10 November 2009