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HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

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**Erection of Wind Monitoring Mast on land at Bury Croft Farm, north of Hanwell**

I appreciate that notwithstanding the well publicised views of the Duke of Edinburgh, and the comments of the Government's Chief Energy Scientist, Professor David MacKay, who has warned that very considerable areas of countryside would have to be covered in wind turbines if Britain is to meet its renewable energy targets, that the District Council has to consider any planning application in accord with planning guidance and planning law.

I think it is clear from Department for Energy and Climate Change's National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3), published in July of this year, that Local Authorities and Planning Inspectors need to have regard to Local Development Plans and the primacy of local decision-making.

Planning Ministers have made it clear that in the transition period to every Local Authority having in place a Local Development Plan under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), that Inspectors should give weight to emerging Local Development Plans as if they are a Local Development Plan so that there isn't any risk of a transitional development framework "black hole" in protecting local planning policies.

The National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy sets out a number of issues that need to be considered, having regard to onshore wind farm proposals, including proximity of the site to dwellings, the impact on biodiversity and on the historic environment, the impact on landscape, and concerns relating to noise, vibration and shadow flicker, caused by wind farms, and concerns about the construction phase of any onshore wind farm and impact of traffic and transport.

All of these are issues which are dealt with in some detail in Cherwell District Council "Planning Guidance on the Residential Amenity Impacts of Wind Turbine Development", published in February of this year.



I would thus assume that in considering this particular planning application the District Council will be having close regard to that planning guidance and I would assume that if a matter were ever to go to appeal, that the Planning Inspector would give weight to this planning guidance as clear and clearly stated policies on the part of Cherwell District Council.

I have seen the submission in respect of this temporary Wind Monitoring Mast made by Hanwell Parish Council.

I note that the Parish Council clearly has considered all the relevant policy documents, including importantly, "Planning Guidance of Residential Amenity Impacts of Wind Turbine Development : Feb 2011", and measuring the application as against the criteria in that planning guidance, have advised that the application should be refused on a number of very specific grounds.

I attach and adopt the submission sent to you by Hanwell Parish Council.

I would suggest that, taken in their totality, these detailed objections make the point also made by Stratford-upon-Avon District Council that there has to be a determination of where the public benefit lies in submissions of this type and that there is no evidence to suggest that such a development would produce sufficient public benefit to override the visual harm, its impact on existing wildlife habitats and biodiversity and in this specific instance, the harm and impact on the safety of aircraft using Shotteswell airfield. Objections, I note, that are also raised and reiterated by my Parliamentary colleague, Jeremy Wright, who represents Shotteswell.

I don't consider that Hanwell Parish Council are over-stating the case when they say that this potential wind farm, planned by Regeneco, would as of its scale and nature, have a "... devastating effect on the two villages of Hanwell and Shotteswell, other nearby villages and the rural landscape".

I appreciate that one has to consider the immediate application for the wind monitoring mast on its own merits or otherwise, rather than it may be a precursor to a full planning application for a wind farm, but even taken on its own merits, I would submit that, having regard to the District Council's own planning guidance on the Residential Amenity Impact of Wind Turbine Development that this planning application should be refused.

Tony Baldry