

Item 4a **11/00919/FUL**

Case Officer **Matthew Banks**

Ward **Pennine**

Proposal **Erection of 2no. wind turbines (Hub height 15.545m / Height to blade tip 20.345m).**

Location **Bluebell Cottage Trigg Lane Heapey ChorleyPR6 9BZ**

Applicant **Kinetica Energy Ltd**

Consultation expiry: 2 February 2012

Application expiry: 2 February 2012

Proposal

1. Erection of 2no. wind turbines (Hub height 15.545m / Height to blade tip 20.345m).

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that this application is approved subject to conditions.

Main Issues

3. The main issues for consideration in respect of this planning application are:

- Background information
- Principle of the development;
- Impact on surrounding landscape;
- Impact on neighbour amenity;
- Impact on highways/access;
- Impact on the historic environment;
- Impact on ecology;
- Other considerations.

Representations

4. To date, (22 February 2012), 5.no letter of objection have been received concerning this application. The points raised in these letters can be summarised as follows:

- The development will result in significant detrimental harm to the environment along one of the well-known footpaths of Heapey;
- The development will substantially affect wildlife;
- Concerns raised for future generations, children and ramblers who will never experience the beauty and tranquillity of a once peaceful meadow;
- Information should be submitted in relation to noise;
- Health issues to both humans and wildlife;
- The structures will appear as a great intrusion;
- Local residents need more time to consider the application because of the complexity of the application and the precedent it will set;
- The turbines will have a massive visual affect on the local landscape;
- The turbines are totally out of proportion to any existing natural feature or development in the area and will remain visible for many miles in all directions;
- Noise generated would impact grossly on health;
- Recent reports suggest such development should not be made within 2 ½ km of homes;
- Recent studies indicate that CO₂ emissions increase when turbines are running because gas and coal power stations run inefficiently on stand-by.
- The height of the turbines situated on a hill above a valley will raise their profile above the sky line and impact visually;

- In a valley, noise travels through the ground as a low rumble;
- Studies should be carried out which address noise pollution;
- This is a unique area for migrating birds, bats, herons, owls and woodpeckers and is situated between 2.no waterways - Brinscall woods, moorland and Green Belt fields;
- The turbines are available with a 10m platform, thus reducing their visual impact;
- The effects of two turbines and the resulting turbulence and noise may be amplified disproportionately;
- A single lower turbine would reduce the impact;
- Questionable environmental credentials are outweighed by negative impact on the area;
- Chorley Borough Council must address how these structures can be built with as little environmental/visual impact as possible;
- This is Green Belt land in an area valuable for tourism and is used by many thousands of people each year;
- The turbines are industrial artefacts, vertically out of all proportion to the immediate natural environment, visible from a wide area, and directly in the line of sight to natural features of outstanding beauty that give the local area its unique character;
Policy LT15, Chapter 10 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review states: "Development on...open land which makes a significant contribution to the character of an area, either individually or as part of a wider network of open space, will not be permitted unless either:(a) it will lead to greater public access to, and enhance the visual amenity of, the open space and it will not have a detrimental effect on any site of nature conservation value or;(b) the development involves a change of use or extension to an existing building which will not harm the amenity value of the open space." The application contravenes this policy;
- Visual impact from Blue Dye House, Heapey;
- Visual impact to walkers using the nearby public footpath;
- Impact on local wildlife and animals;
- Impact from noise and the effect this can have on the quality of life;
- Serious health issues caused by turbines which have been outlined in medical studies and reports;
- Noise can travel several miles causing irregularity and sleep disturbance from low frequency sound;
- Recent scientific evidence has suggested this is a flawed technology.

Consultations

5. **Ramblers Association – Object** – The proposed turbines would be within very close proximity to Footpath 15 (FP15). This proximity to the turbines would dominate the view from the footpath and together with the noise, would materially alter the nature and enjoyment of the footpath and surrounding countryside. For this reason the Ramblers Association (Chorley) oppose the proposed development.
6. **CBC Environmental Health Team (noise)** – Raise no objection.
7. **Parish Council** – None received.
8. **Civil Aviation Authority** – Have provided guidance which Planning Authorities should follow in determining such an application. Raise no indication of an objection.
9. **Ministry of Defence** – Raise no objection to the proposal, however, if permission is granted they must be notified of (1) the date construction starts and ends; (2) the maximum height of construction equipment and; (3) the latitude and longitude of every turbine.
10. **OFCOM** – State it is not their policy to advise or get involved with any planning applications, however, raise a number of bodies which should be consulted as part of the application.
11. **National Air Traffic Services** – raise no safeguarding objection to the proposal.
12. **The Coal Authority** - Standing advice informative.

13. **People & Places - Waste & Contaminated Land** – no comments to make.
14. **Lancashire County Council (LCC) Ecology Service** – raise no objections subject to a condition which states that works that may affect nesting birds (including ground nesting species) will be avoided between March and August inclusive, unless the absence of nesting birds has been confirmed by surveys or inspections.
15. **Lancashire County Council Highways** – raise no overriding highway objection, but suggest a condition be added if the application is approved requiring a construction and traffic management plan for highway approval, prior to the development commencing.
16. **Conservation Officer** – Raise no objection to the impact on the nearby Listed Building.
17. **Economic Development Unit** – none received.
18. **Environment Agency** – No comments to make.
19. **Joint Radio Company (JRC)** – Raises no objection and does not foresee any potential problems on known interference scenarios based on the data that has been provided.

Assessment

Background information

20. The application site comprises land to the north-east of Bluebell Cottage, Trigg Lane, Heapey and is owned by Mr Derek Bolton. The application has been made by “Kinetica Energy Ltd” with JDA Architects acting as consultant.
21. The applicant has occupied and owned the farm for a number of years, but because of the recession and rising costs, has looked at more financially viable ways to sustain its operation and use the associated land. The applicant is therefore looking to diversify and achieve long term stability.
22. The applicant intends to utilise the ‘windy nature’ of the site to generate electricity for both domestic and agricultural use by installing two “Evoco 10KW” wind turbines in a field to the north-east of the existing farm complex. The applicant has indicated that any electric surplus generated would be exported to the National Grid for public distribution.
23. In summary, the applicant argues the application has been submitted to: (1) lower the farms carbon footprint; (2) break away from on-going rising energy costs; (3) achieve a steady, sustainable future for the holding; (4) to achieve savings in revenue which can be re-invested into the farm; (5) to assist in the “greening” of the farm and its local environment.
24. As an alternative, the applicant has looked at utilising Photovoltaic cells, however, argues that these are based on complex technology, requiring a large surface area and potentially could have a greater visual impact on the landscape than the proposed turbines.

Principle of the development

25. In terms of the principle of the development, the turbines would be situated to the north-east of the existing farm complex on a plateau type field which comprises short grass and is used for agricultural purposes. To the south and east of the turbines, the field extends to a cutting and brook which are both shielded from view by tree cover.
26. The farm itself carries out some agricultural activities, but is also involved in the keeping of horses. The site has a large block of stables as well as three sand paddocks which adjoin the field where the turbines would be sited (formally known as Bluebell livery stables).
27. The plateau itself is relatively flat, and spans a distance of approximately 200m in a north/south direction. The southerly section of the field is where the turbines would be sited and both turbines would face in a northerly direction. Whilst the land around the site of the turbines is relatively flat, the land to the east and west assumes a more undulating nature

and renders the site somewhat enclosed by hedgerows and trees. The plateau itself is not considered to be a summit location given the higher, more undulating land to the east and west.

28. It has been noted that in the surrounding area, there are a scattering of isolated residential properties, many of which are positioned at a lower level to the development and are predominately sited to the east and north-east of the site.
29. The site itself is washed over by the Green Belt with an area of open countryside situated to the south. In terms of national and local planning policy concerning the control of development within the Green Belt, National Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts (PPG2) and Policy DC1 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review state that planning permission will not be granted, except in very special circumstances for development other than those falling within certain limited categories.
30. Paragraph 3.4 of PPG2 indicates that the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt is inappropriate unless the buildings are for certain limited purposes. Paragraph 3.12 states that the carrying out of engineering and other operations is inappropriate if they do not maintain the openness of the Green Belt and conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
31. With regard to PPG2 and Policy DC1, it is not considered the erection of the turbines falls within the ambit of appropriate development within the Green Belt and actually falls within the broad definition of engineering or other operations.
32. Therefore, the proposed turbines are considered inappropriate development within the Green Belt and should only be permitted where very special circumstances exist to clearly outweigh the harm that would come to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.
33. As such, it is therefore appropriate to consider any factors in support of the application, which individually or cumulatively could amount to very special circumstances that would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. Additionally, the impact on the openness of the Green Belt should also be considered.
34. Firstly, in terms of openness, it is acknowledged that the turbines represent an encroachment of development into the countryside (which is one of the purposes for including land within the Green Belt). However, it should also be noted that there often is a requirement for wind turbines to be located within open areas away from built development to function effectively.
35. It is considered that in this case, the area of land to be built on is small in size (relative to the vast undeveloped surrounding land) and is somewhat contained by tree cover which restricts views of the turbines from the south and east. It is considered that the impact on openness comes primarily in the form of the bases for the turbines and the structures themselves. However, the turbines are relatively modest in size, have a relatively slender design and would be well spaced. As such, taking into consideration the specification of the structures and the site specific circumstances, it is considered that the loss of openness in this case would be modest and in itself would not warrant refusal of the application.
36. Turning to the issue of very special circumstances, the applicant has submitted a case in support of the application which covers a number of issues in favour of the application.
37. Firstly, the applicant highlights that the proposed development finds support in national planning policy which was identified in 2006 through the Stern Report. This report demonstrated that climate change must be managed if we are to avoid catastrophic social and environmental effects. The Government's energy policy, including its policy on renewable energy, is set out in the Energy White Paper. This sets the challenging aim for the UK to cut its carbon dioxide emissions by some 60% by 2050, with real progress by 2020, and to maintain reliable and competitive energy supplies. The UK has a more tangible target to incorporate 10% renewable sources by 2010, and at least 20% by 2020. Planning Policy Statement 22 (PPS22) also highlights the importance of offshore and onshore wind energy in

contribution to national targets. It is considered the bulk of these targets are expected to be delivered locally through the planning system.

38. The applicant draws attention to Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) which sets out the government's approach to delivering sustainable development and indicates that planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural growth.
39. The applicant argues that PPS22 and the climate change supplement to PPS1 highlight the importance and urgency of slowing down the pace of climate change by reducing Carbon Dioxide emissions from the generation of energy through the burning of fossil fuels by producing energy from renewable sources. It is evident from the advice in PPS22 that Local Planning Authorities should plan positively for renewable developments and should afford substantial weight to the contribution such developments make to combating climate change.
40. The applicant highlights that it is important to realise that smaller scale projects (such as that proposed) can provide a limited but valuable contribution to the overall outputs of renewable energy and to meeting energy needs both locally and nationally. PPS22 states that planning authorities should not therefore reject planning applications simply because the level of output is small. Furthermore, it is also relevant to note that PPS22 states that Local Planning Authorities should not require applicant's for energy development to demonstrate neither the overall need for renewable energy and its distribution, nor question the energy justification for why a proposal for such development must be sited in a particular location.
41. In terms of energy production, the applicant states that the wind turbines will produce 21,100Kwh of renewable energy per turbine based upon the manufacturer's literature at a wind speed of 5m/s. This gives a potential annual total of 42,200Kwh which will have a direct impact on reducing carbon emissions.
42. The applicant argues that the wider environmental and economic benefits for all proposals for renewable energy projects, whatever their scale, are material considerations that should be given significant weight in determining whether proposals should be granted planning permission.
43. The applicant also highlights that the application finds support in the draft National Planning Policy Framework which re-iterates much of the advice given in PPS1 and PPS22.
44. As such, in terms of assessing the supporting information, it is considered that in this case, the proposed turbines would make a modest, but valuable contribution to meeting the challenging target for the production of energy from renewable sources both locally and nationally and in doing so, the proposal would play a part in helping to offset the impact of climate change. Support is found in PPS1 which encourages sustainable patterns of development, and also in PPS22 which states that Local Planning Authorities should specifically encourage small scale renewable energy developments through positively expressed policies in local development documents.
45. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed turbines would assist in the diversification of the farm and provide electricity to the existing residential unit and for the agricultural working of the site. The electricity produced will replace / reduce the existing mains electricity supplied to the farm and reduce running costs over time.
46. It is also considered that the proposed pair of turbines will generate an income from the sale of any surplus electricity which would be exported back to the National Grid for public distribution via the District Network Operator for the benefit of the community.
47. Additionally, indirect benefits of the scheme would include temporary job creation during construction and in the maintenance of the turbines, and that the turbines will provide an alternative source of electricity.

48. As such, it is considered that the arguments submitted by the applicant in favour of the application and the support for the development in national planning policy, cumulatively amount to very special circumstances required to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.
49. The development is therefore considered in accordance with PPG2 and Policy DC1 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

Impact on surrounding landscape

50. In terms of the effect of the development on the surrounding landscape, Policy EP10 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review states that developers are required to demonstrate that the character and value of the existing landscape and its features have been taken into consideration during the design of a proposal. Policy EP24 states that proposals for wind farms will be supported provided they are not on ridge top or summit locations or where they would form prominent features against the skyline.
51. As addressed earlier in this report, it is considered the turbines would be situated on a plateau type field which is relatively flat and spans a distance of approximately 200m in a north/south direction. The proposed turbines would be situated in the southern portion of the field within relatively close proximity to the existing farm buildings and sand paddock, thereby retaining built development in a cluster rather than allowing it to encroach into an isolated location.
52. The land to which the turbines would be sited is relatively flat, whereas the topography of the surrounding land assumes a more undulating nature. To the south and east of the turbines is dense tree cover which will help to soften the visual impact of the development on the surrounding area. To the east and west of the site the land rises significantly to enclose the turbines in a shallow valley type arrangement. As a result, the turbines would not be situated on a ridge top and are not positioned to appear as prominent features against the skyline.
53. Paragraph 21 of PPS22 refers to the need to take account of the cumulative effect of any wind generation project. It is considered that in this case, the turbines are relatively modest in size and have a relatively slender design and would be well spaced. As such, it is not considered views of the surrounding landscape would be blocked or seriously obscured to warrant refusal of the application.
54. To the immediate west of the development is the existing farm complex which comprises a number of low level buildings including Bluebell Livery Stables. It is acknowledged that the turbines may be partially visible from residential properties in the surrounding area, however, this visual impact would be softened by the existing built development in-between the turbines and the properties adjacent to Bluebell cottage, and the sparse tree cover and change in land levels in-between the turbines and the properties Mill Road.
55. The design of wind turbines means they are often inevitably visible from some neighbouring properties in a surrounding area. However, given the site specific circumstances in this case, it is not considered the appearance of the turbines would cause any significant detrimental harm to the amenity of the nearby residential properties that would warrant refusal of the application.
56. The proposed turbines would be constructed from a self-supporting galvanised steel structure and would be white in appearance to soften their appearance when viewed against the skyline.
57. As such, on balance of the above, it is considered the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact on the character of the surrounding landscape that would warrant refusal of the application and the development is therefore in accordance with Policies EP10 and EP24 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

Impact on neighbour amenity

58. The visual impact of the proposed turbines has been addressed above and is not considered in itself to be a reason to refuse the application. It has also been acknowledged that there are a relatively small number of dwellings located in the vicinity of the site which could be affected by the proposed development.
59. Firstly, it must be noted that PPS22 Companion Guide states that well-specified wind farms should be located so that increases in ambient noise levels around noise-sensitive developments are kept to acceptable levels in relation to existing background noise.
60. The applicant states that prior to submitting the application, a site visit was made to identify the most suitable design and location for the turbines. This included maximising the exposure to the prevailing wind and minimising the risk of turbulence from trees or buildings in the vicinity. The applicant has submitted acoustic information in support of the application which has been assessed by the Council's Environmental Health Team.
61. The Council's Environmental Health Team has concluded that the submitted information satisfactorily demonstrates that there is unlikely to be any audible noise at the receptors from the proposed application.
62. As such, it is not considered a refusal of the application could be sustained with regard to the impact from noise.
63. Turning to the issue of shadow flicker, it is acknowledged that at certain times of the day the sun may shine through the moving blades thereby causing a shadow flicker effect which can be disturbing for some and deeply disturbing for others. However, local and national documents indicate that shadow flicker only occurs within ten rotor diameters of a turbine. The proposed rotor diameter of the blades is 9.6m and therefore, properties which are within 96m of the turbines could be affected by shadow flicker.
64. It has been noted the turbines would be within relatively close proximity to a number of properties including Bluebell Cottage, Pheasant House Farm, Lower House Fold Farm, Lower House Farm and Ardgaith. However, these properties would be situated over 150m from the turbines which is significantly greater than the required 96m.
65. Other residential properties within the area nearest the proposed development (namely Logwood Mill Stables and The Old Mill Race situated on Mill Lane) would be positioned over 200m from the turbines and so it is not considered shadow flicker in this case would cause significant detrimental harm to the amenity of the neighbouring residents that would warrant refusal of the application.
66. The predicted shadow flicker has been shown on the submitted location plan which shows only localised impacts from the proposed turbines, with any potential shadow flicker primarily restricted to the field to which the turbines would be sited.
67. With regard to the impact on Blue Dye House, it is acknowledged that the proposed turbines will be partially visible from this property. However, Blue Dye House is also situated over 200m from the proposed turbines, is set lower than the level of the application site and is separated from it by a substantial tree line. As such, it is not considered this property would experience any significant detrimental harm as a result of the development to warrant refusal of the application.
68. As such, it is considered the proposed turbines would not adversely affect the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers by reason of noise and flicker and so the development is considered in accordance with Policies EP20 and EP24 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review 2003. There are no other known health effects in relation to wind turbines.

Impact on highways/access:

69. PPS22 states that the road access to wind farm sites should be capable of accommodating trailers carrying long and heavy loads.
70. As the development is in a rural area of the borough, Lancashire County Council (LCC) Highways have been consulted regarding the application. LCC Highways have concluded that the proposed turbines would be relatively modest in size, however, the development would still require large vehicles to transport the turbines.
71. LCC have shown concern for the access arrangements during the construction of the turbines as Trigg Lane comprises a typical country lane, not ideally suited for large vehicles.
72. However, in determining the application, it must also be considered that the lane already supports a number of farms, residential properties and stables in the surrounding area, and the building phase of the development will only be for a short duration.
73. Furthermore, during the construction of the turbines, the applicant has indicated that the turbines will be transported to the site utilising an existing track and there are no plans to excavate any earth to form additional tracks or hardstanding. The applicant argues that if issues arise that additional ground support is required, this will be accommodated by temporary matting.
74. It is therefore considered that on balance, the development will not result in significant traffic issues and therefore no overriding highway objection is raised. However, LCC Highways have suggested that if planning permission is granted, a suitably worded condition should be imposed, requiring a construction and traffic management plan for highway approval, prior to the development commencing.

Impact on the historic environment:

75. The application site is within close proximity to Lower House Farm which comprises a Grade II Listed building. As such, the Council's Conservation Officer has been consulted and has provided the following comments.
76. Lower House Farm comprises an 18th Century vernacular farm house with an attached combination barn. It is relatively modest in scale and is set within a cluster of cottages, stables and associated structures. Lower House Farm itself is in a very poor condition and has now been added to the Council's Buildings at Risk Register.
77. The site of the proposed turbines is approximately 190m to the east of Lower House Farm and would be obscured from view by the development in between.
78. As such, it is considered that on balance of the above, the significance of the designated heritage asset that is the listed building will be sustained in accordance with Policy HE10 of Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5).
79. It is not considered there are any other features of historic interest within the vicinity of the application site.

Impact on ecology

80. As part of the application, LCC Ecology have been consulted concerning any impact on issues of ecology.
81. LCC Ecology have concluded the main ecological issue arising from the proposal is the potential impact on birds. LCC Ecology have confirmed the turbines do not appear to be located within an area identified as supporting significant bird populations sensitive to wind turbines. However, such areas are not definitive and the need for an ornithological assessment should be considered on a case by case basis.

82. In this case, LCC Ecology has no records of any priority bird species likely to be affected by the proposed development. It is considered that this, combined with the location of the proposed turbines and their size suggest that any requirement for a detailed ornithological assessment may be disproportionate to the likely impacts, unless evidence provided by another consultee indicates that there is a significant bird population that may be adversely affected.
83. LCC Ecology therefore recommend that a condition be imposed if planning permission is granted which states that works that may affect nesting birds (including ground nesting species) will be avoided between March and August inclusive, unless the absence of nesting birds has been confirmed by surveys or inspections.
84. As such, it is considered that if planning permission is granted, a similarly worded condition will be imposed. However, a fundamental change to the condition will be that it states that no development will commence between March and August inclusive, unless the absence of nesting birds has been confirmed by surveys or inspections. This will avoid any ambiguity or uncertainty as to what works may or may not affect nesting birds.
85. Turning to the issue of bats, LCC Ecology have stated that it appears the proposed turbines would be situated more than 50m from any feature likely to be used by foraging bats (e.g. hedgerows, water courses etc.). As such, it is considered impacts on bats seem reasonably unlikely in this case.
86. With regard to the above, it is considered that subject to an appropriately worded condition, the development would be in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9) and Policy EP4 of the Adopted Local Plan Review and would not result in any significant detrimental harm to nearby wildlife.

Other considerations

87. There are public footpaths located within and near to the field where the turbines would be located, however, both turbines both would be situated over 80m from the footpath.
88. As part of the application the Ramblers Association were consulted because of the proximity of the turbines to the nearby public footpath. The Ramblers Association have objected to the application stating that the turbines would dominate the view from the footpath and together with the noise, would materially alter the nature and enjoyment of the footpath and surrounding countryside.
89. Firstly, in terms of safety, the companion guide to PPS22 states that the fall over distance for turbines should be the height of the turbine to the tip of the blade, plus 10%.
90. The footpath under question would be situated over 80m from the turbines which is significantly outside the required fall-over height of 35m for the proposed turbines. As such, it is considered in this case that reasonable steps have been taken to maintain the safety of the local residents and other members of the public wishing to use the public footpath.
91. With regard to the visual impact of the proposed turbines, it has already been established that the visual impact would be localised, aided by the surrounding topography and tree cover. However, it is acknowledged the turbines would be visible from the nearby footpath and from some vantage points in the surrounding area.
92. The visual appearance of wind turbines is considered to be somewhat subjective and often splits opinion, however, in assessing the overall impact, it is considered that the section of footpath to be most affected is modest in size (when viewed in the context of the wider area) and ramblers who use the footpath would only have to 'tolerate' the turbines for a short period whilst negotiating the field. As such, it is considered that the actual harm caused by the turbines would be limited in this case and is not considered sufficient to outweigh the benefits of the scheme with regard to local and national planning policy in tackling climate change.

93. The plans submitted with this application show that the shadow flicker potentially associated with the proposed turbines is expected to fall just short of the footpath and will only affect walkers at certain times of the day. It is acknowledged that some noise may be heard from the turbines when ramblers use the footpath, particularly given its proximity. However, it is not considered the turbines are likely to result in any significant detrimental harm with regard to noise and disturbance given the comments from the Council's Environmental Health Team. Furthermore, it is considered that any noise which is evident would only be audible whilst ramblers negotiate the section of field to which the turbines would be sited.
94. With regard to the above, it is not considered a refusal of the application could be sustained with regard to the impact on the nearby footpath.
95. It has been acknowledged that a neighbouring resident has made reference to Policy LT15 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review which relates to development in areas of amenity open space. However, the application site is not identified on the Proposals Map as an area of amenity open space and it is not considered appropriate in this case to apply the requirements of Policy LT15 to a scenario for which the policy was not intended. The issues of Green Belt and impact on the surrounding landscape have been addressed in length earlier in this report.
96. It has been acknowledged that a neighbouring resident has made reference to recent studies and reports which raise issues concerning possible health impacts and the inefficiency of wind turbines.
97. However, in assessing the impact on human health it is relevant to note that the applicant has addressed the two recognised health orientated issues with regard to the turbines within the application submission. The first being projected shadow flicker and second being noise. The projected shadow flicker has been clearly demonstrated on a submitted plan (addressed in more detail earlier in this report) and is not considered to cause any significant detrimental harm to the amenity of the neighbouring residents. With regard to noise, the Council's Environmental Health Team has been consulted and raises no objection to the proposed development on the basis of the information submitted.
98. Additionally, regard must be had to Adopted National Planning Policy in the form of Planning for Renewable Energy: A Companion Guide to PPS22 which states that there is no evidence that ground transmitted low frequency noise from wind turbines is at a sufficient level to be harmful to human health.
99. Planning for Renewable Energy: A Companion Guide to PPS22 acknowledges that wind turbines contain electrical machines producing power and will therefore also produce electromagnetic radiation. However, this is at a very low level, and presents no greater risk to human health than most domestic appliances. Any electrical machine can cause interference to other electrical devices (particularly radios and TVs) and there is no difference between a wind turbine and any other electrical machine in this respect. Only in very rare circumstances does such development produce electromagnetic signals that cause problems.
100. As such, although medical studies and reports have been highlighted by a neighbouring resident concerning the health implications of wind turbines, the adopted national guidance on such matters does not raise significant concern to the impact on human health. Therefore, it is considered that such studies/reports should only be attributed very limited weight in determining the application compared to national policy which should be attributed significant weight. It is therefore considered a refusal of the application could not be sustained on these grounds

Overall Conclusion

101. In conclusion, it is considered that the national and development plan policies in favour of the application and the benefits in terms of reducing climate change clearly outweigh those policies with which the scheme conflicts and in this case, very special circumstances have been demonstrated to justify the development.

102. It is not considered any other material planning considerations of sufficient weight have been demonstrated or have arisen to indicate that the application should be determined other than in accordance with national planning policy and the development plan.
103. As such, on balance of the above, the application is accordingly recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Planning Policies

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts (PPG2)
Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1)
Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPS5)
Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (PPS7)
Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9)
Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy (PPS22)
Planning Policy Statement 22: Companion Guide

Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review

Policies: DC1, GN5, EP4, EP10, EP24 and TR4.

Planning History

The site history of the property is as follows:

Ref: 95/00476/FUL **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 3 October 1995
Description: Temporary siting of caravan in front garden during barn conversion,

Application Number - 11/00919/FUL

- Erection of 2no. wind turbines (Hub height 15.545m / Height to blade tip 20.345m).
- Approve subject to conditions.
- 2 February 2012.

Recommendation: Permit Full Planning Permission Conditions

- 1. The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission.**
Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2. If either turbine hereby permitted ceases to operate for a continuous period of 6 months then, the wind turbine(s) and any other ancillary equipment and structures shall be dismantled and removed from the land and the land restored to its original state within 3 months of the cessation period.**
Reason: To ensure that the rural landscape is not littered with structures that are no longer needed or have outlived their useful lives and in accordance with PPG2, PPS22 and Policies Nos. DC1, EP10 and EP24 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.
- 3. Before the development hereby approved is first commenced, a turbine construction and traffic management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The turbine construction and traffic management plan shall include:**
 - A detailed methodology for the construction and maintenance of the turbines including details of any temporary hardstanding to be used during construction;
 - The timescale of operation for construction of the development;
 - The size and number of vehicle movements (including plant and wagons);

- Any temporary signage / road warning signs advising other road users of the duration / schedule of the works;
- Any other provisions required on construction / delivery days to safeguard other road users;
- The date construction starts and ends;
- The maximum height of construction equipment;
- The latitude and Longitude of every turbine.

The development shall therefore be carried out and implemented in full in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reasons: To ensure there is no unreasonable inconvenience to other road users, to ensure all plant and vehicles are suitably sized to use Trigg Lane, to ensure all plant and vehicles are not a danger to themselves or any other road user(s) (i.e. pedestrians / horses / vehicles / cyclists), in accordance with Policy TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review 2003, and to notify the MOD of certain information which is required so the data can be plotted on flying charts to make sure the military avoid this area.

4. This permission shall expire no later than 25 years from the date that the first turbine is erected. Within 6 months of the expiration of the permission, all elements of the development shall be removed and the land restored to its former condition.

Reason: To ensure that the rural landscape is not littered with structures that are no longer needed or have outlived their useful lives and in accordance with PPG2, PPS22 and Policies Nos. DC1, EP10 and EP24 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.

5. No development shall commence between March and August inclusive, unless the absence of nesting birds has been first confirmed through appropriate surveys and/or inspections carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist which are submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure nesting birds (including ground nesting birds) are not adversely affected by the development. In accordance with PPS9 and Policy EP4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review 2003.

6. The turbines and ancillary development hereby approved shall only be carried out in the materials and colours detailed in the design and access statement unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the materials used are visually appropriate to the locality and in accordance with PPG2, PPS22 and Policies Nos. DC1, EP10 and EP24 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.