

CORRESPONDENCE WITH ENERTRAG UK – JULY 2009

Following the Public Meeting held at Sulgrave Manor on Saturday 15th July, Parish Council Chairman Graham Roberts wrote to Enertrag UK in respect of a number of points raised at that meeting, as follows:

I have some questions which I would like to have your response on:-

Q How many sites have Enertrag developed that are as close to the communities as in this proposal (ie within 1000m) and where are they?

Q What is the criteria for selecting the sites - most sites we have identified seem to be located in brownfield locations, (ie disused airfields etc) in this case unspoilt natural landscape has been chosen, what are the over-riding factors that resulted in this site being chosen.

Q The site is intersected by a public footpath and bridal path, the latter is used almost daily by local stables exercising horses, what consideration is to be given to the impact on horses and their riders and what evidence is there that horses (including spirited racing horses) are unaffected by wind turbines.

I would appreciate your views on the above questions put to me by my parishoners

Thank you

Enertrag UK replied as follows:

Thank you for informing me of the report on the meeting. It is interesting for us to know the local opinion and as we mentioned before we will be consulting with the council and community throughout the planning process. I will point out, the proposal is for 9 turbines of maximum height to tip of 125m and not 130m as stated.

The following is in response to your questions;

- 1. Enertrag UK currently have one operational wind farm in the UK, this is North Pickenham in Norfolk. As you are aware from your visit, the site comprises 8 turbines of the same model proposed for Weston. At North Pickenham the nearest property is approximately 840m from the closest turbine. There is no legislation in the UK for minimum separation between turbines and residential dwellings, however Enertrag UK do not site turbines closer than 700m to properties as this has been found to be a sensible distance to avoid issues with noise and shadow flicker. Other Enertrag projects in progress all work on this basis, so will be similar to Weston in this respect, and information can be found on our website (www.enertraguk.com) for sites proposed at Hempnall, Linton, Baumber, and Tivetshall. These projects are within the East of England, however Enertrag UK are investigating sites all over the country.*
- 2. Residential properties are the main concern in site selection, so the process starts with studying OS maps and identifying areas of land at least 700m from houses. There is in depth desktop study and site research around a number of criteria before the site is progressed. Factors initially considered include; landscape, proximity to aerodromes, accessibility, landscape and ecological designations such as SSSI's, topography, availability of a suitable grid connection, presence of existing wind farms and the wind resource available. Once Enertrag are satisfied the relevant criteria are*

met, landowners are approached to assess willingness for the proposed project and agreements are made.

Although the site between Weston and Sulgrave is not a brownfield, there are no National or local designations in respect to landscape covering, or near to, the area. Desktop research highlighted the Registered Park and Garden at Sulgrave Manor, and a complete landscape and cultural heritage assessment will be completed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment for the project.

3. *There is no statutory legislation regarding the proximity of footpaths and bridleways to wind turbines in the UK. Within PPS (Planning Policy Statement) 22 Companion Guide the British Horse society suggest a 200m exclusion zone around bridleways. As best practice Enertrag UK comply with this recommendation, and at minimum turbines will be located "topple distance" (125m in this case) from Public Rights of Way. The turbine layout initially proposed is likely to undergo minor alterations throughout the project planning as a result of consultation with statutory bodies, such as communications operators, and may be dependent on findings of environmental assessments. Also organisations such as the British Horse Society and the Ramblers Association will be consulted for their view on the site proposal.*

There are no cases of injury or harm associated with horses and wind farms. Horses can become "lively" at a number of factors such as traffic, farm machinery and loud/sudden noises. Tolerance and sensitivity will vary depending on the character of the animal. Wind turbines, although large structures will not surprise horses as they will be viewed gradually from distance and on approach do not create loud noise or sudden movement so are unlikely to scare. There are many instances where wind farms are located around or near to bridleways and footpaths. For example Delabole Wind Farm in Cornwall is located in an area heavily used by horses, and very close to a Stud which has found the wind farm to have no negative impact. The presence of a wind farm does not interrupt the ability to utilise the public rights of way. Due to the distances the turbines are proposed from footpaths and bridleways at Weston, negative impacts or issues are not anticipated although all local bodies and statutory consultees will be approached for opinion.

I hope the above answers the community queries as a result of the meeting. If you would like any more information I would be happy to help.