

**TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING ACT 1990 - SECTION 78**

**APPEAL BY
BROADVIEW ENERGY
DEVELOPMENTS LTD.**

**LAND AT SPRING FARM RIDGE,
NORTH OF WELSH LANE
BETWEEN GREATWORTH
AND HELMDON**

**PROOF OF EVIDENCE
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The Planning Inspectorate Ref. No:
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I.00 SUMMARY

- I.01 I am Andrew Newman Brown, BA, BArch, MSc, MRTPI, RIBA, IHBC. This Inquiry relates to an appeal against the decision of South Northamptonshire Council to refuse an application for planning permission for a wind farm comprising five wind turbines and associated works on land at Spring Farm Ridge, north of Welsh Lane between Greatworth and Helmdon. The Appellant's case is being presented by a number of witnesses and my evidence relates to the impact of the proposed development upon the setting of heritage assets around the Appeal Site.
- I.02 The Council's Statement of Case indicates that it would focus on the impact of the proposed development upon seven designated heritage assets or groups of heritage assets. It also states that the Council considers the harm to these heritage assets is 'less than substantial'. Concern about other heritage assets has been raised by consultees and third parties. I note that, despite the various comments set out in its letter of 14th January 2011, English Heritage did not recommend refusal of the application.
- I.03 The Council is not expressing any concerns regarding the potential of the proposed development to have a direct effect upon the non-designated heritage assets (principally archaeological remains) on the Appeal Site. Also, heritage concerns expressed by third parties relate entirely to the impact of the proposal on the setting of heritage assets. My evidence therefore solely considers the impact of the proposed turbines on the setting of heritage assets.
- I.04 The setting of a heritage asset is defined in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework as *'The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced.'* Whilst the settings of various heritage assets need to be understood in assessing the impact of this proposal, I consider that any attempt to closely define the extent of setting is of limited usefulness. Setting is not a heritage asset in itself, nor is it a heritage designation; its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of a heritage asset. As a result, within my evidence I have not attempted to define the geographical extent of the setting of the various heritage assets but have sought to identify whether and to what extent elements of the setting of a heritage asset contribute to the significance of that asset. I have then assessed the impact of the proposed wind turbines on the significance of the various heritage assets, including any impact on those elements of their settings that contribute to their significance.

- I.05 I have set out the statutory requirements and the policies of the Development Plan that relate to the historic environment, together with other relevant documents adopted by the Council. I have also considered central government policy relating to the historic environment and guidance provided by English Heritage.
- I.06 Within my evidence I have considered the impact of the proposed development upon those heritage assets set out in paragraph 4.8 of the Council's Statement of Case, together with those assets where specific heritage concerns have been raised by third parties.
- I.07 My assessment makes use of the five step approach set out in the English Heritage document *The Setting of Heritage Assets*. However, I have omitted Step 4 (maximising enhancement and minimising harm) as no enhancement or mitigation specifically related to heritage assets is proposed. In relation to Step 5, I have only considered the public benefits to the historic environment (in my conclusions) as the wider public benefits of the proposed development are considered within the evidence of Mr. Bell.
- I.08 As a result of my assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon the setting of the various heritage assets, I have concluded that the proposed development would impact as follows:
- Greatworth Hall (Grade II listed building) – Moderate adverse;
 - Greatworth Conservation Area – Slight Adverse;
 - Church of St. Peter, Greatworth (Grade II* listed building) - Slight Adverse;
 - Astwell Castle (scheduled ancient monument and Grade II* listed building) – Moderate Adverse;
 - Sulgrave Conservation Area – Moderate Adverse;
 - Castle Hill Ringworks and Church of St. James, Sulgrave (scheduled ancient monument and Grade II* listed building) – Moderate Adverse;
 - Sulgrave Manor (Grade I listed building and Grade II registered park and garden) – Neutral;
 - Church of St. Mary Magdelene, Helmdon (Grade II* listed building) – Slight Adverse;
 - Canons Ashby (Grade I listed building and Grade II* registered park and garden) - Neutral;
 - Stowe (Grade I listed building and Grade I registered park and garden) – Slight Adverse;
 - Site of deserted village, Stuchbury (non-designated heritage asset) – Slight Adverse; and

- Railway Viaduct, Helmdon (non-designated heritage asset) – Neutral.

- I.09 The proposed development would be contrary to the specific wording of ‘saved’ Policies G3 and EV11 of the Local Plan. However, these two policies do not contain a balancing provision and are therefore considered to be inconsistent with the relevant parts of the Framework. I consider that the proposed development would accord with Policies EV10, EV12 and EV 28 of the Local Plan.
- I.10 For the purposes of the Framework I consider that all the identified impacts are ‘less than substantial’ and therefore paragraph 134 is relevant. Inevitably, some observers may not like the fact that the proposed wind turbines will be experienced in relation to some or all of the heritage assets that have been considered. It may even be the case that an understanding of the significance of some of these assets would be easier if the turbines were not erected. However, in no case would the turbines impact on elements of setting which contribute to significance to such a degree as to cause substantial harm. Paragraph 134 of the Framework indicates that ‘less than substantial harm’ needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.
- I.11 The English Heritage document, *Wind Energy and the Historic Environment*, indicates that reversibility is an important feature and should be taken into account and this has been explicitly confirmed in the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure EN-3. This aspect of the proposed development is of particular significance in relation to the historic environment. Whilst 25 years is not a short period in human terms (being approximately one generation), in relation to the enduring significance of the heritage assets around the Appeal Site it only represents a small slice of their history up to the present day (and a much smaller slice of their potential history). Whatever adverse effect the proposed development may be considered to have on heritage assets, this will be capable of being reversed after 25 years.
- I.12 Climate change is likely to be detrimental to the historic environment. Whilst there will be some diffuse benefits to the historic environment from the proposed development, I do not consider that these by themselves are sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.
- I.13 The wider public benefits of the proposed development, against which the identified harm needs to be balanced, are outside the scope of my evidence but are set out within the evidence of Mr. Bell.

2.00 PERSONAL DETAILS

- 2.01 I am Andrew Newman Brown, Architect and Town Planner. I obtained my Bachelor of Arts (Architecture) from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1971 and a Bachelor of Architecture from the same institution in 1974. In 1975 I successfully completed my Master of Science (Environmental Conservation) at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh. I am a registered architect, a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute, a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and a member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation.
- 2.02 The whole of my career has involved work in the historic environment and the design of new developments in sensitive locations. Initially I worked in specialist conservation/design teams for Tyne and Wear County and Durham County Council, and I was then Conservation Officer of Chester City Council from 1983 to 1988. Since then I have been in private practice, first in Cheshire, then as a partner of Brown Environmental Design (Manchester and Barnsley), and now as a principal with Woodhall Planning & Conservation. I have been involved in many schemes involving listed buildings and conservation areas, and have prepared Conservation Area Appraisals for local planning authorities. I have provided design and conservation evidence at Public Inquires for many developers and local authorities, including evidence in relation to other wind farm proposals.
- 2.03 In relation to this proposal, I was responsible for the preparation of the Heritage Assets Chapter of the Environmental Statement and gave evidence at the first Inquiry into the appeal against the refusal of planning permission.

3.00 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF EVIDENCE

- 3.01 This Inquiry relates to an appeal against the decision of South Northamptonshire Council (the 'Council') to refuse an application for planning permission for a wind farm comprising five wind turbines, underground cabling, meteorological mast, access tracks, control building, temporary site compound, and ancillary developments on land at Spring Farm Ridge. A previous Inquiry into this appeal was held in May 2012 but the Inspector's decision was challenged in the High Court and, on one specific ground, was overturned.
- 3.02 The Appellant's case is being presented by a number of witnesses and my evidence relates to the impact of the proposed development upon the setting of the heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) around the Appeal Site. Landscape issues are considered within the evidence of Mr. Stevenson. In a case such as this it is important to provide a structured framework for objective analysis and, particularly, to disaggregate likely significant effects on landscape and visual amenity from those which relate to heritage assets. The overall planning evaluation of the proposed development is provided within the evidence of Mr. Bell.
- 3.03 The application for planning permission was considered by the Development Control Committee of the Council on 30 June 2011 (CD 12.3) and six reasons for refusal were given on the decision notice (CD 12.4). Subsequently three of these reasons were withdrawn (before the first Inquiry). My evidence relates to the first of the reasons for refusal. Paragraph 4.8 of the Council's Statement of Case indicates that it would focus on the impact of the proposed development upon seven designated heritage assets or groups of heritage assets (the Council's concern at the previous Inquiry regarding the Culworth Conservation Area has been dropped). The Council also states (in paragraph 4.10 of its Statement of Case) that it would not be raising any issue regarding cultural heritage tourism. In addition, the Council accepts in paragraph 4.7 of its Statement of Case that the harm to heritage assets is no longer considered 'substantial' in relation to paragraphs 132 to 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 3.04 In addition to the designated heritage assets identified by the Council, the National Trust has raised concerns regarding the impact of the proposed development upon two of its properties. Also, the Friends of St. Mary Magdalene Church, Helmdon and others are concerned about the impact upon that building. In addition, the Helmdon, Stuchbury and Greatworth Windfarm Action Group ('HSGWAG') indicates at paragraph 29 of its Statement of Case that serious and unacceptable harm would also be caused to two

undesigned heritage assets. I note that, despite the various comments set out in its letter of 14th January 2011, English Heritage did not recommend refusal of the application.

3.05 As a result of the concerns raised by the Council and others, within my evidence I have considered the impact of the proposed development upon the following individual or groups of heritage assets, namely:

- Greatworth Hall (Grade II listed building);
- Greatworth Conservation Area;
- Church of St. Peter, Greatworth (Grade II* listed building);
- Astwell Castle (scheduled ancient monument and Grade II* listed building);
- Sulgrave Conservation Area;
- Castle Hill Ringworks and Church of St. James, Sulgrave (scheduled ancient monument and Grade II* listed building);
- Sulgrave Manor (Grade I listed building and Grade II registered park and garden);
- Church of St. Mary Magdelene, Helmdon (Grade II* listed building);
- Canons Ashby (Grade I listed building and Grade II* registered park and garden);
- Stowe (Grade I listed building and Grade I registered park and garden);
- Site of deserted village, Stuchbury (non-designated heritage asset); and
- Railway Viaduct, Helmdon (non-designated heritage asset).

Methodology

3.06 In order to prepare this evidence I have visited all the heritage assets (or their surroundings) set out at 3.05 above, and have made use of the material submitted with the application (particularly the various photomontages).

3.07 The Council is not expressing any concerns regarding the potential of the proposed development to have a direct effect upon the non-designated heritage assets (principally archaeological remains) on the Appeal Site. Also, heritage concerns expressed by third parties relate entirely to the impact of the proposal on the setting of heritage assets. As a result it is only the impact of the proposed wind turbines that are relevant, not the other elements of the proposed development. My evidence therefore solely considers the impact of the proposed turbines on the setting of heritage assets.

3.08 The setting of a heritage asset is defined in Annex 2 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the 'Framework' - see 5.04 below and CD 2.1). Whilst the settings of various heritage

assets need to be understood in assessing the impact of this proposal, I consider that any attempt to closely define the extent of setting is of limited usefulness. Setting is not a heritage asset in itself, nor is it a heritage designation; its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of a heritage asset (see 5.05 below). Therefore, what is of primary importance is not whether a proposed development is within or beyond the setting but the impact of that development upon the significance of the heritage asset, including its setting. This is the object of Sections 66 and 72 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (see 4.01 below) and accords with the methodology set out in the English Heritage document, *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (see 5.11 below and CD 10.1), particularly the advice on page 16 of *The Setting of Heritage Assets*, which includes the comment that:

Understanding the significance of a heritage asset will enable the contribution made by its setting to be understood. This will be the starting point for any proper evaluation of the implications of development affecting setting.

3.09 As a result, within my evidence I have not attempted to define the geographical extent of the setting of the various heritage assets but have sought to identify whether and to what extent elements of the setting of a heritage asset contribute to the significance of that asset. I have then assessed the impact of the proposed wind turbines on the significance of the various heritage assets, including any impact on those elements of their settings that contribute to their significance. In assessing significance I have used the four categories listed in Annex 2 of the Framework (see 5.05 below and CD 2.1) in preference to those suggested on pages 27 to 32 of the English Heritage document, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (CD 10.4), as the Framework is a central government document and post-dates the English Heritage publication.

3.10 No beneficial changes to heritage assets are anticipated as a result of the proposed development and therefore paragraphs 133 and 134 of the Framework are of relevance (see 5.02 below and CD 2.1). These make a distinction between proposals that will lead to ‘... *substantial harm to or total loss of significance* ...’ of a designated heritage asset (paragraph 133) and proposals which will have ‘... *less than substantial harm* ...’ (paragraph 134). This is different from the more graduated approach that was properly adopted for the assessment in the Historic Environment Chapter of the Environmental Statement (CD 12.2). I consider that impacts with a level of magnitude of ‘Major’ within the Environmental Statement would equate to the Framework’s ‘substantial harm’, with ‘Moderate’, ‘Slight’, and ‘Negligible’ magnitudes equating to ‘less than substantial harm’. It is, of course, possible for the proposed development to result in no harm to the significance of a heritage asset. In order

to use the same terminology as that adopted in the *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (see 5.04 below and CD 10.1), where I consider that there would be no harm, I have used the word 'neutral'.

4.00 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Statutory requirements

- 4.01 All policies relating to listed buildings and conservation areas need to be understood in the context of the statutory requirements, which are primary. Section 66 of the *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* states that special regard shall be paid to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings and Section 72 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Whilst the exact importance and weight to be given to these statutory duties remains a matter for the decision maker, it clearly needs to be greater than that given to other material considerations.
- 4.02 It should also be noted that, in relation to conservation areas, the Courts have held that the objective of “preserve” or “preserving” (Sections 69 and 72 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*) can be achieved by development which leaves character and appearance unharmed. This is the criterion I have adopted for my assessment, rather than the idea that “preservation” means keeping unaltered.
- 4.03 Under Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

- 4.04 The Development Plan comprises the ‘saved’ policies of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan 1997 (the ‘Local Plan’ – CD I.1); the East Midlands Regional Plan has been revoked since the previous Inquiry. The Council’s Local Development Framework is emerging and the relevant document is the West Northamptonshire draft Joint Core Strategy (CD 4.4, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8), which is currently proceeding through the Examination process. Mr Bell explains the status of the draft Core Strategy in detail within his evidence. Mr. Bell also considers the relevance of the Council’s supplementary planning documents and the regional renewable energy base documents. Two conservation area appraisals have been published by the Council since the previous Inquiry: a *Greatworth Conservation Area Appraisal* (CD 10.8) and a *Sulgrave Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* (CD 10.7). Also, a Historic Landscape Character Appraisal has been produced on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council (CD 8.9). This last document is considered within the evidence of Mr. Stevenson.

Local Plan

- 4.05 The 'saved' policies of the Local Plan (CD 1.1) that are relevant to my evidence are:
- Policy G3, which includes references to the setting of listed buildings and the character, appearance and setting of conservation areas;
 - Policy EV10, which is concerned with conservation areas and refers to retaining views where they contribute to the character of the area; this policy is not referred to in the Council's reasons for refusal;
 - Policy EV11, which is concerned with the setting of conservations areas;
 - Policy EV12, which refers to the setting of listed buildings; and
 - Policy EV28, which refers to the setting of historic parkland and battlefields.
- 4.06 I note that 'saved' Policies G3, EV11 and EV28 are expressed in absolute terms and do not allow for the balancing act between harm and benefits that is integral to the legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas, and to the approach set out in the Framework (see 4.01 above and 5.02 below). The weight to be given to the Development Plan policies and their relationship with the Framework is considered within the evidence of Mr. Bell.

Local Development Framework

- 4.07 The West Northamptonshire draft Joint Core Strategy (CD 4.4, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8) includes two emerging policies of relevance to my evidence:
- Policy S11, which relates to low carbon and renewable energy and indicates that proposals should be sensitively located and designed to minimise potential adverse impacts on historic assets; and
 - Policy BN5, which relates to the historic environment and indicates that proposals should demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development in order to minimise harm.

Conservation Area Appraisals

- 4.08 The *Greatworth Conservation Area Appraisal* (CD 10.8) was adopted by the Council in June 2012. The *Sulgrave Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* (CD 10.7) was adopted in June 2013 and at the same time the boundaries of the designated area were modified to include two additional buildings and to rationalise the Conservation Area where there were no boundaries or features on the ground.

5.00 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.01 Central government policy on planning issues is set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the ‘Framework’ – CD 2.1), and additional policies relevant to this proposal are set out in the *Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy EN-1* (CD 2.7), the *National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy EN-3* (CD 2.8), and the *Planning practice guidance for renewable and low carbon energy* (CD 2.5). The Framework has largely superseded the central government policies that were relevant at the time of the previous Inquiry but the *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* (CD 10.2) remains relevant. Additional advice is provided by English Heritage in various documents that are discussed in 5.07 to 5.12 below.

Framework

5.02 One of the twelve core planning principles set out in paragraph 17 of the Framework (CD 2.1) is to, ‘*Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance ...*’ Further details are provided in paragraphs 126 to 141. Paragraphs 133 and 134 make a distinction between proposals that will lead to ‘*... substantial harm to or total loss of significance ...*’ of a designated heritage asset (paragraph 133) and proposals which will have ‘*... less than substantial harm ...*’ (paragraph 134). Paragraph 135 relates to the impact of proposed developments upon non-designated heritage assets.

5.03 There is no specific guidance on what might constitute the difference between ‘substantial harm’ and ‘less than substantial harm’ but I note that in the *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* ‘substantial harm’ is linked to ‘demolition’, ‘destruction’ and ‘total loss’ (see paragraph 91 and the heading above – CD 10.2).

5.04 Annex 2 of the Framework (CD 2.1) provides definitions for a variety of terms related to the historic environment. The ‘Setting of a heritage asset’ is defined as:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

5.05 Similarly, ‘Significance (for heritage policy)’ is defined as:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.

National Policy Statements for Energy

- 5.06 Both the *Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy EN-1* (CD 2.7) and the *National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy EN-3* (CD 2.8) have sections on the Historic Environment. Paragraphs 2.7.17 and 2.7.43 of *National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy EN-3* indicate that the time-limited nature of wind farms is a consideration when assessing their impact on the setting of heritage assets. The *Planning practice guidance for renewable and low carbon energy* (CD 2.5) refers in paragraph 15 to the need to take great care to ensure that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (reflecting paragraph 17 of the Framework- see 5.02 above), and also states in paragraph 34 that:

As the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence, but also from its setting, careful consideration should be given to the impact of wind turbines on such assets. Depending on their scale, design and prominence a wind turbine within the setting of a heritage asset may cause substantial harm to the significance of the asset.

Climate Change and the Historic Environment

- 5.07 The English Heritage document, *Climate Change and the Historic Environment* (see CD 10.3) sets out the implications of climate change for the historic environment. It indicates (on page 6) that historic assets. ‘... are potentially at risk from the direct impacts of future climate change. Without action to adapt to a changing climate and limit further changes it is likely that these will be irreparably damaged and the cultural, social and economic benefits they provide will also be lost.’

Wind Energy and the Historic Environment

- 5.08 The document, *Wind Energy and the Historic Environment* (see CD 10.5) indicates that English Heritage recognises that climate change is likely to be detrimental to the historic environment and supports measures to exploit renewable energy sources (page 3). It considers the issues related to the impact of wind turbines on the historic environment and on page 8 it includes specific advice on setting and visual amenity. I have considered these issues (where relevant) within my assessments in Section 6.00 below.
- 5.09 This document (see CD 10.5) also indicates (on page 9 and on the back cover) that reversibility is an important feature of wind energy developments that should be taken into account in every case.

The Setting of Heritage Assets

5.10 The English Heritage document *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (CD 10.1) makes it clear in Section 2.4 that:

Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset.

5.11 This document (CD 10.1) also provides a five step approach for assessing the implications of a development proposal, namely:

- Step 1: Identifying the heritage assets affected and their settings;
- Step 2: Assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Step 3: Assessing the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s);
- Step 4: Maximising enhancement and minimising harm; and
- Step 5: Making and documenting the decision and monitoring the outcomes.

5.12 I have generally adopted this approach for the assessments in Section 6.00 below.

6.00 IMPACT ON HERITAGE ASSETS

- 6.01 As indicated in 3.03 to 3.05 above, within my evidence I provide an assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon a number of heritage assets (both designated and non-designated).
- 6.02 As indicated in 5.11 and 5.12 above, this assessment makes use of the five step approach set out in the English Heritage document *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (CD 10.1). However, I have omitted Steps 4 and 5. The opportunities for maximising enhancement and minimising harm (Step 4) are limited as a result of the size of the proposed wind turbines, although (as indicated in paragraphs 3.1.5 and 3.1.7 of Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement – CD 12.2) both the site selection process and the design evolution included consideration of the mitigation of environmental impacts (including impact upon heritage assets). Step 5 (weighing the harm against the full public benefits) is undertaken within the evidence of Mr. Bell. I do, however, consider the public benefits to the historic environment in my conclusions (see 7.07 below).
- 6.03 The assessment considers the factors identified on page 8 of the English Heritage document, *Wind Energy and the Historic Environment* (see CD 10.5), which are: visual dominance; scale; intervisibility; vistas and sight-lines; movement, sound and light effects; and unaltered settings. However, in no case have I considered sight-lines, sound, light and unaltered setting to be relevant.

Impact on Greatworth Hall

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.04 Greatworth Hall is a Grade II listed building that is located approximately 250m south-west of the Appeal Site (see Appendices ANB 1 and ANB 2). It dates from the early eighteenth century and was enlarged in the early nineteenth century. As a farmhouse, which may also have had a wider historic importance (as suggested by its name), I consider that its significance is primarily the result of its architectural and historic interest, although its surroundings may also have some archaeological interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

- 6.05 The setting of the house is provided by its garden, the adjacent farm buildings and the surrounding agricultural land. In view of its historic and architectural interest, I consider that the garden, the farm buildings and the surrounding agricultural land contribute to the significance of Greatworth Hall. In relation to the (non-exhaustive) checklist on page 19 of

The setting of heritage assets (CD 10.1), I consider that the following attributes of the setting of Greatworth Hall contribute to its significance:

- Other historic assets – particularly the relationship of the house and the farm with the village of Greatworth;
- Land use – the agricultural use of the surrounding land relates to the function of the farm;
- Green spaces, trees and vegetation – this relates to land use (see above);
- Openness – this relates to land use (see above); and
- Functional relationships – particularly the functional relationship between the house and the various farm buildings (although many of these have been converted to other uses).

6.06 I note that the setting of Greatworth Hall would be affected by the HS2 rail line, which (if constructed) would pass close to the south-west of this listed building, although it is proposed that a section of the proposed rail line to the north-west would be within a tunnel (see CD 14.1).

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

6.07 The proposed wind turbines would be located on the agricultural land to the north-east of Greatworth Hall and the nearest turbine would be approximately 500m from the listed building. The principal views out from the house are to the south-east across its garden (away from the proposed turbines); those towards the Appeal Site being from within the group of farm buildings. The approach to the house is from the road to the north-east but there are also public views of the building from the public footpaths and bridleways to the south. Although there will be some screening by the farm buildings and the existing trees, the proposed turbines would be visually dominant in views from the north-east side of the house, from the access road, and from the south (see Photomontage 2b in Volume 2 of the Further Environmental Information – CD 12.2). There are no important views of the house across the Appeal Site. The movement and noise of the turbines would also be new features around the building. However, the scale of the proposed development is relatively limited (consisting of five turbines) and they are all located to the north-east so there would be no sense that they surround the asset.

6.08 The turbines would not lead to the loss or major alteration of any of the attributes of setting that contribute to the significance of this heritage asset (see 6.05 above). The garden and farm buildings adjacent to Greatworth Hall would remain unaltered as a result of the

proposed development. Also, the agricultural land around the house would remain largely unaltered (albeit with the addition of five large new elements), particularly to the south-east which is the direction of the principal views out. As a result, I consider that the proposed development will have a moderate adverse impact on the significance of this heritage asset. In relation to the distinctions made in the Framework (see 5.02 above and CD 2.1), I consider that the proposed development would cause 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of this listed building. This level of harm needs to be considered against the statutory duty set out in Section 66 of the *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (see 4.01 above).

6.09 I note that following the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above), the Inspector's decision letter stated in relation to Greatworth Hall (paragraph 48 – CD 6.16) that:

... the proposal would have moderate adverse impact on the setting of the Hall but the harm would be less than substantial.

Impact on Greatworth Conservation Area

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

6.10 The historic centre of Greatworth is located approximately 1.2km south-west of the Appeal Site (see ANB 1). The Greatworth Conservation Area covers the historic core of the village. The Council has published a *Greatworth Conservation Area Appraisal* (CD 10.8). The historic core of the village is typical of small agricultural settlements within this part of the country. I consider that the Conservation Area is of archaeological, architectural and historic interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

6.11 The setting of the Greatworth Conservation Area is largely provided by the surrounding twentieth-century housing. On its eastern side, small parts of the designated area abut agricultural land but, apart from the graveyard of the church, these are generally the gardens of private houses. The Summary of Special Interest on page 2 of the Council's *Greatworth Conservation Area Appraisal* (CD 10.8) indicates that '*The glimpsed views of the open countryside from within the conservation area contribute to the character of the village and stand as strong reminders of the setting and rural heritage of Greatworth.*' Section 4.2 indicates that, '*There is a strong sense of enclosure within the settlement.*' and Section 4.5 states that, '*Views within the conservation area are limited to those down roads and footpaths*' However, it also notes in Section 4.5 that:

An important view within the conservation area is the view looking east through the churchyard. Due to the enclosed nature of the village this is the only view of the open

countryside that can be seen from directly within the central core. It is therefore very significant as it makes the visual connection between the village and its rural setting.

- 6.12 I assess the view through the churchyard in considering the setting of the Church of St. Peter (see 6.16 to 6.20 below). I also note that, despite the statement that this is the ‘... *only view of the open countryside that can be seen from directly within the central core ...*’, a number of other views from the central core of the village towards open countryside are indicated in Figure 30 of the Council’s *Greatworth Conservation Area Appraisal* (CD 10.8). In my opinion the setting of the Greatworth Conservation Area makes a limited contribution to its significance, as the designated area is largely divorced from the surrounding agricultural land which would have been its historic setting and given the village its historic purpose. I also note that the setting of the Conservation Area would be affected to some extent by the HS2 rail line, which (if constructed) would pass to the north-east of the village, although it is proposed that a section close to the village would be within a tunnel.

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.13 The proposed wind turbines would be located on the agricultural land to the north-east of the Greatworth Conservation Area and the nearest turbine would be approximately 1.2km from the edge of the designated area. From my assessment, I do not consider that the turbines would be seen in any public views out of the Conservation Area, with the exception of the view from the eastern end of the graveyard (see 6.18 to 6.20 below) and the view from the very northern end of the designated area along Helmdon Road. There will also be some private views of the turbines, primarily from the first floor windows of residential properties. As a result of the topography and intervening trees there are no views towards the Conservation Area across the Appeal Site. As a result of the distance between the turbines and Greatworth, the partial screening provided by intervening trees, and the way in which they would be seen as part of the wider landscape, I do not consider that the turbines would be visually dominant in views from the Conservation Area (see Cultural Heritage Wireframe Overlay Visualisation 1a in Appendix ANB 5), although the movement of the blades will attract attention to them. The scale of the proposed development is relatively limited (consisting of five turbines) and they are all located to the north-east so there would be no sense that they surround the Conservation Area.
- 6.14 The twentieth-century housing and agricultural land surrounding the Greatworth Conservation Area will remain unaltered as a result of the proposed development and views of the proposed wind turbines will be very limited. As a result, I consider that the proposed development will have a slight adverse impact on the significance of this heritage asset. In

relation to the distinctions made in the Framework (see 5.02 above and CD 2.1), I consider that the proposed development would cause 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of the Greatworth Conservation Area. This level of harm needs to be considered against the statutory duty set out in Section 72 of the *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (see 4.01 above).

- 6.15 I note that following the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above), the Inspector's decision letter stated in paragraph 47 (CD 6.16) that:

There would be very limited views of the proposal from Greatworth Conservation Area. However, there are three paths leading out of the ... churchyard which, at present, is a secluded spot. The visible and sometimes moving presence of part or all of at least four of the proposed wind turbines ... would affect the perceived tranquillity. The array, some 1.3km away, would act as a distraction and impact on the setting of the churchyard within the conservation area but not to such an extent as to cause substantial harm.

Impact on Church of St. Peter, Greatworth

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.16 This church is a Grade II* listed building that is located approximately 1.2km south-west of the Appeal Site and is within the Greatworth Conservation Area (see Appendices ANB 1 and ANB 2). The earliest sections of the building date from the thirteenth century, although it has been rebuilt and extended over the centuries. In addition, there are 22 seventeenth-century headstones within its graveyard that are listed Grade II (see Appendix ANB 2). As a historic parish church the building is primarily of architectural and historic interest, although some of the headstones may be considered to also be of artistic interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

- 6.17 The setting of the church is mainly provided by its graveyard and the adjacent section of the village, although the eastern end of the graveyard abuts agricultural land. The heritage asset is a church and I therefore consider that its graveyard and its location within the village contribute to its significance. In my opinion the adjacent agricultural land makes little contribution to the significance of the church, partly because there are mature trees within the graveyard to the east of the building that restrict views in that direction (see Figures 24a and 27 within the Council's *Greatworth Conservation Area Appraisal* – CD 10.8). I have already quoted the comments about the importance of the view through the churchyard in Section 4.5 of the Council's *Greatworth Conservation Area Appraisal* (see 6.11 above and CD 10.8). I do not agree with this assessment as, in my opinion, the mature trees within the graveyard severely restrict appreciation of the open countryside from Church Road and

from the immediate vicinity of the church. However, I do note that there is a route through the churchyard to three public footpaths, which cross the agricultural land to its east.

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.18 The proposed wind turbines would be located on the agricultural land to the north-east of the church and the nearest turbine would be approximately 1.4km from the north-east corner of its graveyard. As a result of the surrounding buildings and trees the turbines will not be seen in any key views to or from the church. The only position in the vicinity of the church from which the turbines will be clearly seen is at the eastern end of the graveyard in views to the north-east (see Cultural Heritage Wireframe Overlay Visualisation 1a in Appendix ANB 5). Even if there was an important view looking east through the graveyard as asserted in the Council's *Greatworth Conservation Area Appraisal* (see 6.11 above and CD 10.8), the turbines would not be seen in this view (except at the very eastern end) as they would be screened by the church building, and by the trees and buildings to the north of the graveyard.
- 6.19 The graveyard, the adjacent section of the village, and the agricultural land immediately to the east of the graveyard will remain unaltered as a result of the proposed development. Views of the proposed wind turbines from any of these locations will be limited. As a result, I consider that the proposed development will have a slight adverse impact on the significance of the church. In relation to the distinctions made in the Framework (see 5.02 above and CD 2.1), I consider that the proposed development would cause 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of this listed building. Even this slight level of harm needs to be considered against the statutory duty set out in Section 66 of the *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (see 4.01 above).
- 6.20 The decision letter of the Inspector who held the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above) makes no specific reference to the impact of the proposed development upon the significance of the Church of St. Peter but the assessment in relation to the Greatworth Conservation Area (set out in paragraph 47 of the decision letter - CD 6.16) is partly quoted at 6.15 above.

Impact on Astwell Castle

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.21 Astwell Castle is a Grade II* listed building and, in addition, the uninhabited section is a scheduled monument (see Appendices ANB 2 and ANB 3). The gatehouse is all that remains of a fifteenth-century fortified manor house that was largely demolished to be

replaced by a seventeenth century house. Further demolition occurred in the eighteenth century when the building became a farmhouse and it was partially restored in the mid-twentieth century. Astwell Castle is located approximately 3.2km east of the eastern boundary of the Appeal Site (see Appendix ANB 1). Few examples of small fortified manor houses from the medieval period survive in England, although small seventeenth-century manor houses are more common. The early elements of Astwell Castle are therefore of particular interest despite the later alterations. As it includes the remains of a former defensive building, together with a small manor house that has subsequently been partly converted into a farmhouse, I consider Astwell Castle to be of archaeological, architectural and historic interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

6.22 The location of Astwell Castle on rising ground with good visibility to the west, north and east contributes to an understanding of its early defensive role. Similarly, its garden, the adjacent farm buildings and the surrounding agricultural land contribute to the appreciation of its later use as a farmhouse. In relation to the (non-exhaustive) checklist on page 19 of *The setting of heritage assets* (CD 10.1), I consider that the following attributes of the setting of Astwell Castle contribute to its significance:

- Topography – particularly the location of the building on relatively high ground;
- Land use – the agricultural use of the surrounding land relates to the later function of the building as a farmhouse;
- Green spaces, trees and vegetation – this relates to land use (see above);
- Openness – this relates to land use (see above);
- Views – particularly the views out to the west, north and east;
- Visual dominance – the historic role of the building as a defensive structure means that it would have been design to be visually dominant; and
- Tranquility, remoteness – although there are other buildings within the immediate vicinity, there is a sense of remoteness in the wider area.

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

6.23 The proposed wind turbines would be located on the agricultural land to the west and the nearest turbine would be approximately 3.5km from Astwell Castle. The principal views towards the building are from the east and the turbines would be seen in the background of many of these views (see Cultural Heritage Photomontage Visualisation 2a in Appendix ANB 5). They would also be seen in views west from the building and the movement of the blades would attract attention. The scale of the proposed development is relatively limited

(consisting of five turbines) and they are all located to the west so there would be no sense that they surround the heritage asset.

6.24 The turbines would not lead to the loss or major alteration of any of the attributes of setting that contribute to the significance of this heritage asset (see 6.22 above). The garden, the adjacent farm buildings and all the farmland in the vicinity of Astwell Castle will remain unaltered as a result of the proposed development. The wider landscape would also remain largely unaltered (albeit with the addition of five large new elements), which would be seen in views to the west. However, as a result of the distance involved, I do not consider the turbines will be dominant in these views. There would be no confusion between the castle as a feature of archaeological, architectural and historic interest and the turbines, and therefore the turbines would not detract to any great extent from the significance of this heritage asset. I therefore consider that the proposed development will have a moderate adverse impact on Astwell Castle. In relation to the distinctions made in the Framework (see 5.02 above and CD 2.1), I consider that the proposed development would cause 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of this listed building. This harm needs to be considered against the statutory duty set out in Section 66 of the *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (see 4.01 above).

6.25 I note that following the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above), the Inspector's decision letter stated in relation to Astwell Castle (paragraph 49 – CD 6.16) that:

Although it is difficult to appreciate the asset with the proposal in the same view from the road, views west have a sense of tranquillity and remoteness that allows attention to be focussed on the asset. The kinetic nature of the proposal would attract attention to the man-made features of significant scale on the skyline. However, the turbines would not be close to or fill the field of view but a peripheral part of views across and out of the asset. Therefore, the understanding and appreciation of the asset would not be substantially harmed.

Impact on Sulgrave Conservation Area

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

6.26 The Sulgrave Conservation Area is located approximately 2km north of the main section of the Appeal Site (see ANB 1) and the designated area covers the majority of the village. This designated area has changed to a small extent since the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 and 4.09 above). Also, the Council has now published a *Sulgrave Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* (CD 10.7). Sulgrave is typical of small agricultural settlements within this

part of the country. I consider that the Conservation Area is of archaeological, architectural and historic interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

6.27 The setting of the Sulgrave Conservation Area is largely provided by small developments of twentieth-century housing and the surrounding agricultural land. Section 4.6 of the Council's *Sulgrave Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* (CD 10.7) states that:

Views within the conservation area are a mixture of wide sweeping views of the open countryside around the settlement and short channelled vistas along the roads and lanes.

The roads of Sulgrave have an enclosed feel due to the strong hedgerows, walls and building lines which run alongside them. ...

Views of the open countryside from within the village can be found in many areas including Castle Hill and the adjacent Registered Village Green. The views from these areas are of great importance to the significance of the Scheduled Ancient Monument as due to modern encroachment they remain the only views to and from Castle Hill, which was most likely constructed as a defensive site of which formed an integral part.

Views of the countryside from within the conservation area are key to understanding the development of Sulgrave and maintain the rural links that are the foundations of the village.

Views of the conservation area from outside the village are also important in understanding the context and development of Sulgrave. The surrounding landscape provides an important rural settlement and makes a contribution to the special character of the area.

6.28 In relation to the (non-exhaustive) checklist on page 19 of *The setting of heritage assets* (CD 10.1), I consider that the following attributes of the setting of the Sulgrave Conservation Area contribute to its significance:

- Topography – particularly the location of the village below the high ground to the west and north;
- Land use – the agricultural use of the surrounding land relates to the historic function of the village as a predominantly agricultural settlement;
- Green spaces, trees and vegetation – this relates to land use (see above);
- Openness – this relates to land use (see above);
- Functional relationship – the village has a functional relationship with the surrounding pattern of roads and footpaths; and
- Views – particularly the views across the village from the high ground to the west and north;

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.29 The proposed wind turbines would be located to the south of the Sulgrave Conservation Area and the nearest turbine would be approximately 2km from the edge of the designated area. From my assessment, I consider that public views of the turbines from within the Conservation Area would only be possible from around Castle Hill and the parish church (see 6.32 to 6.36 below) and from Helmdon Road. There will also be some private views of the turbines, primarily from the first floor windows of residential properties. The turbines will be seen beyond the village in views from the public footpaths that cross the higher ground to the north but in these views the village would be clearly appreciated as a historic settlement identifiably different from the turbines, and therefore the turbines would not detract to any great extent from the significance of the heritage asset. There are no views towards the Conservation Area across the Appeal Site. As a result of the distance between the turbines and Sulgrave, and the way in which they would be seen as part of the wider landscape, I do not consider that they would be visually dominant in views from the Conservation Area (see Photomontages 4b and 5b in Volume 2 of the Further Environmental Information – CD 12.2), although the movement of the blades will attract attention to them. The scale of the proposed development is relatively limited (consisting of five turbines) and they are all located to the south so there would be no sense that they surround the Conservation Area.
- 6.30 The turbines would not lead to the loss or major alteration of any of the attributes of setting that contribute to the significance of this heritage asset (see 6.28 above), although five large new elements would be seen in views across the agricultural land to the south. The twentieth-century housing and the agricultural land adjacent to the Sulgrave Conservation Area will remain unaltered as a result of the proposed development and views of the proposed wind turbines will be very limited. As a result, I consider that the proposed development will have a moderate adverse impact on the significance of the Sulgrave Conservation Area. In relation to paragraphs 133 and 134 of the Framework (see 5.02 above and CD 2.1), I consider that this is ‘less than substantial harm’. This level of harm needs to be considered against the statutory duty set out in Section 72 of the *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (see 4.01 above).
- 6.31 I note that following the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above), the Inspector’s decision letter stated in relation to the Sulgrave Conservation Area (paragraph 45 – CD 6.16) that:
- Sulgrave is separated from the proposal and the presence of the wind turbines in views would act as a distraction but not erode an understanding or appreciation of the*

significance of the designated heritage asset. Therefore the harm would be less than substantial.

Impact on Castle Ringworks and Church of St. James, Sulgrave

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.32 These two heritage assets are located approximately 2km north of the main section of the Appeal Site within the Sulgrave Conservation Area (see Appendix ANB 1). The Castle Ringworks are a scheduled monument (see Appendix ANB 3) and is the site of a medieval fortification that was probably occupied from the late Anglo-Saxon period to the late twelfth century. It consists of a small area that contained buildings, surrounded by a substantial ditch and a bank. The church is listed Grade II* and dates from the thirteenth century (see Appendix ANB 2). In addition, there are 2 headstones and 5 chest tombs within the graveyard that date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and are listed Grade II (see Appendix ANB 2). It is common for the site of a former defensive structure to be closely associated with the site of the parish church at the heart of a settlement. I consider that these two heritage assets are of archaeological, architectural and historic interest, but the headstones and chest tombs may be considered to also be of artistic interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

- 6.33 The setting of the Castle Ringworks and the church is mainly provided by the adjacent section of the village, which includes various sections of open space. To the south there is agricultural land. All of these contribute to the significance of these heritage assets. In addition, as indicated in the Section 4.6 of the Council's *Sulgrave Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* (CD 10.7) the views out from the Castle Ringworks are of great importance to the significance of the monument (see 6.27 above).

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.34 The proposed wind turbines would be located on the agricultural land approximately 2km to the south of these heritage assets. The turbines will be seen in views south from both the Castle Ringworks and the church (see Photomontage 4b in Volume 2 of the Further Environmental Information – CD 12.2).
- 6.35 The adjacent section of the village and the agricultural land to the south will remain unaltered as a result of the proposed development (although views of the proposed wind turbines will be possible). However, there would be no confusion between the Castle Ringworks and the church as features of archaeological, architectural and historic interest and the turbines, and therefore the turbines would not detract to any great extent from the

significance of these heritage assets. I consider that the proposed development will have a moderate adverse impact on the significance of these two heritage assets. In relation to paragraphs 133 and 134 of the Framework (see 5.02 above and CD 2.1) I consider that this is less than substantial harm. This harm to the church needs to be considered against the statutory duty set out in Section 66 of the *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (see 4.01 above).

- 6.36 I note that following the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above), the Inspector's decision letter stated in relation to the Castle Ringworks and the Church of St. James (paragraph 41 – CD 6.16) that:

I concur with the parties that the impact of the proposal on Castle Hill and associated elements and the Church would be moderately adverse but less than substantial.

Impact on Sulgrave Manor

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.37 Sulgrave Manor is listed Grade I and its gatepiers are Grade II (see Appendix ANB 2). The surrounding gardens are included within the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens at Grade II (see Appendix ANB 4) and the whole complex is located within the Sulgrave Conservation Area (see 6.26 above). The house was constructed in the mid-sixteenth century by Lawrence Washington, who was an ancestor of George Washington, the first President of the United States of America. It has had a very mixed history, being extended around 1700, only to be partly demolished later in the eighteenth century; following its acquisition as a memorial to George Washington in 1914 it was extensively rebuilt and in recent years it has been comprehensively restored. The Manor and its gardens are open to the public and are important visitor attractions, particularly for Americans. They are also well used for educational visits. As a small manor house and garden I consider that these heritage assets are of archaeological, architectural and historic interest, and the link to the family of George Washington significantly increases their special historic interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

- 6.38 The setting of Sulgrave Manor is provided by the adjacent section of the village and by the agricultural land to the east. The open land to the south of the village is almost entirely screened in ground-level views from the Manor and its immediate surroundings by the buildings and trees along the south side of Little Street. Some views out to the south are possible from the upper floors of the Manor. I therefore consider that this open land and

the views across it towards the Appeal Site make very little contribution to the significance of Sulgrave Manor.

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.39 The proposed wind turbines would be located on the agricultural land approximately 2km to the south of Sulgrave Manor. The turbines would not generally be seen in views from the ground floor of the Manor or from the majority of the garden (see Cultural Heritage Visualisation Aa in Volume 2 of the Further Environmental Information – CD 12.2). The turbines would be visible from the orchard and the associated section of garden to the west of the house. The turbines will not generally appear in views towards these heritage assets from Manor Road. Some glimpses of the turbines will be possible from the upper floors of the Manor.
- 6.40 The adjacent section of the village and the agricultural land to the east will remain unaltered as a result of the proposed development and views of the proposed wind turbines would be very limited. I consider that the proposed development will have a neutral impact on the significance of these heritage assets (see 3.10 above). The impact of the proposed development upon Sulgrave Manor’s role as a visitor attraction is considered within the evidence of Mr. Bell.
- 6.41 I note that following the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above), the Inspector’s decision letter stated in relation to Sulgrave Manor (paragraph 43 – CD 6.16) that:
- ... the proposed wind farm would have a very limited adverse impact on the setting of the listed house and registered garden.*

Impact on Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Helmdon

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.42 This church is a Grade II* listed building that is located on high ground at the southern end of the village of Helmdon, approximately 1.2km east of the eastern boundary of the Appeal Site (see Appendices ANB 1 and ANB 2). It is predominantly a fourteenth century structure, although the tower and many other elements date from the nineteenth century. In addition, there are 8 headstones and 6 chest tombs within its graveyard that date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and are listed Grade II (see Appendix ANB 2). I consider that as a parish church the building is primarily of architectural and historic interest, although some of the headstones may be considered to also be of artistic interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

- 6.43 The setting of the church is provided by its graveyard, the adjacent section of the village (including the manorial earthworks to the west), its hill-top location and the surrounding agricultural land. As the heritage asset is a church, I consider that it is the graveyard and its relationship to the village that are of particular importance in understanding its significance. Hill-top locations were often chosen for the sites of early churches and thus this aspect of its setting is also important. The surrounding agricultural land is, in my opinion, of more limited relevance to the significance of the church.

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.44 The proposed wind turbines would be located on the agricultural land to the west of the church and the nearest turbine would be approximately 1.6km from the church. The approach to the church is from the west and views towards the building from this direction will not be affected by the wind turbines. Views out from the church and its graveyard are very limited as a result of the surrounding trees, although the turbines would be visually dominant in views from the lychgate and from small sections along the western edge of the graveyard; from these locations the movement of the turbines will attract attention. There are no significant views of the church from the east beyond the graveyard that would be affected by the turbines, although in some views from the west the turbines would be seen in association with the church.
- 6.45 The graveyard, the adjacent section of the village, and the hill-top location of the church will remain unaltered as a result of the proposed development. Also, the agricultural land around the church will remain largely unaltered (albeit with the addition of five large new elements). I therefore consider that the proposed development will have a slight adverse impact on the significance of the church. In relation to the distinctions made in the Framework (see 5.02 above and CD 2.1), I consider that the proposed development would cause 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of this listed building. Even this slight harm needs to be considered against the statutory duty set out in Section 66 of the *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (see 4.01 above).
- 6.46 I note that following the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above), the Inspector's decision letter stated in relation to the Church of St. Mary Magdelene (paragraph 52 – CD 6.16) that:
- ... the proposal would not result in harm to its significance and any impact would be less than substantial.*

Impact on Canons Ashby

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.47 The National Trust has raised concerns about the impact of the proposed development upon its property at Canons Ashby, a house dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which is located approximately 7km north of the Appeal Site (see Appendix ANB 1). The grounds around the house were laid out in the eighteenth century and are included within the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens at Grade II* (see Appendix ANB 4) and the site also includes a number of listed buildings (in this case the list descriptions are not provided in Appendix ANB 2). As a medium-sized country house with associated buildings and gardens I consider that Canons Ashby is of archaeological, architectural, artistic and historical interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

- 6.48 The wider setting of Canons Ashby (which is of relevance at this Inquiry) is principally provided by the surrounding agricultural land.

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.49 The proposed wind turbines would be seen in long-distance views from a number of locations around Canons Ashby (see Cultural Heritage Visualisations Ba, Ca, Da, Ea, and Fa in Volume 2 of the Further Environmental Information – CD 12.2). Views of the turbines would be predominantly from the upper floors of the house, from high ground within the park and from the tower of the church. The undulating nature of the topography within and around the park and gardens, and the many mature trees within and around the park, mean that views of the turbines from ground level would be limited. In particular, the turbines would not be seen on or close to any of the axial views through the gardens and would not be generally visible in principal views from the house. As a result, I consider that the proposed development would have a neutral impact on the significance of Canons Ashby.
- 6.50 I note that following the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above), the Inspector's decision letter stated in relation to Canons Ashby (paragraph 50 – CD 6.16) that:
- Overall, due to its separation from the house and gardens, intervening landscape and settlements, the proposal would not impact harmfully on the significance or wider setting of the property.*

Impact on Stowe

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.51 The National Trust has also raised concerns about the impact of the proposed development upon Stowe, a major eighteenth century house, which is located approximately 11km south-east of the Appeal Site (see Appendix ANB 1). The grounds at Stowe are included within the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens at Grade I (see Appendix ANB 4) and the site also includes a large number of listed buildings (in this case the list descriptions are not provided in Appendix ANB 2). Stowe is a substantial country house and its pleasure grounds (to the south-east of the house) are world famous, primarily because of its collection of garden structures. The house and pleasure grounds are set within a parkland setting. I therefore consider that Stowe is of archaeological, architectural, artistic and historical interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

- 6.52 The wider setting of Stowe (which is of relevance at this Inquiry) is principally provided by the surrounding agricultural land, which contributes to its significance as a major country house set within its own gardens and parkland.

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.53 The proposed wind turbines would be seen in long-distance views from Stowe (see Photomontage 18b in Volume 2 of the Further Environmental Information – CD 12.2). The turbines would not be on or close to the axial view out from the north front of the house or other axial views, although the proposed wind farm would be seen as an element within the broader landscape from the central section of the Oxford Avenue as it passes the house and from other locations within the northern section of the park. The turbines would have no impact upon the pleasure grounds, which are located in a valley to the south-east of the house. As a result, I consider that the proposed development would have a slight adverse impact on the significance of the registered park and garden but would have a neutral impact upon the significance of the many listed buildings at Stowe.

- 6.54 I note that following the previous Inquiry (see 3.01 above), the Inspector's decision letter stated in relation to Stowe (paragraph 51 – CD 6.16) that:

As the turbine blades would form a very small part of the overall view to the north and be about 11.4 km from the park, their impact would be slight on the significance of the heritage assets and less than substantial.

Impact on the site of the deserted village of Stuchbury

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.55 The remains of the village of Stuchbury are predominantly to the south of Stuchbury Hall Farm and are close to the northern boundary of the Appeal Site (see Appendix ANB 1). The location of the village can be identified as a series of earthworks and the line of a hollow way. I note that concern has been expressed about the extent of the village, which is unknown. However, there does not appear to be any evidence that it extended into the Appeal Site and the archaeological investigations undertaken in connection with this proposal did not indicate that any remains of the village would be damaged by the proposed development. The site is not a scheduled monument but as the location of a medieval and (possibly) earlier settlement it is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset of regional interest. I consider the site to be of archaeological and historic interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

- 6.56 The setting of the site of the village is provided by the surrounding agricultural land, Stuchbury Hall Farm and later features, such as the line of the disused Northampton and Banbury Junction Railway. As the heritage asset was presumably a predominantly agricultural community, it is the surrounding agricultural land (with its field boundaries and trees) that contributes to significance of the asset. However, given the nature of the asset (with little visible presence), this contribution to significance is very limited.

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.57 The proposed wind turbines would be located on the agricultural land to the south of the site of the village. The nearest turbine would be approximately 500m from the southern edge of the earthworks and would be visually dominant in views to and from the remains. The movement and noise of the turbines would also be new features in and around the earthworks. However, the scale of the proposed development is relatively limited (consisting of five turbines) and they are all located to the south so there would be no sense that they surround the asset.
- 6.58 As the agricultural land around the site of the village will remain largely unaltered (albeit with the addition of five large new elements), I consider that the proposed development will have a slight adverse impact on the significance of this heritage asset.

Impact on Railway Viaduct at Helmdon

Step 1 – Identify the heritage asset

- 6.59 This railway viaduct is part of the disused Great Central Railway, which runs north-south approximately 500m from the eastern boundary of the Appeal Site (see Appendix ANB 1). It is a brick structure that carried the railway on a series of arches. I consider the viaduct to be of architectural and historic interest and as a non-designated heritage asset of regional interest.

Step 2 – Assessment of setting

- 6.60 The setting of the railway viaduct is provided by the surrounding agricultural land and by the lines of two disused railways. It is the disused railway lines that primarily contribute to significance of the asset.

Step 3 – Effect of the proposed development

- 6.61 The proposed wind turbines would be located on the agricultural land to the west of the railway viaduct. The nearest turbine would be approximately 800m away and would be visually dominant in views to and from the heritage asset. The movement and noise of the turbines would also be new features in the landscape. However, the scale of the proposed development is relatively limited (consisting of five turbines) and they are all located to the west so there would be no sense that they surround the asset. As the disused railway lines and the agricultural land around the railway viaduct will remain largely unaltered (albeit with the addition of five large new elements), I consider that the proposed development will have a neutral impact on the significance of this heritage asset.

7.00 CONCLUSIONS

7.01 Within my evidence I have set out the statutory requirements and the policies of the Development Plan that relate to the historic environment, together with other relevant documents adopted by the Council. I have also considered central government policy relating to the historic environment and the guidance provided by English Heritage that I consider to be relevant to the impact of the proposed development upon the significance of the heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) around the Appeal Site.

7.02 I have assessed the impact of the proposed wind turbines on the significance of the specific heritage assets that are of concern to the Council, consultees and third parties (see 3.03 and 3.04 above and Section 6.00 above). As a result of this assessment I have concluded that the proposed development would impact upon the significance of these heritage assets as follows:

- Greatworth Hall – Moderate adverse;
- Greatworth Conservation Area – Slight Adverse;
- Church of St. Peter, Greatworth - Slight Adverse;
- Astwell Castle – Moderate Adverse;
- Sulgrave Conservation Area – Moderate Adverse;
- Castle Hill Ringworks and Church of St. James, Sulgrave – Moderate Adverse;
- Sulgrave Manor - Neutral;
- Church of St. Mary Magdelene, Helmdon – Slight Adverse;
- Canons Ashby - Neutral;
- Stowe – Slight Adverse;
- Site of deserted village, Stuchbury – Slight Adverse; and
- Railway Viaduct, Helmdon – Neutral.

7.03 All of the adverse impacts that have been identified on these heritage assets are indirect, in that they relate to harm to their settings and the intervention of the proposed wind turbines into a number of views. The proposed development will not give rise to any direct harm to any identified heritage assets.

7.04 The proposed development would be contrary to the specific wording of ‘saved’ Policies G3 and EV11 of the Local Plan (see 4.05 above). However, as indicated at 4.06 above and within the evidence of Mr. Bell, these policies do not contain a balancing provision and are therefore considered to be inconsistent with the relevant parts of the Framework. I

consider that the proposed development would accord with the Policies EV10, EV12 and EV28 of the Local Plan (see 4.05 above). Mr Bell considers the relationship of the proposed development to the draft Joint Core Strategy (see 4.07 above).

- 7.05 For the purposes of the Framework I consider that all the identified impacts are ‘less than substantial’ and therefore paragraph 134 is relevant (see 5.02 above). Indeed, I note that the Council accepts that the harm to heritage assets is less than substantial (see 3.03 above and paragraph 4.11 of the Council’s Statement of Case). Inevitably, some observers may not like the fact that the proposed wind turbines will be experienced in relation to some or all of the heritage assets that have been considered. It may even be the case that an understanding of the significance of some of these assets would be easier if the turbines were not erected. However, in no case would the turbines impact on elements of setting which contribute to significance to such a degree as to cause substantial harm. Paragraph 134 of the Framework indicates that ‘less than substantial harm’ needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development. I consider that this ‘balancing exercise’ is the general intention of the statutory requirements (see 4.01 above) and the relevant policies of the Development Plan (see 4.04 to 4.06 above and CD 1.1).
- 7.06 The English Heritage document, *Wind Energy and the Historic Environment*, indicates that reversibility is an important feature and should be taken into account (see 5.09 above and CD 10.5) and this has been explicitly confirmed in the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure EN-3 (see 5.06 above and CD 2.8). This aspect of the proposed development is of particular significance in relation to the historic environment. Whilst 25 years is not a short period in human terms (being approximately one generation), in relation to the enduring significance of the heritage assets around the Appeal Site it only represents a small slice of their history up to the present day (and a much smaller slice of their potential history). Whatever adverse effect the proposed development may be considered to have on heritage assets, this will be capable of being reversed after 25 years. Taken at its highest, the Council’s case is that some elements of setting that contribute to the significance of heritage assets will be affected for a defined period, but this significance will be fully revealed after a period of 25 years.
- 7.07 As is recognised in the English Heritage documents, *Climate Change and the Historic Environment* (see 5.07 and CD 10.3) and *Wind Energy and the Historic Environment* (see 5.08 and CD 10.5), climate change is likely to be detrimental to the historic environment. Whilst there will be some diffuse benefits to the historic environment from the proposed

development, I do not consider that these by themselves are sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.

- 7.08 The wider public benefits of the proposed development, against which the identified harm (see Section 7.02 above) needs to be balanced, are outside the scope of my evidence (see 3.02 above) but are set out within the evidence of Mr. Bell.