

**PROPOSED WINDFARM AT SPRING FARM RIDGE, HELMDON/GREATWORTH,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (SOUTH NORTHANTS COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATION
S/2010/1437/MAF)**

PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO APPEAL AGAINST REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION

APP/Z2830/A/11/2165035/NWF

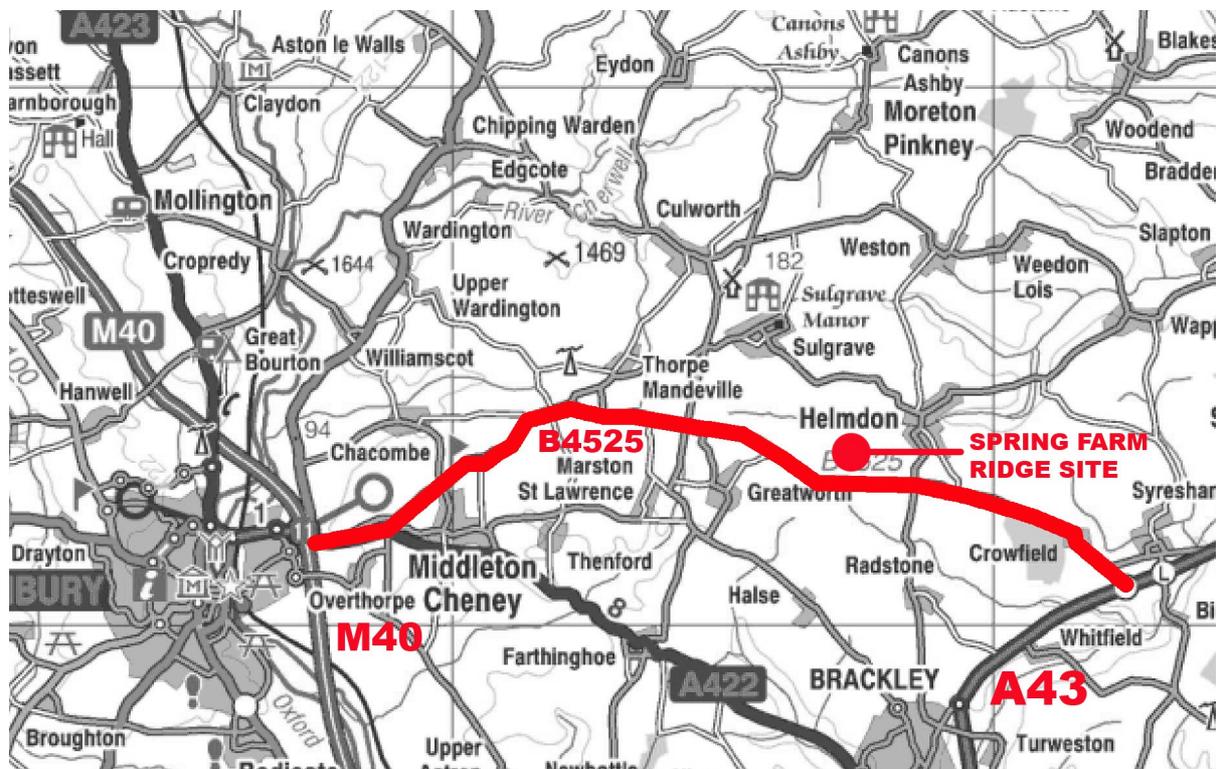
APPENDIX 4 TO STATEMENT BY COLIN WOOTTON

ON BEHALF OF

SULGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL

TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS FOR SULGRAVE RESIDENTS

There could be a number of adverse traffic implications for the residents of Sulgrave. As shown on the map below, the Spring Farm Ridge site lies immediately to the north of the B4525 road, between the villages of Helmdon and Greatworth:



The five turbines would be aligned alongside this road and as close to it as 150 metres. The B4525 is a direct link between the M40 at Banbury and the A43 at Syresham. It carries a lethal mixture of heavy goods vehicles and cars frequently travelling well above the speed limit despite two speed cameras in its relatively short length. Many drivers clearly fail to moderate their speeds after leaving either of the two fast roads which it links. The B4525 is substandard in vertical and horizontal alignment with many known danger points. A good deal of concentration is necessary to negotiate it without mishap and the

presence of a row of tall randomly moving objects close to it could cause a potentially disastrous lapse in attention.

In its "Highways and Windfarms Good Practice Guide" the Highways Agency makes the following statement in respect of assessing local road conditions with regard to wind turbine applications:

The accident record, and the complexity of the road surrounding a proposed wind farm development needs to be assessed when considering the likely impact of a wind turbine or wind farm. Whilst no correlation has been found between wind farms and accidents, wind farms themselves and construction activity have the potential to distract. If the wind farm is located close to a particularly complex or hazardous section of road the application should be treated with caution because any accident that results from distraction will cause disruption to the local road network and have a cost implication for the local economy.

It is submitted that B4525 alongside the turbines is just such a hazardous section of road and consequently the site should not be considered suitable for a wind farm on the grounds of road safety.

Many residents of Sulgrave use sections of the B4525 on a daily basis on the way to the Banbury and/or the M40 or Northampton and/or the M1. These journeys, together with more local ones southwards towards Brackley, involve the crossing the B4525 at junctions so dangerous that there have been fatal accidents to villagers. The only access to the site during the construction period and subsequently for maintenance purposes will be from this dangerous section of road. The huge volume of construction traffic and the size and character of the vehicles involved can only add to the present dangers to users of this road outlined above.

The inherent dangers of this road and the accident statistics related thereto have caused the local highway authority, Northamptonshire County Council, to designate it as a "red route" requiring special measures. One of the most important special measures must surely be to avoid any developments close to the road which would be a further distraction to drivers and would increase the amount of traffic upon it.

CONCLUSIONS

The known dangers of the substandard section of the B4525 which is the only access to the site of the proposed turbines would be substantially increased during the construction period of the windfarm. Far from diminishing once the turbines are erected the dangers of this road would be exacerbated by the presence of the turbines at such close distances.

It is therefore submitted that the adverse traffic implications of the proposal in both the short and long term are such as to render the site totally unsuitable for a wind farm.

Colin S Wootton MRICS MRTPI (Rtd)

09.05.2013