

**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

**COMMENTS UPON MR ARNOTT'S PROOF OF EVIDENCE FOR BROADVIEW ENERGY
LIMITED**

**BY COLIN WOOTTON ON BEHALF OF
SULGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL**

I note that in his Proof of Evidence on behalf of Broadview Energy Limited, Mr Arnott takes issue with a number of points in my Statement on behalf of Sulgrave Parish Council, submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 22nd May 2013.

In advance of the Inquiry, I think it would be helpful to all for me to respond to Mr Arnott's comments, as follows:

At **Paragraph 5.25** of his Proof, Mr Arnott says:

"Mr Colin Wootton on behalf of Sulgrave Parish Council refers to National Planning Policy Framework areas of tranquillity, suggesting this is just such an area. In my view this site does not fall within the concept of a 'quiet area in open country' and the background noise measurements undertaken by TNEI demonstrated this."

During the previous inquiry, I accompanied Inspector Fieldhouse on all of her site visits, together with Daniel Callis, Principal Planning Officer, South Northants Council, Roger Miles, Helmdon Footpath Warden and Jeffrey Stevenson, Landscape Witness for Broadview Energy Limited. On frequent occasions, I asked her to stop and listen, saying: "Tranquillity, Madam". Almost invariably all that could be heard was the song of birds and humming of bees. On each occasion she replied: "Noted, Mr Wootton". Messrs Callis and Miles are prepared to attest to this at the inquiry if necessary.

I would draw attention to the following extracts from Inspector Fieldhouse's Decision Letter (my italics):

20. From my site visit, having regard to the springs noted on the base map, the gradient and characteristics of the landscape, *and the tranquillity of the area...*

31. However, *the peaceful tranquillity of the area would be changed* by the rotating blades that would contrast harmfully with the modest scale of parts of the landscape, its patterns, undulations and textures. Overall the turbines would be a palpable feature in the landscape but by their continuous presence would be unlikely to be unnerving unless the blades over-sail the footpath.

47. The visible and sometimes moving presence of part or all of the blades of at least four of the proposed wind turbines over hedges and hedgerow trees in the adjoining pastureland (Cultural heritage visualisation 1a) would affect *the perceived tranquillity*.

49. 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 focused on the asset.

79. The proposed development would be a visible presence in the area and result in the *loss of a perception of tranquillity* contrary to the aims of RSS policy 1, LP policy G3 and CS

policy S1.

At **5.25** in his Proof, Mr Arnott states:

“His Appendix 2 (Page 105) mentions noise again and at Page 105 mentions ‘there would be more or less constant and unnaturally rhythmical loud noise’. Predicted turbine noise around Sulgrave is between 25-28 dBA outside properties. These are very low noise levels and are liable to be inaudible at Sulgrave most of the time. To put these levels in context BS 823319: suggests that reasonable internal conditions for LivingRooms is 30-40 dBA and reasonable listening conditions in a Concert Hall is 25-30 dBA. The available evidence does not therefore support his concern in relation to noise.”

I am unsure of the provenance of the document containing “Page 105” but it seems that Mr Arnott has wrongly assumed that the description “more or less constant and unnaturally rhythmical loud noise” applies to my assessment of the noise impact upon Sulgrave Village. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have nowhere stated that there would be any noise impact upon Sulgrave Village and have always assumed that the turbines would not be heard at Sulgrave. I am therefore very interested in the statement in Mr Arnott's proof that the sounds made by the turbines “...are liable to be inaudible at Sulgrave most of the time...” presumably implying that they will be heard in the village for some of the time.

A careful look at Appendix 2 to my Statement - “An Assessment of the Implications for Users of Local Byways, Bridleways and Footpaths” will demonstrate that the words “*more or less constant and unnaturally rhythmical loud noise*” were only applied to a prediction of noise impact on a pedestrian located within 41 metres of a turbine. This description is based on my own experience of the noise impact at such distances when visiting a wind farm containing turbines similar to those proposed for Spring Farm Ridge, in average wind speed conditions.

Colin Wootton September 2013