

5 September 2017

Woburn/Checkley Wood/CBC Dev Mngt committee.ltr.0509



Members of the Development Management Committee  
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Dear Sirs

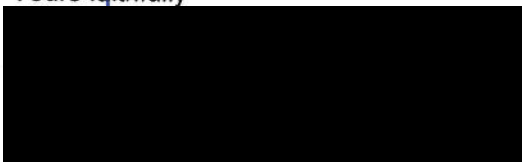
**PLANNING APPLICATION CB/16/01389/FULL - CHECKLEY WOOD WIND TURBINE**

Further to our previous submissions, please find enclosed the following correspondence which we have recently sent to Debbie Willcox, the Planning Officer at Central Bedfordshire Council:-

- Savills letter dated 30 August 2017
- Richard Buxton's letter dated 4 September 2017

There are several reasons why we consider that this application should be refused, including opinions which have been expressed by some of the Council's own Officers, as well as our own and other parties' interpretation of the planning policy and how it applies to what will be one of the largest onshore turbines in the UK.

Yours faithfully



Michael Horton BSc MRICS  
Director

Encs



30 August 2017  
WOB/CheckleyWood/CBC.Willcox.ltr.3008



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Dear Debbie

**Checkley Wood Farm - Proposed Wind Turbine Application No.CB-16-01389-4**

It was helpful to speak to you on the telephone further to my letter dated 17 August 2017, primarily concerning landscape issues and the Council's own guidance note on wind energy development in Central Bedfordshire.

During the conversation, you made the point that CBC's own Landscape Officer had not objected to the application. Having read through the agenda papers for the last Committee meeting and referring to page 59, I have looked through the Landscape Officer's comments which I think raises more concerns than have been admitted.

To quote his comments:-

***"I have serious concerns regarding the proposal's visual impact on the local and wider landscapes, especially given wind turbines cannot be mitigated visually, it is important to note that the proposed turbine is of an equivalent scale to the existing turbine at the adjoining Double Arches site – currently one of the tallest on-shore turbines in the UK."***

That may not technically be an objection, but neither does it indicate any support and it does indicate the Officer has serious concerns.

In the last paragraph of page 61, the Officer refers to the key question of the cumulative effect of two turbines at this location, in particular, raising the issue of capacity of the landscape to accommodate more turbines being the key.

On page 62, the Officer comments on CBC's own wind energy guidance, but for some reason does not provide an opinion on which of the capacity criteria apply, either a single turbine or a cluster of 1-3 turbines.

I find this odd. Surely it is an Officer's responsibility to give an opinion as to how the guidance should be interpreted.

In my letter dated 17 August 2017, I provided views on what seems to be a logical interpretation of the guidance, i.e. that you have to accept that the Double Arches turbine is already there and the issue is trying to assess the capacity of the given landscape to absorb wind development.

I reiterate, that adding this turbine into the existing landscape produces one where two turbines exist and thus, the appropriate criteria to consider in landscaping terms, is that described as a cluster of 1-3 turbines.



Thus, as stated, in the guidance notes, there is a low capacity for the landscape in question to absorb a cluster of 1-3 turbines. The analysis specifically refers to concerns over cumulative impact with a large turbine at Double Arches.

I have tried to think how the single turbine criteria might be applied as you describe. It seems illogical to me that another turbine in one planning application should be considered as a single turbine in the landscape when one exists already. In theory, if your interpretation applies there could be several applications of single turbines made, which could create substantive numbers of turbines clustered there, but only the single turbine criteria would be applicable to consider the landscape's capacity to absorb them. Surely this cannot be right?

I know this letter may seem slightly repetitive, but I think it is a vital point that the members of the Committee consider and it is important that the serious concerns that your Landscape Officer has over the application, are made clear.

With regards,

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Michael Horton.

Michael Horton BSc MRICS  
Director