

Subject:	Wind Turbine – Mapping of Proposals	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Development Control Committee	Date:	15 th January 2013
Report of:	Director of Business	Portfolio Holder:	Operational Services and Development Control
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Community Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	Members are advised to note the report contents.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide elected members with a mapping update on turbine proposals within Rossendale and its borders.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **A clean and green Rossendale** – creating a better environment for all.
 - **A healthy and successful Rossendale** – supporting vibrant communities and a strong economy.
 - **Responsive and value for money local services** – responding to and meeting the different needs of customers and improving the cost effectiveness of services.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- The Council has a statutory duty to determine planning applications including those for wind turbine proposals. The documentation attached will assist in developing the evidence base for the proper assessment of proposals the Council receives.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 Members of the committee will recall that in light of the frequency in the number of applications for wind turbine proposals coming before the committee, members had requested a map of wind turbine proposals already previously received by the Council so that new proposals could be considered in that context.
- 5.2 Members will already be aware of the Julie Martin Study (2010) of Landscape Capacity Assessment commissioned by 6 Local authorities including Rossendale to assist in the determination of Planning applications particularly for larger turbine / Windfarm proposals. Members may also be aware that a further report has been commissioned by 8 South Pennine authorities that will look specifically at the landscape assessment considerations

related to smaller turbine proposals of 60m or less. It is anticipated that this report will be ready towards the end of January / early February 2013. This latter study will not look at landscape capacity issues specifically, but will provide guiding principles in the consideration of proposals for smaller turbines. Training for all members in the use of this Report is programmed for Tuesday 5th February at 18.30 in the Council Chamber. The Council is also actively working with neighbouring authorities to improve cross-border sharing of information on wind turbine applications to ensure cumulative visual impacts can be fully considered.

- 5.3 It is considered that use of the Julie Martin Landscape Capacity Study 2010, the current mapping exercise of turbines in Rossendale (which will be subject to continuous monitoring and updating), and the latest Julie Martin Study will all help in providing a structured assessment of the landscape impacts of future proposals both large and small. However, it is important to understand the above work is aimed at assessing the visual impacts only. Other issues such as ecology, shadow flicker, traffic, drainage etc are separate matters that can be of equal or greater significance for individual applications.
- 5.4 Finally, while wind turbine applications are controversial and have a number of similarities, each application needs to be considered on a case by case basis. This must be done within the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) context which contains a presumption in favour of renewable energy and the local planning policy context provided by relevant policies, particularly policy 20 of the adopted Core Strategy. A blanket ban approach to new turbines would not accord with current national or local planning policy and would only lead, in officers' opinion, to unsuccessful and potentially costly planning appeals. A Judicial Review of a restrictive policy approach put forward by an authority elsewhere in the country is being monitored. If the Council in question (Milton Keynes) successfully defend this a review of policy approach locally could be considered. However until this case is decided determination must be made having regard to the appropriate policy context and as comprehensive as is possible evidence base.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

6.1 There are no specific financial implications

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 The Council must make a decision based on all relevant information and following consideration of all relevant Council policies.

8. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

8.1 There are no specific human resources implications.

9. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

9.1 None carried out

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The mapping exercise will provide a useful additional element in the overall consideration / assessment of future planning applications for wind turbine proposals within Rossendale and for commenting on applications determined by neighbouring authorities where their proximity will have visual impact.

Background Papers

Document	Place of Inspection

Appendices

Document	Appendix Number