

**SECTION 36 AND SCHEDULE 8 ELECTRICITY ACT 1989
SECTION 90(2) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

**ELECTRICITY GENERATING STATIONS AND OVERHEAD LINES (INQUIRIES PROCEDURE) RULES
2007**

**APPLICATION BY STEADINGS WINDFARM LIMITED FOR CONSENT TO ERECT A 66MW WIND
GENERATING STATION AT KIRKWHELPINGTON, NORTHUMBERLAND**

**NOTE TO THE INQUIRY ON QUESTION SHEET HANDED TO SWFL STAFF BY MR ARCHBOLD AT
EXHIBITION**

In Week 1 of the Public Inquiry Mr Archbold stated that SWFL had failed to respond to a series of written questions he had handed to a representative of the company at an exhibition held in 2005. SWFL agreed to check its records and report back to the Inquiry on its understanding of the situation.

By way of background information on the consultation exercise undertaken by SWFL prior to the submission of the S36 application for the Steadings Wind Farm is contained in Appendix 1 of the Environmental Statement (CD2). The consultation exercise included holding 2 exhibitions at Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall on the following dates:

28 September 2005 (initial site design)
21 February 2006 (site layout prior to submission)

It is normal practice for 'comment sheets' to be handed out to attendees of such exhibitions to be filled in and collected from them again by SWFL staff either at the exhibition or posted back to the company at a later date. The sheets are assessed by the project team within SWFL and the comments of local residents fed back into the site design and assessment process.

Having checked its records and discussed the matter with several members of the project team who attended the exhibition in question SWFL can confirm that a separate sheet of paper containing 10 questions was handed to Rob Williams (SWFL Project Manager). A copy of that sheet has now been found in the records and is attached.

The sheet was handed to Mr Williams at a busy time during the exhibition and at a time when he was seeking to answer questions from several parties including Mr and Mrs Archbold. Additionally the sheet containing the questions was separate from the comment sheets collected together at the end of the public exhibition. Regrettably, therefore, its content was overlooked and no response was provided to Mr and Mrs Archbold. For this SWFL can only apologise.

Having reviewed the questions on the sheet, there are a number relating to the financial viability of the proposed development or to the terms of SWFL agreements with landowners on whose land the proposed development will be located. SWFL would not have been prepared to answer these questions at the time the sheet was handed to Mr Williams on the grounds of commercial confidentiality. That remains the position. A number of the questions relate to the nature of the proposed development at the time of the exhibition (a 35 turbine development) and, through amendments to the proposed development and through the production of the Environmental Statement (as amended) which accompanied the S36 application, have been overtaken by events. If however Mr and Mrs Archbold would still find it helpful for SWFL to provide a written response to questions 5, 7, 9 and 10, it is willing to do so.

It should be noted that SWFL has sought, through correspondence and telephone conversations to keep Mr and Mrs Archbold informed of progress of the Steadings. Copies of correspondence in this respect is attached to this note. Again, SWFL apologises for the oversight which led to the original failure to respond.

Questions for Banks Re Plashetts Wind Farm Proposal

1. Why do Banks propose 35 turbines when the Regional Spatial Strategy identifies the Knowsgate area as suitable for a "medium sized wind farm" of 25 turbines? Is this so that it brings the planning decision into the remit of the DTI and out of the hands of the local planning authority?
2. How do Banks propose to compensate those who will lose business (eg tourism) or who cannot sell their houses because of their proposals?
3. How much are Banks paying local landowners per turbine per annum? Suggestions vary from £3k to £10k per turbine per annum.
4. How much is each turbine subsidised by the taxpayer?
5. If the Banks proposal generates enough power for 63,000 homes how about giving free electricity to the very small number of homes effected by their proposals? Annual electricity bills average about £300 - £400 per household.
6. The Banks proposal for 35 turbines would produce 70 Megawatts. This is one third of the total target of 212 megawatts for the whole of Northumberland by 2010. Together with the Amec and Wind Prospect proposals totalling 117 turbines this one small area of Northumberland will actually exceed the target for the whole county. Why should the people in this area suffer the outfall from that?
7. What progress have Banks made towards having a joined up public meeting with the other wind farm developers proposals for the area. This was asked at the Kirkwelpington PC meeting on 6th September and Banks said they would look into it.
8. Why do Banks think their scheme is better than the Wind Prospect or Amec Schemes? Why should the local community support Banks rather than the others.
9. Why has an anemometer been placed on the fell at Bavington without planning permission. The Planners have told us that you should have one. Is this the way Banks intends to operate? IE cutting corners and exploiting planning loopholes?
10. Why are the wire drawings in the Banks leaflet done from the bottom of a river bed in Kirkwelpington and another river bed on the Green Rigg? We have surveyed the areas and can only get the views portrayed by Banks from those positions! Why have Banks chosen these two locations from which to produce these representations? Why not the top of the fell at Bavington? - after all they have chosen to site an anemometer here.

Sheet of questions received from
Karen Archbold at exhibition on

28/9/05

MW

Our ref RobW/JM RE/N/639/COM/Pr

18 August 2005

Dear Mr

PLASHETTS WIND FARM PROPOSALS

I am writing to inform you about our proposals for a wind farm on land around Plashetts Farm.

I have enclosed a map, which identifies the area of interest and our provisional wind turbine layout. I would ideally like to meet with you to discuss the proposals and answer any questions you may have.

The proposals involve land close to your premises and we recognise that you may have some concerns or questions.

Our proposals are at a very early stage and we will be undertaking an extensive consultation exercise before we submit a planning application. Contacting you and others closest to the study area is the first part of this consultation process. Involving you at this early stage means that your feedback about the proposals can directly affect the final design of the site before we submit a planning application. Following this consultation we will be holding public exhibitions to inform the relevant local communities.

HJ Banks & Co Ltd. was founded as a coal mining company in 1976 in County Durham, since then the company has diversified in to a number of new sectors including waste management, land reclamation and property development. Banks is also now working in the renewable energy sector. This industry was a natural progression for the company building on our nearly 30 years of experience in successfully developing significant projects. The attached brochure details some of the projects we have delivered and are working on currently.

Our Renewable Energy Division has identified land in the Plashetts area to develop a significant wind farm, which will go a long way in meeting the region's targets for renewable energy.

In order to gain feedback from you and answer your questions, I would like to organise for a couple of members of the project team to visit you at a time which is convenient for you, whether that be during the day or in the evening. If you would like to meet with us please contact me direct on 01388 738330 or e-mail me at rob.williams@hjbanks.com.

Yours sincerely

Robert Williams
Project Manager

Enc Plan of Plashetts
 Banks News

Our ref ROBW/JM RE/N/639/COMpr

23 August 2005

Dear Resident

PLASHETTS PROPOSED WIND FARM

Please find attached an Information Leaflet with further information on our proposals for the Plashetts site, following my letter which was hand delivered to you last week.

Again, I wish to make it clear that our proposals are at a very early stage. We will be undertaking an extensive consultation exercise before we submit a planning application. Contacting you and others closest to the study area is the first part of this consultation process. Involving you at this early stage means that your feedback about the proposals can directly affect the final design of the site before we submit a planning application. Following this consultation we will be holding public exhibitions to inform the relevant local communities.

In order for us to obtain feedback from you about the proposals and answer any questions you may have, I would like to organise for a couple of members of the project team to visit you at a time which is convenient for you, whether that be during the day or in the evening. If you would like to meet with us please contact me direct on 01388 738330 or e-mail me at rob.williams@hjbanks.com.

Yours sincerely

Robert Williams
Project Manager

Enc Information Leaflet

Our Ref

RAS/AS WRE/N/639/COM-PR

12 April 2006

Ms M and Mr K Archbold
The Old Manse
Great Bavington
Newcastle upon Tyne

Dear Ms & Mrs Archbold

STEADINGS WIND FARM

Further to our letter of 27 January 2006, we would like to confirm that our project team have now finalised the planning application for submission to the DTI for our proposed Steadings Wind Farm Development.

We attach with this letter a copy of the non technical summary for your information, the planning application is being submitted on Thursday 13 April 2006.

Assuring you of our careful attention.

Yours sincerely

Bo Swainson
Community Liaison Manager

Please reply to:
Inkerman Road, Tow Law, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, DL13 4HG
Tel: 01740 658500 Fax: 01388 738336



Banks Developments

Property. Energy. Waste.

Our Ref RAS/RD RE/N/639/COM/PR

27 January 2006

Ms M and K Archbold
The Old Manse
Great Bavington
Newcastle Upon Tyne

Dear Ms M and K Archbold

STEADINGS WINDFARM (FORMERLY PLASHETTS)

I am writing to inform you of our proposals to hold a further exhibition at Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall on 21 February 2006 commencing at 3pm until 7pm.

Our project team having been working on a revised design since our last exhibition held on 28 and 29 September 2005 taking into account a lot of the issues and sensitivities recorded during the exhibition and discussions with statutory consultees.

The new design proposals include fewer turbines, a reduction from 35 to 24 having taken into account you who live closest to the site together with landscape, ecological and other considerations. We propose to remove turbines from the Great Wanney Crag area and those turbines which were close to the A696.

We wanted to notify you early to enable you to have the opportunity of meeting with us before the exhibition, we will be undertaking a wider community exhibition notification leaflet distribution week commencing 6 February 2006.

Should you wish to make further contact with myself or Rob Williams please do not hesitate to contact us on 01740 658500.

Assuring you of my careful attention at all times.

Yours sincerely

Bob Swainson
Community Liaison Manager 07802 563049

Please reply to:
Inkerman Road, Tow Law, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, DL13 4HG
Tel: 01740 658500 Fax: 01388 738336

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