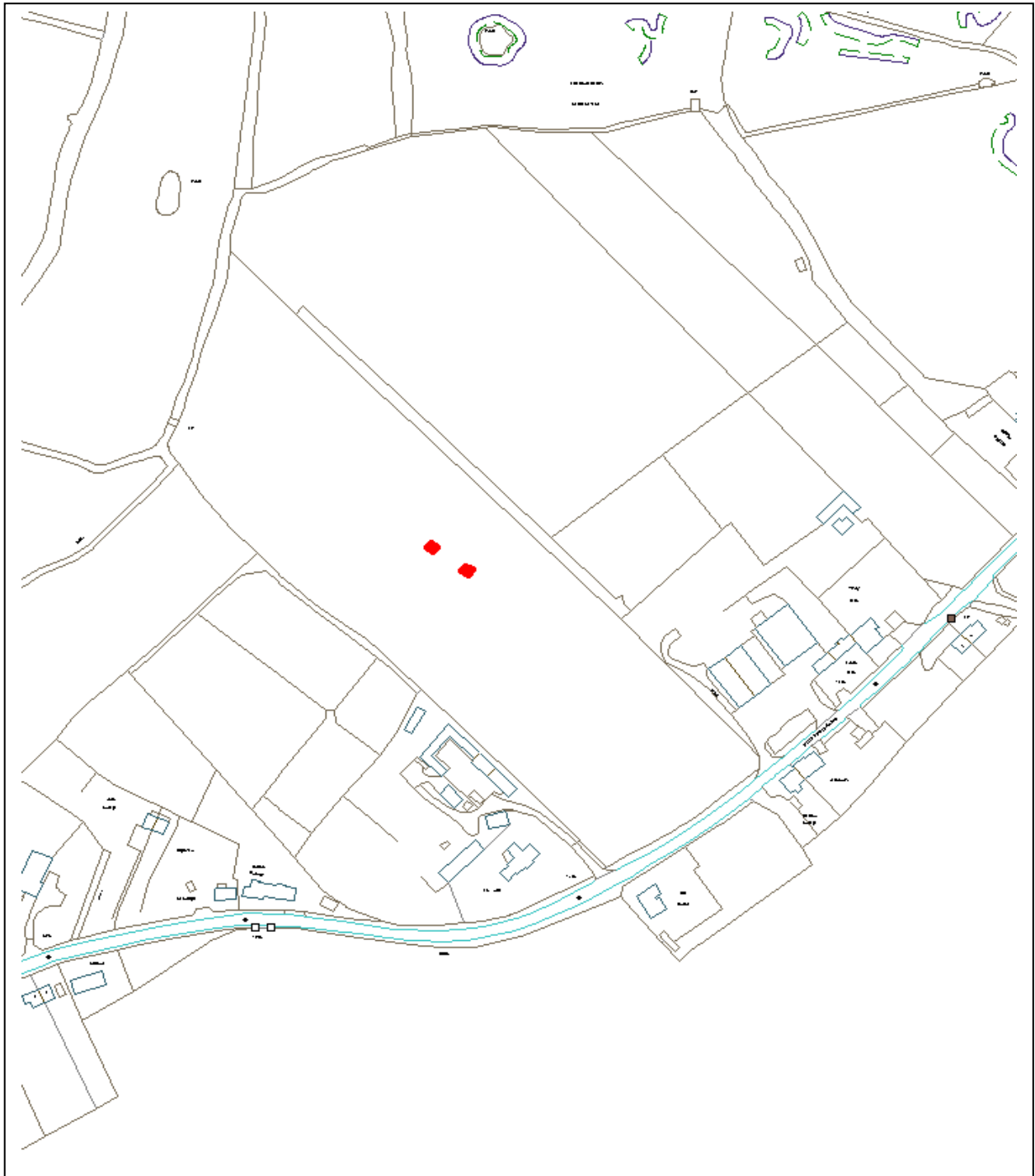


PLANNING COMMITTEE

16 JULY 2013

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING

A.3 PLANNING APPLICATION - 13/00200/FUL - ELM TODD, LITTLE CLACTON ROAD, GREAT HOLLAND, FRINTON-ON-SEA, CO13 0EX



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Application:	13/00200/FUL	Town / Parish: Frinton and Walton Town Council
Applicant:	Mr & Mrs Salmon	
Address:	Elm Todd, Little Clacton Road, Great Holland, Frinton-on-Sea, CO13 0EX	
Development:	Installation of two micro-scale wind turbines (14.97m to hub, 5.6m blades)	

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The application has been referred to Committee at the request of Councillor Bucke.
- 1.2 The proposal is for a small-scale renewable energy scheme comprising of two wind turbines of 14.97m hub height. The application has been submitted following the dismissal of a single larger-scale wind turbine of 18m hub height. Your Officers consider that the resubmitted scheme would not have an unduly harmful impact in terms of the landscape and visual effects and there would be no adverse effects due to noise. Although two wind turbines are now proposed, having regard to their size the landscape and visual impacts will be less than with the larger-scale appeal proposal, which the Inspector considered would have a "slight adverse impact".

Recommendation: Approve

Conditions:

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Approved plans
3. Removal of turbines if not generating energy
4. Landscaping scheme

2. Planning Policy

National Policy:

National Planning Policy Framework

Local Plan Policy:

Adopted Tendring District Local Plan (2007)

QL9 Design of New Development

QL11 Environmental Impacts and Compatibility of Uses

EN1 Landscape Character

EN13a Renewable Energy

Tendring District Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft (2012)

SD9	Design of New Development
PLA5	The Countryside Landscape
PLA10	Renewable Energy Installations

3. **Relevant Planning History**

12/00542/FUL Erection of 11kW Gaia wind turbine on 18m high tower Refused 03.07.2012

Appeal dismissed 05.12.2012

4. **Consultations**

- 4.1 Natural England – no comment received
- 4.2 RSPB – no comment received
- 4.3 Essex Wildlife Trust – no comment received
- 4.4 CAA – standard comments (no objection raised)
- 4.5 MoD – no objection
- 4.6 National Grid Gas Networks – cleared
- 4.7 Arqiva (BBC & ITV) - no objection
- 4.8 ECC Highways – no objection
- 4.9 TDC Principal Tree and Landscape Officer – No effect on protected trees or significant vegetation. Prominent location – turbines will be able to be seen from a considerable distance. Consideration to be given to boundary planting along Little Clacton Road to obscure views from the highway.
- 4.10 TDC Public Experience – After visiting the site and looking at predicted sound levels – no comments.
- 4.11 I am still of the opinion that noise from the turbines is not a factor that should prevent the application being approved.
- 4.12 Frinton & Walton Town Council – Refusal – This is against the village design statement of Great Holland. It would destroy the visual aspect of the village. Very concerned about the noise factor.

5. **Representations**

- 5.1 Councillor Bucke has requested that this application be determined by the Planning Committee for the following reasons:
- 5.2 The proposed turbines will be visible and detrimental to rural scene and amenity in an area close to an SSSI site near Holland Common (nature reserve) and marshland, within sight and hearing of residential properties nearby. The Great Holland Parish Plan and Village Design Statement, which carries some weight in Planning matters, supports preservation of scenic views and outlook from and towards Great Holland, and these turbines would offend and conflict with that Localism agenda.

- 5.3 Little Clacton Parish Council – Objects – Although the application is not within Little Clacton Parish, the proposed wind turbines are just outside our boundary. We do not consider the proposed site suitable.
- 5.4 Chairman of Great Holland Residents Association – Proposal is contrary to the Parish Plan and Village Design Statement.
- 5.5 11 further individual objections have been received, raising the following summarised issues:
- Visual intrusion
 - Harm to landscape character
 - Noise impact
 - Against village design statement
 - SSSI nearby
 - Listed buildings nearby
 - Biodiversity affected
 - Residential amenity affected

6. **Assessment**

- 6.1 The main planning considerations are:
- Landscape and visual effects
 - Noise
- 6.2 The proposal is for two small-scale wind turbines of 14.97m hub height - a type of renewable energy development increasingly common throughout the rural parts of the district.
- 6.3 There is a general presumption in favour of sustainable renewable energy schemes and the main issue in this case concerns whether that presumption is materially outweighed by any significant adverse visual, landscape or other effects, including noise.
- 6.4 Members are advised that Officers refused planning permission for a single larger mast in this location under delegated powers and an appeal against that decision was dismissed (see Planning History). In dismissing the appeal, the Planning Inspector considered that although the site is on the edge of a plateau, this particular part “is characterised by a ribbon of scattered residential development along Little Clacton Road, interspersed with fields, paddocks and agricultural buildings. It is therefore less sensitive to change than other, less developed, sections of the plateau edge.” He added that “the proposal would have an adverse impact on the rural character and appearance of the area, although the extent of the harm would be limited. Taking account of the moderate sensitivity of the landscape this would result in a slight adverse impact”. Valid concerns over noise had been raised by the Parish Council and local residents in his opinion and there was “an unacceptable risk of harmful noise impacts.” There were no other over-riding concerns, including effects on biodiversity and the setting of nearby listed buildings. He concluded that “The National Planning Policy Framework ... seeks to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources and recognises that even small-scale projects can make a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Consequently this is a significant factor weighing in support of the appeal.” However, taken together, the slight harm to the landscape and unacceptable risk of noise impacts outweighed the benefits of the scheme.
- 6.5 Whilst the current application must be considered on its merits it is a resubmitted scheme and the appeal decision, including the Inspector’s reasons, is a material planning consideration to be afforded considerable weight.

6.6 Your Officers acknowledge the local objections, many of which echo concerns raised previously. However, officers advise that the two schemes are materially different in terms of their visual effects and the risk of noise. Although your Officers have made attempts to address the concerns over the visual impact of the proposal by asking the applicants to consider reducing the number of turbines to one, they wish the scheme to be considered as submitted. The landscape and visual effects of the proposal, and any harm which may result would be less significant than with the appeal proposal and no new issues of concern are raised which in themselves might warrant refusal. The dimensions of the proposed towers are significantly smaller than the appeal proposal and having regard to the siting of the two wind turbines from the nearby road (160m) their impact on the character and appearance of the area will not be so great. The Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that he has had regard to the Appeal Inspector's consideration of potentially harmful noise effects and does not have any concerns regarding noise.

Background Papers

None.