

# Land at Stoneton and Wormleighton, 13/00165/ADJ Warwickshire

**Ward:** Adjacent area  
**District Councillor:** Cllr Atack (closest Councillor)

**Case Officer:** Simon Dean                      **Recommendation:** To express concerns

**Applicant:** EDF Energy Renewables

**Application Description:** Erection of 9 wind turbines up to a maximum tip height of 125 metres, and other ancillary development including a new vehicular access from the A423 south of Fenny Compton Wharf, access tracks, vehicular access from the C35 east of Wormleighton, crane hardstandings, bridge crossing of the Oxford canal, control building, cabling, construction compound and permanent meteorological mast (Stratford DC ref. 12/01500/FUL)

**Committee Referral Reason:** Site area

## 1. Site Description and Proposed Development

- 1.1 The application site is located in the Stratford on Avon District Council area, bordering the South Northamptonshire Council boundary and lying close to the northern tip of the Cherwell District Council area, north of Claydon.
- 1.2 The proposal is for the erection of 9 turbines, with a maximum tip height of 125m above ground level, as well as associated infrastructure including foundations and hardstanding, a permanent monitoring mast, onsite tracks, a new canal crossing, two temporary construction compounds, one control building and underground cabling required for grid connection.
- 1.3 The land is currently in arable and grazing use, with a number of public rights of way, including a bridleway, footpath and the Oxford Canal.

## 2. Application Publicity

- 2.1 As an adjacent authority consultation, no publicity has been carried out. However, following member feedback after a similar application in 2012, the adjacent Parish Councils in Cherwell have been informed.

## 3. Consultations

- 3.1 **Objections** to the scheme have been received from Claydon, Cropredy, Hanwell and Mollington Parish Councils; objecting to the scheme on the basis of the height, landscape impact/visibility, possible wildlife impact, flicker and impact on the setting and significance of the Oxford Canal. These comments have been passed to Stratford

## 4. Relevant National and Local Policy and Guidance

### 4.1 Development Plan Policy

Adopted Cherwell Local Plan (Saved Policies)

C7: Landscape conservation

C13: Areas of High Landscape Value

C28: Layout, design and external appearance of new development

## 4.2 Other Material Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

## 5. Appraisal

5.1 The key issues for consideration in this consultation are:

### Landscape and visual impact

- 5.2 Although the application site lies outside the Cherwell District Council area, the site is immediately adjacent to a locally designated Area of High Landscape Value. It is also understood that the other adjoining authorities have similar local landscape designations covering this area.
- 5.3 From the documents submitted with the application, it appears that the proposed turbines may be visible from villages in the North of the district, notably Wardington, Cropredy, Mollington and Claydon. The level of harm that this visibility would cause is of course subjective, as those settlements would be approximately 5km from the proposed application site (with the exception of Claydon at approximately 1km from the boundary) although it is important to note that the most Southerly turbine is almost 3km from the Southern boundary of the site.
- 5.4 The applicants have suggested in their application that *“The landscape has the capacity to accommodate the scale of development proposed”* and that *“localised significant landscape effects may occur at greater distances but are not considered significant upon the landscape characters as a whole”*. The applicants also conclude that although there is *“potential for significant effects in the views experienced by users of the Oxford Canal Walk which passes through the site, the effect of close range views crossing the site would not be over dominant or overwhelming”* and that *“Significant cumulative landscape and visual effects will be localised in extent and limited given the size of this nine turbine wind farm proposal”*.
- 5.5 The overall conclusion of the applicant is that *“the proposed development presents a compact and well balanced array of turbines in the landscape. Significant landscape and visual effects would be localised as a result of local topography and the limited size and scale of the proposed development. Significant effects are also reversible upon decommissioning. The conclusion is therefore that in landscape and visual terms the Stoneton site has the potential to accommodate the scale of development proposed”*.

### Conclusion

- 5.6 Given the distance of the site from the settlements within the Cherwell District Council area, and the relatively limited nature of any impact which may occur (in terms of visual impact, impact on residential amenities and impact upon any

areas or buildings of historic significance) and the presumption within the National Planning Policy Framework in favour of sustainable forms of renewable energy infrastructure it is not considered appropriate to object to this application.

- 5.7 Officers do however consider that, on the basis of representations received, it is appropriate to express concerns over potential landscape or visual impacts of the proposal.

## **6. Recommendation**

That Stratford on Avon District Council be advised that this Council has concerns over the potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposal given the local topography. Stratford on Avon District Council is requested to inform Cherwell District Council of the outcome of the application.