

Re: Planning reference SL/2017/0687

10th October, 2017

Kirkby Moor Wind Farm

Variation of Condition no 6 attached to planning permission 5/90/2312

Blawith & Subberthwaite Parish Council would like to advise you that they oppose the above planning application in respect of the Kirkby Moor Wind Farm. Councillors have discussed the issue after attending the public consultation at Grizebeck Village Hall and listening to representations from members of the public at the most recent meeting of the Parish Council.

There are a number of points the council wishes to raise in connection with its decision.

1. Granting of the original application on an experimental basis

The original planning application was not approved by SLDC nor was it approved by a government appointed planning inspector. Permission was given directly by central government on the basis that as wind power was then in its infancy (1992) there was a need for experimental sites to assess the potential of this source of energy. This is no longer the case. There is no longer any need for experimentation on this site

2. Local opinion and its requirement to be taken into consideration

As noted above the existence of the site has never been endorsed by members of the local community and our experience indicates that this has not changed. Recent government guidelines indicate that significant weight should be given to local opinion in reaching a final decision. It is clear to us that local opinion is substantially against this development continuing

3. Continued visual impact on the Lake District National Park

The Wind farm lies immediately outside the boundary (200m) of the recently created World Heritage Site of the Lake District National Park, but is well within its "buffer zone". As such it has a damaging visual impact on this area of the national park as it can be seen from a wide area including Coniston, Grizedale forest and across the Duddon estuary. World Heritage status is not something that can be taken lightly and to maintain it the area must show a continuing commitment to maintain the high standards required. Rejecting this application would be an important statement of intent in showing we are serious and value this asset.

4. Age and inefficiency of equipment

We were told as part of the previous application that this equipment was technologically obsolete and difficult to maintain given its location and the conditions it has been exposed to over the last 25 years.

Nothing has changed since then other than the fact that maintenance costs and breakdowns will continue to increase as the equipment becomes older and more decrepit, requiring more frequent access from heavy equipment across the surrounding SSSI land. This damage cannot be justified.

5. Use of public subsidies

It is no coincidence the requested planning permission expires exactly at the end of the current period of subsidy. The applicants seem determined to extract as much public money as possible to support their crumbling equipment without regard to the environmental impact of maintaining them.

6. Restoration of the site

The proposed changes to the site restoration are not necessary or advantageous to the SSSI. It is inconceivable that it was envisioned in the original successful application the electrical transmission equipment would not be removed along with the turbines. The proposed changes to the Moor should be left in the hands of Natural England and the local people who, working with the relevant landowners, are better placed to manage the site in conjunction with the long term plans for the neighbouring slate quarry.