

Jacobstowe & Exbourne

Wind Turbine Action Group

10 October 2014

Dear Sir

Many local residents have received a letter from Holistic Ideas Ltd; their formal planning application to WDBC for an industrial scale wind turbine at West Down Farm, Jacobstowe, would appear to be imminent.

Sadly, the letter essentially states that yes, the wind turbine will impact on the sensitive habitat at West Down but no, other than turning it off at certain times in the summer (and who will be monitoring this?) in an attempt to preserve the bats, there is nothing they can do about it. Furthermore, they are admitting that the turbine will ruin the landscape but, again, there is nothing they can do about this (what could screen a 77m turbine on a hill top?). The turbine will be seen from top to base from Hatherleigh Moor to Dartmoor and from Hatherleigh itself and the surrounding villages.

The letter states that the farmer's only other option is to graze the land more intensively; he already gets a DEFRA subsidy (ie compensation) for grazing it lightly. To mitigate (in their opinion!) the impact of the turbine the developers are proposing to fund the installation of bat roosts elsewhere (ie not necessarily anywhere in the Hatherleigh/Jacobstowe/Exbourne area). This is poor comfort for local villages whose inhabitants' lives will be blighted by the turbine, visually, aurally and financially and for the scenic quality of Hatherleigh Moor, the panoramic view from which is praised in just about every walking and tourist information guide for the area. Who would want to use the picnic tables up there to sit and admire an industrial scale wind turbine? There will be little point in having conservation areas and taking pride in our villages, homes and gardens if they are to be overshadowed by vast industrial scale structures.

We just have to look at the impact of the Bondleigh turbine to realise what we shall be facing. There is to be a proliferation of wind turbines, an application from Risdon Farm for the installation of a turbine is imminent and another similar sized wind turbine, proposed for Exbourne, is currently at the screening and scoping opinion stage with WDBC, there are many turbine applications in the Iddesleigh and Winkleigh area at appeal and, doubtless, the Heane Farm, Hatherleigh, turbine application will follow the inevitable route to appeal. All this before the construction of the Den Brook wind farm. Soon West Devon will as blighted as Cornwall is, it will become one giant wind farm. Our unspoilt countryside should be cherished not desecrated.

The pill would be less bitter if the wind turbines were actually efficient. The majority of the turbine's income comes from subsidies, without these they would not be built, they will never be generators of cheap electricity. Over the 20 life of a wind turbine they earn in the region of £8m, none of which, save for the hundreds of tonnes of concrete for the base and the minuscule local fund, will be spent locally. The wind turbines themselves are, almost without exception, manufactured overseas. It is all about money, neither developer nor landowner care about the environment. Indeed, wind turbines are little more than an investment vehicle giving vast returns to their developers.

We shall keep you posted with any news which we might receive.

Yours,

JACOBSTOWE & EXBOURNE WIND TURBINE ACTION GROUP

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