

Our ref: 40b – Planning Conformity/Final Responses/NLincs, Renewable Energy Plant, Scawby Jun 08

18 June 2008

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Dear Mike

Planning Application Number: PA/2008/0793

Planning permission to construct a renewable energy plant (primarily fuel consisting of straw) comprising the erection of turbine and boiler hall, two storage barns and a wood storage building.

Thank you for consulting the Assembly on the above. I am pleased to forward the following officer comments to you, based on the approved Yorkshire and Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 (May 2008).

The Assembly, as the Regional Planning Body, has been asked to comment on this development as its nature and location mean that it could have an effect on the implementation of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The current RSS - The Yorkshire and Humber Plan was issued by the Secretary of State in May 2008. The RSS has the status of a Development Plan Document and forms part of the framework for decisions taken under section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), which means that decisions on all applications have to be taken in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Regional Policy Context

Several policies in the RSS are relevant when considering this proposal, including environmental, economic, and sub area policies.

Location

The proposal site is located approximately 1.5 kilometres south-west of the settlement of Brigg and 1.8 kilometres east of the village of Scawby. The Regional Settlement Study identified Brigg as Local Service Centres, although Scawby is not identified in the settlement hierarchy of RSS. Policy YH6 provides for development that supports economic diversification and meets locally generated needs in terms both market and affordable housing in Local Service Centres and rural and coastal areas.

The proposed development does have specific locational requirements and could potentially impact on adjoining land uses which leads us to conclude that the locational principles in YH6 may not be appropriate. Therefore in principle the Assembly would support the proposed location as this would not have adverse impacts on the village of Scawby or the Local Service Centre of Brigg.

Climate Change & Renewable Energy

Policy YH2 of RSS deals with the issue of climate change and resource use. It states that plans, strategies, investment decisions and programmes should increase renewable energy capacity and carbon capture. In line with these policies, the proposed development will assist in reducing carbon dioxide emissions in the region.

Renewable Energy Targets

Policy ENV5 of RSS sets the Humber a target of at least 124MW by 2010 and 350MW for installed grid connected renewable capacity. Table 10.2 recommends a renewable energy target in North Lincolnshire of 54MW to 2010 and 112MW to 2021. Policy HE1 emphasises the need to develop the Humber sub area's renewable energy generation.

The Sub Regional Renewable Energy Assessment and Targets Study (2004) identifies potential renewable energy targets at a regional, sub regional and Local Authority level for 2010 and 2021. The sub regional indicative potential for biomass in the Humber is 36.6 MW by 2021 and is 6.4 MW for North Lincolnshire by 2021. The proposed development would therefore make a significant contribution to these challenging overall targets for the sub region.

The RSS Annual Monitoring Report (2007) highlighted that bio-fuel and biomass installations have proved to be the greatest contributor to renewable energy generation. Based on information collected for the RSS Annual Monitoring Report (2007) the renewable energy capacity for bio-fuels and biomass in the Region between 2006-2007 was 5.298 MW, this indicator was not monitored by North Lincolnshire.

RSS (2008) states that local authorities have an important role to promote renewable energy development, ideally with other authorities on a sub regional basis, and provide supplementary locational and environmental criteria to be used in assessing such development as needed.

Economic Development

Policy E4 of RSS supports the development of key sectors including Environmental Technologies, Chemicals, and Bio-Science.

The proposed development will provide an opportunity for rural diversification through creating a new market for straw based waste. The use of locally grown straw in the process will also bring local economic benefits. Policy E7 supports rural diversification schemes which bring economic, social and environmental benefits. Policy YH6 also supports economic diversification in Local Service Centres and rural areas.

Flooding

Information from the Environment Agency shows that the site lies partially within a Flood Zone 3, defined as having a high risk of flooding. In the case of fluvial flooding, this is defined as a risk of flooding with a 1 in 100 year return period or a 1.0% annual probability. The applicant has carried out a Flood Risk Assessment, which concluded that provided the scheme is designed and implemented in accordance with the stated recommendations, then the risks and consequences of flooding will be mitigated to an acceptably low level such that the safe occupancy of the site can be assured for the lifetime of the development.

Conclusion

In conclusion to the comments made by the Assembly:

- The Assembly supports the application on the basis that it will assist in the implementation of the RSS, in terms of environmental and economic considerations.

If you have any queries about this response, please do not hesitate to contact Andy Haigh on 01924 331555. .

Yours sincerely



Wendy Bundy
Acting Chair, Regional Planning Board
Yorkshire and Humber Assembly