

Moor House Wind Farm Proposal

Newsletter • May 2011



ABOVE: Turbines shown are 100m to tip in height at West Durham Wind Farm

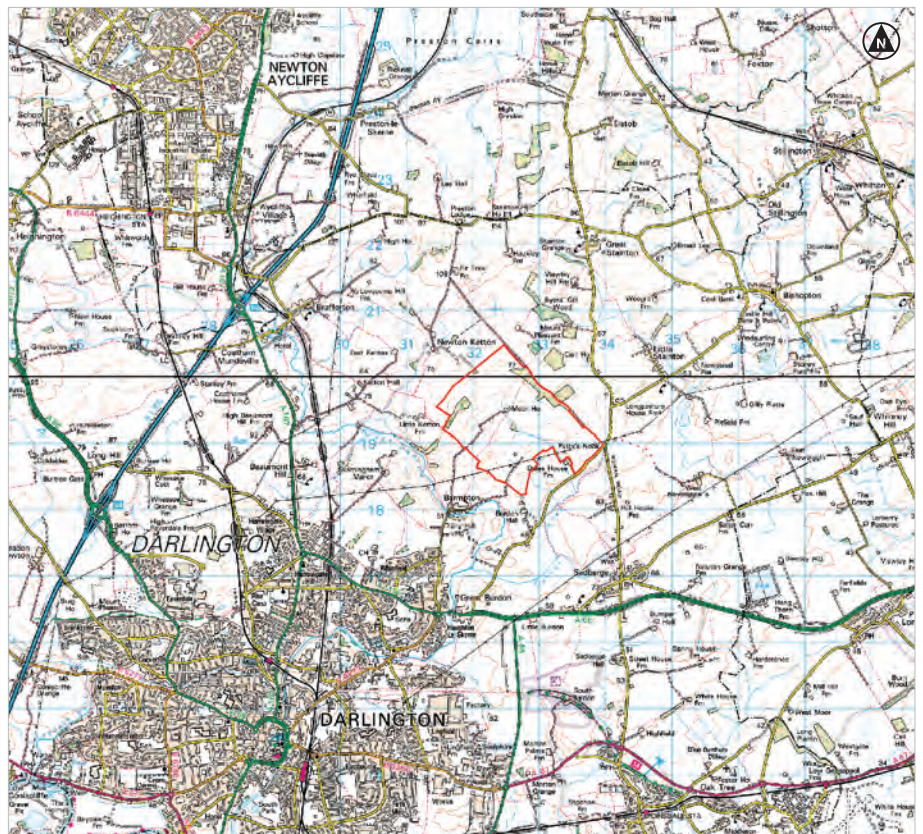
Introduction

The purpose of this newsletter is to update residents of north east Darlington and surrounding villages about progress with the proposed Moor House wind farm near Barmpton.

Background

Banks Renewables submitted a planning application for ten wind turbines to the borough council in 2009. Following detailed consideration of all the environmental and technical issues the planning officers recommended that the Council approve the proposal in November 2010. However the committee made up of elected members decided to refuse planning permission on the grounds of its visual impact.

Banks Renewables has a right of appeal against this decision. That would lead to a public inquiry with an independent inspector. This would be costly to the borough council as well as Banks Renewables. The company takes the view that if the public inquiry can be avoided through reasonable compromise then that is preferable.



Site location - application boundary shown by red line

Who we are

Banks Renewables is part of the Banks Group, which has been successfully developing projects for over 35 years and employs approximately 360 people.

Banks Renewables identifies suitable sites for onshore wind farms, as well as looking at opportunities for other forms of renewable energy generation. Opposite is a map of the UK showing the locations and status of wind farm projects we have developed/are developing.

We actively involve local communities at all stages of the development process and we are committed to our development with care approach.



Do wind farms work?

Banks has constructed a wind farm in Tow Law, West Durham and our experience is that this wind farm exceeded our expectations of the electricity generated from turbines of this size. We have been monitoring wind at Moor House since 2008 and we have found the wind levels, although less than Tow Law, to be acceptable for a wind farm. We anticipate that if six turbines are approved by Darlington Borough Council they will provide enough electricity for 8,300 houses – roughly equivalent to 20% of Darlington's households. On average wind farms produce electricity for 85% of the time. Wind farms have a significant role to play in providing indigenous energy which we do not have to import, reducing carbon emissions and meeting our international commitment to tackling climate change.



Construction of 100m to tip height turbine at West Durham Wind Farm

Jobs and training

The Banks Group is a County Durham based company with 360 employees. Wherever possible we source employment and contractors locally. In the Tees Valley we have worked with Tolent Construction and they have set out some of the economic benefits of that work below.



Tolent Construction explain the economic impacts of new turbine construction

“ Tolent Construction plc is a north east based company with two offices in the region carrying out many types of building and civil engineering work. We are determined to secure work in the green sector, with wind farms playing a large part in our current and future business operations. The project of six 125m turbines at Moor House could represent a significant amount of work for our Thornaby base.

We would have the opportunity to tender for civil and building works, of which around 60% will be hands-on labour, providing real jobs for local people. The construction will generate additional business for local suppliers. In total the contract would be worth between £1.5 and £3 million. ”

Rick Halton
Joint Area Manager
Tolent Construction

Banks Renewables will seek to ensure that jobs are provided locally wherever possible.

A different approach

We have taken on board the issues raised in the refusal of planning permission.

In particular some consultees took the view that ten turbines would be too many.

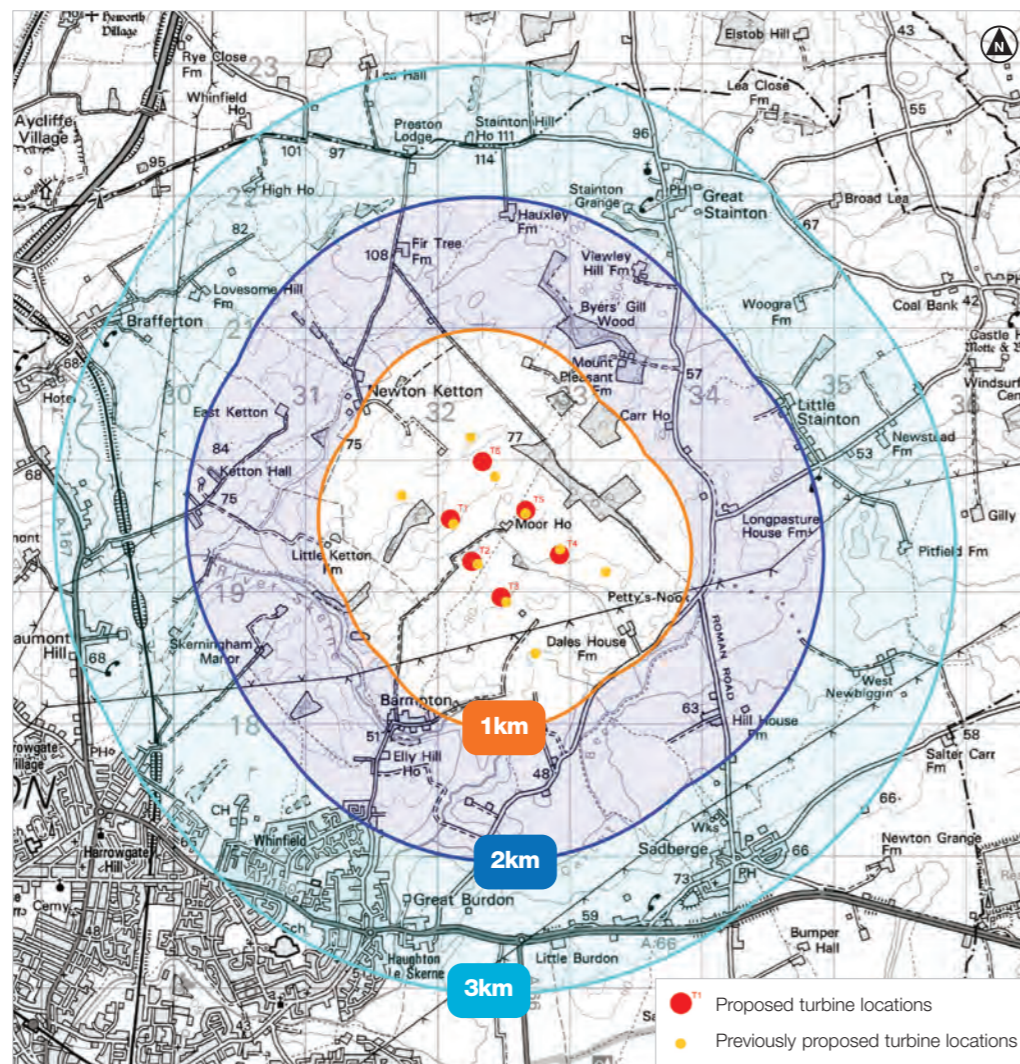
Another concern was the proximity of the proposed turbines to nearby properties.

We reassessed the wind farm proposals with six turbines as opposed to ten and we found that it would be viable provided that the generating capacity of each turbine was increased.

The previous scheme had a mixture of 4 x 110 metres and 6 x 100 metres. So a new planning application has been submitted for six turbines of 125 metres height.

Increasing the height of a turbine by 15% can increase its power output by 30%.

We have also increased the separation distance to the nearest residential properties to that shown on the plan right.



Plan showing the distances from the turbines in the new proposals

Banks wins permission for Lambs Hill Wind Farm

You may have read that Banks Renewables was successful in securing planning permission for four turbines at Lambs Hill near Stillington. The approved turbines will be 125 metres high like those proposed at Moor House. We believe the two sites will work well together because they are sufficiently far apart not to have a detrimental cumulative visual impact.

We propose to provide new radar information to Durham Tees Valley Airport (DTVA) which will mean that neither Lambs Hill or Moor House would be visible on their radar screens. This would be a condition of the planning permission and it is the reason that DTVA withdrew objections to both proposals. We are committed to working with the local airport to reach the optimum operational solutions.

Footpath users

Catkill Lane is an ancient bridleway which runs along the eastern side of the Moor House site. At present the lane is poorly maintained and we propose to re-surface the path and manage it so that it is much more accessible to walkers and horse riders in the future.

We will carry out hedge planting beside existing footpaths. No path would have to be closed as a result of the work. It is perfectly safe to walk under a wind turbine but to not detract from the experience of walkers we could provide an additional path across the site linking into Catkill Lane.

What will the Moor House Wind Farm look like?

The following pages show what the Moor House Wind Farm would look like from a selection of viewpoints. Further viewpoints have been submitted as part of the environmental statement accompanying the application. Please contact us for further information.

Viewpoint from Little Stainton (Distance 2km)



Viewpoint from Sadberge Village Hall (Distance 2.6km)



What will the Moor House Wind Farm look like?

Viewpoint from Bishopton Lane - In this image we demonstrate the effect of removing the two closest turbines from the previous application (shown in blue)



Viewpoint from footpath near Skerningham Manor - This viewpoint shows the impact on a local footpath. New tree planting in the foreground would eventually screen this view. Our proposals include 3km more hedge and tree planting.



Common wind farm questions

Noise

The previous ten turbine proposal was found to be acceptable by independent expert noise consultants employed by the council. The six turbine scheme would cause even lower noise levels at properties. We would still have planning conditions, noise monitoring and a liaison committee to ensure there will not be problems. We strongly recommend a visit to an existing wind farm and if you contact us we can arrange a trip to a local site.

Shadow flicker

Shadow flicker will not be problem at Moor House Wind Farm because no property is close enough to experience flicker when taking into account the direction of the sun.

Television signal

We don't expect the turbines to affect television signals but if they do, a planning condition will require us to make good at our expense the television signal at least to the standard it was before the wind farm started operating. We would survey signal strength before we start to establish the existing situation.

Tell us what you think

At Banks Renewables we are always keen to hear feedback from the local community to find out how you feel about our proposals. We are also happy to answer any questions you might have.

If you would like to get in touch please contact us using the details below. We are also able to provide guided tours of the West Durham Wind Farm site. If you are interested in organising a visit please contact the project team using the details provided below.

*Calls to 0844 numbers are charged at local rate from a BT landline. Charges from mobile phones and other providers may vary. The alternative number for calls from mobile phones is 0191 378 6100.

Help with energy bills



Installing loft insulation is just one simple way to increase the energy efficiency of any home

Many people tell us that they would be more likely to support wind farms if it led to a reduction in energy bills. We have considered ways of helping Darlington residents and one option is to create a Warm Zone for the Borough. Councils on Tyneside already benefit from Warm Zones. The principle is that electricity generators would contribute profits to a scheme which would improve energy efficiency in existing homes.

However initial funding is required to establish a Warm Zone and Banks Renewables could pay this cost. Banks recently started this process in Rotherham and we look forward to seeing those local people benefiting from this scheme. A Warm Zone could also provide seven local office-based jobs with a significant amount of work improving existing houses which local businesses can tender for.

Local benefits for local interests



Following an energy audit, Brafferton Village Hall received a grant for insulation to help retain heat and reduce energy bills and carbon emissions

When Banks Renewables build a wind farm we set up a community fund over a 25 year period with an income of £1,000 per Megawatt of capacity per annum.

A local committee would then be able to decide how this money is spent. Typically the money is channelled to community groups and community buildings. At Moor House this fund would have a guaranteed income of £15,000 per annum (£375,000 over the life of the wind farm).

Banks Renewables

Inkerman House,
St John's Road,
Meadowfield,
Durham,
DH7 8XL

0844 209 1515*

www.banksgroup.co.uk

enquiries@banksgroup.co.uk

