

CURTIS COMMUNICATIONS

Statement of Community Involvement

Windlend (Cumbria) Ltd

Land west of The Energy Coast Business Park, off A595, Haile, Egremont, Cumberland

November 2023

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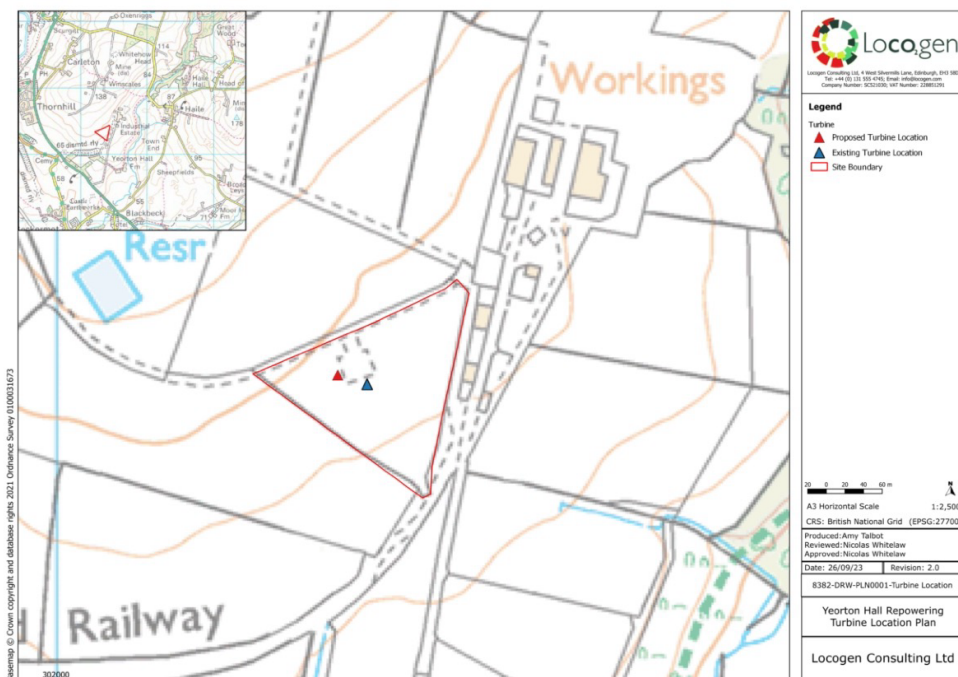
1. Introduction

1.1 Windlease (Cumbria) Limited are proposing to gain planning permission for the repowering of a wind turbine site near to the town of Haile in Cumbria.

1.2 The site is in the open countryside and currently contains a single wind turbine which remains extant to 2039: the proposal seeks to replace the existing wind turbine though in order to generate additional renewable electricity from the site as the existing wind turbine begins to reach the end of its operational life. The proposal is therefore to marginally relocate the turbine and replace it with a taller (by 30.5 metres) model which will generate more power.

1.3 Because the application is to replace an existing turbine with a new one, rather than develop a whole new site, it was hoped that there would be limited objections to the application.

1.4 Curtis Communications were appointed by Windlend (Cumbria) Limited to carry out an engagement exercise to better understand local views and did this by communicating with both Councillors and residents to give them an opportunity to have a say.



2. Background

2.1 The site has contained a wind turbine for many years. The Applicants are aware of the wind resource from the site and in seeking to maximise renewable energy generation the Applicants are seeking planning permission for a re-powered replacement wind turbine which will renew the use of the site and enable it to generate power for many more years.

2.2 The site is in the open countryside, with very few properties nearby or impacted by it. However, wind power can be controversial, so it was important to ensure that the local community were given an opportunity to air their views.



2.3 Windlend (Cumbria) Limited are proposing to submit a planning application, but before doing so needed to understand whether there was any local concern and, if required, try to mitigate that concern.

2.4 Consultation with residents was carried out through a letter which provided details of an email address and consultation telephone number where they could make their views known. Facebook was also monitored.

2.5 Curtis Communications also contacted Haile and Wilton Parish Council and the Gosforth Ward Member for Cumberland Council offering the opportunity to meet to discuss the proposals.

2.6 The public consultation resulted in two responses, one by email and one as a voice message left on the consultation phone line; both responses were from the same individual.

3. Community Engagement

3.1 Statement of Community Involvement

3.1.1 The Localism Act 2011 and the current version of the National Planning Policy Framework make it clear that developers are expected to consult with residents, with a clear request that this is carried out during the pre-application phase to enable issues to be identified and resolved.

3.1.2 Paragraph 158 b) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) references footnote 54 which refers to the re-powering of wind turbines such as that proposed here. Footnote 54 states that:

Except for applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing wind turbines, a planning application for wind energy development involving one or more turbines should not be considered acceptable unless it is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in the development plan or a supplementary planning document; and, following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been appropriately addressed and the proposal has community support.

3.1.3 As the proposal is for a re-powering scheme it is not therefore necessary in this case to demonstrate that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been appropriately addressed and the proposal has community support.

3.1.4 In any event though the Applicant committed to public consultation and the engagement that has taken place on this proposal fully meets with National requirements and expectations for a development of this type.

3.2 Engagement

3.2.1 As well as engaging with the community through the delivery, Curtis Communications advised both Haile and Wilton Parish Council and the about the proposals and notified them of the community consultation as well as the Cumberland Council ward member for Gosforth Ward, which is where the turbine is located. This was undertaken on 3rd October 2023.

3.2.2 The letter to residents, which is included as an appendix to this document, was sent to both residential and commercial properties. This ensured that those most directly affected were able to comment. The distribution is shown by the properties highlighted in red on the map below.



4. Feedback

4.1 Following the delivery of the letters, two items of feedback were received from just one resident. These did not contain objections to the change, the message left on the survey hot line asked questions about noise and the email asked for details about the proposed blade height and wanted assurances that only one turbine was being replaced. This email was responded to giving more information.

5. Analysis

5.1 The aim of the consultation was to identify whether there were any community concerns about the proposed repowering of the wind turbine and to see if there were any issues that needed to be mitigated prior to submission of the application.

5.2 The single response and the nature of that response makes it clear that having been given the opportunity to make views known, residents opted not to make express any view, leading to the conclusion that there are no significant local objections to the proposals.

6. Next Steps

6.1 Whilst the application is going through the planning process, residents will still be able to contact Curtis Communications Ltd. by email and through the survey hotline and we will continue to monitor responses.

6.2 We will also make sure that Ward Councillors and the Parish Council are kept informed and Windlend (Cumbria) Limited remain open to any meetings and discussions that both statutory authorities and elected representatives may wish to hold.

Appendix 1

Resident Letter

CURTIS COMMUNICATIONS

Dear Resident,

Land West of The Energy Coast Business Park off the A595

I am writing on behalf of Windlend (Cumbria) Limited to let you know about some changes that are to be proposed to a wind turbine site that is in your area (the exact location is shown on the map overleaf). These changes will shortly be formalised through a planning application which will be submitted to Cumberland Council.

The current turbine is approaching the end of its useful life, so we are proposing to replace it with a new upgraded version which will generate more power. This is known as repowering. The main change that will be noticed by residents is that the turbine will be marginally taller, albeit this will only be noticeable to very few residents.

You may be aware that the Government have recently announced new proposals for onshore wind turbines which includes the potential for "for improved benefits and rewards for communities backing onshore wind farms" which they intend to set out shortly. Our expectation is that these changes will be live by the time our planning application is approved. However, it is difficult to provide exact details at this stage because the announcement is very new but Government have recognised that "*it must go further and faster to generate the clean and renewable energy the country needs.*"

We are aware how controversial wind turbine applications can be but believe that the option of repowering on the current site is a far better alternative than bringing forward a new site which could have a much bigger impact, especially given that this site already impacts very few residents directly.

Overleaf, we have provided an image showing the exact site location and the proposed location of the new repowered turbine.

We hope that you understand the benefits of our proposal, which offers a means of increasing renewable energy production, whilst minimising the impact on local communities.

In order to progress our proposals to a planning application, we would be keen to hear from you, with any thoughts and suggestions you might have as well as to hear your views. You can do this by getting in touch with us at survey@curtiscomms.co.uk or by leaving a message on our survey hotline number 0800 699 0698.

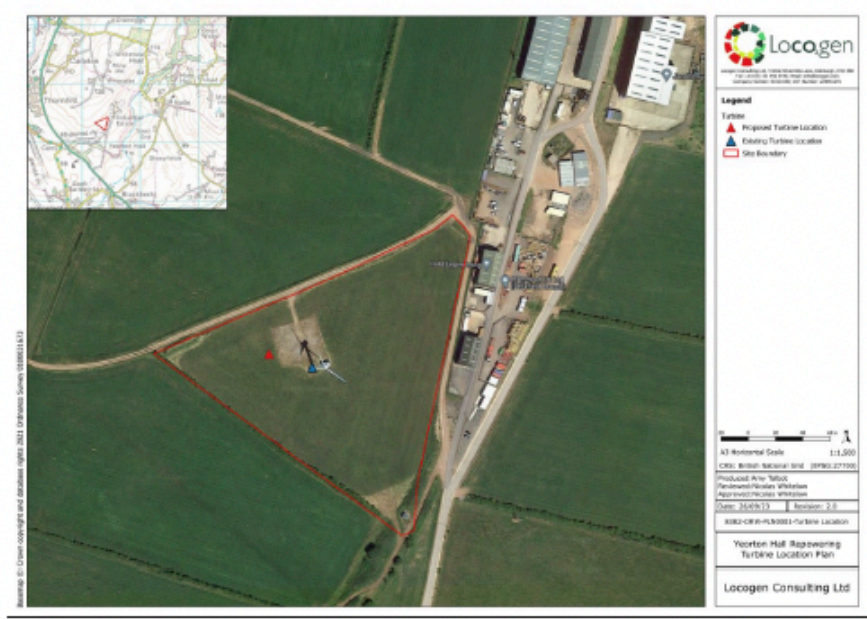
We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely

Martin Curtis
Director

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Proposed Turbine Location



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