

Item 10 Development Committee 3 January 2024

Update on Possibility of Planning Permission being Sought for an Onshore Windfarm at Walshaw Estate in Wadsworth, Hebden Bridge

Cllr S Press and Assistant Town Clerk, Mrs S Miles attended the second meeting of the Parish Forum on 11 December 2023. The meeting was attended by representatives of Wadsworth Parish Council, Hebden Royd Town Council, Heptonstall Parish Council, Oxenhope Parish Council, Cllr S Courtney, Cllr S Patient from Calderdale Council, Mr C Wilson of Calderdale Wind Farms, Mr K Whitmore of Cavendish Communication Consultants and Ms A Sidgewick who produced the Scoping Report.

The set of questions produced by the Parish Forum (which included the rural economy, flooding, biodiversity, the removal of peat, access, heritage and flooding) were answered by Mr Wilson and the consultants. It was clear that much of the information was not yet available and that the purpose of the Scoping Report (a pre-planning application process) is to generate issues, objections and questions so that 'design chill' can be achieved which will more closely define the scope of the project. Several projects are underway to clarify where exactly on the site would be suitable for development. However, it was stated that the size of the project and the number of turbines to be proposed will be less than the original 65. It seems that very serious concerns include the Bronte heritage of the area and the situation of the Pennine Way through the site.

Ms A Sidgewick advised that the Calderdale response to the Scoping Report should be received by Christmas. Subject to this, a revised design will be submitted to Calderdale Council in early 2024.

It was clarified that the initial funding for the scoping stage of the project is being provided from families in Saudi Arabia. However, it is envisaged that should the project be approved the majority funding is likely to be from pension funds.

Mr Wilson confirmed that he is currently looking at 7 potential sites on a speculative basis in the UK and that the Walshaw Estate is the only one in England. The site has been chosen because it is owned by one landowner (and therefore a simpler transaction than if many were involved) and that the site has a high capacity for wind.

It is likely that there will be another Parish Forum meeting in 2024.

Susan Miles
Assistant Town Clerk
13 December 2023