

**11. FULL APPLICATION – PROPOSAL FOR THE INSTALLATION of 1.NO MICRO-WIND TURBINE AT BRINK FARM COTTAGE, BAKESTONEDALE ROAD, POTT SHRIGLEY (NP/CEC/0823/0917, WE)**

**APPLICANT:** Mr John Murphy

**Summary**

1. This application seeks consent for the installation of a 15m wind turbine in the curtilage of Brink Farm Cottage. The property is located on the southern side of Bakestonedale Road approximately 1.3km to the west of Pott Shrigley. Approximately 55m south-south-west from the turbines proposed location is Brink Brow and Brink Barn, a converted barn in residential use as a short-stay holiday accommodation.
2. Brink Farm Cottage is located on a relatively raised position in the landscape. To the south of the property, the landscape drops away to form a wide, undulating valley. As a result, the property is exposed on the landscape, particularly from the south-east.
3. The proposed development would be constructed from galvanised steel in grey. The tip of its blade would be located 15m from the ground. By virtue of the raised location it is considered that the proposed development would be extremely visible from the south-east, and the blade unit would break the skyline of the back-drop it would sit within. The turbine's rotary and mobile nature would result in it becoming a prominent feature in the landscape. It's location, material, and overall height would detract from the rural and undeveloped landscape it sits within. As such, it is considered that the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the landscape. In addition to this, the noise generated from the turbine would result in an unacceptable level of harm to the residential amenity of those staying within Brink Brow and Brink Barn.
4. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

**Site and Surroundings**

5. The development site is Brink Farm Cottage, a residential property located on Bakestonedale Rd, approximately 1.3km to the west of Pott Shrigley. The property is situated within a cluster of buildings, including Brink House and Brink Farm, which are two farmhouses with associated outbuilding and landholdings. Beyond the cluster of residential and agricultural buildings, the local landscape is agricultural and pastoral in character, primarily grazing land for cattle and sheep.
6. Brink Farm Cottage is a large, hipped roof property constructed from gritstone under a blue-slate roof. It features several historic agricultural outbuildings constructed from coursed or random gritstone walling with traditional stone-slate roofs.
7. Brink Farm Cottage has a triangular rear garden which is bound primarily by drystone walling but also features some hedgerow and boundary trees. The rear garden is largely contained to approximately 30m from the rear elevation of the property; however, it does feature a small narrow pan-handle shaped area which extends another 25m from the property. At present, there is currently a plastic oil-tank in this section of the garden, in addition to an area for storing garden waste. It is this area of the garden where the proposed wind turbine would be sited.
8. As noted, to the south of Brink Farm Cottage is the converted barn housing two short-stay holiday-lets. The barn is approximately 55m from where the turbine would be;

however, it is acknowledged that the outside seating area for the north-eastern holiday-let is closer to the proposed development site.

9. The development site is located in the enclosed gritstone upland section of the Dark Peak Western Fringe. It sits on a sloping landscape which raises to the north towards the Natural Zone and Lyme Park. To the south, the landscape drops away to form a shallow undulating valley. There are several rights of way in the immediate vicinity, including footpath 192/FP24/1 which goes directly north from Bakestonedale Rd approximately 250m east of the development site, and 253/FP19/5 which goes south-west from Bakestonedale Rd, which is also approximately 250m east of the development site.

### **Proposal**

10. This application seeks consent for the installation of a 15m micro-generation wind turbine to power the domestic property Brink Farm Cottage.
11. The supporting mast of the turbine would measure 12.3m in height. For the first 6m of the mast, its width would measure approximately 0.4m, after which it would narrow to 0.273m in width.
12. The rotor would measure nearly 4m in length, whilst the diameter (inclusive of the blades) would measure 5.5m.
13. The turbine would be constructed from galvanised steel, and feature a grey finish.
14. It would be sited at the far end of Brink Farm Cottage's garden, at the southern tip of the "offshoot".

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:**

1. **By virtue of its siting, scale, materials, and the dynamic rotating nature of the blades, it is considered that the proposed turbine would be a dominant and visually intrusive feature in the landscape which would have an unacceptable urbanising impact on the pastoral and agricultural landscape. The structure would be out of scale with the nearby built-form surrounding Brink Farm Cottage, and the rotor of the turbine would break the skyline of the landscape when viewed from the south-east, resulting in a prominent, rotating feature. It would therefore cause significant harm the valued characteristics and special qualities of the National Park landscape which would not be outweighed by the sustainability benefits of the scheme. On this basis, it is contrary to policies L1, DMC1, GSP1, and GSP2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.**
2. **The noise generated from the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the amenity of the guests visiting Brink Barn. The noise levels would exceed the identified allowance for residential properties and would despoil the quiet, tranquil character of the property. In addition to this, Brink Barn is an established business within the area and the noise generated from the proposed development would have a negative impact on the owner being able to operate their business. It is therefore contrary to policies CC2, DMC14, the Climate Change and Sustainable Buildings SPD and the National Planning policy Framework.**

## 15. **Key Issues**

- Principle of development;
- Impact on the valued characteristics of the landscape;
- Amenity and noise;
- Ecology;
- Climate change and sustainability.

## **History**

16. There is no relevant planning history for the development site. An application for a single 8m high wind turbine was submitted in March 2022 on a section of land to the west of the development site (NP/INV/0322/0304), but the application remains invalid.

## **Consultations**

17. Natural England – No objection. Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.
18. Rainow Parish Council – Support. Rainow Parish Council supports this application because of the nature of the location and limited impact on the landscape.
19. Cheshire East Council Planning – No response to date.
20. Cheshire East Council Regulatory Services and Health – Considered the application but have no comments to make with regard to Air Quality, Amenity and Contaminated Land.
21. PDNPA Ecology – Originally objected to the application due to insufficient information on the impact of removing the Hawthorn hedgerow. The agent provided a written response to these comments, outlining that the hedgerow is poor quality and unlikely to be appropriate habitat. A verbal confirmation was received which resolved to make no objection to the application subject to conditions.

## **Representations**

22. One ‘general comment’ was received during the determination of the application. It raised concern over the visual and noise impacts of the proposed development on Brink Brow and Brink Brow, the two short-stay holiday-lets which are approximately 55m south of the development site. It notes that many of the guests praise the area for its “pristine landscape, the peace and quiet that the countryside provides”, and outlines concern that the visual and audible impact of the turbine would despoil this.

## **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

23. National Park designation is the highest level of landscape designation in the UK. The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales: Which are; to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public. When national parks carry out these purposes they also have the duty to; seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Parks.

24. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been revised (2023). The Government's intention is that the document should be considered as a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. In particular Paragraph 176 states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.
25. Paragraph 158 of the NPPF states that when determining applications for renewable and low carbon development, local authorities should:
- not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions;
  - approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas, and
  - in the case of applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing renewable sites, give significant weight to the benefits of utilising an established site, and approve the proposal if its impacts are or can be made acceptable.
26. It goes on to state that for an application for wind energy development involving one or more turbine should not be considered acceptable unless it is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy in the development plan or 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.
27. In the National Park, the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and the Development Management Policies (DMP), adopted May 2019. These Development Plan Policies provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. In this case, it is considered there are no significant conflicts between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and government guidance in the NPPF.

## **Main Development Plan Policies**

### **Core Strategy**

28. GSP1, GSP2 - *Securing National Park Purposes and sustainable development & Enhancing the National Park*. These policies jointly seek to secure national park legal purposes and duties through the conversion and enhancement of the National Park's landscape and its natural and heritage assets.
29. GSP3 - *Development Management Principles*. Requires that particular attention is paid to the impact on the character and setting of buildings and that the design is in accord with the Authority's Design Guide and development is appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park.
30. DS1 - *Development Strategy*. Sets out that most new development will be directed into named settlements. Taddington is a named settlement.
31. L1 - *Landscape character and valued characteristics*. Seeks to ensure that all development conserves and enhances valued landscape character and sites, features and species of biodiversity importance.

32. L2 – *Sites of biodiversity or geodiversity*. Development must conserve and enhance any sites, features of special importance and where appropriate their setting. Other than in exceptional circumstances development will not be permitted where it is likely to have an adverse impact on any sites, features or species of importance or their setting.
33. Policy CC1 states that development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources.
34. Policy CC2 - Proposals for low carbon and renewable energy will be encouraged provided they can be accommodated without adversely affecting landscape character, cultural heritage, other valued characteristics, or other established uses of the area.

#### Development Management Policies

35. DMC1 – *Conservation and enhancement of nationally significant landscapes*. In countryside beyond the edge of settlements listed in Core Strategy policy DS1, any development proposal with a wide scale landscape impact must provide a landscape assessment with reference to the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan. The assessment must be proportionate to the proposed development and clearly demonstrate how valued landscape character, including natural beauty, biodiversity, cultural heritage features and other valued characteristics will be conserved and, where possible, enhanced.
36. DMC3 - *Siting, Design, layout and landscaping*. Reiterates, that where developments are acceptable in principle, Policy requires that design is to high standards and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape. The siting, mass, scale, height, design, building materials should all be appropriate to the context. Accessibility of the development should also be a key consideration.
37. DMC11 – *Safeguarding, recording and enhancing nature conservation interests*. Proposals should aim to achieve net gains to biodiversity or geodiversity as a result of development. In considering whether a proposal conserves and enhances sites, features or species of wildlife, geological or geomorphological importance all reasonable measures must be taken to avoid net loss.
38. DMC12 – *Sites, features of species of wildlife, geological or geomorphological importance*. For Internationally designated or candidate sites, or European Protected Species, the exceptional circumstances where development may be permitted are those where it can be demonstrated that the legislative provisions to protect such sites or species can be fully met.

#### Supplementary Planning Documents

39. Climate Change and Sustainable Building SPD (2013). This SPD offers on, amongst other topics, the provision of renewable and low carbon energy development including wind power.
40. It outlines that wind turbine development is the most challenging of all types of low carbon and renewable energy development to accommodate into the statutorily protected landscapes of a National Park. It states that the construction of a single small wind turbine is likely to have significant visual impact in an open landscape, outlining that careful attention to scale, location, and design is needed.

41. It outlines that the most successful way to assimilate wind turbines into the landscape is to integrate them into the existing built-environment. It suggests turbines of up to 15m are the easiest to assimilate into the National Park landscape, after which it becomes more difficult to successfully integrate them without harm.
42. The document suggests utilising the Sensitivity Assessment to determine whether the landscape character type has the opportunity for wind power. Within the Sensitivity Assessment, it outlines that enclosed gritstone upland landscapes have a *moderate to high* sensitivity to small-scale wind energy development. It outlines that the landscape's *broad landform, sparse tree coverage, strong sense of openness, high levels of tranquility and remoteness, very sparse settlement, valued upland habitats and historic industrial remains all place significant sensitivities on development of wind turbines.*
43. The document advises that single small-scale turbines are likely to be most appropriate. These should be located close to existing built elements (e.g. farm buildings, main roads) or areas of tree cover.

## **Assessment**

### **Principle of Development**

44. Policy CC2 outlines that proposals for low carbon and renewable energy development will be encouraged provided they can be accommodated without adversely affecting landscape character, cultural heritage, other valued characteristics, or other established uses of the area.
45. Paragraph 158a of the NPPF states that when determining applications for renewable or low carbon development, local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable carbon energy, and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions.
46. As such, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in principle. Officers acknowledge the need, and overall benefit, of low carbon and renewable energy development. The provision of such development will be given significant weight in the planning balance. Notwithstanding this, the impact of the proposed development on identified features of value, in addition to established uses, need to be appropriately balanced against these benefits. The identified features of value pertinent to this development are the landscape and ecology. The impact of the development on the established residential use of nearby accommodation is also a key consideration.

### **Impact on the valued characteristics of the landscape**

47. The development site is located in the enclosed gritstone upland section of the Dark Peak Western Fringe. This landscape is characterised by:
  - High rolling upland with some steeper slopes;
  - Thin soils over gritstone bedrock with localised pockets of peat;
  - Remnant patches of rough land with bracken and gorse;
  - Permanent pasture and rough grazing enclosed by gritstone walls;
  - Regular pattern of medium to large fields;
  - Straight road with wide verges of grass, and in some places, heather
  - Scattered gritstone farmsteads with stone slate roofs and some relict quarry and coal mining sites;
  - Trees grouped around farmsteads for shelter.

48. The development site is within a cluster of gritstone farmsteads located on a steep slope which rises to the north. The local area is primarily large field parcels of grazing land; however, there are isolated patches of rough gorse or bracken. Some of the nearby farms feature small copses and belts of trees. Bakestonedale Rd is a largely straight road which runs in an east-west direction, with views to the north steep grazing land, and views to the south open, pastoral and undulating large agricultural fields. As such, it is considered that the development site features many of the key characteristics of the enclosed gritstone upland landscape type.
49. This application has been supported by a Landscape and Visual Study. The document outlines several representative viewpoint locations to assess the impact of the proposed development, mainly consisting of footpaths on the local network, but also features some locations which would be visible from roads.
50. The study identifies several viewpoints where the turbine would not be visible in the landscape. These include 2 views from the Gritstone Trail, a medium distance trail connecting Kidsgrove to Disley. From the point at which the Gritstone Trail meets Bakestonedale Rd, and on the trail approximately 750m north of the road, the study states that the turbine would be largely screened by intervening tree coverage. Officers agree that the proposed development would not be visible from these viewpoints.
51. The study presents a viewpoint from footpath 192/FP23/1, located on the open hillside of Sponds which rises towards Lyme Park. From this viewpoint, vistas are southward looking and are largely characterised by large grazing field parcels in the medium distance, and the rolling hills of Goyt Valley and Shutlingsloe in the longer distance. In the middle of this view is the cluster of farms surrounding Brink Farm Cottage. The large farm complex of the adjacent farm is clearly visible in this viewpoint, featuring many large-scale portal framed sheds and outbuildings. The study's montage shows that the rotor and blades of the turbine would be visible between one of the large farmhouses and mature tree. The assessment concludes that that the turbine would be "scarcely perceptible", and occupy a small part of a wide view and be a minor addition to the overall farm complex. While Officers agree that from this viewpoint, the turbine would be well assimilated into the wider farm setting of Brink Farm, the study fails to consider the mobile nature of the rotor which would increase the prominence of the turbine on the landscape. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that from this localised viewpoint, the proposed turbine would not be a dominant or detracting influence on the wider landscape.
52. The study provides a montage of the proposed development from footpath 253/FP19/5 which starts from Bakestonedale Rd approximately 250m to the east of the development site, and runs south south-west down the sloping hills towards Harrop Farm. The study outlines that the proposed turbine would be in a "noticeable but not prominent feature in the views", and would be sited "in a 'fold' in the landform occupying a small part of the view and would be seen partially against the skyline and partially back clothed against vegetation with the colour of the structure helping it integrate into the view. It is likely to be perceived as an addition to the overall farm complex". It then goes on to state that the view would be experienced by "small numbers of people using the footpath". It concludes by stating that the addition of the small-scale turbine would not affect the overall character of this view.
53. Officers disagree with this summary. The intervisibility of the development site is open from the top of 253/FP19/5 for over 400m. From this viewpoint, the landscape is largely characterised by steep rolling hills, with the converted Brink Barn in the foreground at the bottom of Brink Brow knoll, with a small amount of Brink Farm Cottage's rear elevation visible within the fold of the landscape. The pastoral landscape, with historic features such as the converted barn and drystone walls, present an isolated and rural landscape character. Crucially, from this viewpoint, the large agricultural development to the north

of Brink Farm Cottage is not visible due to the topography of the landscape. As such, Officer's disagree that the proposal would be seen as "an addition to the overall farm complex".

54. The proposed turbine would be sited at the rear of Brink Farm Cottage's garden. Whilst this is slightly lower in height to Brink Farm Cottage, it is still a raised piece of land when compared to footpath 253/FP19/5. The provision of the 15m turbine would be a prominent, and incongruous feature, when viewed from this footpath. Its relatively large height would be out of scale when compared to the focal point of the view which is Brink Farm Cottage itself. The proposed colour and form would not sit harmoniously with the property, and would instead contrast the traditional and simple gritstone form of the dwelling. By virtue of "looking up" towards the proposed development from this footpath, it would increase the overall prominence of the development.
55. In the Sustainable Buildings SPD, it outlines that development that breaks the ridgeline of a hill when viewed at a distance will have a significant landscape impact. It is considered that from this footpath, the rotor and blades of the turbine would sit above Brink Farm Cottage and its adjacent tree coverage. It is considered that this further exacerbates the imposing nature of the proposed development when compared to the relatively undeveloped and pastoral viewpoint.
56. As noted, the mobile nature of the proposed turbine's rotor and blades would further and significantly exacerbate its intrusive impact on the landscape. From this viewpoint, it is considered that the landscape is largely static in nature, featuring understated properties in the centre of the view and animal grazing in the adjacent field parcels. While the Bakestonedale Rd offers a source of intermittent traffic movement, it is considered that the mostly constant rotating rotor and blade of the turbine would instantly "draw the eye" to the turbine, which would detract from the valued characteristics of the landscape.
57. As such, from this viewpoint, the proposed development is considered harmful and would present an incongruous, large-scale piece of infrastructure which does not relate well to the landscape nor the built-form it sits against.
58. The study appraises a further three viewpoints. One of these is from footpath 253/FP92/1, a footpath approximately 1.2km south of the proposed development. This viewpoint features a wide-open valley landform, with several trough, valleys and rolling hills. The main element of this view is Harrop Farm, an equestrian centre featuring a traditional farmhouse with several medium sized sheds. At the top of this viewpoint is Brink Barn, Brink Farm Cottage and Brink Farm. From this view, the full extent of agricultural development cannot be seen due to the landform and tree planting. It is considered that the turbine would be visible from this viewpoint, with the rotor and blade sitting above the skyline of the built-form. Whilst this would comprise a small section of the wider landscape, its scale, material and mobile form would detract from the setting of the landscape and would appear out of keeping with the relatively undeveloped landscape.
59. The final two viewpoints are from footpaths at further distances away. One of these is 253/FP/14/4, which is approximately 2.43km south south-east of the proposed turbine. This viewpoint is a large, panoramic vista featuring several large field parcels with interspersed farmsteads and tree belts. From this viewpoint, the raised land to the north of Brink Farm is visible, so it does not appear as sitting atop of the hill. From this viewpoint it is considered that the relatively narrow column and small rotor and blades would not be discernible from this distance. Similarly, the viewpoint from HP14/133/1 located close to Embridge Causeway is nearly 5km south-east of the development. It is considered that the proposed development would not be visible from such a distance.



60. As identified, there are several local viewpoints where the proposed wind turbine would be highly visible on the landscape. It is considered that the 15m structure would be a highly incongruous and prominent feature set against the undeveloped, rolling and agricultural landscape. As noted, from the south, the large-scale agricultural development of Brink Farm cannot be seen, so the proposed developments location near this farm does not provide any mitigation or potential for assimilation into the complex. It is considered that the proposed development is contrary to the guidance outlined within the Climate Change and Sustainable Building SPD, wherein it advises that the turbine should relate well in terms of landscape, built-form and tree coverage. In this instance, whilst the proposal would be relatively close to Brink Farm Cottage, from the identified viewpoints this property appears more as an isolated property in the open countryside as opposed to a piece of built-form close to a large farm complex. It does not utilise the landform, as it sits on a piece of raised land, and the nearby tree coverage offers little mitigation due to the headgear of the turbine sitting above the landform and tree canopy.
61. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development's siting, scale, materials, and mobile nature would have an unacceptable urbanising impact on the pastoral and agricultural landscape. The structure would be out of scale with the nearby built-form surrounding Brink Farm Cottage, and the rotor of the turbine would break the skyline of the landscape when viewed from the south-east, resulting in a prominent, non-static feature. It would therefore harm the valued characteristics of the enclosed gritstone upland character type. On this basis, it is contrary to policies L1, DMC1, GSP1, and GSP2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Amenity and noise**

62. The Climate Change and Sustainable Building SPD outlines that the impact of the turbine, including noise, disturbance and shadow flicker on private and public amenity should be considered in the determination of applications for wind turbines.
63. This application has been supported by a Noise Assessment. The assessment provides information pertaining to 4 receptors; Brink Farm Cottage itself; Brink Barn/Brink Brow, the holiday-let in close proximity to the proposed turbine; Brink Farm, and Brink House, two residential properties to the north of the development site.
64. The Noise Assessment utilises guidance from the institute of Acoustics titled 'A good practice guide to the application of ETSU-R-97 for the assessment and rating of wind turbine noise' (IOA: GPG)', which utilises the 'ETSU-R-97' methodology. The assessment notes that that this guidance is only relevant to wind turbines/farms with a minimum power output of 50kW, while the proposed turbine is only 5kW. It states that it utilises this methodology and guidance in absence of any relevant guidance for smaller turbines.
65. The assessment breaks receptors into two categories 'ESRs' and 'FSRs'. An ESR is an existing sensitive receptor, while FSRs are financially involved sensitive receptors. In this instance, Brink Farm Cottage is an FRS as it is financially involved with the wind turbine.
66. The assessment outlines two noise limits to nearby receptors. The existing sensitive receptor would have a limit of 35dB, while financially involved sensitive receptors would have a limit of 45dB. The assessment identifies Brink Farm Cottage as an FSR, and identifies Brink Farm and Brink House as ESRs.
67. The assessment utilises the higher 45dB limit for Brink Brow/Brink Barn, despite the owner of the property having no financial interest in the construction of the wind turbine. The assessment states that due to the location of the turbine, direction of the wind, and the fact that the barn is in "transient" short-stay holiday use, the upper limit is appropriate.

68. The conclusion of the report outlines that for Brink Farm Cottage, Brink House, and Brink Farm, the noise levels would fall within the specified appropriate range. Brink Farm Cottage would have a noise level of 44dbA, below the specified 45dB, while Brink Farm would have a noise level of 32dBA, and Brink House would have a noise limit of 29dBA, below the identified 35dBA limit.
69. The noise level at Brink Brow and Brink Barn would be 42dBA. The assessment concludes that this is acceptable due to it being a worse-case scenario. It outlines that there is a screened section of the building where the noise level would be 31dBA.
70. Officer's disagree that Brink Brow and Brink Barn should be subject to the higher noise criteria. Ultimately, the property is in residential use, and whilst there is a holiday occupancy condition attached to the site, the established use of the site as a short-stay residential dwelling should be given appropriate weight in the planning balance.
71. The report advises that there is an area of the garden on the southern side of the barn where the noise level from the turbine would be 31dbA, an appropriate level for residential properties. It is noted that the barn is converted into two separate properties; one on the north of the barn (Brink Barn) and one on the south (Brink Brow). The northern properties' amenity space is located to the north of the gable end, while the southern property has small amenity space on the southern gable end of the building. It was the amenity space to the north of the barn which had the anticipated noise level of 42dBA (7dBA above the identified criteria for ESRs). As such, it is considered inappropriate to consider the fact that there is amenity space available which does not form part of the curtilage for each unit. Guests to Brink Barn may not be able to use Brink Browns amenity space, particularly if both properties are rented out at the same time. They would be required to use the space where higher than acceptable noise levels are anticipated.
72. While guests to the holiday-lets would not stay in the property for extended periods of time, there would nevertheless be a detrimental impact to their amenity. In addition to this, the holiday business is an established use in the area, and the provision of the wind turbine may prejudice the owner's ability to operate their business if the quiet, tranquil nature of the barn and its setting is despoiled by the noise generated by the turbine.
73. It is considered that from the information provided, the proposed wind turbine would generate inappropriate levels of noise for residents of Brink Barn. Whilst it is appreciated that the properties are holiday-lets, and the assessment provides a "worse case" scenario, it nevertheless demonstrates that the proposed turbine has the potential to have a detrimental impact on guests, in addition to potentially prejudicing the established business on site.
74. Policy CC2 states that proposals for low carbon and renewable energy development will be encouraged provided they can be accommodated without adversely affecting an established use of an area. In this instance, it is concluded that as a result of the excessive noise levels at Brink Brow and Brink Farm, the proposed development would have a negative impact on the established business on site. The proposed development is therefore contrary to policy CC2.

## **Ecology**

75. This application has been supported by an Ecological Appraisal, with field assessments carried out over summer (April-September) 2023.

76. The report gives an overview of the impact of the proposed development on various species, including bats, birds, great crested newts and other protected and priority species.
77. The appraisal outlines that there would be no adverse impacts on protected or priority species. The development site, inclusive of scrub hedgerow planting nearby, is considered to be of low value to bats and outlines that more favourable habitat is available in the locality. Similarly, the development site and wider locality is considered to be of low value to birds, so the proposed development is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on these species.
78. The assessment concludes that the impact of the proposed development on other protected species would be low. It also states that there would be no impact on ecologically designated areas in the wider vicinity.
79. The application proposes to remove a small 40m section of “leggy” hawthorn hedgerow in close proximity to the proposed turbine, and planting of a 50m section of native berry and fruit bearing hedgerow of native provenance elsewhere in the wider site.
80. Authority ecologists originally objected to the scheme on insufficient information, citing concern over the removal of hedgerow without appropriate surveys or assessment. The agent provided a rebuttal to the ecologist’s response, outlining the poor-quality nature of the hedgerow and limited potential for habitat.
81. Following receipt of this additional information, the ecologist provided a verbal response outlining that subject to conditions, they had no extant objection. While no written response was received from the PDNPA ecologist, it is acknowledged that the rebuttal from the agents has addressed their primary concern over the potential hedgerow habitat. Had the development been found acceptable in other respects then a pre-commencement condition requiring details of the timing, species, and location of the 50m native hedgerow would have been suggested. In addition to this, conditions relating to precautionary measures during construction for great crested newts, badgers, and birds would also have been suggested.
82. Subject to these conditions, it is considered that the ecological interest of the development site could be appropriately conserved to accord with policies DMC11 and DMC12.

### **Climate change and sustainability**

83. The proposed development has the capability to generate a nominal power of 5kW. Officers are mindful of paragraph 158a of the NPPF, which outlines that applicants are not required to demonstrate overall need for renewable or low carbon energy. Officers acknowledge that even the provision of small-scale, or ‘micro-generation’ schemes, have the potential to provide a valuable contribution towards decreasing reliance on greenhouse and meeting carbon net-zero.
84. This report will not present the sustainability benefits of the proposed development; however, significant weight has been placed on the provision of low carbon energy development in the wider planning balance.

## **Conclusion**

85. This application seeks consent for the installation of a 5kW, 15m micro generation wind turbine located in the rear garden of Brink Farm Cottage, located in the open countryside between Kettlethulme and Pott Shrigley.
86. The proposed turbine would be visible from the south-east along the nearby footpath. It is considered that from this viewpoint, the proposed turbine would be seen as incongruous, alien feature in an otherwise pastoral and undeveloped landscape. In addition to the close-range views from the nearby footpath, and from Bakestonedale Road, longer distance views onto the development site are permitted from further site. Even from the longer distance views, the proposed development would detract from the rolling, pastoral landscape through the introduction of a rotating dynamic feature which does not relate well in scale, material or form to the adjacent built-form. While Officers accept that the built-form surrounding Brink Farm Cottage is large and expansive, due to the topography of the landscape the largescale farm complex cannot be seen over the top of the hill. As such, the proposal cannot be assimilated or integrated into the wider site in its proposed location.
87. The noise generated from the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the amenity of guests to the nearby holiday-lets at Brink Brow and Brink Barn. The noise at the northern extent of the garden would exceed the established noise limits for residential properties. Due to the tight garden space surrounding the converted barn, there is no scope for finding an alternative site for outdoor amenity space where the noise levels would be lower. In addition to impacting amenity, it would also have an adverse impact on an established business in the locality of the development site.
88. Whilst the provision of renewable energy development is a significant material consideration in the determination of this application, to be acceptable development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and other valued characteristics - Policy L1. National policy in the NPPF p176 also requires that “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape in National Parks.”
89. It is concluded that the harm identified above would have a significant detrimental impact on the special landscape of the National Park. This, coupled with the harmful impact on amenity and established uses, outweighs the significant sustainability benefits of the proposed scheme. On this basis, the proposed development is considered contrary to policy GSP1, GSP3, CC2, L1, DMC1, DMC14, and the guidance outlined within the Climate Change and Sustainable Buildings SPD and the NPPF. On this basis, it is recommended for refusal.

## **Human Rights**

90. Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.
91. List of Background Papers (not previously published) Nil

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