



C/OThe Old School House
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Marshland St James
Wisbech
Cambs
PE14 8EY

22nd April 2008

Investigating Executive
Advertising Standards Authority
Mid City Place
71 High Holborn
LONDON
WC1V 6QT

Dear

COMPLAINT BROUGHT BY MARSHLAND WINDFARMS LTD

I am writing on behalf of the FLAT Committee to address your letter of the 26th March.

I am sure you are fully aware that the ASA are being “used” by the developers of proposed wind farms as a means of trying to discredit and silence local protest groups. It is however a case of David fighting Goliath because most protest groups such as FLAT are made up of local concerned residents who also have busy “day jobs” whereas the developers have the resources to pay expensive professionals to try and silence us at every opportunity! This said, we will do our best to address your concerns and fight our corner at every opportunity using information that is factual and truthful.

Our answers to the five complaints are as follows:-

1. and 2 ***“your house could plummet in value and end up worthless...” and “...your life could be ruined by noise and disturbance..”***

We were very careful to use the word COULD in these statements.

Our comments were made in the light of some cases where people have suffered such outcomes as a result of wind farms. One very well documented case is that of Jane Davis who has spoken at many protest meetings as well as international conferences etc. Jane has given presentations at two of our public meetings. I have included documentary evidence about her claims and we would argue that this COULD happen to some people living near the proposed Marshland wind farm.

3. *"Wind turbines are not efficient ... most developers claim in excess of 30% efficiency ... but once built the actual figures are much less – sometimes lower than 20%."*

I am not sure if the complaint relates to the actual figures quoted or the use of the term EFFICIENT. If it relates to 30% figure, it is always very difficult to determine exact efficiency figures because the developers are very loathe to release them. However, in the case of our application we can only work on information that is in the public domain. Please see the attached document which gives mean wind speeds and the average power output for a 3MW turbine. It is well known that we are in a low wind speed area and the figures provided by the Government show us to have an average wind speed of 5-6 metres per second. Using the power curve supplied by the turbine manufacturer, at the very most, such low wind speeds would only generate an output of about 400KW which is about 15% of the potential total output.

If the actual complaint relates to the use of the word EFFICIENT we would concede that it may be more appropriate to use the term CAPACITY FACTOR as described in the BERR Fact Sheet 14 entitled Efficiency and Performance. This fact sheet clearly states that in Europe capacity factors vary between 20% and 40% hence giving an average of 30%. They then go on to say that the variation in capacity factors is primarily due to differences in local wind speeds. We at FLAT would therefore argue that in an area known to have low wind speeds, the actual average capacity of any turbine built on Marshland Fen is more likely to be closer to the BERR 20% figure rather than the 40% figure. If necessary we will start using the term generating capacity, rather than efficiency in our future literature.

4. ***“.... developers do get huge subsidies landowners will stand to receive between 8 and 15 thousand pounds per year, per turbine, guaranteed for 25 years!!!! And”***

We are not quite sure what they are complaining about with this statement but we assume that it is the word subsidies. After a discussion with representatives from the developers at one of their public consultation meetings, it would appear that they concede that they receive large amounts of money via ROC's but they prefer to call it a premium rather than a subsidy. We are therefore happy to expand on our statement and explain how the ROC's work and show what this is likely to mean financially for each turbine erected. I also assume that they are objecting to the “8 to 15 thousand pounds” statement because we cannot prove exactly what the landowners will receive in this situation. Would it therefore be acceptable for us to change this statement to something along the lines of “while we do not have exact figures for how much the landowner will receive, in other cases payments have been between 8 and 15 thousand pounds per year, per turbine, guaranteed for 25 years”. We welcome your comments.

5. ***“... it is proposed to build 26 turbines this WILL surround the village and totally desecrate the area”***

At the time of producing our leaflet, the proposal WAS for 26 turbines but we now accept that the proposal is for 19 and all of our current literature reflects this fact. Having seen the new plans we also concede that the word “surround” the village is probably inappropriate. We would therefore like to suggest that we change the word surround to DOMINATE. I don't think that anyone can argue that 19, 460ft high turbines will not dominate a small rural community such as ours.

We look forward to your ruling on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Lyndon Mason
FLAT Chairman and local parishioner