

Environment Information Services

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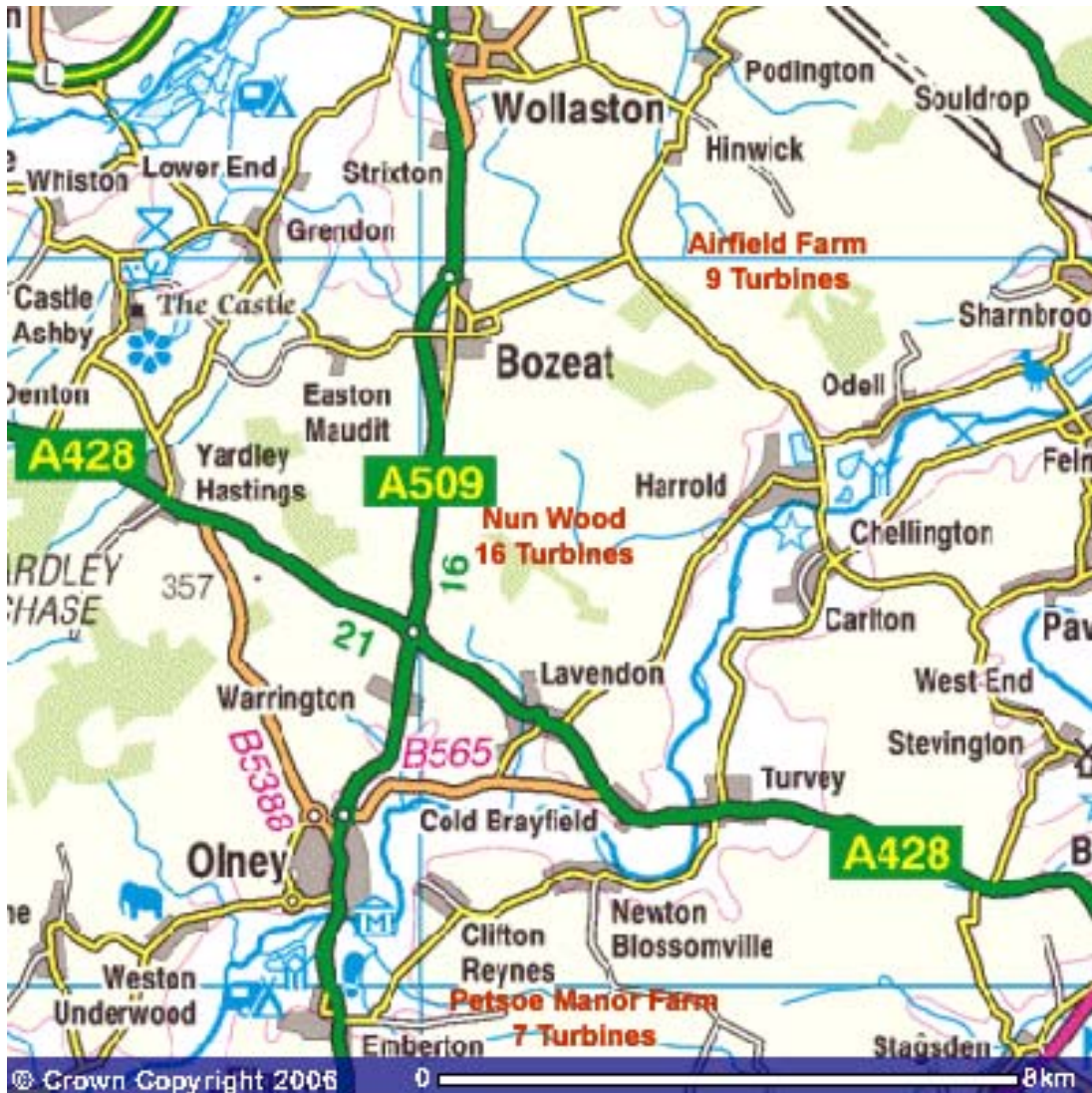
Proposed wind power station at Airfield Farm – 9 x 125m turbines **Application to Bedford Borough Council ref: 05/02589/FUL**

At para 7.4.71 in the Airfield Farm Environmental Statement (ES) there is a reference under 'Cumulative Views' to '*other wind farms in this extended study area [60km radius] which are operational, have planning permission or are awaiting planning permission as of April 2005*'. Further analysis follows in section 7.11 under the heading of '*Cumulative Effects*' in respect of the then 'permitted' (and now operational) Burton Wold installation, 15km away, plus three projects between 34 and 57km distant, one of which was then 'permitted' and two were 'awaiting determination'. This follows established practice and clearly recognises (as the Regulations, PPS 22 and the Companion Guide require) that cumulative assessment of proposals submitted before determination is relevant and necessary to the planning authority's consideration.

Since the completion of the ES in April 2005 the situation has dramatically altered because planning applications have recently been submitted to neighbouring local authorities for two other much closer projects. There is of course no reference to these projects in the Environmental Statement for Airfield Farm, because at its compilation neither application had been made. Nevertheless each of these recent projects will have to be evaluated in terms of its potential cumulative effects with this proposal.

The proposals are as follows:

Name and Grid Reference	Applicant & Date submitted	LPA	Proposal	Nearest turbine to Airfield Fm
Nun Wood OS L/R 152 SP 912 567	Npower renewables 11 th August 2006	<u>Wellingborough DC</u> Bedford BC Milton Keynes UA	16 x 125m	2.8km
Milton Keynes (Petsoe) OS L/R 152 SP 918 486	Your Energy 18 th August 2006	Milton Keynes UA	7 x 125m	11km



It is essential that the Borough Council evaluates the cumulative effects of these projects in relation to Airfield Farm: to do otherwise would be contrary to the relevant Environmental Impact Assessment regulations and all current published Central Government Policy (in PPS 22 and elsewhere), and contrary to best practice.

The ESs for the two recent applications do bear to assess impacts in relation to Airfield Farm, but self-evidently this is not a one-way process. It is clear beyond argument that the consultation process in this case cannot be completed without that stage, and I suggest that at a minimum the applicants at Airfield Farm should be required to produce formal Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI) to enable the Council and the general public to consider the proposal in its full and proper context. There is ample precedent for such action in other cases throughout the UK. I have concentrated on landscape and visual effects, but there may well be other impacts such as traffic and transport and ornithological issues that need to be examined cumulatively.