

**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday 3 September 2013

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive  
(Partnership and Services for Communities)

**SUBJECT:** Application for Planning Permission for Consideration

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*Note - this application was called off the Scheme of Delegation List by Councillor Williamson for the following reason: The location of the proposed wind turbine is on low lying ground compared to most of the surrounding area which would tend to mitigate the visual effect on the landscape. There have been no local objections to the application. A site visit would enable the grounds for refusal to be seen in context.*

Application No.      **13/00211/P**

Proposal              Erection of wind turbine and associated works

Location              **Queen Margaret University  
Queen Margaret University Drive  
Stoneybank  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian  
EH21 6UU**

Applicant             Queen Margaret University

Per                      Locogen

RECOMMENDATION      Application Refused

#### PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Planning permission is sought for the erection of one wind turbine on land comprising part of the educational campus of Queen Margaret University. The land of the application site is adjacent to the university energy centre and services yard area at the southeastern part of the campus, southeast of the other land and buildings of the Queen Margaret University Campus.

In association with the proposed wind turbine, planning permission is also sought for the formation of a small hardstanding area and access track that would be positioned adjacent to the proposed wind turbine.

The proposed wind turbine would consist of a supporting column measuring 36.7 metres in height from the ground to the centre of the rotor hub. The triple blades of the rotor would each have a length of 10.45 metres. The wind turbine would therefore have a height of 47.15 metres from ground level to blade tip. The diameter of its rotating blades would be 20.9 metres.

The proposed position of the wind turbine is within the battlefield site of the Battle of Pinkie (1547) that is included in Historic Scotland's Inventory of Historic Battlefields.

Under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 the proposed development falls within the category of a Schedule 2 Development, being one that may require the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Schedule 3 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 sets out the selection criteria for screening whether a Schedule 2 development requires an EIA. On 21 July 2011 the Council gave a formal screening opinion. The screening opinion concludes that the proposed development is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment to the extent that expert and detailed study through EIA would be necessary to properly assess any effect. Therefore, there is no requirement for the proposed wind turbine to be the subject of an EIA.

Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires that the application be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The development plan is the approved South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan (SESplan) and the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008.

Policies 1B (The Spatial Strategy: Development Principles) and 10 (Sustainable Energy Technologies) of the approved South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan (SESplan) and Proposal ED14 (Queen Margaret University Campus, Musselburgh) and Policies DP13 (Biodiversity and Development Sites), NRG3 (Wind Turbines), NRG5 (Edinburgh Airport Safeguarding Zone), ENV7 (Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Sites) and T2 (General Transport Impact) of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 are relevant to the determination of the application.

Material to the determination of the application are:

1. The Scottish Government's policy on renewable energy given in Scottish Planning Policy: February 2010;
2. The Scottish Government web based renewables advice entitled "Onshore Wind Turbines", which has replaced Planning Advice Note 45: Renewable Energy Technologies;
3. The East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011);
4. The Council's Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013;
5. The Scottish Historic Environment Policy: December 2011.

Scottish Planning Policy on renewable energy states that the commitment to increase the amount of electricity generated from renewable sources is a vital part of the response to climate change. In this, there is potential for communities and small businesses in urban and rural areas to invest in ownership of renewable energy projects or to develop their own projects for local benefit. Planning authorities should support the development of a diverse range of renewable energy technologies whilst guiding development to appropriate locations. Factors relevant to the consideration of applications for planning permission will depend on the scale of the development and its relationship with the surrounding area, but are likely to include impact on the landscape, historic environment,

natural heritage and water environment, amenity and communities, and any cumulative impacts that are likely to arise. When granting planning permission planning authorities should include conditions for the decommissioning of renewable energy developments including, where applicable ancillary infrastructure and site restoration.

The advice entitled "Onshore Wind Turbines" forms one section of the web based renewables advice from the Scottish Government. It provides advice on, amongst other things, matters relating to landscape impact, wildlife and habitat, ecosystems and biodiversity, shadow flicker, noise, road traffic impacts, aviation, and cumulative effects. In relation to landscape impact, the advice is that wind turbines can impact upon the landscape by virtue of their number, size or layout, how they impact on the skyline, their design and colour, any land form change, access tracks and ancillary components anemometers, substations and power lines. The ability of the landscape to absorb development often depends largely on features of landscape character such as landform, ridges, hills, valleys, and vegetation. Selecting an appropriate route for access, considering landform change, surfacing and vegetation can also influence to what extent proposals are integrated into the landscape setting. In relation to landscape impact, a cautious approach is necessary in relation to particular landscapes which are rare or valued. In assessing cumulative landscape and visual impacts, the scale and pattern of the turbines plus the tracks, power lines and ancillary development will be relevant considerations. It will also be necessary to consider the significance of the landscape and views, proximity and inter-visibility and the sensitivity of visual receptors. Planning authorities are more frequently having to consider turbines within lower-lying more populated areas, where design elements and cumulative impacts need to be managed.

Policy 10 of the approved South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan (SESplan) seeks to promote sustainable energy sources.

It is stated in paragraph 9.6 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 that the Council is supportive of Government policy to secure greater energy generation from renewable sources. The benefits will be weighed against the impact on the local environment and features of interest. With regard to wind turbines it is stated in paragraph 9.7 that because of the need for turbines to catch the wind it is not possible to hide them. The visual and landscape impact, both of the turbines themselves and associated infrastructure, is usually the main concern. In paragraph 9.8 it is stated that the Council wishes to protect valued landscape features, including North Berwick Law.

Policy NRG3 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 states that subject to consistency with other plan policies, proposals for individual turbines or wind farms and associated access tracks and transmission lines will be supported where (i) they would not change the existing landscape character in an unacceptable way; (ii) they would not have an unacceptable visual impact on landscape or townscape including the impact on distinctive public views, landmark buildings or natural features, or routes; (iii) they would not have an unacceptable impact from noise at any noise sensitive property including the gardens of such properties however large; (iv) there would be no demonstrable nuisance from a shadow flicker effect; (v) they would have no unacceptable adverse impacts on hydrogeology or hydrology; (vi) alternative, better, sites are not available; and (vii) there are no unacceptable cumulative impacts. Policy NRG3 also requires that in assessing all proposals the Council will have regard to the findings and recommendations of the Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Turbine Development in East Lothian (May 2005).

The Council's East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011) is also relevant to the determination of this application. This Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study determines the capacity of the East Lothian

lowland landscapes and the Lammermuir fringe to accommodate various scales of wind turbine development smaller than those considered in the Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Turbine Development in East Lothian (May 2005). In this regard four principal development typologies are considered in the study, namely, (i) Typology A: wind turbines between 65m and 120m high, (ii) Typology B: Single wind turbines between >42m and <65m high, (iii) typology C: wind turbines between 20m and up to and including 42m high, and (iv) typology D: wind turbines between 12m and <20m high, with all wind turbine heights being from ground level to blade tip.

The Council's Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013 is relevant to the determination of this application. In setting out the policy framework, key considerations and capacity assessments for wind turbine development the purpose of this supplementary planning guidance is (i) to provide potential applicants for planning permission for smaller and medium sized turbines with guidance on the range of issue which they should consider when preparing wind turbine proposals, (ii) to indicate the matters which will be considered by the Council when assessing these applications, (iii) to set out the recommendations of the Council's East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011). It is focused primarily on turbines with a height to blade tip ranging from between 20 to 120 metres but is also applicable to single and small groups of turbines in excess of 120 metres to blade tip where the same design and policy issues would be relevant.

The Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Turbine Development in East Lothian (May 2005) is not material to the determination of this application as its findings are not based on an assessment of the affect on the landscape of East Lothian of a single wind turbine lower than 120 metres high.

A total of 7 written objections have been received to this planning application. The main grounds of the objections to the application are:

- \* the proposed wind turbine is contrary to the findings of the Council's East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011);
- \* the proposed wind turbine would harmfully impact on key features and views.

Due to their positioning within the local landform and that they would be ground surface features, the proposed access track and hardsurfaced areas would not be harmful to the landscape character and appearance of the University Campus or of the wider area.

The National Air Traffic Services (NATS) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) have been consulted on the application and all raise no objection to the proposed wind turbine on grounds of aircraft safety. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) have no comment to make on the application.

As the application site lies within the Edinburgh Airport Safeguarding Zone, Edinburgh Airport Limited have been consulted on the application. Edinburgh Airport Limited advises that the proposed wind turbine would not conflict with the safeguarding criteria and thus there is no objection to the application. Thus the proposed wind turbine is not contrary to Policy NRG5 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008.

Proposal ED14 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 promotes some 21 hectares of land at Mucklets Road, Musselburgh, between the A1 and the east coast main line for educational purposes to accommodate Queen Margaret University Campus and a new junction off the A1 trunk road. The University Campus has been erected and is operational.

The application site is part of the Queen Margaret University Campus site. The proposed wind turbine by its siting and operation in relation to the use of the Queen Margaret University Campus gives it an operational requirement to be sited in its proposed location. The proposed wind turbine is capable of providing the university with a renewable energy source. On these considerations the proposed wind turbine is consistent with Proposal ED14 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008.

Policy NRG3 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 stipulates that a proposed wind turbine(s) should not have an unacceptable impact from noise at any noise sensitive property and Part 5 of Policy DC1 requires there to be no significant adverse impact on nearby uses.

Paragraph 5.20 of Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013 states that the proximity of noise sensitive receptors (e.g. residential properties) will be a significant factor in the requirement for an assessment of the affect of noise from the turbine on such noise sensitive receptors. Paragraph 5.22 states that for single turbines in low noise environments the day time level measured as LA(), 10min should be 35 DB at nearest noise sensitive dwellings, up to wind speeds of 10m/s at 10 metres in height.

In this regard the Council's Senior Environmental & Consumer Services Manager advises that he has assessed the noise data submitted with the application and is satisfied that the external free-field noise levels associated with the operation of the proposed wind turbine would not exceed 35dBLA90 10min at any wind speed up to 10m/s at any nearby residential property. In which case the proposed wind turbine would not have a harmful noise impact on any residential property within the locality.

Policy NRG3 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 stipulates that a proposed wind turbine(s) should not demonstrably give rise to nuisance from a shadow flicker effect and Part 5 of Policy DC1 requires there to be no significant adverse impact on nearby uses.

The Scottish Government web based renewables advice entitled "Onshore Wind Turbines" advises that as a general rule the shadow flicker effect of an operating turbine should not be a problem where the distance between the turbine and a dwellinghouse exceeds 10 times the diameter of the rotor blades of the turbine.

In the case of the proposed wind turbine 10 times the diameter of its rotor blades would be 209 metres. The nearest dwellings, being those of Mucklets Crescent to the northeast, are some 255 metres away from where the proposed wind turbine would be sited. Thus, the proposed wind turbine passes the Scottish Government's general rule of shadow flicker effect.

Due to its height and distance from the nearest residential properties the proposed wind turbine would not be physically overbearing on any of them or in the outlook from them. On this count the proposed wind turbine would not harm the amenity of those residential properties.

Policy NRG3 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 stipulates that a proposed wind turbine(s) should not have an unacceptable adverse impact on hydrogeology or hydrology.

There is no evidence on which to say that the proposed wind turbine would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the hydrogeology or hydrology of the area.

On these tests of noise and shadow flicker effect and considerations of dominance, outlook and impact on hydrology the proposed wind turbine is consistent with Policy NRG3 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008, The Scottish Government web based renewables advice entitled “Onshore Wind Turbines” and Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013.

On the matter of safety, paragraph 5.15 of Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013 states that although wind turbines erected in accordance with best engineering practice should be stable structures, it is desirable to achieve a set back from roads, railways and public footpaths. The Scottish Government web based renewables advice entitled “Onshore Wind Turbines” gives advice on the siting of wind turbines in proximity to roads and railways and states that it may be advisable to achieve a set back from roads and railways of at least the height of the turbine proposed.

The proposed wind turbine would achieve such a set back distance in its relationship with the nearest public road; that being the A1 trunk road to the southwest. The Council’s Transportation service has been consulted on the application and raises no objection to the proposed wind turbine, being satisfied that due to its distance away from the public road it would have no significant adverse consequences for road safety.

On this consideration of safety the proposed wind turbine is consistent with Policy T2 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008, The Scottish Government web based renewables advice entitled “Onshore Wind Turbines” and Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013.

Policy DP13 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 generally presumes against new development that would have an unacceptable impact on the biodiversity of an area. One of the key considerations set out in Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013 is that sites or species designated or protected for their biodiversity or nature conservation interest will be protected in accordance with development plan policy. Proposals for wind turbines must have regard to both their site specific and wider impacts.

The Council's Biodiversity Officer is satisfied that the proposed wind turbine would not have any adverse biodiversity impacts.

Accordingly, the proposed wind turbine is not contrary to Policy DP13 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 or Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013.

It is stated in Scottish Planning Policy that archaeological sites and monuments are an important finite and non-renewable resource and should be protected and preserved in situ wherever feasible. The presence and potential presence of archaeological assets should be considered by planning authorities when making decisions on planning applications. Where preservation in situ is not possible planning authorities should through the use of conditions or a legal agreement ensure that developers undertake appropriate excavation, recording, analysis, publication and archiving before and/or during development. If archaeological discoveries are made during any development, a professional archaeologist should be given access to inspect and record them. Planning Advice Note 2/2011: Planning and Archaeology similarly advises.

As stipulated in Policy ENV7 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008, new development that would harm a site of archaeological interest or its setting will not be permitted. One of the key considerations set out in Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind

Turbines: June 2013 is that wind turbine development that would harm an archaeological site or its setting, will not normally be permitted.

It is stated in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy: December 2011 that planning authorities should have careful regard for the landscape characteristics and specific qualities of battlefields. Battlefields are valued for a variety of reasons: marking the sites of significant events containing physical or archaeological remains associated with battles, or the remains of fallen combatants. Battles hold a significant place in our national consciousness and have a strong resonance in Scottish culture.

The Council's Archaeology Officer advises that the proposed development would be situated in an area that has been previously evaluated as part of the Queen Margaret University development and thus there is no requirement for a programme of archaeological works to be carried out prior to the commencement of development. The Archaeology Officer further advises that the site is located on the edge of the area of the Battle of Pinkie and thus he raises no objection to the siting of the proposed wind turbine, advising that it would not harm the landscape characteristics of the battlefield site.

Historic Scotland have been consulted on the application and are content that the proposed wind turbine would not have an adverse impact on the landscape characteristics of the battlefield site.

On this consideration the proposed wind turbine is not contrary to Policy ENV7 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008, the Scottish Historic Environment Policy: December 2011, Scottish Planning Policy: February 2010 or Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013.

As the application site is within a Coal Mining Development Referral Area The Coal Authority has been consulted on it. On the advice of The Coal Authority the applicant has submitted a Mineral Stability Report. The Coal Authority agree with the conclusions of the submitted Mineral Stability Report that coal mining legacy issues do not pose a risk to the proposed development, and thus they do not object to the application.

Notwithstanding these foregoing conclusions it now has to be established whether or not the proposed wind turbine would be acceptable in terms of its landscape and visual impact.

On the matter of landscape impact, an important material consideration in the determination of this planning application is the Council approved East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011) which determines the capacity of the East Lothian lowland landscapes to accommodate various scales of wind turbine development.

The land of the application site is within the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area of the Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011). The Study classifies that landscape character area as being an elongated northeast/southwest orientated low, undulating ridge forming a backdrop to the well-settled Esk valley. The Study further classifies this landscape character area as being of medium-high sensitivity to Typology of wind turbine A and B, medium sensitivity for Typology C and low sensitivity for Typology D.

The Study states that within the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area: (i) there are no opportunities to locate wind turbines of Typology A (between 65 metres and 120 metres high) or of Typology B (single wind turbines between more than 42 metres and less than 65 metres high); (ii) there are very limited opportunities to accommodate

wind turbines of Typology C, being wind turbines between 20 metres high and up to and including 42 metres high (subject to impact on key views); (iii) there are opportunities to locate wind turbines of Typology D, being wind turbines between 12 metres and less than 20 metres high, if visually associated with farms and buildings.

The proposed wind turbine, at a height of 47.15 metres from ground level to blade tip, is a Typology B wind turbine that the East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011) advises cannot be accommodated within the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area.

On this count the proposed wind turbine is contrary to the Council's East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011).

Notwithstanding, it is necessary to determine, though a specific landscape and visual impact appraisal of its likely impact whether or not the proposed wind turbine would be acceptable to its place. In this due regard has to be paid to the terms of Local Plan Policy NRG3, Scottish Planning Policy: February 2010 and Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013.

As stipulated in Policy NRG3 of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008 a proposed wind turbine(s) should not change the existing landscape character in an unacceptable way and should not have an unacceptable visual impact on landscape or townscape including the impact on distinctive public views, landmark buildings or natural features.

On the key considerations of landscape impact and impact on public views to and from landmark features Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013 states:

(i) wind turbine development will only be supported where the overall integrity and setting of key public views to and from landmark features, both natural and man-made, will not be compromised. Developments which would harm the character, appearance and setting of significant natural landscape features, landmark buildings and structures will be resisted;

(ii) wind turbines must be sited and designed so that they relate to their setting; that any adverse effects on visual amenity and landscape are minimised and that areas which are valued for their landscapes and scenery are protected;

(iii) wind turbines must be acceptable in terms of scale and character for their proposed location and must be well integrated into the landscape, reflect its character and quality of place and be compatible with its surroundings;

(iv) wind turbines must not appear incongruous or dominate the local landscape when viewed from a range of public places. They must be capable of being accommodated within an open landscape without detriment to landscape character. They must not result in a change of landscape character from a predominantly agricultural landscape to one that is a landscape dominated by wind turbines: cumulative impact will be a particular issue here;

In relation to cumulative impact paragraph 4.34 of Planning Guidance for the Location and Design of Wind Turbines in the Lowland Areas of East Lothian: December 2010 states that individual wind turbine proposals must not be looked at in isolation. Cumulative visual impact, viz. the impact of the proposed turbine/s when viewed in association with other turbines already erected or in the planning process needs to be taken into account. A balance must be retained, so that wind turbines are integrated into their landscape setting and do not merge with other turbines to change the character of



the landscape into a predominantly wind farm landscape where other significant landscape characteristics of an area become visually subservient to wind turbines. On this matter Policy NRG3 of the local plan stipulates there should be no cumulative impacts from a proposed wind turbine(s).

The specific landscape appraisal of the impact of the proposed wind turbine undertaken by Policy & Projects finds that:

\* In views from the entrance to the Queen Margaret University campus at Stoneybank in Musselburgh the proposed wind turbine would become the dominant focal point, appearing very prominent and obtrusive on the skyline, harmful to the landscape character of the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area;

\* In views from the entrance to the Queen Margaret University campus at the A1 slip road the proposed wind turbine would be a prominent vertical feature with its nacelle and blades visible above the campus buildings where it would appear as a discordant and incongruous form of development harmful to the landscape character of the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area;

\* In northeastward views from the A1 westbound the proposed wind turbine would be a prominent obtrusive vertical skyline feature, out of scale with the university buildings, being some 27.15 metres higher than the tallest building on the site. It would also compete visually with Arthur's Seat therefore diminishing this iconic landmark's importance as the main focus of this view. The proposed wind turbine would also be viewed together with the existing electricity pylons resulting in harmful visual clutter of large scale structures. This would harmfully detract from the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area;

\* In northeastward views from the A1 eastbound the proposed wind turbine would be a prominent obtrusive vertical skyline feature harmful to the landscape character of the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area;

\* In views from Inveresk the proposed wind turbine would be very prominent and obtrusive on the skyline and together with the existing electricity pylons would be harmful visual clutter of large scale structures on the landscape. This would harmfully detract from the landscape character of the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area;

\* In longer distance views from Crookston Farm, in the countryside to the southwest of Wallyford, the proposed wind turbine would break the skyline and appear as a very prominent and obtrusive vertical structure. It would be seen in association with the existing electricity pylons resulting in harmful visual clutter of large scale structures on the landscape. This would harmfully detract from the landscape character of the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area.

The overall findings of the specific landscape appraisal is that the proposed wind turbine due to its positioning, form, height and scale would in many views of it appear as a highly exposed and obtrusive skyline feature and in its relationship with the existing electricity pylons would harmfully amount to visual clutter on the landscape. Such effects would harmfully detract from the landscape character of the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area.

These findings demonstrate that the proposed wind turbine cannot successfully be accommodated in its proposed location within the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area.

On the considerations of landscape appraisal it can be concluded from all of the above that the proposed wind turbine is contrary to Policy NRG3 and of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008, Scottish Planning Policy: February 2010, the Scottish Government web based renewables advice entitled "Onshore Wind Turbines" and the key considerations of landscape impact of Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013.

Finally, it is necessary to consider whether there are material considerations in this case that outweigh the above conclusions that the proposed wind turbine does not comply with relevant development plan policy, the Council's Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013 and the Council's East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011).

Scottish Planning Policy on renewable energy states that the commitment to increase the amount of electricity generated from renewable sources is a vital part of the response to climate change. However, Scottish Planning Policy advises that whilst planning authorities should support the development of a diverse range of renewable energy technologies, they should guide development to appropriate locations and that factors relevant to the consideration of applications for planning permission will depend on the scale of the development and its relationship with the surrounding area and include impact on the landscape, historic environment, natural heritage and water environment, amenity and communities, and any cumulative impacts that are likely to arise.

Development plan policy for East Lothian is supportive of Government policy to secure greater energy generation from renewable sources, but does require that the benefits of that have to be weighed against the impact of any such developments on the local environment and features of interest.

In the case of the wind turbine proposed in this application any benefit of it as a renewable source of electricity generation would not in itself outweigh the harmful impact it would have on the landscape character and appearance of the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area.

#### REASONS FOR REFUSAL:

- 1 The proposed wind turbine is contrary to the Council's East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines (December 2011) which states that a Typology B wind turbine cannot be accommodated within the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area.
- 2 The proposed wind turbine due to its positioning, form, height and scale would in many views of it appear as a highly exposed and obtrusive skyline feature and in its relationship with the existing electricity pylons would harmfully amount to visual clutter on the landscape. Such effects would harmfully detract from the landscape character of the 'Mayfield/Tranent Ridge' landscape character area. Accordingly, the proposed wind turbine is contrary to Policy NRG3 and of the adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008, Scottish Planning Policy: February 2010, the Scottish Government web based renewables advice entitled "Onshore Wind Turbines" and the key considerations of landscape impact of Planning Guidance for Lowland Wind Turbines: June 2013.