

ANNEX B – Response Pro-forma

Name: THOMAS JOHN JOHNSTON

Address: 25 Aughagaskin Road, Magherafelt, BT45 5DS

Original Representation Reference Number: MUDPS/16 (for administrative use only)

Please tick the applicable box below.

- a) I confirm that I wish for my original representation to be considered as my representation.

- b) I confirm that I wish to ~~amend or~~ add to my original representation.

- c) I confirm that I wish for my original representation to be withdrawn and that I no longer wish to make a representation.

Signature:

Date:

If you require assistance when completing the above, please contact developmentplan@midulstercouncil.org

Please ensure you return this completed Pro forma (along with any additional documents if you have ticked [b]) above) to Development Plan Team, Planning Department, Mid Ulster District Council, 50 Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt, BT45 6EN, by 5pm on 21st May 2020.



18 MAY 2020.

Mr THOMAS JOHN JOHNSTON
25' AUGHAGASKIN ROAD
MAGHERAFELT
BT45 5DS.

Dear Sir / Madam.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2030 - DRAFT
PLAN STRATEGY.

I refer to your letter of 12 March 2020 regarding the above plan and in response to this correspondence have indicated that I wish all my original representations / letters to be considered as my response to this draft plan. I have also indicated that I wish to add this correspondence to my original representations.

We are led to believe that in statements / proposals made by the current [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] he confirmed that On-Shore Wind will be eligible to compete in the next "Contracts of Difference" which are scheduled to take place in 2021.

As part of the proposals that will allow On-Shore Wind developments to proceed we are advised that [REDACTED] said local communities will have a more effective voice

in developments that would impact them, that there would be tough new guidance on community engagement for developers of On-Shore Wind, to a point that no On-Shore Wind Project could proceed without the consent of the local community. It would seem that [REDACTED] concluded his statements by saying that the Government are determined to manage On-Shore Wind Projects in a way that works for everyone, to include listening to the local community and giving them an effective voice in the decision making process.

I can confirm that these statements / proposals attributed to [REDACTED] were discussed at a recent meeting of the objectors to the proposed Wind Turbine on the Aughegaskein Road, Magherafelt (Planning Ref: LA09/2015/0151). At this meeting it was agreed that I would advise the Mid-Ulster Council's Planning Department that despite certain powers being devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly / Councils as UK Citizens we are entitled to the same equality and fairness as other UK Citizens and therefore we would ask the Mid-Ulster Council's Planning Department to investigate these statements / proposals attributed to [REDACTED] and if confirmed include them in the new local Development Plan 2030 currently being compiled for approval by the Mid-Ulster District Council.

We would also suggest that if correct the statements / proposals made by [REDACTED] supports the statements made in our correspondence of 9 April 2019. In this correspondence we asked the Planning Department to revert to their former Preferred Option as contained in their "Preferred Options Paper of November 2016," and I quote:

AFFORD MORE WEIGHT TO THE VIEWS OF NEIGHBOURS BY REQUIRING WIND TURBINES TO BE LOCATED 500 METRES AWAY UNLESS THERE IS AN AGREEMENT OF THOSE LIVING IN THE AREA.

I trust that this correspondence will be given serious consideration by the Planning Department and the elected members of the Mid-Ulster Council. In the meantime I would be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this correspondence.

Yours Sincerely

[REDACTED]
T. J. Johnston (On behalf of the objectors to the proposed Wind Turbine on the Aughagaskin Road.)

c.c.: Councillors / M.H.A.'s. / M.P.

Typed copy to follow.



MR THOMAS JOHN JOHNSTON
25 AUGHAGASKIN ROAD
MAGHERAFELT
BT45 5DS

Date: 15 APRIL 2019

Dear Sir / Madam

Re: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2030 - DRAFT PLAN STRATEGY

I refer to my letter of 9 April 2019 regarding the above (copy enclosed) and would wish to add the following statements to the content of this previous correspondence.

We, the objectors to Planning Application Ref LA09/2015/0151, firmly believe that the current P1 Planning Application Form does not deal with the specific issues associated with a Wind Turbine planning application, nor does it require the applicant at the planning application stage to submit all the appropriate information / statements / documentation, etc. as required in the proposed Development Plan, SPPS and PPS18, etc. The current P1 Planning Application Form simply does not require the applicant to carry out any research, surveys or facts / findings with regard to these issues and therefore most are ignored and the "invalid" planning application processed as a valid planning application. It is like trying to renew your Passport without submitting the required new photographs, and as with the Passport application the invalid Wind Turbine planning applications should be returned to the applicants so that they can adhere to the rules and guidelines as set out in the relevant documentation.

We are therefore clearly stating that a new Planning Application Form specifically designed for Wind Turbines, with "tick" boxes to indicate that the required information / statements / documentation, etc. has been submitted with the "new" Planning application, should be introduced by the Planning Service. There is simply no point in having rules, legislation and guidelines if they can be ignored by the Applicant and the Planning Service.

I trust the above is in order and await a reply to this correspondence.

Yours Sincerely,

T. J. Johnston (on behalf of the objectors to the proposed Wind Turbine on the Aughagaskin Road))

c.c.: Councillors (following the May Election)
M.L.A.'s

MUDPS/16



MR THOMAS JOHN JOHNSTON
25 AUGHAGASKIN ROAD
MAGHERAFELT
BT45 5DS

Date: 9 APRIL 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2030 – DRAFT PLAN STRATEGY

I write on behalf of the 26 objectors to the proposed Wind Turbine on the Aughagaskin Road (Planning Ref: LA09 /2015/0151) and would state that we are both disgusted and concerned that the Planning Service have once again capitulated to the Wind Turbine Industry in that they have saw fit to abandon their Preferred Option (i.e. Option 2) as contained in their "Preferred Options Paper" of November 2016.

At a recent meeting with a representative of the Planning Service I was advised that the Preferred Option (i.e. Option 2) as contained in their "Preferred Options Paper" of November 2016, (i.e.: Afford more weight to the views of neighbours by requiring Wind Turbines to be located 500 metres away unless there is agreement of those living in the area) would severely restrict the land available for the erection of Wind Turbines. As a result of this "new finding" the Planning Service are now proposing to discard their Preferred Option and adopt Option 3 in their Draft Plan Strategy, basically the status-quo with a few non-compulsory statements to allow the Planning Service to justify their actions.

What we find amazing is that just because the former Preferred Option would restrict the land available for the erection of Wind Turbines and based solely on this "new finding," the ratepayers of the District can be ignored by the Planning Service and basically be exposed to all the drawbacks and dangers associated with Wind Turbines being erected close to occupied property. These include:

- The noise generated 24/7 by Wind Turbines, a fact recognised by the Planning Service. Note: the Planning Service is aware that ETSU-97 (the guidelines for noise generated by Wind Turbines) clearly states that a separation distance of 350 to 400 metres cannot be relied on to give adequate protection to those living close to these structures. In fact a comprehensive overhaul of all aspects of ETSU-97 was recently proposed by an Assembly Committee so that all aspects of Wind Turbines noise, both AUDIBLE and LOW FREQUENCY noise, can be addressed in a manner that protects the health of residents (including children) who are forced to live close to these structures.
- The lack of sleep suffered by these forced to live close to Wind Turbines, i.e.: the constant noise (24/7) caused by a Wind Turbine less than 500 metres from our homes.
- The health issues suffered because of lack of sleep. There is an abundance of evidence available to show that this is the case. We can provide this evidence on request.
- The loss of amenity/ views, etc. How can anyone say that Wind Turbines would destroy areas of natural beauty and yet say they should be accepted by those who would be forced to live close to these structures? We all consider where we live to be areas of natural beauty.
- The devaluation of property close to Wind Turbines. Any estate agent will confirm that this is the case.

- The lack of equality, fairness and social justice associated with being forced to live close to Wind Turbines. Why should some be forced to endure the effects of Wind Turbines close to our homes while others are protected by planning rules that ensure they can never be exposed to the dangers and health issues associated with Wind Turbines? In fact we believe this is a fundamental issue and therefore we are asking that this issue be submitted, by the Planning Service, to the Equality and Human Rights Commission as part of the current consultation process regarding the Draft Plan Strategy.

We therefore find it amazing that solely because our District is densely populated all the above issues, and many more, can be ignored so that land is available for the erection of Wind Turbines. Are we to be forced to live out our lives in misery because we live in a densely populated area, does our health and well-being not matter, do we have to suffer substantial loss financially in order that Wind Turbines can be erected close to our property and are we less equal (second class citizens) to those who will never be asked to live close to a Wind Turbine. The Planning Service says they MUST find a way to facilitate Renewable Energy in order to meet regional targets. What about protecting the health and well-being of the ratepayer who will be forced to live close to these structures, do we not matter. I would in fact point out that some time ago a precedent was set against structures that had even the potential to damage the health and well-being of ratepayers when Waste Incineration was deemed to be unacceptable due to health and other issues associated with this proposal. What is the difference between the two proposals (Incineration and Wind Turbines) when both are a risk to human health. At least 500 metres separation distance between Wind Turbines and occupied property would have gone some way towards resolving this serious issue.

I would further ask how many Planning Officials and Councillors live less than 300 metres from a Wind Turbine, how many have firsthand knowledge of the noise and loss of amenity, etc. associated with a Wind Turbine, how many have visited Wind Turbine sites to see and access for themselves the issues associated with Wind Turbines before considering this "Draft Plan Strategy." I would also ask if extensive consultation has taken place with other organisations such as the H&S Executive, Transport NI, NIEA, Dept of Agriculture, Environmental Health Officers (remember Environmental Health Officials some time ago stated in a previous consultation process that 500 metres separation distance was necessary to protect those living close to single Wind Turbines) and indeed overseas organisations that have a better knowledge of the health issues associated with Wind Turbines.

In conclusion we note that the Planning Service are proposing to adopt an approach that they say is similar to that of Allerdale District Council in that other than having a defined separation distance between single Wind Turbines and occupied property they will "indicate" a separation distance that would be the "norm" unless there were certain circumstances to justify a shorter separation distance. I would point out that Allerdale District Council's "indicative" separation distance is 800 metres and even this is a much shorter separation distance than that of many of the other Councils with some indicating or adopting up to 1/2 kilometres as the norm between Wind Turbines and occupied property. We would suggest that these Councils have given serious consideration to their separation distances before deciding on their policy regarding this matter. We therefore fail to see how the "indicative" starting point of 300 metres proposed in the Draft Plan Strategy can be justified for the ratepayers of this District, or are we less important than the ratepayers of other Councils who are prepared to protect the health, visual amenity, loss of sleep, etc. of their ratepayers by stipulating at least a 500 metre separation distance between Wind Turbines and occupied property. I trust the Planning Service will not use their standard response to this serious issue by stating other Councils separation distances are not compulsory, they exist and I am advised the norm used by these Councils. We would finally ask if other N. Ireland Councils have been consulted with regard to this issue and if the policy proposed by the Mid-Ulster Council will be the norm throughout N. Ireland. Please note that statements such as the Mid-Ulster area has "more" wind than other N. Ireland Council areas is a ludicrous statement to make given that the strongest sustained winds are around higher ground and coastal areas,

including inland coastal areas, and that the wind blows in basically a uniform pattern throughout the whole of N. Ireland. I would also point out that even if there were less wind in other Council areas than in the Mid-Ulster Council area (a ludicrous statement) it still does not justify a shorter separation distance between single Wind Turbines and occupied property in our area, basically so that our area can accommodate more single Wind Turbines. The separation distance should be the same between every single Wind Turbine and occupied property irrespective of the number of single Wind Turbines erected in any Council area, be it one or two hundred it will affect every neighbour to these structures in a similar manner. In reality what the Mid-Ulster Planning Service are saying is that if our area had less wind and henceforth less Wind Turbines they could have increased the separation distance between single Wind Turbines and occupied property, other factors do not seem to matter irrespective of the consequences. It is meeting targets at all costs so the Mid-Ulster area can be saturated with Wind Turbines while other Councils ratepayers can retain their natural beauty and live out their lives without the misery and depression that will be forced on the ratepayer of this Council area, i.e. those who will be forced to live close to these structures.

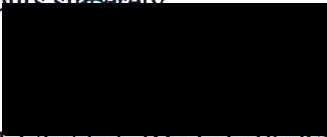
In view of the above statements in order to have a separation distance that is equal and fair to all the ratepayers of this districts, that we can never be exposed to a lifetime of misery by having to endure a Wind Turbine close to our property, we would ask the Planning Service and our Elected Representatives to revert to the former Preferred Options as contained in the "Preferred Options Paper" of November 2016, which states:

"Afford more weight to the views of neighbours by requiring Wind Turbines to be located 500 metres away unless there is an agreement of those living in the area."

I trust this will be given serious consideration by both the Planning Services and the elected members of the Council, so that we who live and enjoy our countryside lifestyle will be protected against the never ending plague of Wind Turbines that are destroying forever the landscape of Northern Ireland.

I trust the above is in order and await a reply to this correspondence.

Yours sincerely


T.J. Johnston (On behalf of the objections to be proposed Wind Turbine on the Aughagaskin Road.)

C.C.: Councillors (following the May Election)
M.L.A's