



FELLS

Friends of Eden, Lakeland and Lunesdale Scenery

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Armistead & Sillfield

a view from Stephen Hinchliffe (Ablot) and Rob McQuarrie (STOP)

If, in June 2007, someone had told us that our lives would be taken over by wind farms, we would have looked at them in disbelief. But this is exactly what happened. So we had to go through the tedium of delivering leaflets, putting up exhibitions, writing newsletters, and so on. But if you feel so angry at the march of turbines on the fells, all for money, then you have to do something about it. We're sure this strikes a chord with all members. Fortunately, the 6 turbines planned for Armistead were rejected 12 to 1 by SLDC Planning committee in October 2008, against the planning officer recommendation. Ablot and STOP were pleased, but not for long, as the developer submitted an appeal in January 2009, taking us into new territory.

The Public Inquiry ran from 28th April for 8 days. The consultants, Capita Symonds represented the SLDC and addressed the issues of landscape, people living near the site and a bridleway. We applied for Rule 6 party status and all that entailed (see page 3). Though beneficial, this entailed hours of research and tonnes of paperwork as well as the worry of fund raising. At this point we must express our heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to the £17,500 raised which let us put up the best possible case.

Anyone who has attended a PI will know that it can be a tedious but also an interesting experience. Our Inspector, Mr Pike, seemed attentive, pleasant, patient and thorough. The Banks team were slick as also was the SLDC advocate despite some poor evidence given by the Capita landscape consultant. To add complications, the company wanting to erect 3 turbines at Sillfield (near Armistead) also registered as a Rule 6 party in order to assert that their turbines would not create a cumulative effect. Their intervention caused some evidence to be rushed and the final accompanied site visit to be shortened.

We were well represented by Geoff Sinclair our lay advocate and landscape expert who showed that the Kendal Low Fells are a valued locals resource, visible from miles around, and providing a backdrop to two National Parks. We also addressed the impact of the proposal on 11 farms and houses in the immediate area. Our list of 55 witnesses included local people, members of the opposition groups, as well as prominent people such as James Cropper, Lord Inglewood and Lord Reay, our MP Tim Farron and Gareth McKeever Conservative PPC.

As you would expect Banks fought the case mainly on Government policy translated into Regional and Local Plans which imposed 'targets' on Cumbria. The facts that CCC and SLDC officers had not opposed the application was regularly mentioned, as was the fact that LDNP, Natural England, RSPB and Cumbria Wildlife Trust had not objected.

Can we sit back and relax? No, the Sillfield application goes to PI on 13th October and a local action group has been set up, called STOP and chaired by Rob McQuarrie which has already given evidence to the SLDC Planning Committee which opposed the application. In this case CCC and SLDC officers and planning committees rejected the application. These turbines would blight not only the Kendal Low Fells for all who travelled near or on them, but the views of many more people who live nearby eg Low Park (Endmoor), Summerlands, Crooklands and areas to the west, and impact adversely on The Helm, Scout Scar and several points within the LDNP.. If these turbines are allowed the danger that others will follow will become very real, leading to the gradual industrialisation of the whole area. Therefore we believe that the benefits of being a Rule 6 party is again needed but costs will be high. Events for money raising are detailed on the back page. Please come and support them and enjoy new venues and meet new people as your moral support is a much valued. When will this end? Soon we hope, so that normal life can resume.

FOR ENQUIRIES CONTACT

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Patrons

The Duke of Westminster. OBE,
TD, DL .
The Lord Lieutenant of Cumbria
Mr James Cropper

STOP PRESS

We have been informed of yet another wind farm scheme in the pipeline at Kelleth Rigg (NY 666 407) some 5 km along the A685 Tebay to Kirkby Stephen road. This is a second 'invasion' of the north Howgills, an area of great scenic beauty (see also Greenlaw Rigg on p.2).

The wave of new applications shows no signs of slowing

Of course 2010 is the first 'target year' for the Government and so it is not surprising perhaps that wind farm companies are frantically pouring in applications in the hope that they will get fast approval. This idea is supported by the fact that developers are now going to appeal more and more often on the grounds that the Council has failed to determine their applications inside the 16 week deadline. Of course they don't tell you that they often submit incomplete information or fail to provide it when requested by the Councils. This is totally unacceptable as no Council can make a balanced judgement with incomplete information. The second 'sinister' development has been the growing tendency of the Government to 'RECOVER' applications going to Public Inquiry. This means that the Inspector, who sits through the whole Inquiry, cannot make the decision but can only make a recommendation to the Secretary of State—who then decides. So much for local democracy.

The usual excuses for the rush are trotted out; Cumbria is still a long way off its 2010 target for installed wind capacity of 210 megawatts (currently about 100MW); climate change is galloping away; we have to meet our European objective, and so on. Below we provide a few notes on recent new applications.

Lazonby Fell (5 turbines X 125 metres) — a scoping study has been carried out by E-ON at Lazonby Fell (SD 515393) about 7 km north of Penrith. The site is a mixed combination of heathland and conifer plantations. There are also some areas of mire where the protected bog bush cricket is found.

Midtown wind farm near Sleagill (11 turbines X 125 metres) - a scoping study is complete by Pure Renewable Energies on this site some 4 km ENE of Shap on the limestone hills (SD 596177). It is spread over a large area not far from the Shap Renewable Energy Park that was proposed some 3 years ago but which seems to have been abandoned. It seems to be causing much local division and will be widely visible from the Eden Valley and the LDNP and lies just within the Area of Search for extension of the YDNP.

Greenlaw Rigg (14 turbines) - a scoping study is in progress by Scottish Power Renewables and maps have been produced showing a layout. It is on the flanks of Wild Boar Fell and Mallerstang and alongside the Settle to Carlisle railway and Pendragon Castle (SD 762026). It is inside the area identified by the Alison Farmer Report as land of National Park quality which should be designated—yet another example of the arrogance with which our finest landscapes are regarded by these companies.

Claughton Moor (20 turbines X 125 metres) - a scoping study has been published by Community Windpower Ltd showing the layout which stretches from the existing Caton wind farm all the way to Hornby (SD 583646). The site lies 6km inside the Forest of Bowland AONB, is on a deep peat moorland and would dominate the southern Lune Valley. This is the same company that is seeking to build 12 turbines at Stainmore near Brough, also inside an AONB.

North of Carlisle (40 turbines on three separate sites). These scoping studies are all from Banks Developments who are behind the Armistead proposal and are currently out for consultation. All three are in the remote land north of Hadrian's Wall stretching up to Bewcastle and Kershope Forest. We have always understood that this area would cause problems due to MOD interests and low flying but perhaps not. The three sites are known as Black Knor (NY 533791), 20 turbines, Stone Chest NY 521747 and Mossgrove (NY 511693), 10 turbines each.

The Arctic Ice Cap

We thought the following statement made by the President of the Royal Society of London to the Admiralty may be of interest. He said;

'It will without doubt have come to your Lordship's knowledge that a considerable change of climate, inexplicable at present to us, must have taken place in the Circumpolar Regions, by which the severity of the cold that has for centuries past enclosed the seas in the high northern latitudes in an impenetrable barrier of ice has been during the last two years, greatly abated.

This affords ample proof that new sources of warmth have been opened and give us leave to hope that the Arctic Seas may at this time be more accessible than they have been for centuries past, and that discoveries may now be made in them not only interesting to the advancement of science but also to the future intercourse of mankind and the commerce of distant nations.'

The statement was made on 20th November 1817!



Rule 6 Party Status and CPCSL

Over the past two years FELLS worked closely with other local opposition groups, namely, ABlot (Old Hutton), STOP (Gatebeck) and Landscape First (Hutton Roof) and also Friends of the Lake District. When the Armistead application went to Public Inquiry we had a joint meeting and, on the advice of a member of CPRE from Devon, agreed to form a joint Consortium to fight the Inquiry. That opened the way for us to request from the Planning Inspectorate what is called Rule 6 Party status.

Rob McQuarrie (Gatebeck) became Chairman and we named it the Countryside Protection Consortium of South Lakes, or CPCSL. We were delighted that Sir Christopher Audland, one of the founders of FELLS, agreed to be our Patron. We applied and were granted Rule 6 status. This gave us a much stronger position in the Inquiry. In effect we had the same status as the SLDC and the developers and could cross-question their witnesses, have formal legal representation and (importantly) were entitled to receive all the evidence of the other parties a month before the Inquiry thus giving us some advanced idea of the lines they were going to take. Of course they also got our evidence as well.

This arrangement worked well and we were able to raise sufficient funds to hire Geoffrey Sinclair as Lay Advocate and landscape expert and to have prepared some dynamic photomontages. When projected these show the turbines actually rotating. CPCSL will continue for the upcoming Sillfield Public Inquiry.

We owe much to the great support from many local people and to some more eminent Cumbrians such as Lord Chorley, Lord Inglwood and Lord Reay all of whom gave evidence.

A Spate of Public Inquiries

It seems that Cumbria is to face at least six Public Inquiries in 2009. Two have already taken place, dates are fixed for two more and the others are still to be given a time slot. The **Hellrigg** wind farm (4 turbines of 125 metres) near Silloth on the north west coast was concluded in February. It took place in The Wave Centre, Maryport and lasted four days. Despite being very close to the west coast AONB the Inspector granted the appeal. This means there will be 65 turbines within 5 mile of Silloth—not counting the 60 out at sea at Robin Rigg.

Armistead and **Sillfield** are covered elsewhere in this newsletter. The results of the former is awaited while the latter is due to start on October 13th in Kendal Town Hall Council chamber. Please try to come.

The other three are all in the Penrith area. **Grise wind farm**, alongside Skelton Radio Station on the M6, is for 9 turbines. This communications centre may be connected with the UK's defence system and it there may be unacceptable radio interference. FELLS submitted a detailed objection and are registered as a Rule 6 Party to give evidence. **Newlands Farm (Cumwhinton)** south of Carlisle is some 500 metres east of the M6 and is for 3 X 125 metre turbines. Contrary to expectation, this is a remarkably rural and undulating area and the proposal faced fierce resistance. Carlisle City Councillors turned it down even though their Planning Officer recommended approval. An appeal was lodged to be determined by exchange of documents but this caused so much protest that there is now to be a Public Inquiry starting on October 20th in the Civic Centre, Rickergate, Carlisle at 10am. FELLS objected on the grounds that most houses in Cumwhinton (some 300) were within 1 km of the site and down wind of the turbines.

The final Public Inquiry, **Berrier Hill**, under the flanks of Blencathra, is truly outrageous and comes from West Coast Energy who were behind the Whinash scheme. It starts on September 8th in Penrith. It is for 9 turbines 125 metres high. This is being fought vigorously by Friends of the Lake District, the National Park Authority and the various councils involved. FELLS submitted a detailed objection which has been included as an appendix in the Berrier Wind Farm Opposition Group evidence. We will give evidence if requested to do so by the local group.

The only good news is that **Lamonby** wind farm (E-ON) for 5 turbine and which might have gone to a Public Inquiry has been withdrawn.

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FELLS is not anti-wind power but believes that every application has to be assessed on its financial, landscape and amenity costs.

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PLEASE TRY TO SUPPORT OUR SUMMER EVENTS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR UPCOMING PUBLIC INQUIRIES

**Open Garden
Whittington Hall,**

Whittington nr. Kirkby Lonsdale
**Sunday 2nd August
2 – 5pm.**

Stunning private garden of Lord and Lady Reay
Not usually open so mark your diaries.
£3 per adult. Children free. Includes tea
Stalls and free parking

Music for a Summer Evening—Rigmaden Park

Mansergh, Nr Kirkby Lonsdale, LA6 2ET
By kind permission of Mr & Mrs William Wilson

Tuesday August 18th 2009 at 6pm for wine reception

Music & entertainment with

Soprano Margaret Pattinson and Friends at 7.30pm

Enjoy your own picnic on the Lawn and one of the finest views in the Lune Valley

£10 per ticket, accompanied children free

RSVP: Mrs Anne Fitzherbert, Hutton Manor, Old Hutton, Cumbria, LA8 0NH

FELLS and the Politics Show

The BBC Politics Show in the North West which went out on Sunday June 21st was devoted to The Energy Coast. A panel of 13 people were assembled in The Wave Centre, Maryport, the previous Friday and a one hours discussion took place, cut to 20 minutes for the actual programme. Inevitably, the focus was on the three proposed nuclear sites in Cumbria with the emphasis on Kirksanton. However, wind was also discussed and Mike Hall for FELLS was able to point out that the County is under siege from wind farm companies. Most others panellists, including members of all political parties, agreed that Cumbria had more or less reached saturation point for onshore wind — with the one exception of the Green Party! No surprises there. Sadly the discussion on the poor record on CO2 savings by wind was edited out but was still in the on-line version.

FELLS AGM 2009

This will take place at 7pm on Wednesday August 19th in Endmoor Village Hall. The AGM is later than usual because of the pressures on the FELLS committee due to the Public Inquiries. We anticipate some committee changes this year including the departure, after 10 years, of our President Professor Joe Shennan. The meeting will, amongst other things, also discuss the future of FELLS in light of the intense wind farm activity in the County and will include an update on the current situation from Mike Hall. Please try to come along and give us your views. Light refreshments afterwards.

**We always welcome feedback/enquiries from members by post or E-mail.
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