

Planning Inspectorate Appeal Decision:
ref APP/Y2810/A/10/2125093 of 20/9/10

Harrington Windfarm rejected: a disgrace.

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The Appeal Inspector's ² only reason for rejecting the 7-turbine windfarm was that, in her opinion, *'the harm to the setting and interrelationships between components of the Thor missile site...outweigh the environmental benefit of the proposal'*³. She acknowledged that no physical harm would occur to any silo or related remains; the objection was only her subjective impression of the visual impact of some, but not all, of the turbines.

The report ignores evidence given at and to the Inquiry⁴ that the heritage value is the *closure and disarmament of the Thor nuclear-missile site*, not its operation. Therefore having a peaceful and sustainable activity on and near the site that fulfills a national need, yet allows the actual silos and other remains to remain and be preserved, is a commendable example of *turning swords into ploughshares*. Moreover, whatever the heritage value of such silos and nuclear warfare, the wider surroundings do not relate in any way to that heritage. The site was a highly fortified military base for the nuclear attack of the former USSR; itself targeted by enemy nuclear missiles. The fortifications, other defences and the working infrastructure have long since gone, with the present agricultural setting unrelated to such a past.

It is a disgrace that a personal impression of the surroundings, the 'setting', should be the only reason for dismissing the windfarm, which the report recognises is a national need. The present setting is nothing like that when the missile base was in operation; to pretend that the present setting helps understand such history is a gross misconception.

In her report, the Inspector acknowledges that the site is not a scheduled heritage site and that it is on private agricultural land. She confirms that the 1950's missile-site protection-fence has been removed entirely and that only remains of the U.S. underground silos and above surface components are visible. Likewise, there are only remains of the previously linked RAF runways of former RAF Harrington. In effect, she concludes with significant detail that most of the immediate setting of the missile site has been removed and transformed to agricultural land.

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² available at

<http://www.pcs.planningportal.gov.uk/pcsportal/fscdav/READONLY?OBJ=COO.2036.300.12.2347551&NAME=/2125093%20Decision.pdf>

³ Para 45, conclusion.

⁴ proof of evidence ref 51

The Inspector summarises clearly the imperatives of Government and EU legislation⁵ for increased renewable energy to mitigate climate change arising from conventional power generation. She acknowledges that the District Council has no specific policies on renewable energy, which increases the government imperatives⁶. She recognises that the windfarm application is for 25 years only,

In considering the many other objections raised by the local anti-wind group⁷, the Inspector dismisses them all as: (i) having no effect on the 10 identified listed buildings within 5 km, nor the 10 historic parks within 15 km, nor local churches; (ii) having no cumulative effect with other windfarms⁸; (iii) not being a danger relating to footpaths, pipelines or highways⁹; (iv) not being a noise or vibration annoyance¹⁰; (v) not causing disruptive shadow flicker¹¹; (vi) not harming populations of birds or bats, and not having unwarranted ecological impact¹².

⁵ Paras 5,6,7 & 8.

⁶ Para 9

⁷ 'Say no to Harrington wind farm action group', www.saynotoharrington.com/

⁸ Para 30

⁹ Pars 31, 32, 33

¹⁰ Paras 34-37

¹¹ Paras 38, 39

¹² Paras 40-42