



WESSEX REGION, BATTLEFIELDS TRUST

J Humphrys
Secretary
Battlefields Trust
Wessex Region

Date: 24 October 2013

Ref: 53/13/00020 Application for the erection of a wind turbine, measuring 50m to hub with a rotor radius of 27m, with ancillary equipment at Westonzoyland.

Rebecca Miller
Planning Officer
Sedgemoor District Council
Bridgwater House
King Square
Bridgwater
TA6 3AR

Dear Ms Miller

I am writing to you in my capacity as secretary of the Wessex Region of the Battlefields Trust, the national charity (Registered No 1017387, www.battlefieldstrust.com) dedicated to the preservation, interpretation and presentation of battlefields as heritage and educational resources. The Battlefields Trust wishes to lodge a formal objection to the above application which would have a severely adverse impact on the setting of this nationally important and extremely evocative battlefield.

Fought on 6th July 1685, the battle of Sedgemoor saw the decisive defeat of the Duke of Monmouth's rebel army by forces loyal to King James II. Monmouth was captured shortly after the battle and later executed. Evidence of the national importance of the battlefield of Sedgemoor can be seen in the fact that it is one of only 46 English battlefields to be registered by English Heritage and one of only two in the county of Somerset. It has added importance in the fact that it was the last major battle to be fought on English soil, in which over a thousand people lost their lives, and was a crucial stage in the career of one of Britain's greatest generals – John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough.

Furthermore the battle and battlefield are understood in great detail and it is possible to visit the site and to gain an exceptionally good idea of the terrain and the course of the action on the 6th July 1685. Considerable work has been done locally on the preservation and interpretation of the site with a battlefield trail, a series of excellent information panels and an information centre in Westonzoyland Church, Visitors to the battlefield bring income both to the church and to the nearby Sedgemoor Inn.

The Trust feels that such an important battlefield should be treated as a national heritage asset to be nurtured and treasured. It should be incumbent on the applicants to demonstrate that they understand the historical importance of the site, that development will not prejudice the setting of the battlefield, its appreciation and interpretation, will not damage its heritage or educational value or any unknown archaeology, and will still allow for proper respect for those who died in the battle.

It is the Trust's belief that a 50m wind turbine will become a dominant feature in the low-lying land of Sedgemoor and siting such a turbine in a field immediately adjacent to the registered battlefield will cause significant harm to the latter's relatively unchanged setting and have a negative effect upon the value of this beautiful site as an important educational and recreational resource. The Trust is anxious to see battlefield heritage preserved and promoted by the attraction of visitors to sites such as the battlefield at Sedgemoor and welcomes the efforts made locally to do this. The current proposal, however, may damage the tourist potential of the battlefield and of the village more generally. The Trust notes that there is no comparative analysis in the application of the relative economic merits of a major tourist (and heritage) asset as against a wind turbine. Finally the Trust notes that the application has elicited no support whatsoever from local residents and from those whose livelihoods depends on local culture and heritage.

Yours sincerely

Julian Humphrys

Secretary of the Battlefields Trust Wessex Region.