

## MIDDLEMOOR WINDFARM PUBLIC INQUIRY

### PROOF OF EVIDENCE

To be submitted by Robert J F Thorp

1. My name is Robert Thorp and I live at Charlton Hall. I am a past member of the R.I.C.S and C.A.A.V and manage a small farm and a four holiday cottages. I am the elected member of Alnwick District Council for Embleton and Newton by the Sea and I am on the National Trust management committee for the Farne Islands.
2. I have consulted widely with residents in the Parishes and therefore feel able to convey what are the views of the great majority of people that would be affected by this proposal.
3. The initial reaction was sheer disbelief that anyone would contemplate building the biggest windfarm in the country, at the narrowest point between the AONB and the National Park-Between Alnwick Castle and Bamburgh Castle- overlooking Holy Island and the Farne Islands and directly inland from Dunstanburgh Castle. And all this in what is now widely acclaimed to be one of the most beautiful and unspoilt parts of the country.
4. Recent accolades for the area include:-  
'Poll names rail route as UK's finest'.  
Durham to Berwick route was voted Britain's finest in Country Life magazine.  
Historian Sir Roy Strong said:  
"It is a lost and romantic part of Britain, especially the country, with its mixture of tamed and wild and all the ruins that were once fought over".  
"The emptiness of it all fills me with wonder so much I want to pull the cord and step off".  
(Journal May 26 2005)  
  
Dunstanburgh voted 5<sup>th</sup> most popular stretch of the coastline in the country :  
National Trust Poll. Lindersfarn also in top ten.  
(Journal Nov 3 2005)  
  
Alnwick Castle 'the Windsor of the north', voted the country's number one visitor site 'not to be missed'.  
  
Bamburgh Castle recently voted second most famous site in country.  
  
"Northumberland the most tranquil place" in CPRE surveys.
5. At 17.2.9 the writer of EIS says 'whilst small numbers of local residents may have reservations about the proposed development' I would suggest that everybody has very grave reservations and even the few who were ambivalent were staggered at the height of these turbines when we flew a balloon at 125

metres. It is felt that these turbines are not only far too big to be absorbed by the landscape but they will totally dominate the daily life and residential amenity of all those living near by.

6. I enclose a comment from an estate agent with regards to value of houses in the area. As this reflects the harm to local amenity.
7. Throughout the EIS the effect on local residents is minimised by suggesting that houses are much screened by trees and that views of the windfarm are only at oblique angles, for instance; Charlton Mires farm house is said to have no meaningful line of site when in fact it is looking straight at the wind farm. East Link Hall is the same.
8. Charlton Hall as with many other houses in the area is enjoyed from the garden and from its setting in general- the great majority of trees in the area are deciduous giving no screening for six months of the year. Trees are sometimes rotational in nature or subject to other non-permanent circumstance. For instance conifer trees in-front of Preston Mains farm house have recently been felled giving a clear view of the wind farm site.
9. Road safety is a subject of concern and the EIS statistics are minimal. The inspector should have more long term details including the death of six people in 1993 and three more in May 2000. At 200 yards north of Charlton Mires directly in site of the proposed turbines.
10. With regard to tourism my own experience of mentioning it to our guests is there reaction of saying "good God surely not here!".
11. Personally I would feel it a tragedy not to be able to stand at Dunstanburgh Castle or on the Farne Islands and feel the sense of history as one gazed inland at Cheviot and the surrounding unspoilt landscape.