

PRESS RELEASE

COURT ORDER STOPS NOISY WIND TURBINE

Residents living nearby give evidence in court of sleep deprivation, stress and anxiety

A giant wind turbine in Mullavilly, County Armagh - which operated 24/7 - is now in use during working hours only, following a Court Order served after an appeal against a Noise Abatement Notice was dismissed. An out of Court settlement was agreed between village based company Rapid International and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council.

The Noise Abatement Notice - dating back to October 2014 - was issued after residents living close by complained that the turbine was creating what they termed "unacceptable noise ". With noise measurements conducted over

The Council and Rapid International agreed that the turbine should operate from 8am - 5pm only and, in addition, should be stopped during Bank and Public Holidays, five working days at Easter, a fortnight during the traditional July summer holiday and over Christmas and the New Year.

Neither the residents nor the Company are happy with this outcome. Residents have had to listen to this noise for over five years night and day which caused sleep deprivation, stress, anxiety and forced residents to move away to sleep so that they could focus on their jobs. They have been unable to enjoy family meals, socialise with friends and family, and at times cannot open windows comfortably during the day. Rapid International say they made the agreement in order to draw a line under the issue -"we have more than complied, with the turbine now operating from 8.30am - 4.30pm during working days".

A spokesperson for the residents said, "During the day, an increasing number of retired residents are at home. The noise disturbs them to the extent that they cannot enjoy relaxing in their gardens or working outside around their houses. The continuous, insistent, intrusive noise pollution remains a problem."

All the residents agree, "This is the first time a local Council in the United Kingdom has used noise legislation to support residents in a situation like this and the residents are very grateful for this support."

Another resident said "There are also Health and Safety issues as the Councils Environmental Health Officer has told us that the tips of the rotating blades can move at speeds up to 100 mph. In a well publicised case in County Tyrone a turbine mast bent double, fell apart and blades were found embedded in the ground 550 metres away"

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The closest residents stated “We support renewable energy but not in the wrong place. Living 180 metres- the length of two football pitches - away from a turbine higher than the Titanic it is the wrong place. Planning permission was granted in 2011 but it is now accepted, with experience, that this was an ill informed and therefore mistaken decision.”

Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Council is unlikely to pursue the matter any further, and issued the following statement –

“ This was a significant and complex case with the Council undertaking a detailed investigation over several years of the noise problems and as a result serving a Noise Abatement Notice on the turbine owner. These investigations included noise measurements in residents bedrooms at 3 am at night.”

The Council statement continued “These Notices were appealed to the local Magistrate’s Court, with an order from the Magistrate allowing noise emissions from the turbine during working hours only from Mondays through to Fridays.”

End.

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