

**Isle of Wight Economic Partnership**

Innovation Centre St Cross Business Park  
Monks Brook Newport Isle of Wight PO30 5WB

tel +44 (0)1983 550300

fax +44 (0)1983 550550

www.iwep.com



Mr A Pegram  
Directorate of Development  
Isle of Wight Council  
Seaclose  
Fairlee Road  
Newport  
Isle of Wight  
PO30 2QS

Dear Mr Pegram,

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A WIND FARM AT WELLOW  
REF TCP/27774, P/01400/06**

The Isle of Wight Economic Partnership wishes to express its full support for this planning application. We feel that the proposed wind farm will be an essential component in establishing the Island as a centre of excellence for wind energy and the composites industry. Conversely, to refuse the application will send totally the wrong impression to a vital part of the Island's economy and will potentially put thousands of well paid jobs at risk.

At this point, it might be worth recalling the recent history of the wind and composites industry on the Island. In 1999, the then Aerolaminates were attracted to the Island to set up a manufacturing plant. This was in competition with Denmark, the parent company's home. Since arriving they have grown to being one of the Island's principle employers - they currently employ over 500 people - and they occupy 2 significant sites in Newport and East Cowes. They have a reputation of being a good employer who pays well - £21,000 p.a. is typical for a shop floor worker, have good working conditions and support their staff with extensive training. In recent years they have been important to the Island's economy in that their expansion has mirrored a contraction in the workforce in one of the Island's other principle manufacturing employers, GKN Aerospace. When one also considers their large number of local suppliers - from Gurit (SP Systems) to sandwich providers - it is easy to see what an important part of the Island's economy they have become.

During their time on the Island they have gone through a change of ownership - they are now Vestas Blades - but the reputation of the skill and quality of the Island's operation has meant that the change has had no negative effects. However, it does mean that any decisions on the company's future and potential investment are still made in the company's HQ in Denmark. It is against this background that the importance of supporting the wind farm must be assessed. The Island's apparent rejection of wind




energy – if the application is refused – will weigh heavily to the Island's disadvantage when any future investment decisions are being made. Why should the company further its investment into the Island's economy when the Island is not prepared to house the very products the company is making?

It would seem to the Isle of Wight Economic Partnership that consideration of the potential impact to the Island's economy is an important component in this decision. All too often, it appears that the argument is centred on the value of alternate energy with its associated effect on climate change vs. the visual impact the wind farm makes on the landscape. To our minds the potential impact on the Island's economy deserves equal weighting with these issues and must be a significant factor in any decision.

In light of the above, we call upon the planning committee to give its full support to the planning application and help cement the position of the Island being an international centre of excellence for wind energy.

Yours sincerely



**Mike King**  
Managing Director, The Isle of Wight Economic Partnership