

Kirklees Local Plan Examination

Stage 4 – Matter 27 – Cooper Bridge (E1832c)

Response to the Inspectors request for the Council to consider implications of using different focal length lenses in landscape visualisations

12 April 2018

1. Introduction

Purpose of the note

- 1.1 During the Stage 4 Matter 27 (strategic employment sites) examination hearings the Inspector was requested to consider new evidence presented in relation to the use of a 50mm focal length camera lens against a 75mm focal length camera lens and their appropriateness when used for landscape visualisations at Cooper Bridge (Site E1832c). Alternative guidance was brought before the Inspector suggesting that the use of a 75mm lens would provide a more accurate representation of the likely impact the proposed development would have on the landscape. The evidence was derived from guidance produced by Alan Macdonald RIBA who undertook a review of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) 2014 guidance on the visual representation of wind farms, and guidance produced by Leeds City Council for large scale infrastructure projects.
- 1.2 Since the submission of this evidence the Inspector has requested the Council consider each of the submitted documents (see summary Table 1 below) and provide a written response to each setting out the Council's view on any implications arising in relation to the Cooper Bridge (site E1832c) visualisation work. Table 1 below lists each of the documents and provides a summary of the implications on the Cooper Bridge visualisation work and the Council's view on these implications.

Context

- 1.3 TGP Architects were appointed by the site promoter to undertake the visualisations for the proposed Cooper Bridge scheme (site E1832c). In undertaking this exercise the methodology adopted by TGP Architects was based on the following best practice guidance:
 - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Third Edition 2013, as published by the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment and Landscape Institute

- LI Advice Note 01/2011, Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment, Landscape Institute

1.4 This guidance recommends the use of a 50mm focal length lens when producing Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessments. A detailed explanation of the methodology applied for the Cooper Bridge visualisations is set out in document SS4 - E1832c – Cooper Bridge Employment Allocation: Cooper Bridge – Heritage Overview Report Strategic Employment Site, Appendix 3, pages 5-7. It should be noted this approach is consistent with Kirklees Council's current visualisation requirements.

Table 1: Kirklees Council response to submitted evidence

Title of document	Implications	Council's view
<p>Review of the SNH Visual Representation of Wind Farms 2014 and where we are today. (Alan Macdonald RIBA)</p>	<p>Review is specific about SNH guidance which is specifically relating to windfarms and is applied to Scotland. It should be noted this is not national policy.</p> <p>The Council does not currently see any implications on the visualisations submitted in support of site E1832c at the Local Plan stage due to the indicative nature of the submission. The use of a 75mm focal length lens does not sufficiently illustrate an entire development plus its context at close viewpoints.</p>	<p>The Landscape Institute's guidance on photography and photomontage in LVIA (LI Advice Note 01/11, https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/PDF/Contribute/LIPhotographyAdviceNote01-11.pdf) is what should be referred to as it is the Landscape Institute's current guidance, applies to all types of development across the UK – not just wind farms. It recommends following the guidance in SNH 2006 and the use of 50mm focal length lenses.</p> <p>The Landscape Institute advice note on photography and photomontage LVIA is currently being updated. This will therefore be recognised as the technical guidance to conform to once adopted, however the Council may require both 50mm and 75mm images for a full LVIA at detailed design stage in the future.</p>
<p>Guidance for Visualisations for large scale infrastructure projects including renewable energy development proposals (Leeds City Council)</p>	<p>Potentially both 50mm and 75mm photomontages could have been submitted but the approach is neither council nor national policy. The implication of presenting visuals derived from 75mm focal length lenses is that – because the camera is doing a 1.5 x enlargement – you lose some field of view so need to stitch more frames</p>	<p>The Council notes this is not national guidance, however it is potentially useful to consider at the detailed planning application stage the incorporation of both 50mm and 75mm images for the visual impact assessment. For the purposes of the Local Plan evidence and to demonstrate the likely impact based on indicative design and layout, then the 50mm is acceptable on the basis it provides the viewer the context of the entire development.</p>

	<p>together to create the same field of view when compared to the 50mm focal length lens.</p> <p>Due to the indicative nature of the design at this stage the Council would not have expected both to be submitted as the implications are minimal until the detailed design stage where a closer image – achieved from the 75mm focal length lens – would be beneficial to appreciate the implications on more immediate surrounding features.</p> <p>The document as submitted meets the best practice guidance as outlined in the TGP Architects methodology (pages 5-7) which also meets Kirklees Council requirements.</p>	
Alan Macdonald resume	Not applicable. Note indicates the need to refer to the wind farm visualisation document.	Refer to council comments above.

2 Conclusion

- 2.1 Having taken the three documents into account the Council are satisfied that the visualisations submitted for site E1832c are compliant with nationally recognised guidelines by the Landscape Institute and SNH and are wholly appropriate for the indicative layout. In reality both the 50mm and 75mm focal length lenses have merits for the use of visualisations. However, single frames using a 75mm focal length lens are not sufficient to illustrate an entire development plus its context at close viewpoints – the key impact to be assessed at this time. Single frames using a 50mm focal length lens are often not sufficient either, hence the use of panoramas (several frames stitched together) in LVIA to give the broader context. This is what has been presented in TGP Architects visualisation work for site E1832c.

- 2.2 Going forward in the detailed design for the Cooper Bridge Development both 50mm and 75mm images for landscape assessment and images for visual impact assessment may need to be provided in the correct and most appropriate format.