

Ford turbine plan looks set to be approved

PLANS for a wind turbine in Northumberland countryside look set to be approved, despite widespread opposition.

A planning application for the turbine at Ford, near Berwick, goes before Northumberland County Council next week with a recommendation that it be approved.

The application is for a 47-metre turbine at Brackside Farm, owned by John Barber of R and J Barber Farms Ltd, and submitted by agent Richard Garland of George F White.

The site is 4km west of Lowick and 4km east of Etal, 240m from the nearest farm building and said to be within an "intermediate" area of landscape value.

The application has sparked objection from local residents, with 31 letters opposing the scheme submitted to the county council.

Objectors cite potential for adverse visual impact on the surrounding special rural landscape and surrounding public rights of way.

Concerns have been voiced over an adverse effect on the historic setting of grade two-listed building Barmoor Castle, noise implications for surrounding residential properties, impact on bats and birds, and potential for television and telecommunications interference.

Ord Parish Council has also voiced its opposition, citing impact on local businesses, while general concerns over turbines have been expressed by Northumberland Wildlife Trust.

Five letters of support have been received, citing the environmental benefits of the scheme, claiming the turbine would not detract from the rural landscape and that the site could accommodate taller and additional turbines.

The county council's North area planning committee is being recommended to approve the application when it meets at Alnwick council chamber on Clayport Street next Thursday at 6pm.

Couple in court over baby death

A COUPLE appeared in court yesterday for the first time in connection with the death of a baby boy more than a year ago.

Richard Morgan, 32, of Owen Terrace, Tantobie, Stanley, County Durham, appeared before magistrates in Consett charged with the unlawful killing by manslaughter of Slater Sharkey, aged 13 months.

Slater's mother, Rachel Peacock, 30, also of Owen Terrace, appeared alongside Morgan charged with neglect and allowing his death.

Slater was unconscious when he was taken to the University Hospital of North Durham, at about 5.30pm on December 11, last year. He died in hospital.

Neither of the accused entered a plea but solicitors representing the pair indicated that they would be pleading not guilty.

Magistrates declined jurisdiction and both Morgan and Peacock were granted bail to appear before Newcastle Crown Court on January 6.



PLAYING SANTA Shaz Qazi, far left, and daughter Llana Qazi who is waiting for a heart transplant, meet Nadine and Ivan and their son Sebastian

Christmas giving just keeps going

Fundraisers deliver toys to children's unit

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A FUNDRAISING couple played Father Christmas to ill youngsters yesterday when they delivered a stack of toys to the hospital which saved their son's life.

Ivan and Nadine Hollingsworth won thousands of pounds worth of toys on ITV's Text Santa after being singled out for a special surprise on the Christmas Eve show by North favourites Ant and Dec.

They believed they just had free tickets to sit in the audience - but Ant and Dec plucked them out of their seats in front of millions of viewers to reveal how they have raised more than £170,000 for the Children's Heart Unit Fund (CHUF) at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital, where medics saved their son Sebastian.

Sebastian was born in January 2009 with the complex heart condition Tetralogy of Fallot, and had life-saving surgery when he was just 16 weeks old.

To show their gratitude, the couple have since devoted their energies to rais-

ing funds through a series of events, including a coast-to-coast challenge which saw Ivan run back to Tyneside from Cumbria in five days.

After playing several games on the TV show - and embarrassing Ivan with a picture of him skiing in a Mankini - the cameras switched to their home in Whitley Bay, North Tyneside, to reveal a sleigh in the middle of their dining room, piled high with toys for the children's heart unit.

Ivan, 35, and Nadine, 34, also won a trip to Disneyland and a mini sports car for Sebastian.

Yesterday, together with two-year-old Sebastian, they delivered the gifts to the heart unit, based at Ward 23, including a pile of soft toys to seven-month-old Llana Qazi, of North Shields, North Tyneside.

Llana has been in hospital for several months awaiting a heart transplant, and she loved her Mickey and Minnie Mouse toys.

Other gifts included 50 Ice watches, Trunki children's cases, DVDs and portable players, books, board games, music CDs, computer games, Thomas the Tank Engine and Doctor Who goodies, and Lego.

Ivan and Nadine loved delivering the presents but were even more pleased that their charity work and CHUF reached a national audience by appearing on Text Santa.

Ivan said: "We were very nervous but excited too. We didn't think we deserved to be singled out ... we just do what we do to help and that's that. So winning all the prizes was amazing."

"And we were so surprised by all the calls and text messages from people who saw it too."

"We've come away saying that being on Text Santa is just the start of something."



SURROUNDED Nadine and Ivan Hollingsworth with Sebastian

We are trying to put CHUF on the map and engage with everyone in the region, but now we've reached a wider audience and want people to adopt the Freeman in the same way people have adopted Great Ormond Street hospital.

"This is a world-leading unit run by a small charity, so this is an opportunity."

Nadine, a business manager, said: "I don't think any of it sunk in until much later."

"When they showed the inside of our house on live TV, all I could think was I

haven't done any housework, I didn't even make the bed!"

"I sat down with the producers after the show finished and they showed me the list of toys, and I was gobsmacked."

"Lots has already been donated to the unit, but to get such a vast number of toys at Christmas is going to make a huge difference."

For more information about Ivan and Nadine's fundraising work, visit seb4chuf.co.uk or read Ivan's new blog at seb4chuf.wordpress.com

“Winning all the prizes was amazing. And we were surprised by all the calls from people who saw it too