

Fears raised over traffic's impact



TOO NARROW Cllr Mary Evans, Margaret Godwin, Cllr Alaric Pugh, Keith Haisman (parish council chair), Cllr Leslie Warmington, and Sarah Pugh hold a 5m wide piece of ribbon across Well Lane to show how much room would be left should a 5m wide wind turbine engine be taken through Clare.

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Plans to put up a wind turbine near Clare could be scuppered by objections to the size and weight of the construction vehicles that would be involved.

The erection of the turbine in Chilton Street was approved by St Edmundsbury Council last May but its future is now in jeopardy after the developer's traffic management plan (TMP) showed the impact it would have on the roads.

The plan shows that the 'anticipated vehicle movement schedule' could result in almost 900 vehicular movements during the construction period.

Most worryingly for Clare Town Council (CTC) and Cllr Mary Evans, county councillor for Clare, who have submitted their objections,

are the 18 oversized and overweight loads that would come from Sturmer and pass over the bridge in Baythorne End before going through Clare to the site.

Cllr Evans, who is also Suffolk County Council's assistant cabinet member for roads and transport, said: "At this stage highways have said to the developers the travel plan is not acceptable.

"The developers will see how they can amend it.

"The axle weights for some of the vehicles are too heavy for Baythorne Bridge.

"The weight limit for the bridge (an 18th century listed structure) is 12 to 14 tonnes and one of the vehicles has an axle weight of 17 tonnes.

"I still think the town council is right to get a full dossier of evidence because this is a really serious issue for Clare and I think the views of the people need to be heard."

The TMP is currently under public consultation

and CTC's planning committee has compiled a long list of objections to it.

CTC chairman, Keith Haisman, said: "This is our chance to make a noise and maybe not get approval of that traffic management plan which will stop that thing (the turbine) dead."

Among the concerns are the potential impact of the traffic on the 150 listed buildings along the route through Stoke by Clare and Clare and the disruption to businesses in the town.

Concerns include the potential damage to buildings in Well Lane, Clare, where many have cellars going underneath the narrow pavements and where the narrowest point is 5.2 metres wide. The engine for the turbine alone, said Mr Haisman, is 5 metres wide.

He added: "What you do with the 150 or so cars that are parked on the side of the roads in Clare at any one time, God only knows."