

Consultations to start on windfarm proposal

A PUBLIC meeting to discuss plans to build 11 125-metre tall wind turbines near Swinford is being held in the village.

Renewable energy firm Nuon UK has applied for permission to build the farm on pasture land near the medieval village of Starmore between Swinford and South Kilworth.

The proposals were officially lodged on April 9 and Harborough District Council is holding a 13-week public consultation into the plans.

An action group has been formed by Swinford resident Dawn Money and on Wednesday next week, from 7.30pm, the

group is holding an open meeting at Swinford Village Hall for anyone affected by the proposals, including people in other nearby villages, to attend.

Speaker Mike Barnard, who has opposed wind farms in other parts of the country, will be giving a talk.

Kathy Ratcliffe, another group member, said: "A meeting was held at The Chequers pub in Swinford earlier this week and was attended by more than 30 people.

By Michael Whelan

"Each turbine will have a footprint larger than the average sized house.

"Harborough District Council has identified 1,900 properties to be notified of the application, thereby implying they will be potentially affected, and these are in Swinford, Shawell, Stanford, the Kilworths and some areas of Lutterworth."

Nuon last year built a temporary mast near the centre of the proposed site to gather wind speed information.

The firm also held a public consultation session in the village to give residents the opportunity to have their say about the plans.

Rob Fellows, Nuon

spokesman, said the company had revised its original plans and reduced the number of proposed turbines from 18 to 11.

He added: "Wind turbines have been re-sited to move them away from the edges of the proposed site.

"We have also increased the separation distances between the turbines and houses."

Mr Fellows said the site had the potential for more turbines, but the firm had listened to concerns from villagers.

A website giving a neutral perspective on the proposals has been set up by district councillor John Everett and can be found at www.mistertonwindfarm.info