



Left: Neil Stevenson of Latimer Hinks. Right: John Littlefair.

the answer is blowing in the wind

A farmer who created a mini-windfarm with help and expertise from solicitors Latimer Hinks is so pleased with the result he is considering adding more wind turbines on his land.

John Littlefair, of Home Hill, Hart Village, near Hartlepool, had the 100m tall turbine and a base station erected on arable land at his farm three years ago. It is one of three turbines in the immediate area, with two on neighbouring farms.

Each of the structures, which are owned and run by energy company Eon, is taller than Nelson's Column and between them they produce enough electricity to power 7,500 homes through the national grid.

Mr Littlefair admitted he was apprehensive about the project at first, but he is now convinced it was the right decision.

He said: "Initially, I wasn't very keen on the idea, but I was offered a very nice package and decided to go for it both from an environmental and financial perspective.

"The main thing is whether you like them or not and it is very much a commercial decision. There is a lot of upheaval at first but there are monetary gains to be made. At the end of the day you've got to be prepared for that upheaval and criticism from others."

Mr Littlefair said he had been approached to add more wind turbines on his land and discussions were ongoing.

He added: "As a landowner I've got no problem with it at all - it fits in quite nicely with our cropping and the farming enterprise, and the yield per acre is very nice.

"In 25 years time, when the contract runs out, it can be taken away and you've just got a normal arable field. No-one will know it has been there."

Neil Stevenson, of solicitors Latimer Hinks, helped Mr Littlefair with the legal process involved in the deal. He said: "Windfarms are going to play a vital role in meeting our future energy needs. This is an exciting, dynamic and fast-moving industry, and the terms being offered are improving all the time.

"Our role was to make sure that a very complex arrangement could be documented and made to work in practice and to ensure that the landowner's interests were fully protected.

"My advice to anyone who is considering installing wind turbines would be to seek good professional advice and be patient, because these things do take time to come to fruition and you need to take a long-term view."

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