

Western Morning News

VILLAGERS DENIED TURBINES EXPERT

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Angry villagers have been told they will not be allowed to have a technical expert representing them at an upcoming meeting about controversial plans to build three 100-metre high wind turbines. Residents from Goveton, in the South Hams, say the situation is "unsatisfactory".

They had hoped an expert from the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) could attend the meeting on November 25 to give a short presentation.

Representatives from Npower will be discussing their plans for the giant turbines - earmarked for land near Goveton - at the meeting but residents say they will now not have an expert to quiz officials from the power group.

They fear they will not have an opportunity to quiz officials about the proposals, which they claim will be a blight on the landscape.

Resident Martin Ranwell said: "We seem to have reached a totally unsatisfactory situation.

"I'm very concerned that people will Npower and South Hams District Council.

"It seems to me that local democracy is under threat.

"But we will still have a technical expert at the meeting."

Dave Mitchell, from South Hams Opposed to Unsightly Turbines (SHOUT) said that residents were "very unhappy" that they would not be represented by an expert at the meeting.

Ernest Fleck, chairman of Buckland-tout-Saints Parish council, confirmed the meeting would solely be for parishioners.

He said it was just for residents of Buckland-tout-Saints, East Allington and Woodleigh, and added that no outside experts would be allowed to speak.

He said that because of the strength of feeling among residents, it may be necessary to have another more widescale meeting.

He said: "We're concerned about numbers attending the meeting.

"We want to really make it a parishioners meeting so we can get a feeling from them.

"If we have formal presentations from one side arguing the principles and justifications then we would need the counter argument and it could become a very technical meeting.

"If it becomes necessary, we may have to consider a bigger more widespread meeting.

"But we always set out for this meeting to be so we could get the local views and

impact on parishioners."

Tomorrow, Western Morning News readers in the South Hams area will be given the opportunity to sign a special petition in the newspaper against wind turbines near Goveton.

Our petition, which will be launched together with a full colour protest poster, gives residents the chance to make their objections known about the proposals.

The initial results of the petition will be presented at the meeting at East Allington at 7pm on November 25.