

# MP backs campaign to stop wind mast

by MARK HILDITCH

**SOUTH** Cheshire MP Stephen O'Brien has given his backing to rural Nantwich villagers in their fight to save one of Cheshire's most valued landscapes from the threat of a wind power development.

The shadow health minister is an outspoken critic of the government's generous subsidies for land-based wind farms.

He has now pledged his support to the action group Stop Bickerton Wind Turbines in its opposition to a controversial planning application to

erect a wind monitoring mast at the foot of Bickerton Hill.

The action group fears, if permission is given for the mast, it will be followed by a proposal for an industrial wind power station which will destroy one of Cheshire's most popular tourist stops.

The planning application comes before the borough council's Development Control committee on February 7.

Stephen O'Brien said: "I believe that this is not a suitable location for a development of this type.

"The impact on the landscape, environment and residential amenity would be unacceptable, in my view, and I will be giv-

ing the objectors to these proposals my full support.

"I will be studying the proposals in greater detail and discussing the potential impact with all parties.

"Unfortunately, as many other local planning authorities have found, an initial successful application for wind turbines often leads to a flood of similar applications once the precedent is set.

"The amount of electricity produced by wind turbines is not sufficiently significant to meet the UK's renewable energy needs.

"The subsidy under this Government's policy fails to make logical or economic sense.

"The Conservatives are not against wind turbines per se, but we do believe communities must be won over, not walked over."

Chairman of the Bickerton action group Mike Voisey added: "We have been contacted by walkers, horse riders and cyclists from several counties who are appalled that such a very special area is under threat."

The action group is urging supporters to continue writing or emailing objections to the borough council quoting PO7/1432 and to register at [stopbickertonwindturbines.co.uk](http://stopbickertonwindturbines.co.uk)

● **What do you think of the wind mast plan? Have your say at [forum.creweandnantwich.guardian.co.uk](http://forum.creweandnantwich.guardian.co.uk)**