

**DCSW2004/1216/F - ERECTION OF WIND TURBINE ON  
11M HIGH TOWER, MOUNT PLEASANT, GARWAY  
HILL, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR2 8RU****For: Mr M Whitfield, Mount Pleasant, Garway Hill,  
Herefordshire, HR2 8RU****Date Received: 5th April 2004****Ward: Pontrilas****Grid Ref: 44436, 24916****Expiry Date: 31st May 2004**

Local Member: Councillor G.W. Davis

**1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The proposal site is within the meadow area of Mount Pleasant that leads off the western side of the class III road (C1238) that skirts the eastern fringe of Garway Hill. It links the western fringe of Garway Common to the south with the Bagwyllydiart crossroads on the Orcop - Pontrilas Class III road (C1238) to the north.
- 1.2 Mount Pleasant gains access off a partly made up track that also serves Lower Caste further to the west. This track is also a bridleway providing access to Garway Hill Common that is to the west of Mount Pleasant. The summit of Garway Hill Common is 366 metres above sea level (1201 feet), views of the Garway Hill mast, 60 metres to the north-east and on its own ridge at an altitude of 344 metres (1128 feet). It is within the Area of Great Landscape Value.
- 1.3 It is proposed to erect a wind turbine approximately 50 metres to the north-west of Mount Pleasant, and up slope from the applicant's property. The turbine will be 11 metres high to the hub of the rotor. The rotor diameter is 3.5 metres. The top and blades will be black in colour and the slightly tapering tower will be natural grey in colour. There are a line of trees on the northern boundary of the site and strung along the eastern side of the property. Trees have been planted up slope and to the west of the proposed mast. There is hedging on the southern boundary adjacent to the bridleway/unsurfaced track from which access to the site is gained.

**2. Policies****2.1 Planning Policy Guidance**

PPG.22 - Renewable Energy

**2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan**

Policy CTC.2 - Area of Great Landscape Value

Policy CTC.9 - Development Criteria

**2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan**

Policy GD.1 - General Development Criteria

Policy C.8 - Development within Area of Great Landscape Value

Policy C.39A - Renewable Energy

## 2.4 Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)

There are no policies that are considered to raise issues different from Development Plan policies.

## 3. Planning History

- 3.1 SH970328PF Alterations to existing dwelling, - Approved 16.04.97  
demolition of redundant outbuilding and  
erection of extension

## 4. Consultation Summary

### Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 No statutory or non-statutory consultations required.

### Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Head of Engineering and Transportation has no objection to grant of permission.

## 5. Representations

- 5.1 The applicant raises the following main points:

- 2.5kw turbine, tower 150mm diameter steel tube. It will be 11 metres high to the turbine. Blade diameter is 3.5 metres
- chosen site, less visible from neighbouring properties and closer to existing buildings.

- 5.2 Orcop Parish Council comment as follows:

"The Parish Council objects to this development. We have taken into consideration the objections of many local residents who feel an approval for this application could set a precedent for similar applications in an area of great landscape value and outstanding natural beauty."

- 5.3 Garway Parish Council comment as follows:

"The Council does not support this application. The small amount of electricity was deemed out of proportion to the size of the turbine."

- 5.4 Seven letters of objection have been received from:

Mr. B. & Mrs. H. A. Thomas, The Sycamores, Garway Hill, HR2 8RU  
Mr. M. & Mrs. C. Phillips, Sun Farm, Garway Hill, HR2 8EZ  
Mr. D. & Mrs. R. Maskell, Windy Ridge, Garway Hill, HR2 8RQ  
Mr. A. P. & Mrs. C. J. Jones, Cherry Orchards, Garway Hill, HR2 8EZ  
M. Gardiner, Orchard Lea, Orcop, HR2 8SD  
Mr. A. L. & Mrs. G. Smith, The Globe, Garway Hill, HR2 8RQ  
Mr. D. Macrae, The Old Post Office, Garway Hill, HR2 8EZ

The following main points are raised:

- detract from amenity of Area of Great Landscape Value and natural beauty of Common
- could establish a precedent
- does not enhance rural landscape and economy (particularly from tourism), it industrialises it. Many tourists visit area for stunning views
- limited energy output (only 2.5 kilowatts barely sufficient for a three bar electric fire)
- request height of structure and rotor outline is indicated by helium balloons
- could hear turbine
- solar panels may be better sense.

The full text of these letters can be inspected at Southern Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

## **6. Officers Appraisal**

- 6.1 The main issues are considered to be the benefits of the renewable resource provided by wind power, the impact of the mast and the issue of precedent.
- 6.2 Policy C.39A contained in the South Herefordshire District Local Plan establishes three main criteria for proposals for renewable energy, these are that they should not have an adverse impact in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Area of Great Landscape Value, or areas of conservation importance, should not have adverse impact on nearby properties through noise or other pollutants, and that associated infrastructure works and buildings will not have an adverse effect on the landscape or local amenity. These criteria are derived from Government advice contained in PPG.22 'Renewable Energy'. These relate to the land form and characteristics, number and size of machines, design and colour and the existing skyline of the area. Renewable sources of energy are being sought by the Government in order to move towards a target of 10% of electricity from renewable sources by 2011. Therefore, it is considered in relation to the first issue highlighted, whether or not the turbine will contribute significantly is not in itself a reason for withholding planning permission. It is a contribution to achieving a renewable energy resource.
- 6.3 The second issue is the fundamental one and that relates to the impact of the turbine in the landscape. The applicant has sited the turbine such that it can be glimpsed from the south-east from the Class III road (C1238) but the southward view is lost by existing tree screening. The mast could be viewed just to the north-east from the track/bridleway that passes Mount Pleasant, but not at a lower altitude at the Sun Inn and those dwellings along the Class III road (C1238). Views from the north further north along the Class III road (C1238) would also not be possible given the gradient of the field on which the turbine is sited and the fact that established trees around the northern and north-eastern boundaries provide screening now and into the future. Different views are possible from the top of Garway Hill, which is 366 metres high. The turbine will be viewed amongst trees. A line of electricity poles just over 8 metres high are visible crossing land just to the north of Mount Pleasant, indeed one is between the applicant's property and the proposal site.

- 6.4 It is not considered that the turbine will adversely detract from the amenity of the landscape. It is only clearly viewed from the entrance to a property across the valley to the south-east, and tourists climbing Garway Hill Common will see a structure below them with trees around it and electricity poles crossing the site. It will introduce a new feature into the landscape, but one that will not detract from the high scenic quality of the surrounding countryside.
- 6.5 There will not be an adverse impact on neighbouring properties as regards noise, given the nearest dwelling is at least 190 metres away from the turbine.
- 6.6 It is not considered that a precedent would be established in this area. It is not appropriate to site turbines in domestic gardens on lower slopes and often in smaller gardens. Each site is unique, this site has been carefully examined, close up and long range views of the site have been taken. The proposal, on balance, can be supported given the site characteristics of established trees and more recent tree planting by the applicant, and topography.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission) )**

**Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

- 2. Trees along all boundaries of the site shall not be felled, topped or lopped without the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority.**

**Reason: In order to provide adequate screening of the turbine in the interests of the amenity of this part of the Area of Great Landscape Value.**

**Informative(s):**

- 1. N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission**

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.