

13 DCSW2003/1369/F - ERECTION OF SMALL WIND TURBINE FOR GENERATING ELECTRICITY 2.5KW 8M. HIGH MAST, SELF-SUPPORTING. 1 BOYCE COTTAGES, SHENMORE, MADLEY, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR2 9NY

For: Mr C C Dennison, 1 Boyce Cottages, Shenmore, Madley, Herefordshire, HR2 9NY

Date Received: 7th May 2003

Ward: Stoney Street

Grid Ref: 3983 3847

Expiry Date: 2nd July 2003

Local Member: Councillor D. C. Taylor

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The proposed site is the rear garden of one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings that are both aligned north-west to south-east and are between 15 to 12 metres back from the metalled edge of the unclassified road (u/c 73211) that leads through this part of Shenmore joining the Madley - Tyberton road to the north-east.
- 1.2 It is proposed to erect a wind turbine to provide a domestic supply. The height to the centre of the rotor is 7.5 metres. The rotor diameter is 3.5 metres. The blades and housing are black polypropylene which in turn is mounted on the slightly tapering pole, which is natural grey galvanised steel that will, it is understood, with weathering change into a matt grey colour. There is no gearbox, unlike on larger wind turbines, also the nominal running speed is 300rpm.
- 1.3 The structure is sited just inside on the north-eastern boundary of the dog-legged shaped garden that leads north-westward and continues beyond the line of the garden of 2 Boyce Cottages. Boyce Villa has a garden area that tapers to a point in line with the rear line of 2 Boyce Cottages.
- 1.4 The turbine is approximately 23 metres along from the nearest point of the rear garden of Boyce Villa and closer, being 18 metres from the rear garden area of 2 Boyce Cottages.
- 1.5 There is a line of established deciduous trees on the south-western boundaries of this part of the garden into which it is proposed to site the turbine. These trees are at the minimum 8 to 9 metres high, they provide screening for the turbine from the south-westerly direction. The hedgerow closest to the turbine is approximately 2.5 metres high. There is open arable land that drops down to the B4352 road to the north-east.

2. Policies

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance

PPG.22 - Renewable Energy

2.2 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

- Policy GD.1 - General Development Criteria
Policy C.39A - Renewable Energy

3. Planning History

3.1 None identified.

4. Consultation Summary

4.1 None applicable.

5. Representations

5.1 In literature from manufacturers, the following main points are made:

- now have 50 installations in UK, hilltop telecommunication sites to domestic heating and electricity
- planning officers and councillors wary of visual intrusion, noise, not an issue with 3 meter rotor diameter as compared to 45 meter ones
- survey found customers would have theirs nearer than at present, distances vary from under 10 metres to 150 metres
- have 2 turbines in National Parks (Dartmoor and Glen Affrie) and one beside a listed country house
- WT2500 stands on a 7.5 metre pole, about same length as standard wooden telegraph pole, of which there are thousands in Herefordshire
- turbine blades are black, help merge into landscape
- mast self-supporting, no stays/ropes, galvanised steel finish quickly dulls to a matt grey colour
- no gear box, main source of whining noise in large wind farms machines
- maximum speed 300rpm, about half speed of other small turbines, producing a gentle 'swooshing' noise
- background noises of cars quieter than swoosh noise of blades, our office is single glazed, 25 metres away, turbine not audible, traffic from 'B' road further 23 metres away is though.

5.2 Two letters of representation have been received from:

Mrs. M. E. Perry, Little Gwerngenny, Wormbridge, HR2 9DT
G.W. & M.C.L. Doman, Lissadell, Shenmore, Madley, HR2 9NZ

The following main points are raised:

- noise disturbance from our sunroom, terrace and garden. Both our front and rear gardens face the site
- whirring noise from turbine
- number of buildings been erected on site, is this plus the turbine for a business?
- establish a precedent in locality
- area of outstanding natural beauty, blades (10 foot plus) on a 26 foot mast enormous, just to produce 2.5kw of electricity
- spoil an interrupted view from Boyce Villa of distant hills, would recommend evergreen planting on western boundary, deciduous at present and could be removed at any time if planning permission were granted

- devalue my property
- only recommend in remote locations, environmental benefits negligible given CO₂ generation associated with the manufacture of the unit
- no benefits from turbine, outweighed by loss of glorious part of countryside.

5.3 The Parish Council make the following observations:

"The Parish Council has no objection to the erection of this wind turbine but has no first-hand experience of such a turbine. Although this is an environmentally friendly energy source, Parish Council has concerns about any noise and requests that permission is only granted for a trial period of time, possibly for one year only."

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 There is general encouragement for renewable energy proposals in Local Plan Policy C.39 and PPG.22. With this proposal there are considered to be two main issues. Firstly the impact on nearby residential property and secondly the impact of the structure in the landscape.
- 6.2 It is considered that the turbine is sufficiently distant from domestic dwellings such that an unacceptable noise intrusion should not arise. No. 2 Boyce Cottages has outbuildings at the end of its garden providing a buffer between the turbine and well used garden area. Boyce Villa has a garden area that tapers to a point. The Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards raises no objection on the basis of the report from the applicant that accompanied the application. In addition, there should not be any unacceptable shadow flicker to the nearby dwellings.
- 6.3 It is evident that this galvanised steel structure will have some impact in the landscape, the issue is whether or not the impact is mitigated by the context of the site and its surroundings. This proposal has to be treated on its merits, whether or not it is granted planning permission does not establish a precedent for turbines across the county. Policy C.39A contained in the Local Plan is concerned with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of Great Landscape Value or other areas of conservation importance. This site falls outside these categories of landscape. The turbine has the backdrop of Boyce Cottages when viewed from the north-west, it will not be visible from the east given topography, it will be glimpsed by dwellings a further 115 metres to the west of Boyce Cottages, particularly in the winter months, however the presence of the trees and the black blades and rota on the turbine will, it is considered, reduce the impact.
- 6.4 Conditions would need to be applied in order to ensure that the existing hedgerows and trees are retained, which would therefore mean that the proposal could not reasonably be withheld planning permission.

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. A07 (Development in accordance with approved plans)

Reason: To ensure adherence to the approved plans in the interests of a satisfactory form of development.

3. G10 (Retention of trees)

Reason: In the interests of reducing the impact of the development in the open countryside.

4. The hedgerow boundary on the north-western boundary of the site shall be maintained at a height of not less than 2 metres to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of reducing the impact of the development in the open countryside.

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.