

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014-2015

**DEVELOPMENT
CONTROL COMMITTEE
5 FEBRUARY 2015**

**REPORT OF:
SERVICE DIRECTOR
PLANNING**

	Agenda Item No. 9
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	APPLICATION NO: 14/1472/03 OBSERVATIONS REQUESTED BY ADJACENT PLANNING AUTHORITY: INSTALLATION OF 6 WIND TURBINES WITH A MAXIMUM TIP HEIGHT OF 145M TO GENERATE UP TO 18 MW, TOGETHER WITH ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING SUBSTATION AND CONTROL BUILDING, ON SITE UNDERGROUND ELECTRICAL CABLES, ACCESS TRACKS, METEOROLOGICAL MAST, CRANE HARD STANDINGS, TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION COMPOUND, PALISADE FENCING ON SITE POND AND SITE ACCESS, LAND TO THE EAST OF MELIN COURT, RESOLVEN, NEATH PORT TALBOT
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To recommend observations on the above planning application which is to be determined by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

To raise no objection to the proposal, subject to points a) and b) below, and to forward the observations of this Authority to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

It is recommended to raise no objection as while the access to the site will be via Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough (the Pen y Cymoedd access track) the highway impacts are considered to be acceptable, subject to conditions. In addition, it is considered that the proposal will not have a significant landscape and visual impact on Rhondda Cynon Taf.

3. BACKGROUND

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application is a full application made to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council for a wind farm comprising six wind turbines of 145m in height to the blade tips, together with associated infrastructure. It is anticipated these would have an output of 12-18 megawatts. The access to the site, while not in the application site itself, does adjoin the highway network within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough. This access is the Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm access track, which adjoins the A4061 on Rhigos Road, approximately 2km south of Hirwaun Industrial Estate. The applicant does not anticipate that the proposal will require any further works to the access track than those required for the Pen y Cymoedd development, but a short section of track will be needed to connect the existing track to the proposed wind farm.

The application is accompanied by a number of documents, including an Environmental Impact Assessment, and Transport Statement and Travel Plan.

SITE DETAILS

The proposed wind farm is approximately 5km west of the boundary of Rhondda Cynon Taf, on upland between Melin Court and Glynccorwg. The proposed wind farm is to the west of the main part of the Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm, so Pen y Cymoedd effectively sits between this proposal and the Rhondda Cynon Taf boundary. There is also extensive forestry between the site and this County Borough. In addition, a small part of Pen y Cymoedd and a further Wind Farm of 17 turbines (Ffynnon Oer) are located to the south of this site.

SITE HISTORY

As the application is within a neighbouring authority, this is unknown.

PUBLICITY

No publicity has been undertaken by Rhondda Cynon Taf as part of this consultation, due to the distance of the proposed Wind Farm from the boundary of the County Borough.

CONSULTATION

Rhondda Cynon Taf's Highway's Development Control Section have been consulted on the proposal and have not raised an objection, subject to conditions in respect of a Construction Traffic Management Plan and a road condition survey.

Wales and West Utilities have also sent a response advising no objection.

POLICY CONTEXT

The site is on the edge of Strategic Search Area F, as defined by Technical Advice Note 8: Renewable Energy. It is understood that all but one of the turbines is within Neath Port Talbot's refined boundary for Strategic Search Area F.

REASONS FOR REACHING THE RECOMMENDATION

The main issues for Rhondda Cynon Taf are considered to be the impact on the highway network within the County Borough, and the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed wind farm.

The main impact in respect of the highway network will be due to abnormal loads being brought through the County Borough during construction. It is anticipated this will result in 54 such loads during the delivery period for the turbine components. It is expected that such loads will enter the County Borough on the A465 travelling east bound, turning on to A4061 at Hirwaun. It is considered that as this is the same haulage route as used for the Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm and the affects would be for a relatively short period of time that the proposal is acceptable in respect of highway impacts, subject to the conditions recommended below. In addition, it is recommended that Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council consult with Rhondda Cynon Taf prior to discharge of highway conditions, where appropriate, due to the use of the highway network within this County Borough.

In respect of landscape and visual impact, the Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs) submitted as part of the application indicate that the views of the turbines from Rhondda Cynon Taf will be limited to small pockets of land in the Upper Rhondda Valleys and Cynon Valley. These pockets of land are largely more sparsely populated upland areas. It is expected that due to the distance of the views, the proximity of the under construction Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm to the site and the intervening Forestry, the visual and landscape impact of the proposed wind farm itself where it is visible will not be significant.

OTHER ISSUES

There are not considered to be any further significant issues for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough.

CONCLUSION

Given the above it is considered that the highway, visual and landscape impacts of the proposal on Rhondda Cynon Taf are acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that no objection is raised to the proposal, subject to:

a) The following conditions being attached to any grant of consent:

1. No development shall take place until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any temporary mitigation measures affecting public highways shall be implemented prior to

transportation of the abnormal loads and reinstated upon completion of the development. The CTMP shall include the following:-

- a) Swept Path Analysis (showing full route and mitigation measures);
- b) Component size (width, height, length, weight);
- c) Convoy Length (number of vehicles including emergency services and escorts);
- d) Traffic Management (during transportation of abnormal loads);
- e) Structures (over bridges height, width, weight restrictions);
- f) Highway works (including all temporary works to public highway to facilitate access and reinstatement works including timescales);
- g) Dry Run (to be witnessed by highway authorities and police);
- h) Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders; and
- i) Emergency Contingencies.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure safe and satisfactory delivery of all components.

2. Prior to the commencement of the development, a report detailing a methodology for undertaking a conditions survey of the A4061/Rhigos Road/Fifth Avenue Roundabout and the priority junction of the NRW forestry track with the A4061 that could be affected by the proposed development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall include: the timescales for undertaking the surveys and the method(s) of reporting the findings to the Local Planning Authority; comprehensive photographs; and potential compensation arrangements. The survey shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The development shall not be brought into use until the final survey (on completion of the development hereby approved) and any compensation arrangements have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that any deterioration of local roads by HGV's associated with the development is rectified in the interests of highway safety.

b) Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council being consulted for their views prior to the discharge of all highway conditions which impact on the highway network within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

as amended by

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

15 JANUARY 2015

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR PLANNING

REPORT

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TOGETHER WITH ANCILLARY
DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING
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TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION
COMPOUND, PALISADE FENCING
ON SITE POND AND SITE
ACCESS, LAND TO THE EAST OF
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NEATH PORT TALBOT**

OFFICER TO CONTACT

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See Relevant Application File

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