

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	Full Planning Committee - 20/10/2015	Item No: 5.8
Report Originator	Rebecca Collins Development Team Leader	Application No: KET/2015/0751
Wards Affected	Burton Latimer	
Location	Wold Road (land south of), Burton Latimer	
Proposal	Full Application: Installation of power generation plant and associated development	
Applicant	Mr A Watkins First Renewable,	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To describe the above proposals
To identify and report on the issues arising from it
To state a recommendation on the application

2. RECOMMENDATION

THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER RECOMMENDS that this application be APPROVED subject to the following Condition(s):-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing of the date when the development hereby permitted is first operational. The development shall be permanently removed from the site following the expiry of 25 years from that date. The land shall be restored to its former condition, as farmland.

REASON: In recognition of the expected life of the proposal and to prevent an unacceptable impact on the landscape and the surrounding environment in accordance with Policy 4 and 11 of the NPPF, and policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

3. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, prior to construction of the development hereby permitted a detailed scheme indicating the position, design, materials and type of fencing, including any landscaping, to be erected shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: Boundary treatment details are necessary prior to the commencement of development in the interests of security and visual amenity in accordance with policy 13 (b and h) of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

4. Prior to the commencement of development a noise assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The noise assessment shall outline the likely impact on any noise sensitive property, and the measures necessary to ensure that the noise does not affect the local amenity of residents. The assessment shall be determined by measurement or prediction in accordance with the guidance and methodology set out in BS4142: 2014. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
REASON: A noise assessment is required prior to the commencement of development to protect the amenity of neighbouring properties in accordance with policy 13(l) of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

5. Prior to the installation of any of the equipment hereby approved the colour/finish of the containers shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The equipment shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.
REASON: To protect the character of the area in accordance with Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

Officers Report for KET/2015/0751

This application is reported for Committee decision because the proposal could be a contentious application which, in the opinion of the Head of Development Services, is a matter for the decision of the Committee.

3.0 Information

KET/2015/0519 - The proposal is for the construction of 132kw connection compound consisting of DNO (WPD) Compound, a customer (IDNO's) Compound and a switch room and metering room building (Approved).

Site A

KET/2015/0421 – Solar Farm (Approved)

KET/2015/0422 – Solar Farm (Approved)

KET/2015/0423 – Solar Farm (Approved)

Site B

KET/2015/0438 – Solar Farm (Approved)

KET/2015/0440 – Solar Farm (Approved)

KET/2015/0445 – Solar Farm (Approved)

KET/2015/0446 – Solar Farm (Approved)

KET/2015/0424 – Construction of a 132kw connection compound consisting of DNO and customer compounds (Approved)

KET/2015/0519 – Construction of a 132kw connection compound consisting of DNO (WPD) Compound and a switch room and metering room building (Approved)

KET/2015/0426 – Installation of cable service corridor between Cranford Quarry North Solar Area and the Local Distribution Network Compound (Approved)

KET/2015/0427 – Installation of a cable/service corridor between Burton Wold Farm East Solar Farm and the Local Distribution Network Compound (Approved)

KET/2014/0863 – Burton Wold Solar Farm northern site – (Approved)

KET/2014/0861 – Burton Wold Wind Farm Southern Extension (comprising 3 turbines, 136.5m to the tip (Approved)

KET/2014/0540 – Burton Wold Solar Farm Southern site – (Approved)

KET/2014/0479 – Scoping Opinion Burton Wold Wind Farm Southern Extension

KET/2014/0215 – Screening Opinion for Burton Wold Solar Farm – EIA required

KET/2014/0216 – Scoping Opinion for Burton Wold Solar Farm – EIA required on the grounds of landscape and visual impact

KET/2012/0249 – Lawful Development Certificate – Commencement of planning permission reference KET/2007/1033 by the marking out of the access tracks and hedge removal positions (Deemed lawful commencement).

KET/2012/0075 – Scoping Opinion – Revision to Burton Wold Wind Farm northern extension.

KET/2011/0506 – 5 wind turbines (100m height to tip) ,control building and

substation within a secure compound, underground electrical cables connecting the turbines to the substation, alterations to existing site access, access tracks and crane hardstandings, temporary construction compound and anemometry mast (65m height) – (Approved)
KET/2010/0755 – Anemometry Mast – (Approved)
KET/2007/1033 – Wind Farm comprising 7 no. wind turbines (100m to tip height) – (Approved)
KET/2007/0054 – Scoping Opinion – Extension to wind farm
KET/2006/1008 – Erection of 50m guyed anemometer mast for a 12 month period to measure wind speed and direction – (Approved)
KET/2005/1012 – Modifications to existing junction - (Approved)
KET/2003/0559 – 10 wind turbines, generators, anemometry mast, substation and associated infrastructure – (Approved)

Site Description

Officer's site inspection was carried out on 25/09/2015.

The application site lies at the mid-point of the access road into Wold Farm off A510. The site lies adjacent to a large corrugated metal farm building, part a wider complex of large metal farm buildings, housing equipment, set around a large area of hard standing, to the south of the proposed site.

There is a dip in the ground levels in this location.

There is a high dense hedgerow along the eastern boundary of the site. To the west are consent wind turbines.

Proposed Development

This application is for the installation of a power generation plant and associated development.

This Peak Power Generation development provides essential back-up power during times of abnormally high power demand on the National Grid. The proposal will help to supply a continual supply when renewable technologies are not producing, or if there is insufficient capacity within the National Grid. The proposal is for a temporary, 25 year development to provide backup power during times of peak demand.

The development is part of necessary grid reinforcements to ensure long term sustainable local and regional power distribution; supporting the Grid in times of regional and national emergency. In addition, it also acts as an integral reinforcement facility to the irregularity of power generation from the Energy Park Wind and Solar developments.

Any Constraints Affecting The Site

None

4.0 Consultation and Customer Impact

The consultation period on this application expires on 16/10/2015. The

comments received so far are as follows:

Environmental Health

No objection subject to a condition for the submission of a noise assessment.

Northamptonshire Police

Would prefer the fencing and gates to allow surveillance in to the compound. The perimeter should be connected to a monitored perimeter alarm system, ideally with CCTV.

5.0 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Policy 1. Building a Strong; Competitive Economy

Policy 3. Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy

Policy 7. Requiring Good Design

Policy 10. Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

Policy 11. Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Policy 12. Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Development Plan Policies

North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy

Policy 1. Strengthening the Network of Settlements

Policy 5. Green Infrastructure

Policy 6. Infrastructure Delivery and Developer Contributions

Policy 9. Distribution and Location of Development

Policy 13. General Sustainable Development Principles

Policy 14. Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Construction

Local Plan

Policy 7. Open Countryside

Emerging Policies (Local Development Framework)

Joint Core Strategy

Site Specific Proposals LDD

6.0 Financial/Resource Implications

None

7.0 Planning Considerations

The key issues for consideration in this application are:-

1. Principle
2. Landscape and Visual Impacts
3. Amenity of neighbouring properties
4. Impact on the historic environment

1. Principle

The principle of renewable energy development on this site is already established by virtue of the existing 17 turbines and further extant planning permissions for 3 turbines and surrounding Solar Farm sites.

The site is located outside of any designated settlement boundary within open countryside, where new development is restricted by policies 1 and 9 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) and policy 7 of the Local Plan for Kettering Borough.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the transition to a low carbon future in changing climate and encouraging the re-use of renewable resources. Policy 10 states this is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Paragraph 97 aims to increase the use and supply of renewable energy through having a positive strategy; design policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy whilst ensuring the adverse impacts are addressed, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts; and to consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy.

Policy 14 of the CSS requires all new development to meet the highest standards of resource and energy efficiency and a reduction in carbon emissions.

As this proposal is to support the consistent delivery of renewable energy, in principle, it is considered acceptable on this basis.

The Site Specific Proposals LDD – Option’s Paper identified Burton Wold Wind Farm and the wider site area as providing ‘*a focus for the Borough’s renewable energy production*’. It went on to say that the site is ‘*well located and provides the opportunity for an intensification of renewable energy technologies and the provision of strategic facilities that could provide energy to support the existing and growing needs of the community*’. The Pre-Submission Joint Core Strategy emerging policy 26 identifies this site has a potential allocation for an energy park and this proposal supports this allocation.

Given the sites emerging allocation; that the works are to support the continuous delivery of renewable energy; then there is a strong policy presumption in favour of sustainable development as outlined in policy 10 of the NPPF. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle.

2. Landscape and Visual Impacts

The proposal is for the installation of power generation plant and associated development including:

10 x 2MW energy generators measuring approximately 12.2(l) x 1.6m(w) x 2.4m(h)

4 x fuel storage tanks measuring approximately 7.5(l) x 2.5m(w) x 2.6m(h)

1 x Transformer and switch gear housing measuring approximately 12m(l) x 3.1m(w) x 3.2m(h)

9 x Energy Storage modules measuring approximately 12m(l) x 2.4m(w) x 2.6m(h)
6 x transformers
1 x substation
HGV access hardstanding for infrequent deliveries
Perimeter fencing

The external appearance of the equipment will largely be metal shipping containers, which will house the equipment. This will sit behind a boundary treatment, to be agreed. A condition is recommended for the exact colour and finish on the containers to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The resultant colour can be agreed to minimise visual impact.

Surrounding the compound the applicants proposed to install a 3 metre high close boarded fence. Northamptonshire Police expressed concern with regards to the security of close boarded fencing and visually it is not encouraged in this location. The applicants have confirmed that they are happy to consider an alternative fencing which would allow views in to the compound, this can be secured via a suitably worded condition.

The proposal will result in an alien feature in the open countryside. The site is 4,805 sq. metres in total. The proposal will be set on a backdrop of existing farm buildings. The proposal includes a number of single storey buildings measuring no more than 3.2 metres in height, the buildings have the appearance of shipping containers but will be largely contained within a 3 metre high, probably mesh fenced area. It is proposed that the existing hedgerows in this location may shield the development from the wider area. In addition, some appropriate landscaping along with the boundary treatment could soften the development.

The proposal is necessary to support the delivery of renewable energy. This site is an emerging allocation, set in the centre of the wider site to be surrounded by farm buildings, wind turbines, solar panels and hedgerows. The proposed location is therefore considered acceptable on this basis and in accordance with Policy 11 of the NPPF and Policy 13(o) of the CSS.

3. Amenity of neighbouring properties

The proposal is sufficiently distanced from neighbouring properties so as not to have a significant impact on their amenity. The submitted information with regards to noise and air quality states that the average operation for other plants of this type in the UK is 38 hours per annum. Noise generation has been assessed on the basis that the equipment would be running twice the annual average. Any noise generation is likely to be occurring at infrequent levels. It is expected that at noise sensitive receptor locations the noise from the equipment would be masked by the existing background noise (this should be considered at intervals both at day and at night and meet the requirements of BS4142 and BS8233). To address the potential for the development to generate noise, a condition is required to submit a noise assessment to prevent any loss of amenity impacts on local residents.

With regards to air quality the application states that the development has been designed to operate in a manner that will minimise any potential emissions. Pollutant emissions comply with the TA Luft air pollution control regulation, and will therefore not pose a significant threat to the health of local residents or people working nearby.

Given the distance of the proposal from neighbouring properties then the proposal is considered in accordance with policy 13(l) of the CSS.

4. Impact on the historic environment

The Roundhouse, Grade II Listed Building is located opposite the entrance to the site on the A510. This building was constructed by the Arbuthnot family after the Duke of Wellington, a regular visitor to Woodford House their family home, said the scene reminded him of the fields of Waterloo. Given the distance from the proposal to the roundhouse and the intervening vegetation/screening along the southern boundary of the access, as well as the development being located adjacent to existing farm buildings, then it is unlikely to have an impact on the setting or significance of this Listed Building. The proposal is significantly distance from any other historic assets with intervening screening. The proposal is therefore considered not to negatively impact the significance or setting of local historic assets in accordance with Policy 12 of the NPPF and 13(h) of the CSS.

Conclusion

Despite being located in open countryside and as the development is likely to have some landscape and visual impacts, it is required to support the continuous delivery of renewable energy already permitted in this location; this site is an emerging Local Plan allocation. The site is adjacent to existing farm buildings, wind turbines, permitted solar panels and located behind existing dense hedgerows. The proposal is considered in accordance with the NPPF and Policy 13 of the CSS and is therefore recommended for approval.

Background Papers

Title of Document:

Date:

Contact Officer:

Rebecca Collins, Development Team Leader on 01536
534316

Previous Reports/Minutes

Ref:

Date: