Application Number: ADC/0125/08 **Recommendation – Temporary permission**

Site: **26 Woodards View, Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5LH**

Proposal: **Micro wind turbine on west side gable**

The Application

The site comprises a detached gable-roofed chalet bungalow within a road of properties of various styles including two-storey houses, bungalows and chalet bungalows. As with the other dwellings, it is set well back from the highway, with a driveway to the side. Either side are two hip-roofed bungalows of similar design. These bungalows have much lower roofs than No.26.

Permission is sought for the erection of a micro wind turbine on the west side gable of the chalet bungalow. The 3 blades would have a swept diameter of 1.75m. The maximum height of the turbine would be 2.5 metres above ridge level and it would be attached to the building with a support pole. The main part of the turbine is to be finished in grey with a galvanised support pole and brackets.

Its rated power output is 1.25kW, with a 12.5 m/s (28mph) wind speed producing an output of 1kW. The cut-in wind speed is about 8mph and the cut-out speed 31mph. According to the manufacturers, it has an expected life of 10 years, depending on the conditions to which it is subjected.

Consultations and Representations

Director of Services: The Environmental Health Officer states that there is a general paucity of noise data associated with micro generation, largely because the noise increases with wind speed, which affects the background noise and makes measurement difficult. Annoyance is dependant on the recipient and the person who installs the system is less likely to be irritated by it than the neighbours. The turbine, in this case, would be only 5 metres away from the nearest property and, in the absence of firm data, he has significant concerns about noise disturbance to neighbours. However, it may be appropriate to give temporary permission to assess the effect of the turbine

Third Parties: - 9 letters/e-mails of objection have been received from No's 3 & 4 Mardyke and No's 22, 24, 28, 29, 31, 33 & 37 Woodards View objecting on the following grounds: -

- Constant noise levels.
- Design and appearance – an eyesore.
- Out of keeping in a residential area and domination of the view from the road, from dwellings and from rear gardens.

- Height unacceptable.
- Television reception interference.
- Close proximity to neighbouring properties.
- Potential danger if it falls during strong winds.
- Many documents prove wind turbines to be inefficient.

A letter has been received from No.30 Woodards View stating no objection.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): LOC1, DEV1
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH7
PPS 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005) and Supplement 'Planning and Climate Change' (DCLG 2007)
PPS22 'Renewable Energy' (ODPM 2004)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Structure Plan policies seek to protect and where possible enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area, requiring high standards of design, layout and construction (DEV1). Policy AH7 of the Local Plan states that extensions and alterations to houses and bungalows should not have an adverse impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring dwelling to an unacceptable degree.

The recent Supplement 'Planning and Climate Change' to PPS1 highlights the importance attached by the Government to tackling global climate change through encouragement of sustainable forms of development, including decentralised renewable or low-carbon energy supply. PPS22 'Renewable Energy' states that local planning authorities should consider the opportunity for incorporating renewable energy projects in all new developments. Small-scale renewable energy schemes utilising technologies such as solar panels, biomass heating, small-scale wind turbines, photovoltaic cells and combined heat and power schemes can be incorporated both into new development and some existing buildings. 'Permitted development rights' have just been increased to allow, without making a planning application, small solar photovoltaics and solar thermal installations on dwellings, plus ground and water source heat pumps and flues for biomass boilers and combined heat & power, but not for wind turbines.

Residential amenity – Noise

No noise assessment or data has been submitted with this application. This is mainly due to the limited number of existing wind turbines that have been installed on dwellings and also the difficulty of taking noise readings. When

the turbine is working at its maximum, the wind is at its strongest and therefore background noise levels are higher. In such instances, the dominant noise would probably be the wind rather than the turbine but this is not certain. The manufacturers state that there is a degree of noise caused by wind-rush on the structure and by the blade tips cutting through the air. They say that customer feedback is positive, the sound of the blades often being described as a "swishing" sound; with the inverter itself only producing noise similar to a personal computer.

The manufacturers currently have no noise data (they say they are commissioning a noise profile report to determine and prescribe noise levels associated with their systems). The noise impact associated with each case may well differ significantly depending on the location of the site, proximity to other sources of noise, wind direction, aspect, etc. Also the level of impact on surrounding residential properties is dependant on the distance involved. Apart from this, whether annoyance is experienced can be subjective, depending on the sensitivity of the recipient.

In a recently-published enforcement case elsewhere in the country, the Planning Inspector, in dismissing the appeal, concluded that domestic microgeneration systems are in their infancy and there is insufficient experience available to determine what level of noise disturbance caused by a domestic wind turbine would bother an average householder and therefore a reliable assessment could not be made.

Visual amenity

The wind turbine will exceed the ridge height of the existing chalet bungalow by a maximum of 2.5 metres and would have a blade diameter of 1.75m. The existing chalet bungalow has a steeply-pitched roof and a much higher ridge than the bungalows directly adjacent. Consequently, the proposed turbine would be a fairly prominent feature in the streetscene and its functional appearance would also be distinct from its surroundings.

Renewable energy

In accordance with Government policy objectives, as a necessary response to global climate change, the need to encourage sustainable energy has to be given sufficient weight when it is balanced against other factors such as visual impact and potential noise disturbance. Cumulatively, small scale renewable energy schemes have a role to play in reducing carbon dioxide emissions and thereby tackling climate change which ultimately protects the wider environment. Whilst an individual domestic turbine would only produce a very small amount of electricity, the approval of such schemes could set an example for similar ones to follow more widely which is what would be needed for there to be any significant effect on reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Taking account of the above, in the present case, it is considered, on balance, that the visual impact of the turbine would not be so adverse as to warrant refusal. However, the absence of noise data and insufficient reliable

information to assess the level of potential disturbance to neighbours is a more serious concern.

It is considered, in the circumstances, that it is necessary to grant only a temporary permission. This would provide a trial period to enable the noise impact to be monitored. At the expiry of the permission, it can be re-assessed and, if justified, could be required to be removed or repositioned.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that:-

The proposal is a sustainable form of development that would help reduce carbon dioxide emissions as set out in Government policy in PPS1 (and the Supplement 'Planning and Climate Change') and PPS22. Owing to uncertainty as to the effect on the residential amenities of nearby dwellings, however, it is considered necessary to grant a temporary permission in the first instance to provide a trial period and retain planning control, having regard to policies DEV1 of the West Sussex Structure Plan and AH7 of the Adur District Local Plan. ↑ AG1 &

Subject to: -

1. C1Di (Temporary permission expiring on 30 April 2009) (amended)
2. The maximum height of any part of the micro wind turbine hereby permitted shall not exceed 2.5 metres above the ridge height of the existing building.
3. No development shall be carried out unless and until a schedule of materials and finishes to be used for the proposed wind turbine have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and it shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.

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