Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1188/23 Recommendation: Approve

Site: Pump House C E G B, Basin Road South, Southwick

Proposal: Construction of two 100kw wind turbines, 35.4m from base to blade tip on the southern spur of land forming the eastern arm and breakwater of Shoreham Harbour. Application accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment. Application to Vary Condition 8 of AWDM/1702/14 to allow painted black line pattern to the tips of the blades.

Date of Site Visit: 30th August 2023

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional neighbour notification: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings:

This application relates to the pair of wind turbines at Shoreham Port which were approved in 2014 and have been in operation for a number of years.

Condition 8 of the original planning permission states:

None of the wind turbines hereby permitted shall be erected until details of their design, colour and finish and a scheme for interpretive facilities at the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The colour of the turbines shall blend in with the sky and the surface of the blades shall not be reflective. No name, sign, symbol or logo shall be displayed on any external surfaces of any turbine, other than the nED100 logo and that which is required to meet statutory health and safety requirements. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained as such.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with 1995 Adur Local Plan policy AP6; Draft Adur Local Plan Policy 1: Sustainable Development Policy 2 Spatial Strategy; Policy 8 Shoreham Harbour Regeneration Area and Policy15 Quality of the Built Environment and the Public Realm; Draft Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan Policy JAAP2 South Quayside; and National Planning Policy Framework.

In addition, Condition 15 states:

The development shall not operate unless and until a scheme has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in respect of post development monitoring for 3 years from first electricity export to assess the number of bird strikes by the wind turbines and a scheme for any necessary mitigation measures. The approved scheme shall be operated as agreed.

There has been concern at the number of bird strikes and it is proposed to vary Condition 8 to allow for the painting of black lines on the tips of the three blades. It has been found that by doing so, the number of fatalities can be reduced by 70%.

Planning History:

AWDM/1702/14 Construction of two 100kw wind turbines, 35.4m from base to blade tip on the southern spur of land forming the eastern arm and breakwater of Shoreham Harbour. Application accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Consultations:

Natural England: No comment

RSPB: No comments received

Sussex Wildlife Trust: No comments received

Representations

6 letters of support received:

Will reduce bird strikes and needless deaths

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 15, 31
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

Planning Assessment

The painting of the blades makes them more visible to birds by creating dark streaks in the sky which should help them to avoid flying into them.

The black stripes will inevitably make them more visible to humans too but it is not considered that this will cause unacceptable visual harm given its location by Shoreham Port and some distance from the nearest residential properties.

The turbines play an important role in helping Shoreham Port become a more sustainable and energy efficient location and the black stripes on the blades will allow them to continue to generate sustainable energy while reducing their environmental impact on wildlife.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

As AWDM/1702/14

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation N

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 21st September 2023

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 21 September 2023