

APPLICATION NUMBER:	LW/07/1080	ITEM NUMBER:	1
APPLICANTS NAME(S):	Glyndebourne Productions Ltd	PARISH / WARD:	Ringmer / Ouse Valley & Ringmer
PROPOSAL:	Planning Application for Temporary installation (1 year) of 50m high meteorological mast		
SITE ADDRESS:	Glyndebourne Mill Plain, New Road, Ringmer, East Sussex, BN8 5UG		
GRID REF:	TQ 4511		

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1. SITE DESCRIPTION / PROPOSAL

1.1 This application seeks consent to install a 50m high meteorological mast for a temporary period of one year at Mill Plain, Ringmer. The mast is required in order to monitor wind speed and direction on the site in advance of the installation of a 70m wind turbine which the applicants hope will be allowed following a 'Call In' Inquiry due to be held in February 2008. The Inquiry was called by the Secretary of State following the decision of Lewes District Council Planning Committee to resolve to approve the turbine contrary to the officers' recommendation in July 2007 (LW/07/0077).

1.2 The Government Office for the South East has issued an Article 14 Direction on this development, preventing the Council from granting planning permission for the mast. The Secretary of State has "Called In" the application and both the wind turbine and meteorological mast will now be considered at the same Inquiry. However, as with the application for the wind turbine, this does not prevent Members from taking a view on the application. The Committee can make a resolution which would set out the Council's position at the Inquiry.

2. RELEVANT POLICIES

LDLP: – ST03 – Design, Form and Setting of Development

LDLP: – CT02 – Landscape Conservation and Enhancement

LDLP: – H02 – Listed Buildings

NPG: – PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development

NPG: – PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

NPG: – PPS22 – Renewable energy

3. PLANNING HISTORY

LW/07/0077 - An 850kw wind turbine comprising a tubular tower 44m high, a three bladed rotor with a diameter of 52m, overall height 70m, an underground cable to Glyndebourne and crane hardstanding area - **Called in by Secretary of State**

4. REPRESENTATIONS FROM STANDARD CONSULTEES

Defence Estates (Ministry of Defence) – No safeguarding objections

ESCC Highways – No highway objection

ESCC Rights Of Way Officer – No objection

The Ramblers Association – Object. The mast would be an intrusion into the landscape of the South Downs. Permission should not be granted until the

public inquiry into the proposed wind turbine is completed. If the turbine is turned down then the reasons for this must become redundant.

East Sussex County Archaeologist – Recommend a programme of archaeological works for the area affected

Open Spaces Society – Object. The mast should not be erected until the outcome of the Inquiry is known. Adverse effect on AONB and National Park. Eyesore when viewed from footpaths.

Environmental Health – No comments

South Downs Joint Committee – No objection, provided it does not interfere with the definitive rights of way at Mill Plain

The South Downs Society – Object. Less acute concerns than with the turbine. However, it would still constitute a significant and unwelcome visual intrusion into the precious landscape of the Downs. Any information yielded by the trial will not be able to justify the overriding planning policy objections as set out in previous Committee report.

Council For Protection Of Rural England – Object. Application should not be considered until the outcome of the pending public inquiry relating to the wind turbine. Will be an unacceptable intrusion into protected landscape. Inappropriate to site a temporary mast as, whatever the results of the trial, they will not justify overriding strong objections to the turbine itself.

Natural England – As the installation is of a temporary nature only, no objection provided there is no lasting impact on the landscape once it has been removed.

Seeboard Power Networks Plc – No objection

Glynde & Beddingham Parish Council – Object on the grounds of original objection to wind turbine

Transco – No objection

NERL Safeguarding National Air Traffic Services Ltd – No safeguarding objections

BAA – No safeguarding objection

Government Office For The South East – In exercise of her powers under Article 14 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995, the Secretary of State hereby directs Lewes District Council not to grant planning permission for the development. The Direction is issued to enable the Department to consider the proposal and whether it ought to be called in for the Secretary of State's own consideration.

Kingston Parish Council – No objection provided the mast is only in place for one year

Ringmer Parish Council – Council understands that there is a question as to whether this application should be considered as Lewes District Council should be aware of the constraints imposed by the Article 14 Notice issued by the Secretary of State in relation to application LW/07/0077. It is the Council's

view that approval should not be given for this latest application until the decision about the wind turbine has been made by the Secretary of State.

5. REPRESENTATIONS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS

5.1 45 letters of objection received - contravenes Article 14 Direction which prevents any development on this site being considered by the local authority; should not be considered until such time as wind turbine has received approval; insufficient time for any meaningful data to be recorded in time for Inquiry into wind turbine; out of keeping with area; will set a precedent; will be a prominent feature which will have a harmful effect on Ringmer and landscape characteristics of AONB and future National Park; not the right site for a wind turbine; close to footpaths; original objections to the turbine reiterated.

5.2 Four letters of support - will collect valuable information to clarify matters which arose during consideration of application for the wind turbine; will not harm the area; will address climate change issues; there was a windmill on the site previously.

5.3 British Gliding Association & East Sussex Gliding Club - Object on the same grounds as for the turbine. Harmful within AONB and National Park. Will set a precedent. 50m mast would present an obstruction to gliders soaring the Glyndebourne ridge.

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main issues in respect of the proposed wind turbine are set out in the officer's report to the 11 July Planning Applications Committee meeting and it is not proposed to repeat them in this report. The main consideration in the determination of this application is the visual impact of such a structure and whether it would be premature to allow such a development in advance of consideration of the turbine application at next year's Inquiry. Many of the objections that have been raised relate to the principle of turbine development on the site and are not relevant to this specific proposal.

6.2 One of the weaknesses of the applicant's case for the siting of a wind turbine at Mill Plain was the lack of site-specific wind speed data to support their assertion that it was a suitable location for their purpose. To this end, they have decided to apply for the monitoring mast which, if approved, will enable the applicants to record wind speed and wind direction data which could then be reported to the Inquiry. The applicants also believe that it would provide a valuable visual reference as to the prominence of a 50m mast in the wider landscape, and would help in the assessment of the impact of a 70m structure in this location.

6.3 The mast is a single steel tube with a diameter of no more than 20cm (for comparison, a scaffolding pole is typically 5.5cm). It will sit on a steel plate which is laid directly onto the ground, thereby avoiding the need for any concrete foundations. The mast is held in place by a series of cables,

secured in the ground by steel anchors which are placed 35m from the mast. It is proposed to keep the mast in place for 12 months, after which it will be removed leaving no trace on the landscape. It will be placed close to the site of the proposed turbine but far enough away from the footpath and estate road so that the cables do not cross them. The public will be prevented from straying under the cables by a lightweight perimeter fence.

6.4 The anemometers (wind measuring devices) will be as close to the hub height of the proposed turbine (44m) as possible. Data is collected by remote telephone link, eliminating the need for regular visits to the site. There will be minimal traffic generated by this proposal and the mast can be erected quickly within one day.

6.5 The proposed mast will be a lightweight structure which will be static and will not be as distracting to the eye as the moving blades of a wind turbine. It is also less tall and less bulky than the proposed turbine. Whilst it will be a less prominent feature in the landscape than the turbine it will impact on and detract from the landscape character of the AONB to a limited degree and for a temporary period. It will be in position for one year only and it is not considered that an objection on the grounds of visual impact could be sustained, bearing in mind the temporary nature of the development and the limited lasting impact on the landscape. Had the applicants applied for the mast before they had submitted the application for the turbine, it is likely that your officers would have made the same recommendation. It is noteworthy that neither Natural England, and the South Downs Joint Committee, have objected.

6.6 While your officers' professional view in respect of the proposed wind turbine development was that such a structure was not justified in this location due to its harmful visual impact in the AONB and future National Park, the Planning Applications Committee resolved to approve it. The proposed anemometer will collect valuable information to help clarify whether the wind speed and direction at Mill Plain is adequate to justify the siting of a wind turbine in that location. It is the applicant's intention to erect the mast as soon as possible to enable at least three months worth of data to be gathered for presentation to the Public Inquiry. However, as a result of the "call in", the applicants will not be able to erect the mast until the outcome of the Inquiry is known.

6.7 The conditions suggested by the Council to be attached to any permission for the wind turbine include a requirement to monitor wind speeds on the site for 12 months prior to its installation. Had the applicants applied for the meteorological mast before they had submitted the application for the turbine, it is likely that your officers would have reached the same conclusion and recommended approval. It is not considered therefore that there is an objection to the principle of allowing such a development.

6.8 In conclusion therefore, on the basis that the mast is for a temporary period only, with no lasting impact on the landscape and no major works required to install it, the application is recommended for approval.

7. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee resolve to grant permission.

The application is subject to the following conditions:

1. The mast hereby approved shall be permanently removed from the site by 31 December 2008 and the land restored to its former condition.

Reason – To protect the landscape character and appearance of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty having regard to Policy CT2 of the Lewes District Local Plan.

2. The wind speeds and wind direction data collated by the mast hereby approved shall be accurately assessed over the course of 12 months and the results submitted to the Local Planning Authority for consideration at the end of the monitoring period.

Reason – To confirm that wind conditions at the site are suitable for the efficient operation of the proposed wind turbine having regard to PPS22 of the National Policy Guidance.

This decision is based on the following submitted plans/documents:

<u>PLAN TYPE</u>	<u>DATE RECEIVED</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
Design & Access Statement	12 September 2007	
Location Plan	16 August 2007	1:2500

Summary of reasons for decision and any relevant development plan policies/proposal:

It is considered that the proposal meets the aims and objectives of Local Plan Policy and respects the character of the location, complying with Policy CT2 of the Lewes District Local Plan.