

PLANNING COMMITTEE

(CIVIC CENTRE - NEATH)

Members Present:

17th February, 2015

Chairman: Councillor R.G.Jones

Vice Chairman: Councillor E.E.Jones

Councillors: Mrs.A.Chaves, Mrs.R.Davies, Mrs.J.Dudley,
S.K.Hunt, D.Keogh, Mrs.S.Paddison,
Mrs.S.M.Penry and Mrs.L.G.Williams

UDP/LDP Member: Councillor A.J.Taylor

Officers In Attendance: S.Ball, I.Davies, T.Davies, Miss C.Brettle and
Mrs.T.Davies

Report of The Head of Planning

(Note: An amendment sheet – attached and agreed – was circulated at the meeting, as detailed in Appendix A hereto).

1. **MYNYDD BROMBIL WIND FARM APPLICATION**

Erection of 5 no. Wind turbines with a max. height to tip of 100m and associated works, access tracks, substation and ancillary equipment. (Amended application site boundary, Supplemental Environmental Information including additional information in relation to transport, mining, ecology, location of borrow pits and access tracks) at Land at Mynydd Brombil, Brombil Farm, Margam, Port Talbot.

Members were advised that an appeal had been lodged by the applicant against non-determination of the Application by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, which would be heard at a Public Inquiry scheduled to commence on Tuesday 12th May, 2015. The report sought authorisation from Members for the stance the Authority would have taken, had it been in a position to determine the Application.

RESOLVED: that, had Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council been in a position to determine the Application, planning

permission would have been refused on the following grounds - as the proposed development would result in the introduction of incongruous, dominating, and visually prominent structures which would:-

- a) have an unacceptable impact on the character and value of the Mynydd Margam/Margam Mountain registered landscape of special historic interest;
- b) have a visually dominant impact that would have a significant harmful effect on the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument Ergyd Isaf Round Barrows (GM160);
- c) have unacceptable adverse landscape and visual impacts, primarily on the settlements of Margam and Goytre, and on the setting of the Grade I Registered Park and Garden at Margam.

Having regard to the location of the site outside of the boundary of the Strategic Search Area F, both as defined by TAN 8 and by the refined boundary within the Authority's approved Interim Planning Guidance: Wind Turbine Development (2008), and the unacceptable landscape and visual impacts, and impacts on historic assets, it was considered that the proposal would cause a degree of harm that would not be outweighed by the benefits of the scheme in terms of wind energy generation. As a consequence the development would be contrary to Planning Policy Wales (2014), TAN8: Planning for Renewable Energy (2005), Policies 1, 5, 6, 19, GC1, GC2, ENV1, ENV3 and IE6 of the Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan, and the Neath Port Talbot Interim Planning Guidance: Wind Turbine Development (2008).

(Note: with regard to the amendment sheet referred to above and attached as an Appendix, on which the Chair had allowed sufficient time for Members to read, in respect of an application item on the published agenda, the Chairman had permitted urgent circulation/consideration thereof at today's meeting, the particular reasons and the circumstances being not to further delay the planning process, unless the Committee itself wanted to defer any applications and to ensure that Members take all extra relevant information into account before coming to any decision at the meeting).

PLANNING COMMITTEE

17TH FEBRUARY 2015

AMENDMENT SHEET

**APPEAL AGAINST NON-DETERMINATION: STANCE REPORT
LAND AT MYNYDD BROMBIL**

It has been noted by Officers that the data in respect of the current position in SSA F has mistakenly included 'Llynfi Afan Renewable Energy Park' (6 MW) in addition to the Mynydd y Gelli / Llynfi Afan wind farm (24MW), even though it forms part of the larger 24MW windfarm. Accordingly to ensure the report does not 'double count' that part of the Llynfi Afan wind farm which lies within Bridgend CBC, Tables 1 and 2 in the report (and the text thereafter which refers to the capacities) is amended as follows to omit that scheme from the table and update relevant figures by ± 6 MW to reflect its omission: -

Current Position in respect of SSA F

Based on the WG 2014 Update (but with figures adjusted to reflect the current position in February 2015 based on additional information available from NPT and other surrounding Authorities), the current position in SSA F is as follows:-

	Development	Max. Capacity (MW)
Built / operational (built capacity)	Ffynnon Oer	32 (included in WG 2014 update but now noted to be Pre-TAN8 so should not be counted)
	Maerdy	24
	PYW: Pant-y-wal	25
	PYW: Mynydd Pwllyrheb / Fforch Nest (BCBC)	10
	PYW: Fforch Nest (RCT)	17.5
	Ferndale (5km buffer)	6.4
	Taff Ely (5km buffer)	9
	Mynydd Portref (5km buffer)	9.35
TOTAL BUILT/ OPERATIONAL		101.25MW (76.5MW exc. sites wholly within 5km buffer)
Consented (maximum capacity)	Mynydd y Gelli / Llynfi Afan	2424
	Pen y Cymoedd	228MW (299 max but under construction so 228MW counted by NPT)
	Hirwaun (Mynydd Bwllfa) * under construction	22.5
TOTAL CONSENTED		280274.5MW
TOTAL BUILT/ OPERATIONAL AND CONSENTED		381375.75MW 357MW 351MW (excluding 5km buffer)

Table 1: Strategic Search Area ‘F’ Developments and Capacities – Built/Operational and Consented

From Table 1, it is clear that the Built and Consented Output of 375.75MW is already greater than the indicative capacity (290 MW) in TAN 8 for SSA F and is closing in on the maximum capacity (430 MW) identified in the Ministerial Letter dated July 2011.

The **375.75MW** of capacity which has been approved or is operational (and this takes Pen y Cymoedd as contributing 228MW not the maximum 299MW which was approved) equates to **87.2%** of the 430MW overall capacity for SSA F. Even if you discount the wind farms which lie within the ‘5km buffer’ (24.75MW total) – which it is considered is not appropriate but is nevertheless often argued by the energy companies - **351MW** of capacity has been approved or is operational, which equates to **81.6 %** of the 430MW overall capacity for SSA F.

Moreover, as can be seen from Table 2 below, whilst the Griffiths maximum capacity has yet to be reached, and the proposed development will make a positive contribution in this regard, opportunities exist elsewhere within the SSA to meet the 54.25MW shortfall (or 79MW shortfall if you exclude sites wholly within the 5km buffer).

In Planning (maximum capacity)	Pant-y-Wal Wind Farm extension (BCBC)	36MW
	Foel Trawsant (Pennant Walters)	39MW
	Abergorki (RCT)	7.5MW
	Melin Court	18MW
	Mynydd Brombil (subject of current appeal) (5km buffer)	12.5 MW
	Mynydd Portref Extension (5km buffer) *RCT resolution to approve Dec 2014	12MW
	Headwind Taff Ely (5km buffer) * RCT resolution to grant April 2013 (awaiting s106)	17.5MW
SUB-TOTAL IN PLANNING		142.5MW (101.5 excluding 5km buffer)
Total POTENTIAL	EXCLUDING 5KM BUFFER	452.5MW (351 + 101.5MW)
	INCLUDING 5KM BUFFER	518.25MW (375.75 + 142.5)

Table 2: Strategic Search Area ‘F’ Developments ‘In Planning’ and Capacities, plus total overall potential capacity

CHAIRMAN