



**STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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Head of Planning: Philip Skill  
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Marcus Beddoe  
12 Melcombe Close  
Station House  
London  
NW1 6JJ

Tel: Helpline: 01453 754442  
Our Ref: 2011/0622/EIAS

10 August 2011

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended). Circular 02/99 "Environmental Impact Assessment".**

**Assessment is not Required**

Address: Wind Turbine At Sharpness Docks, Bridge Road, Sharpness, Berkeley.

Application Type: Environmental Impact Assessment Screen

Description: Scoping request for wind turbine development.

**Reasons for decision**

**COMMENTS**

In general the District Council is happy with the proposed methodology set out in the scoping report. However there are a few points that the Council would like to see.

1. With regard to cultural heritage the applicant should liaise with the District Council's conservation officer as well as the County Archaeologist and English Heritage.
2. The archaeological impacts should be fully researched prior to submission of an application. The scope of any site investigation should be agreed with Charles Parry, County Archaeologist and the ensuing report should form part of the ES, with any "mitigation" included as part of the design/location of the proposed development.
3. There should be an assessment of waste minimisation such that waste is minimised at design, construction, operational life and decommissioning stages.
4. Collision modelling must be expanded to cover all species to inform the likely significance of impact of the turbine on birds. Monitoring of the impact of the turbine on birds must be included.
5. The significance of impact on bats must be assessed, and the monitoring of impacts during the operational phase should be set out.

**HUMAN RIGHTS**

In compiling this recommendation we have given full consideration to all aspects of the Human Rights Act 1998 in relation to the applicant and/or the occupiers of any neighbouring or affected properties. In particular, regard has been had to Article 8 of the ECHR (Right to Respect for private and family life) and the requirement to ensure that any interference with the right in this Article is both permissible and proportionate. On analysing the issues raised by the application no particular matters, other to those referred to in this report, warranted any different action to that recommended.

Yours sincerely,

**Philip Skill**  
**Head of Planning**



David Hagg: Chief Executive





29<sup>th</sup> June 2011

Our ref: 23942

Your ref: 2011/0622/EIAS



Pippa Moore  
Principal Planning Officer  
Stroud District Council

By email

Amanda Grundy  
Natural England  
First Floor  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Bristol BS1 6EB

T 0300 0601454  
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Dear Ms Moore

### **Wind Turbine at Sharpness Docks, Bridge Road, Sharpness, Berkley Scoping request for wind turbine development**

Thank you for consulting Natural England and seeking our views on the need for, and possible scope of, an Environmental Impact Assessment for the above proposal.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

#### **Need for EIA**

The proposal is for a single wind turbine with an expected blade tip height of 122m and other associated works, including a substation building, access and underground cabling, to be sited on land adjacent to the Severn Estuary.

We agree with the applicant's conclusion, set out in their Scoping Report, that the development falls within the threshold for Schedule 2 development, and that the nature, scale and sensitive location of the proposal has the potential to have significant impacts on birds associated with the Severn Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. For this reason the applicant has not sought an EIA screening opinion from the Council.

#### **Scope of EIA**

Natural England is satisfied that the Scoping Report has identified the environmental issues associated with the development proposal that we would wish to see addressed in an environmental impact assessment. In particular, the potential ecological impacts on the Severn Estuary SPA/ Ramsar site and the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat SAC, and possible landscape and visual impacts on the Cotswolds AONB and Wye Valley AONB.

#### **Birds**

The Scoping Report outlines the pre-application discussions that have taken place between Natural England and other consultees regarding possible impacts on the Severn Estuary European Site. This exercise appears to have resulted in a well defined and thorough bird survey effort.

We note that 106 bird species have been recorded within the survey area, and that these include 24 target species, such as the mallard, shelduck, widgeon, lapwing and whooper swan, which were seen using/flying over the proposal site itself, some at turbine height. We are pleased therefore that collision modelling of key target species has been done and that this exercise will be expanded to cover all target species to inform

assessment of the potential impact to birds as part of the EIA. We would expect this information to be particularly relevant for determining the likely significance of effects on the Severn Estuary European Site. We also recommend that the EIA includes an explanation of how future monitoring of the effects of the turbine on birds would be undertaken should the application gain planning consent.

## **Bats**

The proposal site is approximately 6 km east of the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat SAC, designated for its internationally important populations of greater and lesser horseshoe bats, and is approximately 12.5 km west of the Woodschester Park SSSI, designated in part for the nationally important breeding colony of greater horseshoe bats. Bats are known to migrate between the SAC and SSSI across the River Severn, potentially crossing the proposal site. We are therefore pleased to note that bat surveys have been undertaken in line with Natural England guidance to inform the assessment of possible impacts of the development on bats.

## **Landscape**

The proposal site lies within the Severn Vale landscape character area, is approximately 7 km from the Cotswolds AONB, 10 km from the Wye Valley AONB and is close to a range of Parks and Gardens of special interest. In addition, there is a network of Public Rights of Way within the vicinity of the site, including the Severn Way long distance path and the Cotswold Way National Trail. Landscape and visual impacts on these sites and routes and on users of these will need to be assessed.

Given the relatively low lying character of the Severn Vale, described in the Scoping Report as “a diverse range of flat and gently undulating landscapes with little woodland giving rise to open views”, the zone of visual influence of the proposed turbine is likely to be extensive. Natural England would expect a landscape and visual impact assessment to be undertaken as part of the EIA, in accordance with the Landscape Institute’s Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. We also recommend that the AONBs are consulted to inform such an assessment, for example on the selection of representative view points.

## **Habitat Regulations Assessment**

Finally, as previously mentioned, the proposal site is close to the Severn Estuary European Site. If a scheme is likely to have a significant effect on a European Site it is the responsibility of the ‘competent authority’ to carry out a Habitat Regulations Assessment of the scheme to determine whether it will have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.

We therefore welcome the applicant’s intention to undertake an initial screening process to help the Council determine whether the proposal would be likely to result in a significant effect on any European Sites and, if necessary, to provide additional information about possible impacts to inform an assessment of these, in line with the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Natural England would be pleased to advise the Council further on this in due course.

I hope this letter is clear and helpful, but please contact me if you would like to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Grundy  
Lead Adviser, Sustainable Land Use

**Moore, Pippa**

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**From:** NIBLETT, Robert [Robert.NIBLETT@gloucestershire.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 07 June 2011 10:32  
**To:** Moore, Pippa  
**Cc:** KENNISON, Gary; PARRY, Charles  
**Subject:** Wind Turbines Scoping Requests

Hello Pippa

For convenience I have set out Gloucestershire County Council's (GCC) response to both Scoping Opinion requests in this email.

**1. Wind turbine at Sharpness Docks, Bridge Road, Sharpness, Berkeley (1.5MW, 80m hub height)****Ecology**

There is potential in this location for this single large wind turbine to disturb or physically harm birds and/or bats. In addition birds represent a designated feature of the adjacent Severn Estuary European Marine Site and bats (as well as being European Protected Species) are a feature of the Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC on the other side of the Severn Estuary from Sharpness. Consideration of impact on a European Protected Species and more than one European Site is therefore required. In conclusion there are likely to be significant ecological effects arising from this proposal and therefore an EIA should be requested under the 1999 Regulations. An Environment Statement (ES) should therefore be submitted with this application and it should include a chapter on ecology

**Cultural Heritage**

I advise that I have checked the proposed development site against the County Historic Environment Record. It is located at the historic site of Sharpness Docks, in close proximity to Sharpness Old Dock which is designated as a Conservation Area, and in an area where several Listed Buildings are present. The proposed development may therefore have an adverse impact on heritage assets relating to the historic docks.

I note from the scoping report that the impact on Cultural Heritage is to be initially addressed by means of a desk-based assessment and that further evaluation will be undertaken as necessary. In my view such an approach is broadly appropriate.

However, in my view any such further evaluation should be undertaken as part of the EIA process, and the results incorporated within any Environmental Statement prepared for this scheme (and therefore not as a mitigation measure as proposed in paragraph 6.66 of the scoping report).

Lastly, in view of the presence of the nearby Conservation Area and Listed Buildings, it would in my view be appropriate for liaison to be undertaken with Stroud District Council's Conservation Officer (the scoping report currently proposes liaison only with English Heritage and the Local Authority Archaeologist).

**Waste Planning**

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Any major planning application (over 1ha) that is submitted for this site will require a waste minimisation statement as set out within the Gloucestershire County Council Waste Minimisation SPD. The waste minimisation statement requests consideration of sustainable waste management at the following stages; project planning and design stage, construction activities, operational life.

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**Wind turbine at Hay Lane, Horsley, Stroud (50KW, 25m hub height)**

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**Ecology**

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There is potential in this location within the Cotswolds AONB for a single wind turbine of this size to disturb or physically harm birds and/or bats. It is close to woodland including a Key Wildlife Site called Wickley Wood. The potential of bat strike, due to highly suitable habitat being present in the vicinity, is likely to be high and so an ecological survey and accompanying report is needed. The survey will need to be assessed to conclude if there is a likelihood of an adverse impact to local bat populations. We note that the exact location is about 50m from the nearest piece of woodland and that this is often recommended as the minimum distance a turbine should be located from bat habitat.

There could therefore be significant effects on biodiversity arising from this proposal but if this is the only concern then instead of an EIA being requested another acceptable option is that the application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) that suitably informs the details of the proposals in accordance with: Natural England Technical Information Note TIN051 and Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEM) 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the United Kingdom'.

**Archaeology**

I advise that I have checked the County Historic Environment Record and there is no archaeology known within the proposed development area or the immediate vicinity. In my view no archaeological issues arise in connection with this proposal.

Therefore I recommend that consideration of archaeological impact may be omitted from any Environmental Impact Assessment undertaken in connection with this scheme.

If you would like to discuss any of the points raised in this letter please do not hesitate to get contact me.

Thank you

Rob Niblett

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Ms P Moore  
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Please ask for: Customer Service Centre  
Tel: 01454 868004  
Our ref: ET11/0685  
(Please quote at all times)  
Your ref:  
Date: 8th June 2011

**By email**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 1999  
CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

Dear Ms Moore

**LOCATION:** Sharpness Docks Bridge Road Sharpness Berkeley Gloucestershire  
**DESCRIPTION:** Consultation on wind turbine  
**REFERENCE NO:** ET11/0685

I refer to your letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> May 2011 regarding whether a proposal for a wind turbine should be subject to an Environmental Statement.

I have reviewed the Scoping Report and in my opinion the main cross-boundary issues would be the impact of the proposed wind turbine upon ecology and landscape character. In view of the distance between the site and the authority boundary it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to 'significant' environmental effects within South Gloucestershire. It is therefore considered that the relevant issues can be dealt with via technical studies.

I would like to point out that South Gloucestershire has recently dealt with a number of wind turbine applications, which have either been approved or are subject to an appeal. It is considered pertinent to consider the cumulative effects of these schemes in any planning application.

- Erection of 4no. 127m high wind turbines - Stoneyard Lane, Oldbury-on-Severn – Refused, currently awaiting appeal (Ref: PT10/2399/F)
- Erection of 3 No. 100 metre high wind turbines - Land At Old Gloucester Road, Earthcott Green, Nr Alveston – Approved (Ref: PT08/1658/F)

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on 01454 863131.

Yours sincerely

**Peter Rowe**  
**Planning Officer**

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## Moore, Pippa

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**From:** Weaver, Robert  
**Sent:** 22 July 2011 12:57  
**To:** Moore, Pippa  
**Subject:** wind turbine Sharpness Docks ref: 2011/0622/EIAS

Dear Pippa,

I was recently consulted on the proposed development for a wind turbine at Sharpness. Whilst your memo discussed assessment of a 'recent screening opinion' I think from reviewing the information, the matter actually relates to an EIA scoping report.

Having reviewed the information submitted, I can confirm that from an environmental and ecological perspective, I am satisfied with the measures proposed to meet the requirements of an EIA Schedule 2 assessment. I look forward to receiving the specific information.

I have already received a noise report and will come back to you with my thoughts on this.

Regards

Robert Weaver  
Environmental Protection Manager  
01453 754489

