

**Hampshire County Council
Director of Economy, Transport & Environment**

Applicant: Draconids Energy Limited

Installation of a communications building, Auxiliary Transformer and CCTV cameras at Tavells Lane, Marchwood, Hampshire (Application No. 13/10151)

(Received: 1 February 2013)

General

Planning permission is sought for the installation of a communications building, auxiliary transformer and pole mounted CCTV cameras at Tavells Lane, Marchwood. This planning application has been submitted as additional items of equipment are required on the site which were not shown on the approved layout. The location of the CCTV cameras and additional buildings are detailed on plan *GENERAL PLANT RevB* dated 13/03/13. The original planning permission was sought by a different company to the company who now own and are developing the site. Consequently alterations to the planning permission are considered necessary by them to ensure efficient running of the site and maximum energy generation.

The communications building is required to house the system for on-going remote operational monitoring of the performance of the solar farm and security system. In addition to this the building will be used for on-site storage of spare parts and tools which will be required for the upkeep and maintenance of the site. As detailed on plan *COMM BUILDING* dated January 2013 the communications building is to measure 3.0m x 3.6m x 2.4m (h) and is to be coloured dark olive green (RAL 6013).

The CCTV cameras are required to ensure the site is insurable. The requirement for CCTV cameras was identified in the 2012 planning permission title however specific details of their design and location were not shown on the layout. There are to be 21 CCTV cameras and poles installed on site. Each CCTV pole will measure 3.5m in height and be grey in colour. The camera house on top of the pole will be white. The locations of the pole mounted CCTV cameras are detailed on the plan *SECURITY dated January 2103*. The CCTV cameras are to work on motion sensors, it is not the intention that the cameras will be constantly recording. When movement is detected along the fence line, or within the site, the cameras are to send a live feed to the appointed security contractors who will determine whether there is a security threat or not. The cameras are to be focused on the fence line and will not therefore not rotate to gain views off site. There is no requirement for lighting during the hours of darkness as the cameras use infra-red technology.

The Distribution Network Operator (DNO) requires low voltage electricity supply for the substations to provide internal lighting. This is required for health and safety reasons to ensure any faults can be addressed during hours of darkness. The addition of an Auxiliary Transformer is therefore required to provide the "step down" in the voltage. As shown by plan KHV12-161-001 revB the Auxiliary Transformer is to measure 1.55 x 1.35m x 1.05m (h) and the transformer itself will be surrounded by a 1.8m high palisade fence with a width of 2.34m. The Auxiliary Transformer is to be coloured grey and the fence surrounding the Transformer is to be galvanised steel which will remain silver/grey in colour. The fencing of the transformer is required to ensure the safety of any site visitors.

The construction traffic associated with the installation of the CCTV cameras and auxiliary transformer will use the northern site access through the quarry, not the Tavells Lane entrance. Once operational the Tavells Lane entrance which was formalised by planning permission 12/98402 will be used by maintenance vehicles. Parking of these vehicles will be on the site and off the local highway.

Planning History

Planning permission was granted by the Minerals Planning Authority on 8 May 2012 (12/98402) for the construction of a solar park, to include the installation of solar panels to generate up to 5MW of electricity, with transformer housing, security fencing and cameras, landscaping and other associated works.

A Non Material Amendment application was approved on 5 March 2013 (NMA/2013/0023). The approved NMA sought the following amendments:

- Removal of panels from areas north of trees within the centre of the site and near the south west corner of the site. Movement of these removed panels to elsewhere on the site. Slight increase in the height of the panels from 2.21m to 2.36m.
- Distribution Network Operator (DNO) substation (previously named the 11kV sub-station in the approved layout) to be relocated to outside of the fence line but behind the existing vegetation boundary and within the red lined area.
- Relocation of the client side substation (named the Control Room on the approved layout) to the east to the opposite side of the access. The client side substation dimensions have been altered to be 2.65m wide, 3.25m length and 2.25m in height and a dark olive green (RAL colour 6013).
- Reduction in the number of inverters on the site from 5 to 4, a relocation of the inverters to ensure that the array is able to function more efficiency with less energy transmission losses. Inverter 1,2 and 3 will be 8.4m in length, 2.3m wide and 2.2m height, inverter 4 to be 7.45m in length, 2.6m width and 3.15m in height. These will also be finished in a dark olive green (RAL colour 6013). Transformers will be located within the inverter cabinets. The distance of the inverters from the site boundary closest to residential properties has been increased.
- Alteration in the design of the boundary fencing. A reduction in the height from 2.4m wire mesh fence to 1.9m deer fencing.
- Revised landscaping plan to remove the provision for the two additional trees near the access to the site due to the shading on the solar panels. There will continue to be no removal of existing vegetation.

Development Plan

The relevant development plan document is the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (2007). The appropriate policies for consideration are DC3 (Impact on Landscape and Townscape), DC6 (Highways), DC8 (Pollution, health, quality of life and amenity) and Policy DC12 (Restoration and Aftercare).

Consultations

Councillor Harrison
Marchwood Parish Council

Has been consulted, no comments received.
Support the planning application. However, assurance is needed that the removal of the transformer housing to the fencing will not increase any potential noise levels.

Environmental Health New Forest	Following discussion with the planning agents for the development, the additional email received which confirms that no additional noise will be created by this application. Therefore EHO have no comments to make on the application.
New Forest District Council Environment Agency Natural England	Raise no objection to the planning application. Have been consulted, no comments received. Are satisfied that the development proposals will avoid impacts upon the interest features of the area subject to the inclusion of conditions being attached to the planning permission to ensure best practice is in place for operating machinery to reduce unnecessary noise, and that there be no percussive piling or works with heavy machinery occur within the waterfowl over-wintering period, 1 October to 31 March inclusive. Heavy machinery constitutes, for example, use of pneumatic drills, excavators, dumper trucks and lorries.
New Forest National Park Authority Highway Authority	Have been consulted, no comments received. Raise no objection to the proposals subject to the inclusion of a condition to ensure mud is not transported from vehicles wheels onto the highway.
Southampton International Airport	Raise no objection to the planning application.

Representations

Six letters of objection have been received in relation to this planning application. The main planning issues raised are:

- Environmental Impact
- Loss of privacy
- Visual impact of the security cameras due to insufficient screening
- Light pollution
- Security of the site
- Loss of agricultural land

Loss in property value has also been raised as an issue but this is not a planning matter.

Commentary

The concerns of the residents along Tavells Lane are noted. The concerns regarding the potential for lighting from the cameras resulting in light pollution, and the potential for the cameras to rotate and view areas outside of the site have been considered. Due to the technology of the cameras and their installation there will be no requirement for lighting and the area of view for the cameras will be fixed, focused only on the sites fence line. Therefore light pollution will not occur and there will be no loss of privacy from cameras operating within the field. The proposal thereby accords with policy DC8.

The potential environmental impact and the loss of agricultural land was considered when planning permission 12/98402 was determined. The installation of the cameras and the siting of the two additional buildings will not have an adverse impact on the environment. The proposal is associated with an extant planning permission which was considered appropriate under policy DC12.

When considering the visual impact of the new buildings it is considered that they are to be sited in such a location and to be of such a colour that they will not have a significant impact on the character of the area. In addition to this there is a substantial belt of planting along Tavells Lane which is to be retained. The camera poles are to be of a height that could be seen from public viewpoints. Notwithstanding the slight views of the tops of the camera poles and houses the need for the cameras has been appropriately demonstrated and it is considered that the proposed colour of the poles and houses are sympathetic to the area and will to a certain extent blend in with the surrounding colours and skyline. Therefore, whilst elements of the proposal could be visible from the public realm and this may be to a greater extent during certain times of the year, it is considered that the development would not have an adverse visual impact. The planning application accords with policy DC3.

On the basis that the vehicles entering the leaving the site follow the approved route agreed under the extant planning permission 12/98402 and their wheels are cleaned prior to exiting onto the highway it is considered that the proposal accords with policy DC6 as there will not be a significant highway safety impact.

It is recommended that planning permission is granted for a temporary period of time.

Recommendation

That permission be granted subject to the following reason for approval and conditions:

Reasons for Approval

It is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with the development plan (DC12) (summary attached) would not have an adverse visual impact (DC3) and would not have an impact on the amenity of local residents and would cause light pollution (DC8) and would be acceptable in terms of highway safety and convenience (DC6).

Conditions

Commencement

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91(as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Plans and Particulars

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out and completed strictly in accordance with the approved plans, specifications and written particulars identified within the decision notice.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Timescale

3. The development hereby permitted shall be for a limited period only, expiring on 31 May 2037 or when the use ceases, whichever is the sooner. At the expiration of this period the CCTV poles and cameras, communications building and auxiliary transformer shall be removed and the land be reinstated to its former condition within 6 months.

Reason: To ensure the use of the land is returned to solely agriculture/grazing.

Hours of Working

4. No deliveries or construction work associated with this permission shall be carried out other than during the following hours: between 0700 and 1800 hours Mondays to Fridays; 0700 and 1300 hours Saturdays.

Reason: In the interests of local amenity.

Highways

5. For the duration of the development measures shall be taken to clean vehicles leaving the site to prevent mud and spoil from being deposited on the public highway. These measures shall be implemented before the development commences and thereafter maintained. No vehicle shall leave the site unless its wheels have been cleaned sufficiently to prevent mud and spoil being carried on to the public highway.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety.

6. Access to the site for construction workers shall only be via the existing quarry entrance and internal haul road as detailed on plan H.0260_11-A approved under planning permission 12/98402.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and in the interest of local amenity.

Landscape

7. No trees or shrubs shall be removed from the southern boundary of the site, adjacent to Tavells Lane.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

Informative

1. Given the bird sensitivities in the area, we would recommend that works with heavy machinery avoid the overwintering period (October to March inclusive). This is in order to avoid disturbance to overwintering birds. Best practice should be in place for operating machinery to reduce unnecessary noise.
2. In determining this planning application, the Mineral Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application. This approach has been taken positively and proactively in accordance with the requirement in the NPPF, as set out in the Town and

Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No.2) Order 2012.

Case Officer
Kristina King

Date.....10/04/2013.....

Authorised on behalf of the Director of the Economy, Transport & Environment

.....P Chadwick.....

Date.....10/04/2013.....

Annexe to Reasons for Conditions
(as required by Article 31 of the Town and Country Planning
(Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010)

HAMPSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE CORE STRATEGY (ADOPTED 2007)

Policy DC3 – Impact on Landscape and Townscape

Minerals and waste development will only be permitted if due regard is given to the likely visual impact of the proposed development and its impact on, and the need to maintain and enhance, the distinctive character of the landscape or townscape. If necessary, additional design, landscaping, planting and screening, including planting in advance of the commencement of the development, should be proposed.

Policy DC6 – Highways

Major mineral extractions, landfills and ‘strategic’ recycling, aggregate processing and recovery and treatment facilities, will be permitted provided they have a suitable access to and/or route to the minerals and waste lorry route as illustrated on the Key Diagram.

In all cases, minerals and waste development will only be permitted if it pays due regard to the likely volume and nature of traffic that would be generated by the proposal and the suitability of the proposed access to the site and of the road network that would be affected. Consideration should be given to highways capacity, road and pedestrian safety, congestion and environmental impact, and whether any highway improvements are required and whether these could be carried out satisfactorily without causing unacceptable environmental impacts.

Policy DC8 – Pollution, health, quality of life and amenity

Minerals and waste development will only be permitted if due regard is given to the pollution and amenity impacts on the residents and users of the locality and there is unlikely to be an unacceptable impact on health and/or the quality of life of occupants of nearby dwellings and other sensitive properties. Where necessary minerals and waste developments should include mitigation measures, such as buffer zones between the site and such properties.

Policy DC12 – Restoration and Aftercare

Mineral extraction, landfill and other appropriate developments will not be permitted unless there is satisfactory provision for the restoration of the site, within a reasonable timescale, for an after use consistent with the general planning objectives of the area.

The restoration and after care of sites should seek to meet two or more of the following planning objectives:

- a) Improving public access to the countryside, including public access for disabled people and recreation;
- b) Use for management of water resources and/or flooding management;

- c) The improvement of biodiversity;
- d) Use as back-up grazing;
- e) Return to agriculture, forestry or other 'open' use recreational facilities.

Proposals for mineral extraction and landfill must include provision for at least five years of aftercare following restoration of the site.

Restoration proposals for mineral workings in Aerodrome Safeguarding Zones should take account of the need for progressive working and restoration, to prevent open water bodies becoming bird roosts.