

Agenda Item A14	Committee Date 2 November 2009	Application Number 09/00837/FUL
Application Site Lancaster University Bailrigg Lane Lancaster Lancashire	Proposal Erection of 80m Anemometry Mast on a guide tower for a temporary period of one year	
Name of Applicant Lancaster University	Name of Agent Miss Joanne Peaks	
Decision Target Date 29 October 2009	Reason For Delay Committee Cycle	
Case Officer	Mr Karl Glover	
Departure	No	
Summary of Recommendation	Grant Permission with conditions	

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

- 1.1 The proposed 80m Anemometry Mast is to be located on the eastern side of the main Lancaster University Campus on a section of agricultural land separated by the M6 motorway and bounded to the east by Hazelrigg Lane. The site lies and is accessed approximately 300m from the existing Lancaster University Environmental Science Meteorological Station which comprises of two classroom buildings, an existing 25m high lattice meteorological mast and a mobile phone mast. The surrounding land is open in appearance with substantially mature tree belts to the north, south and western boundaries with the land levels decreasing from Hazelrigg Lane towards the application site.
- 1.2 The surrounding and adjoining land is mainly used for agriculture with most boundaries consisting of hawthorn hedgerows with access gates leading to wider open fields. On the eastern side of Hazelrigg Lane is a boarding kennels with a residential dwelling known as Andalucia to the rear. 300m south of the kennels is Hazelrigg Barn and Hazelrigg Mews with a residential dwelling opposite known as Eastrigg. There are therefore few immediate neighbouring residents.
- 1.3 The application site is allocated as Countryside Area within the Lancaster District Local Plan. It lies approximately 1 mile from the nearest boundary of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 Lancaster University seek a one year temporary planning consent for an 80 metre high Anemometry Mast. The mast will be supported by four sets of seven guyed wires which are attached to reinforced ground anchors at 25m and 50m from the base of the mast.
- 2.2 The purpose for the mast is to record wind information by means of sensors including anemometers 10m, 40m and 80m above ground level. This information is then fed to a data logger at the base of

the mast which collects and stores data. No hard standing or foundations are proposed as part of the application.

3.0 Site History

3.1 None relevant to this application

4.0 Consultation Responses

4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory consultees:

Statutory Consultee	Response
Civil Aviation Authority	Support the proposal however a condition is recommended that applicant contacts the MoD related to means of illumination and to consult the Emergency Services (Air Ambulance)
Ministry Of Defence (MoD)	Support the proposal however it is requested that the applicant contacts the MoD to provide information relating to the mast prior to the development.
Environmental Health Services	No observations.
Lancashire County Council Planning	No observations.
Lancashire County Council Highways	No observations.
Ellel Parish Council	No comments received within consultation timescale.
Scotforth Parish Council	No comments received within consultation timescale.
Royal Lancaster Infirmary Emergency Services	No comments received within consultation timescale.

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 One letter of objection has been received on the grounds that the development is unnecessary for the University and that students and staff at the University should be encouraged to be more responsible regarding energy usage.

5.2 One letter of support for the mast has been received encouraging the use of renewable energy.

6.0 Principal Development Plan Policies

6.1 Amongst relevant national planning policies are National **Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 22** - Planning for Renewable Energy, **PPS 7** – Sustainable Development for Rural Areas, and **PPS 1** – Delivering Sustainable Development.

6.2 Regional Spatial Strategy Policies **EM15** and **EM17** are relevant also. EM15 sets out the framework for sustainable energy for the north-west and stipulates that plans and strategies should promote sustainable energy production and consumption in accordance with the principles of the energy hierarchy and within the regional sustainable energy strategy. EM17 supports the development of renewable energy schemes. It states that in line with the North West Sustainable Energy Strategy, by 2010 at least 10% (rising to at least 15% by 2015 and at least 20% by 2020) of the electricity supplied in the North West should be provided from renewable energy sources.

6.3 Lancaster District Core Strategy Policies **ER7**, **ER1** and **E1** are relevant. ER7 seeks to encourage the use of renewable technologies; ER1 Seeks to maximise the regeneration benefits to the Lancaster District of growth at Lancaster University; and E1 seeks to improve the Districts Environment and impact on the Landscape.

6.4 Lancaster District Local Plan (Saved) Policies **E3**, **E4** and **E22** are relevant. E3 states development within or adjoining the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) shall not have any detrimental impact on the views into and across the AONB. E4 states that development will only

be permitted where it is in scale and keeping with the character and natural beauty of the landscape and is appropriate to its surroundings in terms of siting, scale design, materials external appearance and landscaping. E22 was partially superseded by the adoption of the Core Strategy, but it states that proposals for the development of wind turbines will be assessed against their impact on the character of the landscape.

7.0 Comment and Analysis

- 7.1 The key issue for Members to consider in determining the application is the visual impact on the Countryside Area and whether the proposal satisfies the criteria set out in Lancaster District local Plan (LDLP) Policy E4.
- 7.2 With regard to compliance with LDLP Policy E4 the proposed mast at this location will have some visual impact, mindful of the substantial height of the mast at 80 metres; it only has a diameter of just 219mm at the base tapering to 107mm at the mast tip and has a slim, lightweight appearance. As such it is considered to be of a design, which minimises its impact on the landscape character and quality of the area.
- 7.3 Furthermore, when viewed from Hazelrigg lane the mast is likely to only be seen on the skyline against one existing meteorological mast (lattice tower) and one telecommunications mast which is sited approximately 300m to the east of the site within the Lancaster University Environmental Science complex; both of which are seen to be bulkier structures. In this instance, there can be no doubt that an 80m high mast at this location will have some visual impact but given the temporary nature and slim dimensions, the mast is unlikely to be significantly visually intrusive.
- 7.4 The masts impact upon the character and landscape quality of the near by AONB is seen to be very minimal as it is a significant distance from the boundary which lies approximately 1 mile from the application site and is therefore seen to be in accordance with LDLP E3.
- 7.5 The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has stated that they do not feel the mast will constitute an aviation obstruction; however as the proposed 80m mast will be the tallest structure in the immediate vicinity the Ministry Of Defence (MOD) have stated that a condition is required should permission be granted stating that the applicant/developer must notify the Defence & Imagery Agency with information relating to the precise location of the development, the date that construction will take place and be completed and the details of any means of illumination.
- 7.6 A condition is attached stating that if the means of illumination is required by the MOD then details shall be provided and agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to any development being carried out on site. Should illumination be required it is highly unlikely to have any significant adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity due to its minimalistic scale.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 An 80m high mast in this location will have a visual impact, but given the temporary nature and slim dimensions, the mast is unlikely to be a significantly visual intrusion. Therefore this application is recommended for approval subject to a series of conditions

Recommendation

That Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions listed below and delegation of the application to the Head of Planning Services to account for outstanding consultation responses from aviation stakeholders.

1. Temporary permission for 12 months
2. Development to accord to submitted plans
3. Removal of mast and associated elements (footings, anchor points) within 1 year of commencement of any work on site and the landscape to be reinstated to its original form.
4. Details of any means of illumination to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation.

Human Rights Act

This recommendation has been reached after consideration of the provisions of The Human Rights Act. Unless otherwise stated in this report, the issues arising do not appear to be of such magnitude to override the responsibility of the City Council to regulate land use for the benefit of the community as a whole, in accordance with national law.

Background Papers

None