

Agenda Item	A7
Application Number	24/00834/FUL
Proposal	Installation of a temporary coast sense column
Application site	Scalestones Point Marine Road East Morecambe Lancashire
Applicant	Mr Graham Lumbery
Agent	Mr Steve Chapman MRTPI
Case Officer	Ms Sophie Taylor
Departure	
Summary of Recommendation	Approval, subject to conditions

1.0 Application Site and Setting

- 1.1 The site which forms the subject of this application is Scalestones Point located along Marine Road East in Morecambe. Scalestones Point extends slightly into the bay, close to Morecambe Golf Club. The development would be located on the grassed area located just off the A5105.
- 1.2 The proposal is located within the Open Countryside and partly within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. Flood zone 2 and 3 are adjacent to the site but the site itself does not fall within them. Morecambe Bay is located in close proximity to the RAMSAR, Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation and SSSI designations.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 This application seeks temporary planning permission for the erection of a coastal monitoring radar mast and equipment box. The column would be based on a galvanised steel lighting column design with a height of approx. 16.5 metres including the lighting and radar equipment. The associated equipment box is to be located adjacent to the column and measures 1.6 metres high.

3.0 Site History

- 3.1 A number of relevant applications relating to this site have previously been received by the Local Planning Authority. These include:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
05/00633/FUL	Siting of a sculpture	Permitted

4.0 Consultation Responses

4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and internal consultees:

Consultee	Response
Parish Council	No response.
Engineering Team	No response.
Environment Agency	No response.
Natural England	No objection. The proposal is not considered to have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.
Environmental Health	No response.

4.2 The following responses have been received from members of the public:

1 objection has been received from members of the public raising the following material planning concerns:

- Insufficient information regarding the applicant, the purpose and how long it will be in situ.

This issue has been addressed in the subsequent report.

5.0 Analysis

5.1 The key considerations in the assessment of this application are:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Landscape
- Ecology

5.2 **Principle of Development** (NPPF Section 2. Achieving sustainable development.)

5.2.1 The development forms part of the Our Future Coasts project and is one of 14 sites across the North-West coastline. The programme facilitates the systematic collection of coastal monitoring data to inform sustainable decision making on the coast. The programme will provide information to improve understanding of coastal processes, with a particular focus on understanding channel movements and evolution. This information will be used to assist coastal management to make informed decisions on how to protect the coast from erosion and flooding. The monitoring has previously taken place in a mobile format based around a shipping container. The development is intended to be temporary for a period of 3 years. The applicant has set out that the equipment needs a good line of sight to the beach and sea and must be mounted at a sufficiently high elevation to ensure the best possible data collection. The site selected is based on the optimum location for the operation of the equipment. The principle of such development is supported. As the proposal is intended to be temporary in nature, a condition requiring the development to be removed and site restored within the specified temporary period is recommended.

5.3 **Design and Landscape** (NPPF Section. 12 Achieving well-designed and beautiful places, Section 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD Policies: EN3: The Open Countryside; Development Management DPD Policies: DM29 Key Design Principles, DM30: Sustainable Design, DM46: Development and Landscape Impact)

5.3.1 The column would be visible in wider landscape views along the jetty and promenade. Whilst there are currently no features of this height located at the site, there is several surrounding lighting infrastructures located along the footpath running adjacent to the site. It is considered that the proposal would not be unacceptably obtrusive. The proposal would result in a low level of harm to the character and appearance of the immediate location; however, this would be temporary in nature. Furthermore, the benefits entailed with the proposal regarding the coastal process management are important and sufficient to justify the development overall.

5.4 **Ecology** (NPPF Section 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD Policies SP8: Protecting the Natural Environment, EN7: Environmentally Important Areas; Development Management DPD Policies: DM29: Key Design Principles, DM44: The Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity)

5.4.1 The development is located outside of but in close proximity to the Ramsar, Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation and SSSI designations. The surrounding environment is ecologically sensitive, and the development will enable improved understanding of the coastal processes which take place within them. The installation of the development would be minor in nature including the excavation of a small area of hardstanding to facilitate a foundation for the equipment. The design of the structure is akin to a lighting column of which there are many within the area, as such there are not considered to be any longer-term impacts, such as to species associated with the ecological designation, during the lifetime of the development. Natural England have raised no objection to the proposal.

5.4.2 The development is not required to provide mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain as the proposal benefits from the de Minimis exemption.

6.0 Conclusion and Planning Balance

6.1 The development will enable the collection of data to help improve understanding of coastal processes within the wider Morecambe Bay environment. The principle of the development is supported. The development will have a visual impact; however, it is not deemed to be dissimilar to existing lighting infrastructure within the area. The benefits associated with this development, combined with its temporary nature is considered to justify the development in design and landscape terms. The development is also considered to be acceptable with respect to ecological considerations.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission BE GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

Condition no.	Description	Type
1	Timescale	Control
2	Approved plans	Control
3	Temporary 3 year consent and site reinstated following decommissioning	Control

Article 35, Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

Lancaster City Council has made the decision in a positive and proactive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, working proactively with the applicant to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The decision has been taken having had regard to the impact of development, and in particular to the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan, as presented in full in the officer report, and to all relevant material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance.

Background Papers

None