

**Application Ref: NP/12/0342**

<b>Application Type</b>	Full
<b>Grid Ref:</b>	SM80220780
<b>Applicant Agent</b>	Mr Peter Smithies
<b>Proposal</b>	Installation of one 15kw wind turbine(15m mast height to hub, 20.979m to blade tip) plus associated foundation pad and underground cable
<b>Site Location</b>	Philbeach Farm, Dale, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA62 3QU
<b>Case Officer</b>	Richard James

**Summary**

This is a full application for a single 15kw wind turbine at Philbeach Farm, near Marloes in West Pembrokeshire. This application is brought before the Committee as the views of your officers' conflict with those of the Community Council. This application follows from a previous refusal at Committee in May 2012 for a wind turbine under application reference NP/11/527. Whilst raising no other planning concerns and improving its visual impact from many views, the proposed turbine, by virtue of its scale and siting, would still represent a prominent, moving structure above the skyline, to the detriment of the existing landscape character of the Marloes Peninsula, when viewed from the Gann Estuary to the South. The proposal is not considered to adequately address the reason for refusal of application NP/11/527 and would conflict with policies 1, 8, 15, 29 and 33 of the LDP. As such, the application is recommended for refusal.

**Consultee Response**

**Marloes & St Brides Community Council:** Approve - the turbine will be set with the backdrop of the wartime complex, a brownfield setting, the turbine would significantly reduce the farm's carbon emissions. The applicant has made a considerable effort to address the concerns of the National Park (visibility). A larger turbine has since been approved in the neighbouring St Ishmaels community area.

**Public Protection Division - PCC:** No objection

**Countryside Council for Wales:** No objection

**Dale Community Council:** No objection

**Dyfed Archaeological Trust:** No adverse comments

**Ecologist - Pembrokeshire County Council:** No objection

**Environment Agency Wales:** No objection

**MOD:** No objection

**NATS:** No objection

**PCC - Transportation & Environment:** No objection

**St Ishmaels Community Council:** No objection

### **Public Response**

1 letter of support has been received from a neighbouring property, stating absolutely no objection to the proposal, as other turbines are clearly visible from this property.

### **Policies considered**

Please note that these policies can be viewed on the Policies page  
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park website -  
<http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=549>

LDP Policy 01 - National Park Purposes and Duty

LDP Policy 07 - Countryside

LDP Policy 08 - Special Qualities

LDP Policy 11 - Protection of Biodiversity

LDP Policy 15 - Conservation of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

LDP Policy 29 - Sustainable Design

LDP Policy 30 - Amenity

LDP Policy 32 - Surface Water Drainage

LDP Policy 33 - Renewable Energy

LDP Policy 53 - Impacts on traffic

PPW4 Chapter 04 - Planning for Sustainability

PPW4 Chapter 05 - Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the Coast

PPW4 Chapter 08 - Transport

PPW4 Chapter 12 - Infrastructure and Services

PPW4 Chapter 13 - Minimising and Managing Environmental Risks and Pollution

SPG05 - Sustainable Design

SPG06 - Landscape Character Assessment Study, June 2009

SPG14 - Renewable Energy

TAN 05 - Nature Conservation and Planning

TAN 06 - Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities

TAN 08 - Renewable Energy

TAN 11 - Noise

TAN 12 - Design

TAN 18 - Transport

## **Officer's Appraisal**

### **Background**

Philbeach Farm is an agricultural holding located to the East of Marloes. The complex comprises a number of agricultural buildings, the farmhouse, which is a listed building and holiday let accommodation. The site is located within the Marloes Peninsula Landscape Character Area (LCA), as defined in the Landscape Character Assessment SPG. This area is characterised by rolling lowland with scattered farmsteads and dwellings, interspersed with small wooded valleys, bounded by the open coast to the North, West and South. The views out to the Coast provide a sense of place, as does the disused airfield and associated buildings to the South of Marloes.

### **History**

The relevant planning history of the site comprises the following:

- NP/11/527 – Full application for a 15kw wind turbine, refused by the Development Management Committee on the 17th May 2012.

### **Constraints**

There are no relevant constraints on site.

### **Current Proposal**

This is a full application for a C&F 15kw wind turbine at Philbeach Farm, located to the East of Marloes in West Pembrokeshire. The proposed turbine will be sited 110m to the South West of the farm complex within an adjoining agricultural field. It measures 15.4m to the hub and 20.9m to the blade tip, with a blade diameter of 11m. The proposed turbine will provide a renewable energy source for the running of the farm, the dwelling and associated holiday accommodation. This application has been submitted in an attempt to address the reasons for refusal of a previous application for the wind turbine, as listed above.

### **Key Issues**

The application raises the following planning matters:-

- The planning policy context and the principle of development;
- The visual impact upon the existing landscape character of the area;
- The impact upon amenity and public safety;
- The impact upon existing levels of biodiversity;
- The impact upon the integrity of surrounding trees and hedgerow;
- The impact upon highway safety;
- The impact upon air traffic.

The planning policy context and the principle of development

National guidance in relation to renewable energy is set out in PPW4 and TAN 8 and advises that renewable energy projects should generally be supported so long as the designated areas such as National Parks are not compromised. National guidance, together with the main policies of the LDP (1, 8, 15 and 29) seeks to balance this support with the need to conserve and enhance the special landscape character and natural beauty of the National Park.

LDP Policy 33 states that, amongst other things, small scale proposals will be considered favourably subject to there being no over-riding environmental and amenity considerations.

Having regard to the thresholds set out in the Authority's SPG on Renewable Energy, the size and output of the proposed turbine is considered as a "Small Scale" turbine. The SPG identifies this area as having a "Moderate to High" sensitivity to small scale turbines. It does, however; accept that the principle of erecting small scale wind turbines in this area is acceptable, subject to the careful consideration of any application put forward with regard to the above key issues.

The visual impact upon the existing landscape character of the area

The previous application, which was refused, sited the same turbine model approximately 120m to the West of the site proposed under this application, on higher ground within the same agricultural field. This application was refused by the Development Management Committee, in line with the officer's recommendation, as it was considered to cause a prominent skyline feature from many views and thus would significantly detract from the special qualities of the National Park in this area.

The amended proposal has been assessed using the same viewpoints as visited during the previous Committee site visit, which aided the determination of the previous application. The degree of change between the two proposals and the resulting impact upon the surrounding landscape character has therefore been taken into account. This current application sites the turbine on lower ground as the land slopes down into the valley to the South East. The proposed site location is considered to reduce the visual prominence of the turbine to an acceptable level when viewed from the North, West and East, it also brings the turbine approximately 80m closer to the farm complex, improving its relationship with the existing built elements within the landscape. However, when viewed from the South, notably from the rights of way around the Gann Estuary, the proposal would represent a prominent moving structure above the skyline. The turbine would appear at the top end of the valley, which has a strong relationship with the coast from the estuary, prolonged views would be available from the Eastern side of the estuary. With no clear visual improvement from these viewpoints, it is your officer's opinion that the material difference in the proposal is not sufficient to adequately address the

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previous reason for refusal. As a result, the proposal is still therefore considered to cause an unacceptable detrimental visual impact, when viewed from the estuary to the South, causing unacceptable harm to the special landscape character of the Marloes Peninsula. Whilst the comments of Marloes and St Bride's Community Council are noted, and it is accepted that considerable efforts have been made to meet the previous concerns, the proposal must be acceptable from all viewpoints and in this case it is not considered that the impacts have been fully addressed. It is imperative that proposals for wind turbines are considered with regard to their relationship with all viewpoints and where there are impacts on the special landscape character of the National Park, regard must be had to the Authority's first purpose to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area. On this occasion it is considered that this proposal would conflict with this purpose.

### The impact upon amenity and public safety.

With the exception of the above, the proposal is not considered to cause any other harm to the existing amenity levels of the area or neighbouring properties. The application is accompanied by details of expected noise output, the Environmental Health department of Pembrokeshire County Council have been consulted and raises no objections. The proposed turbine will exist on private land with no public access available, it is not therefore considered to cause any risk to public safety.

### The impact upon existing levels of biodiversity

An ecological walkover survey has been submitted with the application, which concludes that the proposed turbine would not represent a significant risk to habitats or species in the area both when being constructed and when in operation. The Authority's Planning Ecologist and CCW have raised no objections. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable on these grounds.

### The impact upon the integrity of surrounding trees and hedgerow

The proposal is not considered to cause any detrimental impact upon the integrity of the surrounding trees and hedgerow. The proposal utilises existing access points and the cable route runs directly to the nearest farm building, with no trees or hedgerows obstructing this route. The application is therefore considered acceptable on these grounds.

### The impact upon road safety

As stated above, access to the site will be provided via the existing farm entrance and field gateways, the turbine will be delivered on a flat bed lorry, there will be no requirement for crane access. The existing access arrangements currently accommodate heavy/large vehicles in connection with the agricultural business on site. The Highways department of Pembrokeshire

County Council has been consulted and has raises no objections. The proposed development is considered acceptable on road safety grounds.

#### The impact upon air traffic

Wind turbines of a certain scale can cause disruption and physical obstruction to air traffic movements and radar installations. Both the Defence Infrastructure Organisation of the MOD and National Air Traffic Services have been consulted. No objections have been raised. The MOD have requested that they be notified of the date construction starts and ends, the height of construction equipment and the latitude and longitude of the turbine for their flying charts, this can be controlled via a planning condition should approval be given. The proposal is considered acceptable on air traffic grounds.

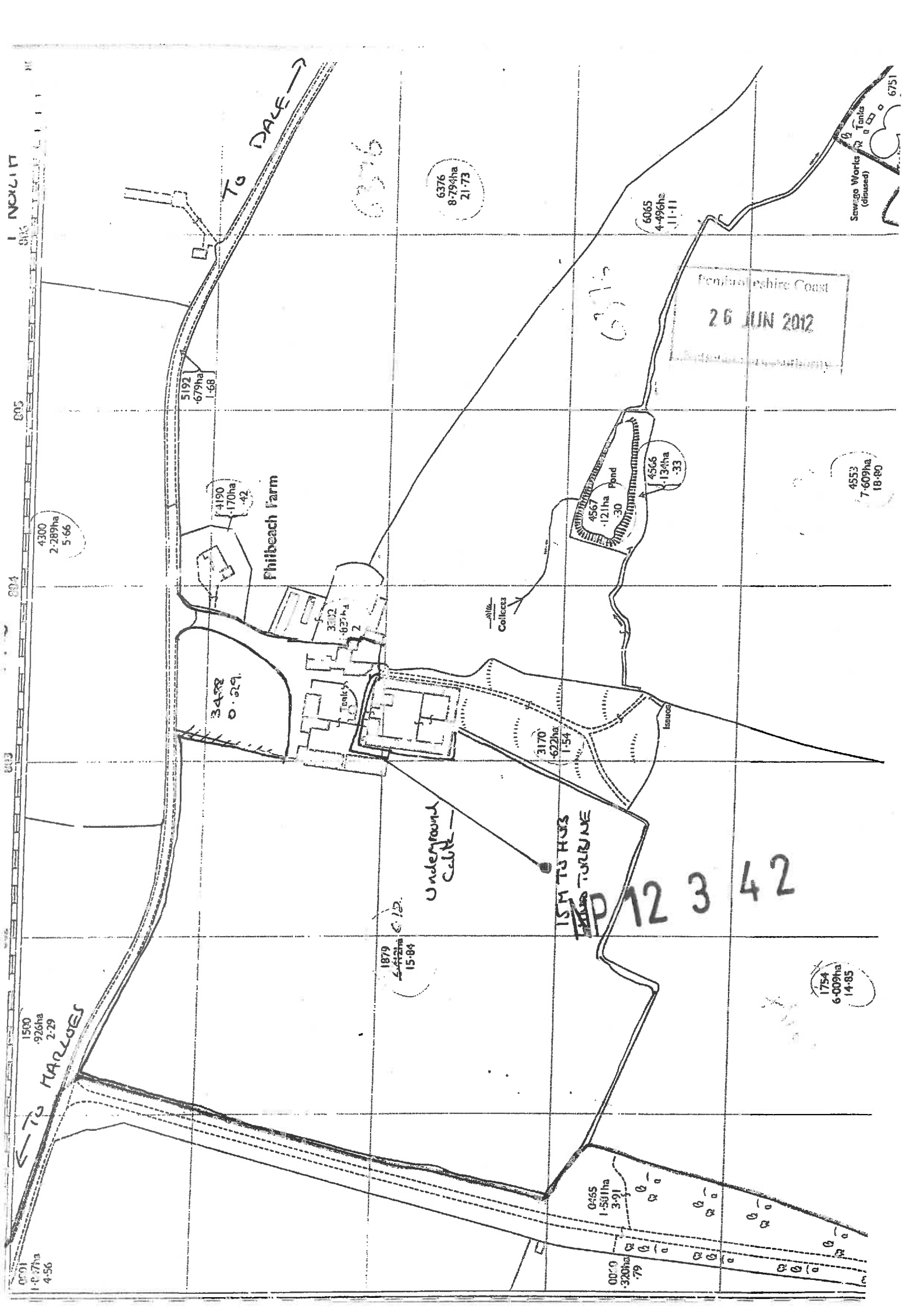
#### **Conclusion**

Whilst raising no other planning concerns and improving its visual impact from many views, the proposed turbine, by virtue of its scale and siting, would still represent a prominent, moving structure above the skyline, to the detriment of the existing landscape character of the Marloes Peninsula, when viewed from the Gann Estuary to the South. The proposal is not considered to adequately address the reason for refusal of application NP/11/527 and would conflict with policies 1, 8, 15, 29 and 33 of the LDP as well as conflicting with the first purpose of the National Park Authority. As such, the application is recommended for refusal.

#### **Recommendation**

That the application be refused for the following reason:

1. Policy 1 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan states that development must be compatible with the conservation or enhancement of the natural beauty of the park. Policy 8 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan seeks to protect the special qualities of the National Park, including amongst other things, the pattern and diversity of the landscape being protected and enhanced. Policy 15 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan states that development that adversely affects the qualities and special character of the National Park will not be permitted. Policy 33 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan requires small scale renewable energy schemes to not have any over-riding environmental and amenity considerations. The proposal by reason of its scale and prominent location which comprises skyline development when looking inland from key views from the coast, will have an adverse visual impact. As such, the proposal would significantly detract from the special qualities of the National Park at the Marloes Peninsula. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to both national and local policies and detrimental to the special qualities of the National Park.



NO. 117

605

604

603

1500

0001

4300  
2-289ha  
5-66

5192  
679ha  
1-68

4190  
170ha  
42

3452  
0.229

3382  
827ha  
2

1879  
442ha  
15-84

6376  
8-794ha  
21-73

6065  
4-496ha  
11-11

4567  
12.1ha  
30

4566  
134ha  
33

3170  
622ha  
1-54

1754  
6-009ha  
14-85

4553  
7-609ha  
18-80

6751

Pembrokeshire Coast  
26 JUN 2012

To DALE →

← To MARLBOROUGH

Underground  
Cable

ISM TURBINE

P 12 3 4 2

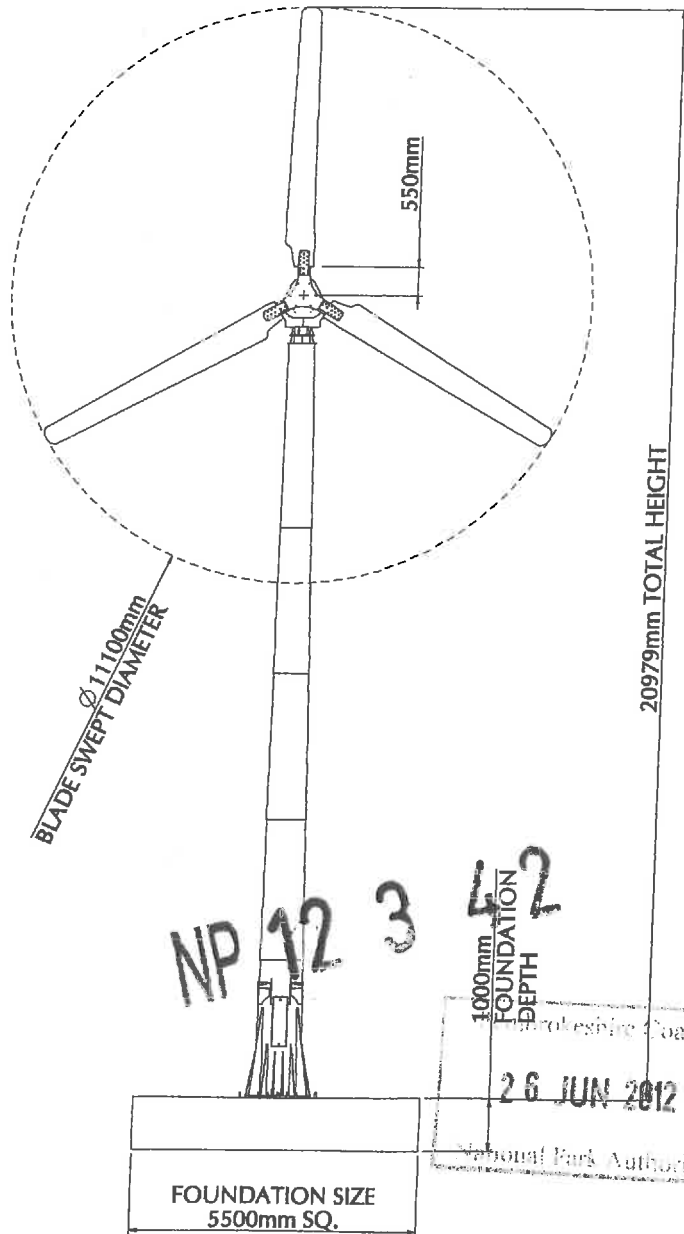
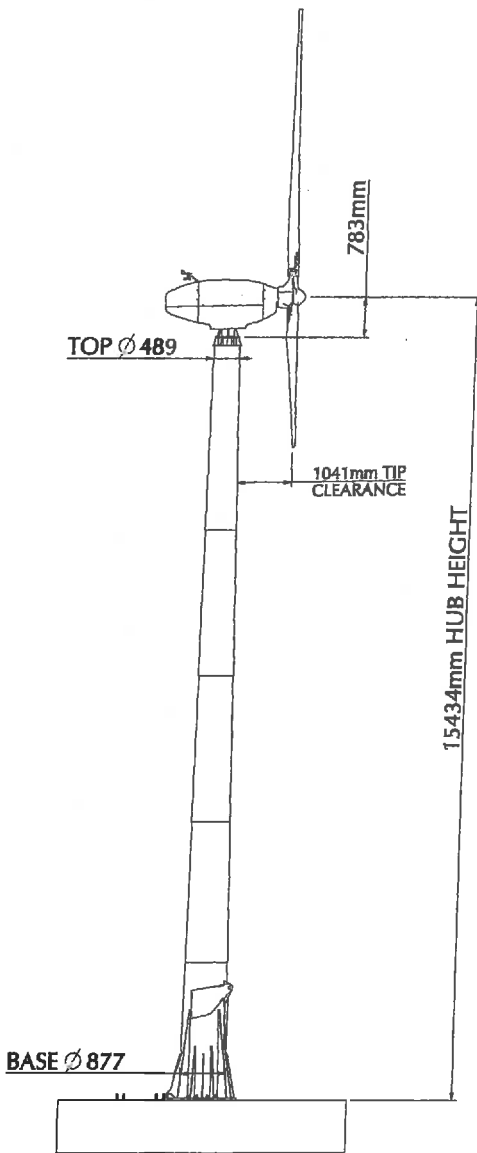
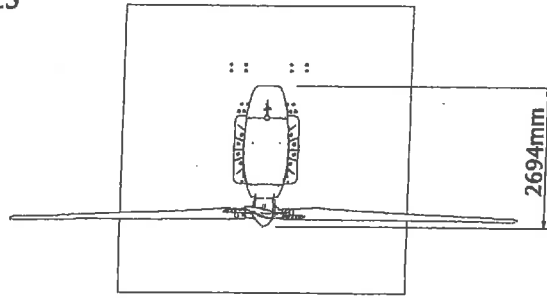
Sewage Works  
(disused)

Phillbeach Farm

Collectors

Islands

**OVERALL DIMENSIONS FOR CF15 TURBINE:  
15kW GENERATOR / 15m MAST / 5m BLADES**



Professional Coast  
26 JUN 2012  
National Park Authority



<b>C&amp;F Green-Energy</b>		<b>CF15</b>	
DESCRIPTION: OVERALLS / PLANNING		All Dimensions in mm	
MATERIAL: Mast: S275 Galv		QTY PER UNIT: -	
DRAWN: C O'Neill		SCALE: 1:100	
CHECKED: -		DWG SIZE: A3	
FINISH: -			