

Our Ref: PC/190428/P1

30 November 2020

Dorset Council
South Walks House
South Walks Road
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 1UZ



Dear Sir / Madam,

Town & Country Planning Act 1990

Proposal: Installation of ground source heat pump

At: Watcombe Farm, Watcombe Farm Access, Forston, DT2 7AD

PP – 09301526

Fowler Architecture & Planning Ltd has been instructed by Ms E Bowden & Mr G Wynn ('the Applicants') to submit an application for Full Planning Permission to Dorset Council in respect of the above development. The application comprises the following:

- Completed Application Form and Certificates;
- Drawing No. 190428-200: Site Location Plan at 1:1250 (A3);
- Drawing No. 190428-201: Site Plan at 1:500 (A1);
- Drawing No. 1.1 (by AES): Proposed Trench Layout (NTS); and
- Planning Statement – Fowlers (see below).

Planning Statement

Introduction

Watcombe Farm is located between Forston and Godmanstone, to the immediate west of the A352 which runs north-south through those villages. The wider farm site is accessed directly off the A352 and comprises a mix of dwellings and agricultural buildings. The red-edge application site relates specifically to the land required for a shared ground array of pipelines, to serve three ground source heat pumps (GSHP), the functional part of which will be set in an agricultural field to the immediate west of the access drive. From here, the shared ground array will serve three separate heat pumps installed within three residential dwellings which are situated generally around that access driveway.

The site is not within a Conservation Area, but it does sit within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site is not within a designated floodplain, or subject to any Tree Preservation Orders and is not crossed by any Public Rights of Way.

Planning History

The wider farm site has been subject to a number of planning applications historically. However, none of these relate to the site of the proposed GSHP and are not of direct relevance to this application proposal.

Proposal

This Full Planning application seeks permission for the installation of a ground array of pipelines, as a heat source for three ground source heat pumps (GSHP). The nature of the ground array, including the depths and dimensions, is included within the submitted Layout and Depths plan (prepared by Abel Environmental Services Ltd.). Once installed, the ground will revert immediately to agricultural land.

Planning Analysis

The Development Plan comprises the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted October 2015) and the Cerne Valley Neighbourhood Plan (made January 2015). Within those, the following policies are considered to be relevant to this application proposal:

- Com 11: Renewable Energy Development
- Environment Objectives (Policy 6)

Com 11 sets a positive framework for proposals for renewable energy, setting out three specific criteria which proposals for such facilities are required to meet; these are considered as follows:

COM 11 policy criteria	Assessment of proposal
Any adverse impacts on the local landscape, townscape or areas of historical interest can be satisfactorily assimilated.	Following its installation there will be no impact on the local landscape and there are no known areas of historical interest impacted.
The proposal minimises harm to residential amenity by virtue of noise, vibration, overshadowing, flicker, or other detrimental emissions, during construction, its operation and decommissioning;	Given the underground nature of the proposed works and the lack of any significant number of traffic movements, there will be no harm arising to residential amenity during either the construction, operation or de-commissioning phases.
adverse impacts upon designated wildlife sites, nature conservation	Given the location of the site and its current use for agriculture, there is not considered to be any adverse ecological or biodiversity impacts arising

The Cerne Valley Neighbourhood Plan generally encourages smaller scale renewable energy, but makes it clear that the technology is suitable, that the proposal can be appropriately assimilated into the local landscape, and that there are no impacts on residential amenity. As set out above, the proposed GSHP would meet these objectives.

The Government's policies are within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) revised February 2019, describing how the planning system should achieve sustainable development and when the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. Section 14 of the Framework provides strong encouragement for the use of sustainable forms of energy generation.

The properties at Watcombe Farm are situated in a rural environment and are currently heated by oil-fired boilers. The provision of GSHP will allow the site to achieve the highest possible energy efficiency, considerably reducing CO2 emissions across the wider site and dwellings it will serve.

Following its installation, there are no above ground works associated with the GSHP, and the land will immediately return to agricultural use once the GSHP has been installed. There are therefore no adverse impacts on the immediate landscape or wider AONB as a result of this development.

Given the above, the proposed GSHP accords with the relevant development plan policy, in particular Policy Com11 of the Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2011-2031.

Conclusion

The application proposal accords with the relevant development plan policies, in particular Policy Com11 of the Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2011-2031. There are no other material considerations that indicate that planning permission should not be granted.

The requisite planning fee of £468 has been paid via the Planning Portal. I trust that the enclosed information is sufficient for this application to be registered at the earliest opportunity. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information.

Yours faithfully,

P. Crozier

Peter Crozier BA(Hons) DipUP MRTPI

FOWLER ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

Encs

cc: Clients