

PRESS RELEASE

MAERDY WINDFARM RECEIVES PLANNING PERMISSION

Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council approved planning permission for the Maerdy Windfarm on Tuesday 19th August.

Councillors had indicated at the previous months planning meeting that they were minded to refuse the planning application. However, this was reversed after further detailed information on the Windfarm was provided to Councillors by Planning Officers and extensive further discussion within the Council at Tuesday's meeting.

The windfarm has been under development since 2003 with a major public consultation in 2005 and exhibitions on the final proposals in 2006. Since then the project has been under two years of rigorous assessment by the Local Authority and environmental organisations.

The Maerdy Windfarm site is within the one of the Welsh Assembly's strategic search areas for windfarms (Tan 8). It is also within the Council's own smaller refined search area for windfarms that was determined after a year of studies to find the areas with the lowest landscape impact. The windfarm proposals had no objections from any of the environmental or other statutory consultees and was the only project in the Rhondda and Cynon valleys recommended for approval by Council Officers.

Public opposition to the windfarm was a minority with only 5 original and independent letters of objection sent in from the public and 5 people objecting at the planning meeting. A standard opposition letter was distributed, but this was forwarded on by just 6% of recipients (82 of 1,250 recipients).

The windfarm will feed electricity directly into the local network at Maerdy substation and will significantly reduce the carbon footprint of thousands of Rhondda electricity consumers. The windfarm is 8 turbines with 24MW installed capacity. It would provide electricity equivalent to the consumption of 13,600 households each year. As a reference the number of households in the northern Rhondda wards of Maerdy, Ferndale, Ystrad, Pentre, Treorchy and Treherbert is 14,000.

Construction of the windfarm will start in approximately 2 years time. Construction will take 9-12 months. Access to the windfarm site is from the Heads of the Valleys road to the north and then up the mountain on the A4061 Rhigos road. The route avoids passing through any villages whatsoever. At peak activity traffic on local roads will increase only 10%. A similar access route was used for construction of the Ffynon Oer windfarm in 2005.

Richard Hadwin, Director of REP, the developer of the windfarm proposals commented:

"We have to take action now if we are to avoid dangerous climate change later this century. Balancing the action needed with preserving the local environment is the difficult objective before everyone. Maerdy Windfarm was one of the very best sites that has come before the Council, endorsed by all the environmental organisations and both local and national government bodies. It is one of the sites that strikes the right balance and it deserved to be given the go ahead."

reference: Press Release, Maerdy Windfarm PLanning Permission, 200808.docx

Tel 01225 816862

Website www.r-e-p.com

Overmoor
Neston
Corsham
SN13 9TZ

Renewable Energy Partnerships Ltd - Registered office: as above. Company registered no. 4599328