
Report To:	The Planning Board	Date:	4th March 2009
Report By:	Head of Planning and Housing	Report No:	08/0249/IC Plan 03/09
Contact Officer:	James McColl	Contact No:	01475 712462
Subject:	Installation of 6 no. 2.5 Kw wind turbines on 6.5m towers on roof of hospital at Inverclyde Royal Hospital Larkfield Road Greenock PA16 0XN		

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application relates to the main Inverclyde Royal Hospital building located on the southwestern side of Larkfield Road, Greenock. The hospital lies within an otherwise primarily residential area.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed to install 6 micro 2.5 Kw wind turbines on the roof of the hospital. This roof is approximately 4 metres high excluding the roof mounted service room. The turbine units are approximately 6.4 metres in height. They are no higher than the existing service room. The turbine towers are finished in galvanized steel, with the blades being formed with wood epoxy finished in matt black.

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

Local Plan Policy UT6 - Renewable Energy Infrastructure

In assessing proposals for renewable energy infrastructure, Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, will have regard to the impact on:

- (a) the natural environment and built heritage of the locality;
- (b) the landscape, particularly when viewed from major transport corridors;
- (c) residential amenity;
- (d) tourism and leisure resources, particularly if within the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park; and
- (e) the operation of aircraft and telecommunications equipment.

CONSULTATIONS

Head Of Safer Communities - No objections to the proposal.

NATS - CTC - No objections to the proposal.

PUBLICITY

The nature of the proposal did not require advertisement.

SITE NOTICES

The nature of the proposal did not require a site notice.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The application was subject of neighbour notification, no representations were received.

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in the assessment of this application are the development plan, the visual impact of the proposed turbines, the consultation responses and the advice and guidance contained within PPAN 45 Annex.

In terms of the Inverclyde Local Plan, policy UT6 provides criteria for the assessment of development proposals comprising renewable energy infrastructure.

In considering national guidance, PAN 45 Annex on Micro Renewables supports the development of micro renewable power sources subject to other material planning considerations. It is advised that the erection of micro-wind turbines must be undertaken in a manner that keeps the environmental impact to a minimum whilst still ensuring they provide sufficient power. The ideal location for micro turbines is as high as possible to take advantage of prevailing south-westerly winds. Planning authorities and developers should be flexible in considering locations to ensure a balance is struck between maximising energy production and minimising unwelcome visual impacts. Where the main background to the turbines is the sky, an off white colour is most appropriate.

The consultation responses from both the Head of Safer Communities and NATS offer no objection to the application in terms of noise disturbance to neighbouring residential properties and aviation safety respectively.

Assessing the visual impact of the proposed turbines, the main hospital building is visible from many vantage points within Greenock and beyond. The building itself is architecturally unremarkable and the proposed wind turbine columns themselves are approximately 6.4 metres in height, no higher than the existing plan room or telecommunications equipment. Therefore, they do not project significantly above any other roof features and are subordinate to the building to which they are mounted. When viewing the hospital building in close proximity, the turbines will not be clearly visible. From a distance the turbines, due to their limited size and mass, will not be visually prominent or to the detriment of the appearance of the existing building and wider views of the locality. Whilst the turbine blades are finished in matt black, the main body of the turbine and tower are finished in grey galvanised steel. I therefore consider that the colouring of the turbine is appropriate for the sky backdrop. I am satisfied that the proposal therefore meets the requirements of policy UT6 of the Inverclyde Local Plan.

In conclusion, I consider that turbines offer an opportunity to promote alternative sustainable energy generation which will play a small part in meeting targets on Carbon emissions. The visual impact of the turbines is acceptable in terms of both the existing building and wider views of the locality. As such the application should be granted.

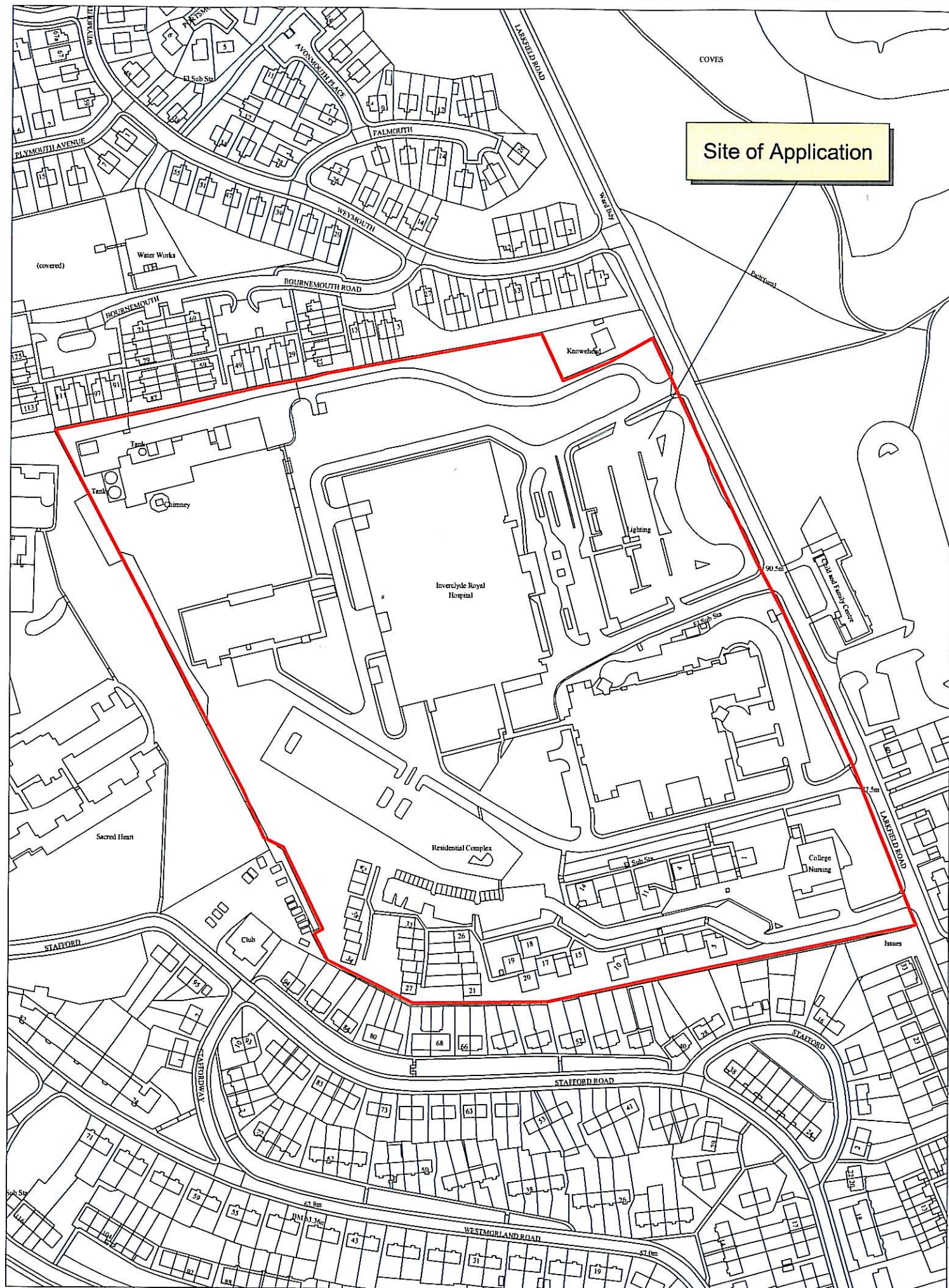
RECOMMENDATION

That the application be Granted

F. K WILLIAMSON
Head of Planning and Housing

Background papers

1. Application forms
2. Application plans
3. Inverclyde Local Plans
4. Consultation responses
5. PAN 45 annex – Planning for micro renewables.



Date: 10:02:09

Drawn: JML Drg. No. 08/0249/IC



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