



Environmental Impact Assessment

Project

The Avonmouth Wind Power Project at Bristol Sewage Treatment Works (STW)

Client

Wessex Water

Background

As the regional water and sewage treatment provider, Wessex Water is an energy intensive business. In pursuance of its aim to be a genuinely sustainable company, Wessex Water sought to increase on-site renewable energy generation by developing wind turbines at Bristol STW.

Landmark was commissioned to scope and manage an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for installation of three wind turbines at the site and provide environmental planning, ecology, ornithology and landscape input to the Environmental Statement (ES).

Description

Wind turbines are large, dynamic structures which can cause a specific range of environmental impacts. Key site constraints included the proximity of Filton Airfield, a substantial network of telecommunications links, and the proposed siting of two of the wind turbines in a Wildlife Trust nature reserve and designated Site of Nature Conservation Interest.

The application scheme was adjusted to address the findings of the EIA. One of the turbines that initially posed risk to bird and bat species was moved to a less sensitive position, and the energy generating potential of the site was enhanced by addition of a fourth turbine to the scheme.

The ES concluded that the proposed wind turbines could be accommodated without unacceptable environmental impact, as long as recommended mitigation measures were secured. Key measures were to monitor, and compensate if necessary, disturbance impacts on birds and bats, and to implement strategies agreed with the telecoms regulators and the nearby airfield to remove risk of disruption to air safety or telecoms links. Landmark managed the EIA technical team, edited and produced the ES and represented the applicant in consultation with stakeholders and the planning authority.

Client benefits

The robust EIA process demonstrated the potential for energy to be generated close to the point of demand, even if the site initially appears to be environmentally sensitive. Planning approval for the wind turbines was granted in March 2009 by unanimous planning committee vote.