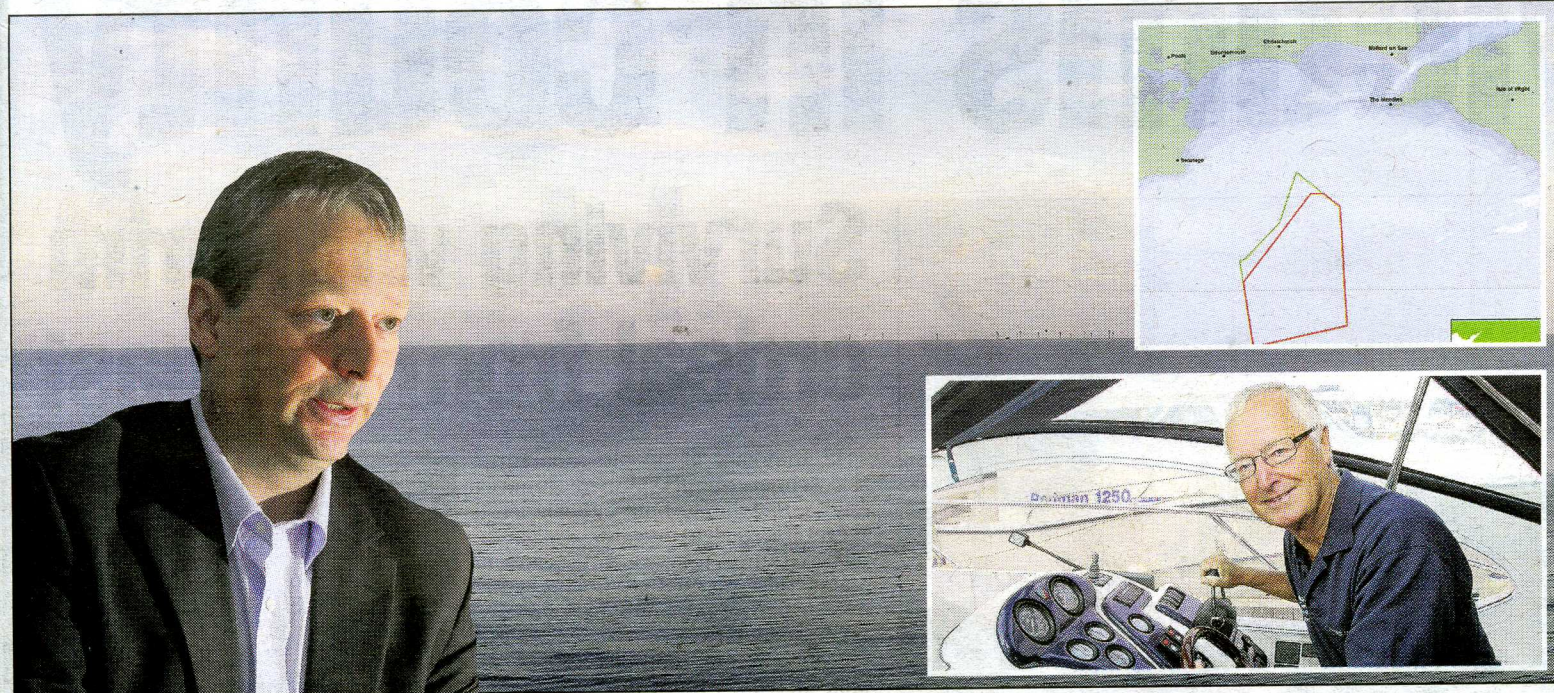


Sailors say turbines will create hazard in busy lane



SEA VIEW: Left, Mike Unsworth, project director of the Navitus Bay wind farm, right, Parkstone Yacht Club commodore, Barry Rolfe. Inset top right, the proposed site of the wind farm, marked in green, with the original boundary shown in red

Storms ahoy at wind farm

SAILORS from across the area have come out against the proposed wind farm off Dorset.

In all, 18 clubs from along the coastline were invited to a meeting at Parkstone Yacht Club and around 120 people attended.

They met to look at revised plans for the Navitus Bay project, which is a joint venture between Dutch firm Eneco and EDF Energy.

It comes as anti-wind farm protestors gear up to demonstrate in Swanage tomorrow morning, while supporters are planning their own demonstration at the same time.

As reported in the Daily Echo, Navitus said it had listened to feedback and, as a result, said the park would now be 12 miles away from Bournemouth, rather than 10, and the maximum number of turbines would be 218, rather than 333.

Maximum height will now be 200m, not 210m, while the total area of the seabed used reduced from 198sqkm to 175sqkm.

But the changes did little to placate opposi-

By Steven Smith

tion group, Challenge Navitus, and they got the same reaction from sailors.

The meeting resulted in sailors saying the turbines would create a hazard in one of the UK's busiest sailing areas. They also fear environmental effects and are worried about the farm's size and visual intrusion.

Sailors are now being urged to formally voice their opinions through the planning process.

Barry Rolfe, commodore of Parkstone Yacht Club, chaired the meeting. He said: "The visual impact is going to be massive. It will be a big hazard as that's a very big leisure channel.

"It will interfere with racing as well; it will cause all sort of problems. I asked for a show of hands at one stage if people were against it and the majority of people in the room put their hands up. It was a unanimous feeling that this is something that we don't want.

"We're not against wind power per se, but

Public consultations

- West Moors Memorial Hall, February 1, 2-8pm
- Bournemouth International Centre, Bourne Lounge, February 2, 10-4pm
- RNLI Lifeboat College, Poole, February 6, 2-8pm
- New Milton Community Centre, February 7, 2-8pm
- Lymington Community Centre, February 8, 2-8pm
- Cowes Yacht Haven, Isle of Wight, Saturday February 9, 10am-4pm
- Christchurch Council, February 12, 2-8pm
- St Edwards Church Hall, Swanage, February 13, 2-8pm

it's the environmental impact and the navigational hazard that it will present."

Navitus Bay said it had been in consultation with sailing clubs, Trinity House and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

It said the revised plans were aimed at addressing issues of safety and navigation.

"We believe these changes, coupled with the reductions in number and maximum sizes of the turbines, have helped to mitigate concerns not just on navigational safety, but also environmental impacts including visual. We look forward to continuing the dialogue with the sailing fraternity," it added.

It said there were no plans to restrict access to the site other than for health and safety.

Navitus also said that a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment was being completed.

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