

# London Eye architects plan giant turbine at City Hall

THIS is the wind turbine being hailed as an answer to London's power problems.

Forty metres tall, its designers hope to build one in front of City Hall.

David Marks and Julia Barfield, who created the London Eye, say their turbine would be capable of powering up to 25 homes and is the future of sustainable energy.

They hope the Y-shaped Beacon will soon be dotted around London — including smaller ones on domestic roofs.

But one critic has likened the design to a giant fly swatter.

The architects say they designed the turbine to try to prove huge wind farms are not the only way to generate wind power.

They have built a prototype and are in negotiation with local authorities, English Heritage and potential backers in the hope of building the real thing.

Mr Marks and Ms Barfield said: "Wind energy is one of the best

**MIRA BAR-HILLEL  
AND MARK PRIGG**

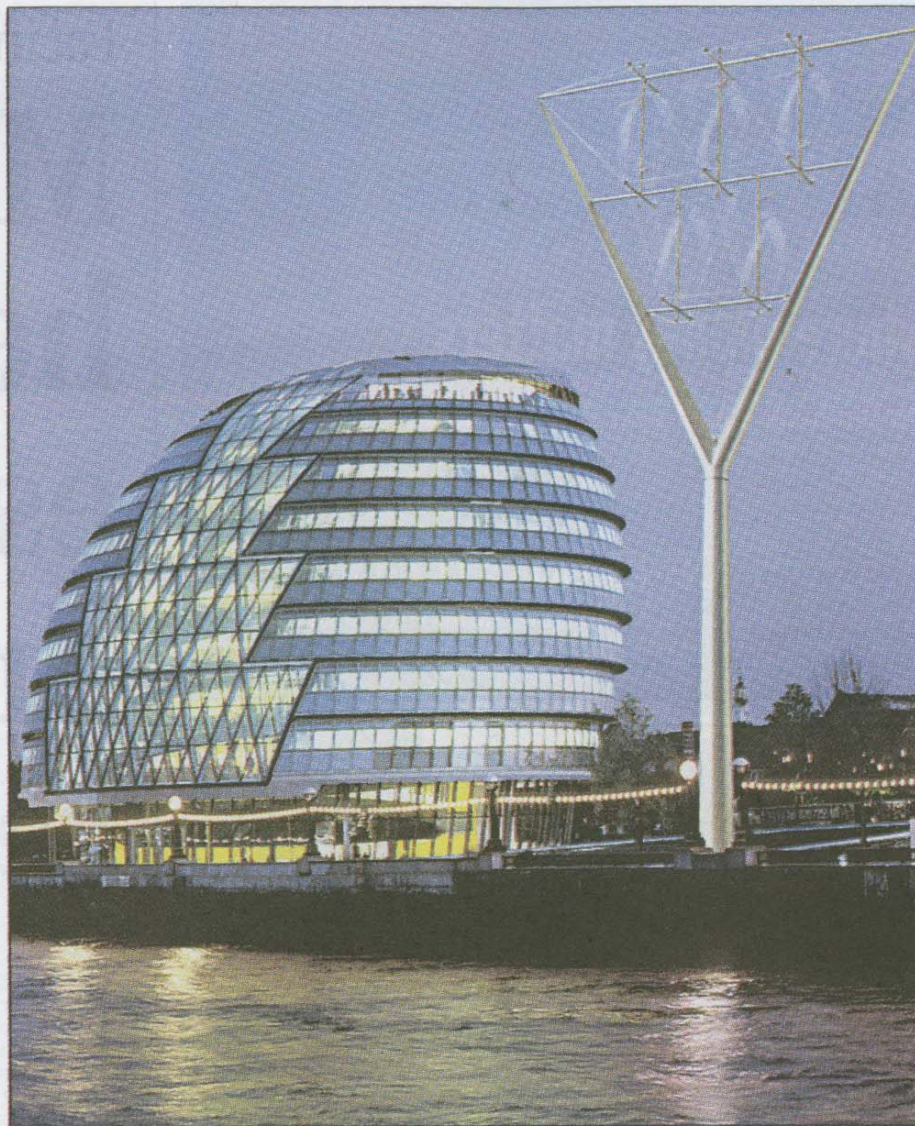
forms of renewable energy. We believe cities such as London should take greater responsibility for their energy generation. It could meet up to 30 per cent of the UK's electricity demand and 10 per cent of London's.

"Each Beacon will generate enough to power twenty-five energy-efficient houses. One Beacon for every six hectares across London could meet this target.

"But as well as being a symbol of sustainable energy, The Beacon is also an elegant urban sculpture".

However, Mark Hedges, editor of Country Life magazine, which has launched several campaigns against wind farms, said: "It looks like a giant fly swatter.

"It's absolutely appalling and even manages to make City Hall look attractive. It really seems little more than a stunt. We all love



"Fly swatter": an artist's impression of the 40-metre Beacon in front of City Hall

the London Eye but the designers need to realise that doesn't give them free licence to do whatever they want. This would be an eyesore."

A spokeswoman for English Heritage said: "Some renewable energy technologies have the potential to cause serious damage to the historic environment, which is itself an

integral part of the wider environmental and sustainability agenda.

"The benefits need to be balanced against the impact they have, especially on listed buildings, conservation areas and sensitive areas."

Each of Marks and Barfield's Y-shaped structures has five wind turbines attached. They

are said to be virtually noiseless and the designers are working on scaling them down for homeowners.

The Government is struggling to meet an aggressive target of sourcing 20 per cent of electricity from renewables by 2010 and a reduction in carbon emissions of at least 60 per cent by 2050.

## Green light for Cameron's eco-friendly home plans

**KIRAN RANDHAWA**

DAVID CAMERON has been given the go-ahead for a £1 million eco-friendly makeover of his home.

The Tory leader's proposals to kit out his west London house with a two-metre high wind turbine and solar panels was given the go-ahead by council planning chiefs last night.

Kensington & Chelsea council's planning services committee spent more than an hour hearing evidence about the plans for Mr Cameron's house, which lies in a conservation area.

Neighbour Barbara Want, 43, a media consultant, spoke at the meeting to voice her objections to the plans, describing them as an "eyesore". Mrs Want, wife of BBC radio Four presenter Nick Clarke, said the plans would spoil the character of the area, which is largely made up of Edwardian two-storey properties.

She said: "I love this area, I don't want to see it harmed and I believe that these proposals will harm it."

Mr Cameron was not at the meeting but was said to be "delighted" with the decision, which will see the impact of the wind turbine reviewed after three years. Permission was also granted for a basement conversion.

Although four of the five councillors on the planning committee were members of the Conservative Party, they affirmed before the meeting began that this would not affect their decision.