

Planning Response to Onshore Wind Farms in the UK

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Overview

- Presentation summarises emerging onshore wind planning strategies in Wales, England and Scotland;
- Informed by WCE's development experience within the UK, and also our involvement in policy within Wales through membership of the TAN8 group;
- Aim is to stimulate debate rather than provide answers!

Strategic Policies

- Different approaches emerging in Wales, England and Scotland:
- TAN8 in Wales identifies strategic search areas and a wind energy target;
- PPS22 in England sets out a criteria and regional target approach via Regional Planning Guidance and Local Development Plans;
- NPPG6 in Scotland favours broad areas of search and related criteria but does not support regional or technology-specific targets.

Wales

- 4TWh renewable energy target by 2010 (approx 12%);
- Equates to 800MW onshore wind, 200MW offshore wind targets;
- 800MW to be delivered by concentrating development in 7 Strategic Search Areas (SSAs) – tbc July 2005;
- Within SSAs will be presumption in favour and cumulative effect will have less material weight;
- Outside SSAs only small community schemes will be acceptable;
- Local authorities to develop detailed plans within SSAs;
- S36 schemes will be needed, not devolved to Wales.

England

- 9 regions have produced Regional Planning Guidance;
- Regional targets have been identified by technology and sub-region;
- Interpreted at County and District level;
- Devon has preferred search areas at County level plus 100MW wind target by 2010, has been material consideration in 2 approvals at appeal, 3rd project is outside search area and was refused but County has stated this should not be grounds for refusal;
- Cumbria has search areas at County level but these have not been accepted at District level, being tested at appeal (Whinash).

Scotland

- Majority of Scottish Councils have or are developing policies based on preferred areas;
- Includes regions subject to significant development interest – e.g. Highland, Perth & Kinross, Clyde Valley;
- Uncertain how these relate to the potential contribution that regions could make to Scottish target, or how the preferred areas will be ‘enforced’ – potential for significant numbers of prospective sites to be outside preferred areas.