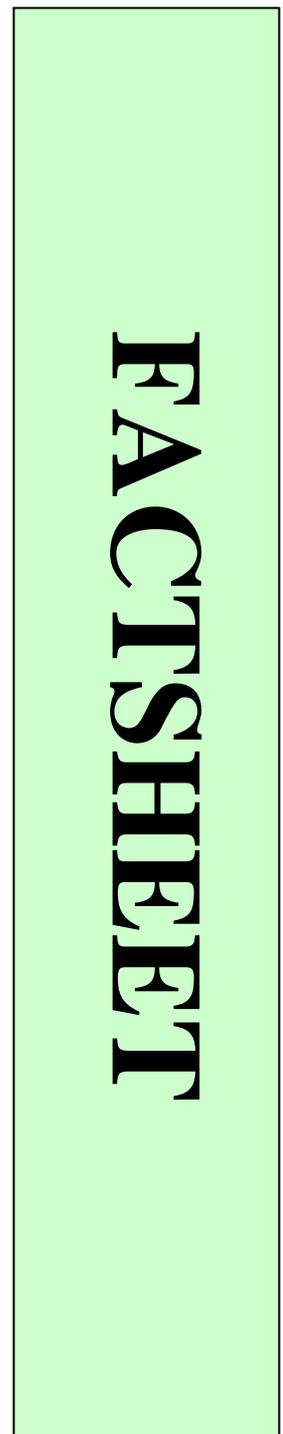
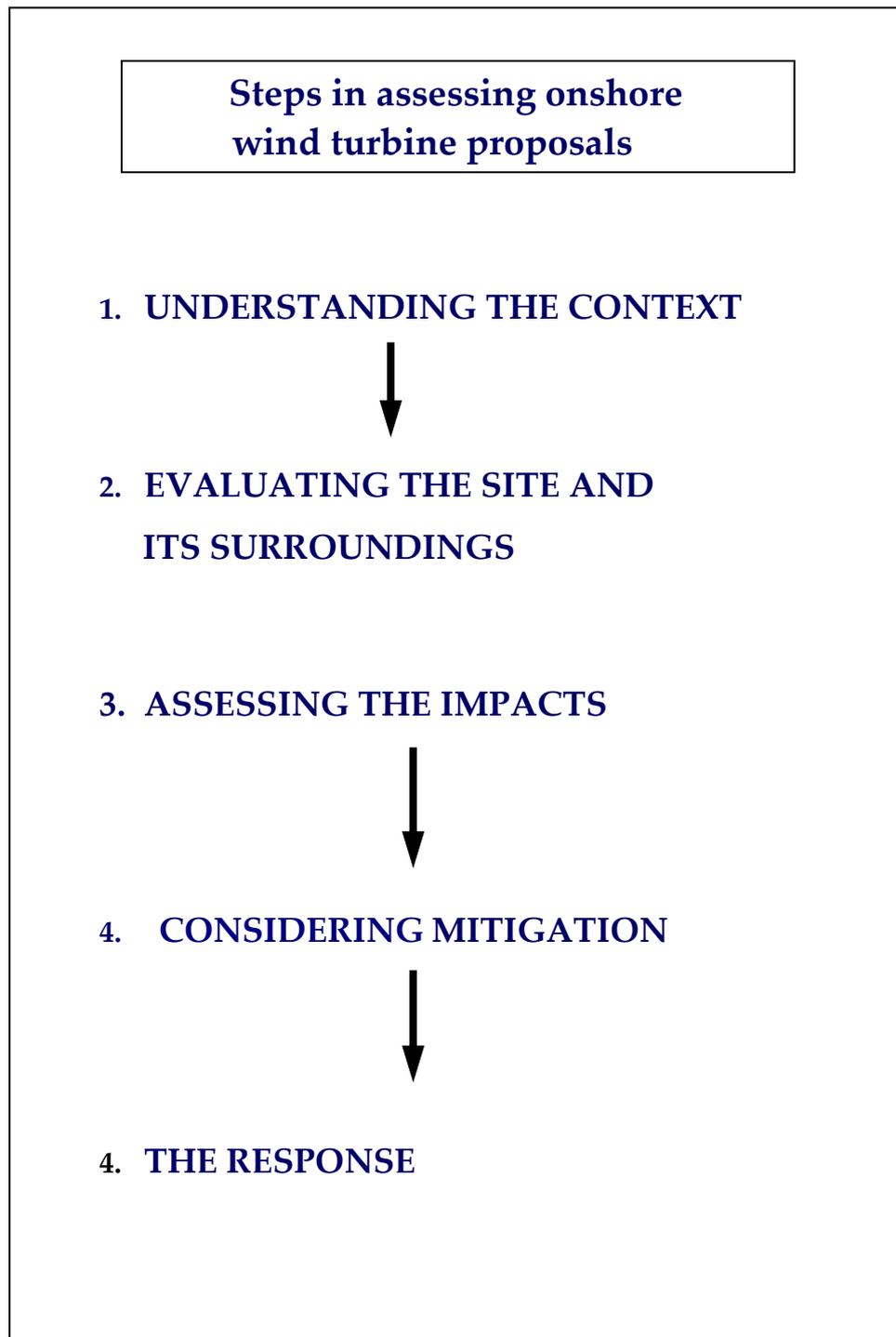


# Guidance for responding to applications for on shore wind installations

(To be used with CPRW's Environmental Impact Assessment Fact sheet)



## An overview



## Introduction

The number and complexity of on shore wind turbines applications is increasing and is likely to continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

This guidance has been published to assist CPRW Branches and in particular local Coordinators consider how to compile the relevant information and produce a response on CPRW's behalf to a planning application for on shore wind turbines.

This guidance ensures that those making a representation consider **methodically and consistently**

- The characteristics of the site and its landscape context,
- How the scale, location and nature of the proposed development affects these characteristics
- The cumulative impact of the development within its landscape setting.
- How these considerations relate to current CPRW

## Current CPRW policy

Although CPRW has a long established policy position in respect of onshore wind installations, experience in using it combined with recent changes in wind energy policy approaches in Wales means that whilst its underlying principles still remain valid and have been confirmed by the Executive, its tone and emphasis needs updating.

must however be noted that CPRW **does not object** to wind power generation in principle so long as the schemes which produce this form of renewable energy do not detrimentally affect the landscape or amenity values of the site and surroundings in which they are proposed. (See Appendix 1 for the current wording of CPRW policy)

That being the case it is important when responding to planning applications, for Branches to try to avoid being drawn into considerations relating to the legitimacy of wind energy as an alternative energy source, or the validity or effectiveness of wind power itself as a technology.

Similarly it is important to recognise that a Local Planning Authority when considering a planning application is unlikely to and probably will not consider issues such as the wider principles of global warming or climate

change when considering the proposal in front of them. These matters should have been considered by the Authority when they produced the policies relating to Renewable Energy within their relevant Development Plan. Matters of principle clearly have their place in the debate, but focussing on them in responding to a specific planning application will not help the narrow and specific task of defeating proposals which are contrary to the sentiments of CPRW's policy and hence its charitable objects.

### **Know your local people and policies**

It is normal practice for Planning Authorities to allocate a Case officer to deal with the assessment of individual planning proposals. In some instances this may be a Case officer who covers a geographical area or in other instances one who specialises in dealing with renewable energy applications.

When the Case officer receives an application for a wind turbine development and eventually when the Planning Authority considers this application for planning consent, it must have enough information to enable it to **identify**, **describe** and **assesses** the effects that the proposed development is likely to have on the environment.

It is important to track this process as early as is possible and it is appropriate for those making representations to make contact and build a working relationship with the relevant officer, establish what information has been received, what is expected and when. If Planning Officers know that their activities are being tracked and monitored they are more likely to ensure that all the relevant information has been provided by the developer.

Establish as early as possible whether the Planning Case Officer considers the application warrants an Environmental Impact Assessment, through the formal process known as "screening" (*See CPRW Fact sheet on EIA*). In most instances clusters of turbines will now require an EIA but some small schemes or individual turbines may not require such an appraisal.

If the Case officer decides a scheme doesn't need an EIA and you disagree with his opinion, challenge the Authority to justify its decision in writing:

Likewise it is important to remember that applicants will initially ask the LPA whether a formal Environmental Impact Assessment is needed. Near the advisory margin of 5MW capacity or 2 turbines they will often try to avoid an EIA by submitting a less detailed Environmental Report which is

always less satisfactory and often poorly written. Once an EIA is required, they will discuss the Scoping (content) of the resultant Environmental Statement with the LPA.

Remember that under the new provisions of the Freedom to Information Act, you have a right to see all the relevant correspondence relating to the process of deciding the acceptability of planning proposals. If you are not satisfied with the decision not to produce an EIA

- **Write to the Chief Planning Officer of the Authority requesting the reasons why it is considered that an EIA is not needed.**
- **Copy your request and his response to CPRW Head Office**
- **In the light of this response, a decision will be taken as to whether to challenge this opinion.**

Developers can appeal to the Assembly against a decision by the LPA that an EIA is needed and have in the past succeeded in convincing them that an EIA is not required. This process appears somewhat arbitrary and if CPRW is aware and involved at an early stage it can support the representations of the LPA for an EIA.

Although it may not appear to be the case initially, most Planning Officers will probably appreciate **early and regular contact** with a nominated person representing CPRW's interests and will certainly benefit from an early indication of the position CPRW intends to take in responding to such an application.

Getting to know your relevant Case Officer and building a working relationship with him or her will be of considerable benefit later when you need information and perhaps the opportunity to discuss the merits of the scheme.

- **Build good relationships with relevant officers**
- **Engage in discussions before the application is formally submitted as appropriate**

**Know and understand the relevant policy context**

All "development proposals" have by law to be determined in accordance with the policies of the relevant "adopted Development Plan". These

planning policies will be found in either the existing Structure Plans and Local Plan or the Unitary Development Plan covering the proposal site. Most Authorities have yet to adopt their Unitary Development Plan but some weight can be given to policies which have reached an advanced stage of the adoption process, so long as they are relevant to the planning application issues.

In many instances however the policy basis against which decisions about the acceptability of wind installations will be made by officers is most likely to be made using a set of general policies for instance:

- The impact of development within the open countryside in terms of its scale, siting and impact on surrounding areas
- The manner in which development affects areas which may have specific national or local environmental / conservation values,
- Highway access.
- Residential amenity
- The implications on local employment and community interests

It is crucial that you are familiar with the relevant Planning policies and are able to decide how your judgement of the impact of the development either conforms or conflicts with these policies.

The Proposals Maps associated with any adopted plans will show details of any areas which have been designated because of their special conservation or landscape merits.

Local Authorities may also have separate policies on Renewable Energy, some with a specific focus on wind power. These are most likely to be written in a positive way but should also set out circumstances in which proposals will be unacceptable. These are the key criteria which should be used when evaluating the acceptability of any proposal both from a CPRW point of view and that of the Authority. These criteria provide the focus for any representation which is eventually submitted.

A number of Local Authorities have produced Supplementary Planning Guidance which they should use when considering the merits of development proposals. Some Authorities now have these for Renewable Energy installations and many certainly have them on Design in the countryside. Again it is important to establish the range and status of these existing and proposed documents within your area.

Most Planning Authorities Development Plans and Supplementary Guidance are on their Web sites and all should have copies available for inspection free of charge at the Planning Offices

### **Welsh Assembly Guidance Planning Guidance**

This guidance is in the process of being revised and the document which will set a context for all decision making in Wales about future on shore wind proposals is Technical Advice Note 8 (TAN 8)

Following public consultation, it is expected that a final version of this guidance will be issued in late Spring 2005. TAN 8 is a crucial document and its contents may affect the approach that CPRW will take towards on shore proposals in the future.

CPRW has submitted a detailed response to this document, the contents of which you should familiarise yourself with.

At present the Draft TAN 8 remains a material consideration for Planning Authorities to take into account when determining planning proposals, but the weight it is given in decisions has not yet been tested in law.

CPRW takes the view that until this document is published in its final form any decision which relies on the content of the Draft version of this document as the basis for justifying the legitimacy of a proposal for a wind installation, should be challenged on the basis of "policy prematurity."

**Branches should notify Head Office where TAN 8 is being used primarily as the reason to support a wind power station proposal.**

It is therefore vital to understand the collection of relevant policies which relate to wind installations, as developers are required to state those which are relevant and which they have considered when they submit planning applications. Be wary however their reference to these policies may be incomplete or partisan !.

### **Anemometer or Monitoring masts**

Getting involved in the planning process as soon as possible is important and being aware of the sequence of events which are trigger

an interest in a site is important. Early signs of prospecting activity or of proposals are often followed (usually but not always) by an application for an anemometer (wind monitoring) mast (typically 50 – 60m slender pole roughly the anticipated turbine tower height) supported by guy ropes. These are temporary, not intrinsically obtrusive and may not always lead to an application.

LPAs will probably never refuse permission for them, and cannot do so on the grounds they might lead to a subsequent application for turbines which they might not wish to approve.

The submission of an application for an anemometer mast provides a chance to raise concerns locally. Whilst Branches may feel it is important to object to such applications, they are advised not to do so. Instead they should start the process of site investigations in anticipation of a future wind proposal and focus on the task of submitting observations about any subsequent wind power application. If any response is to be made then written confirmation from the Local Planning Authority should be sought that if granted any mast consent is accompanied by a written proviso that it is issued without prejudice to the granting of consent for any future wind turbine proposal on the site.

## Types of wind power schemes

Proposals for on shore wind schemes vary in scale and purpose tremendously. **Domestic-scale** turbines are designed to power isolated houses or even individual pieces of equipment (such as electric fences or lighting). The typical size for such turbines are up to 20m overall height with 3.5m blades and most are located within close proximity of the source they are supplying.

**Small / Local scale** schemes may consist of small clusters of turbines of varying heights. There is no consistency in size or numbers but many are branded by developers as “community schemes” supplying electricity to a given area or user group. Some comprise refurbished older design second hand machines typically 30m hub + 15m blades = 45m. Such schemes have relatively low capacities of 300 – 600kW and may be noisy. Other schemes are often referred to as ‘farm-scale’. Large machines as characterised by National Wind Power’s ‘Wind

Works' scheme consist of 1.3MWturbines which are typically 3 x 60+31metres in height i.e. 91m in total; taller than most commercial turbines already built in Wales.

**Commercial scale** wind power stations use large turbines now typically up to 100m overall, and 120m in lower wind speed areas. Blades are often 40m long. The swept area of the blades has a significant implications on issues of visual impact. These are the types of schemes which CPRW most often has to consider. Care should be taken however when considering what developers may often refer to as "*community wind power schemes*" as these are more often commercial in scale.

## Evaluating the proposal site and its surroundings

Understanding the characteristics and values of the development site is crucial especially when reviewing the contents and conclusions of the Environmental Impact Assessment submitted by the developer.

Direct comparisons however are obviously not possible until the details in the Environmental Statement have been published and available.

Notwithstanding that it is helpful for those assessing proposals to think about the characteristics of the proposed development site and its surrounding in advance. This will help in particular when working with CPRW's Adviser in compiling CPRW's formal response.

Given that most proposals are located in upland or coastal rural landscapes, it is important to understand the characteristics of the site to be used and its surrounding area in order to decide what in the landscape is affected and hence the degree of impact . Issues which will be of particular relevance include

- *The site's inherent landscape qualities and sensitivity. (This is the issue of most importance to CPRW)*
- *The historic or cultural values of the site or features on it*
- *It amenity value to local people or to visitors*
- *The rights of access which exist on the site, (especially in respect of the new CROW Act provisions. See CPRW Fact sheet )*
- *The status of its natural and conservation values*
- *The proximity of the site to local residences.*
- *Vehicular access to the site*
- *Ownership and status of the land be it public, private, common land or an area with any other legal rights. In the case of the latter what rights will be affected by the development.*
- *The statutory status of any other features on the site.*

All of these represent potential constraints and information about them should be held on public registers within the Planning Department. Even if you do not feel competent in judging the relevance or significance of all of these issues, it is important to think about them when thinking about what is important on the site and its surroundings

Maps showing areas which will be subject to the provisions of the CROW Act are available from either CCW or the Secretary of the Local Access Forum for that area

LANDMAP is another important source of information which will provide help in judging the landscape value of the site and its surroundings. Be aware of where this information is held in the Local Authority and its current status. LANDMAP Assessments have been carried out for most areas of Wales and will be published on line by CCW over the next 12 months. Once accredited this information is a material consideration which Local Authorities will be required to consider in assessing any development proposal of a significant scale. The methodology has been sanctioned by the Assembly Government and is official guidance.

It is also useful to try to compile data about wind resources in your area and a develop a good general knowledge of your area's landscape resources, especially those uplands and coasts likely to be targeted by wind power developers. Your LPA may have a resource map in its Development Plan or Special Planning Guidance documents. Over the coming months CPRW will compile a wind speed map for Wales.

### **What is not relevant to CPRW's interests?**

Whilst it is important to assess what is relevant when considering the impact of the proposed development, it is also important to recognise that as an organisation CPRW's objects relate primarily to the protection of landscape values. That being the case, assessments of wind power station proposals should not rely principally on the following as the basis for deciding the acceptability of any scheme.

- Potential hazards to wildlife on or off site when the scheme is operational
- Health or noise hazards arising from the operation of the scheme, unless it relates to residential amenity.
- Public safety on the site or its surroundings

Most of these issues will be the subject of consideration by the relevant statutory body or licensing authority for instance CCW, the Environment Agency and the Local Authority.

Notwithstanding this, ensure when scrutinising the information compiled by the Planning Officer that the relevance and significance of these matters has been considered fully and professionally by the relevant body and taken into account properly by the Local Authority in drawing together its conclusions about the legitimacy of the scheme.

## **Defining the setting and surrounding to the proposal site**

When judging the impact of a scheme it is important to understand exactly what is the development site and the area affected by the proposal “its surroundings”

**Site** – Is the area shown and hence defined as the planning unit on the plans submitted with the planning application?

### **The setting and surroundings**

The area affected by the proposal is most commonly referred to as the **Zone of visual influence**. Commonly known as the “**ZVI**”

For simplicity, think of the setting of the site as a series of concentric zones. Within each of these, the impact of the development will vary and change according to the extent that the proposal affects the important features within that zone.

Where possible it is best to try and divide the zones as follows

Foreground	up to 1km
Mid distance views	1-3 kms
Long distance	3-10 kms
Panoramas and Backgrounds	Beyond 10 kms

Each of these zones will need to be considered in a slightly different way with a view to deciding objectively what the development affects and the extent of this impact.

The information used to characterise the proposal site and its setting are broadly similar and as described previously.

In addition however there are some other important elements of information which need to be considered in respect of the setting.

- The locations from which the proposal site can be viewed or seen.
- Residences or property interests whose amenity are likely to be affected by the proposal
- Significant views or panoramas which will be affected by the proposal.

Certain wind power schemes are often located close to or on the boundaries of a number of Local Authority areas, which often run along watersheds. It is therefore important to maintain close contact with adjacent Branches, and expect them to do the same. It will be important in such instances for Branches to join forces and co-operate so that a consistent point of view is established

The process of identifying and describing the features of the site and its surroundings is not easy and factors which need to be taken into account are outlined in **Appendix 1**.

Once this characterisation of the site and its surroundings have been completed the following should be more obvious

- 1. The characteristics and importance of the site and its surroundings**
- 2. What area will the proposal influence?**

Record and summarise your conclusions so that direct comparisons can be made with the information and conclusions in the Environmental Statement produced by the developer.

## **Assessing the impact of the proposal**

Having established the characteristics of the site, the degree of impact a scheme has on the site, its surrounding landscape and rural scene has to be considered. As mentioned previously this can only be done fully once the details of the proposal as outlined in the application and Environmental statement are available.

Once the proposal has been submitted as a planning application the nature of the proposal will be apparent, so it is important to be clear what are

### **The defining features of the proposal**

- The scale of development
- The Number and size of turbines
- The site's exact location with respect to vehicular access
- The means by which power will be transmitted from the site

Every scheme will vary in its detail and complexity and the challenge is to focus on the degree of impact that the proposal will have on the key issues you have identified and compare your conclusions with those of the developer.

Undertaking the assessment in this way will make it easier not only to understand the significance of the development's impact but also to describe it more precisely when it comes to making a written representation.

## **Considering the developer's Environmental Statement**

Although the developer will have undertaken a thorough and what will appear daunting assessment of the impact of the proposal on the environment and landscape in their Environmental Statement, your initial work in characterising the site and its surroundings will now help in focussing on key issues of relevance to CPRW especially when considering the merits of the developer's conclusions.

It is essential to obtain copies of the Environmental Statement prepared by the developer as reviewing their conclusions in the light of your judgements will form an important basis for the eventual

representation made to the Local Planning Authority. (*See CPRW Fact Sheet on How to assess an Environmental Statement*). It is also important to **liaise with CPRW's Renewable Energy Advisor** at this point as a comprehensive assessment of the Environmental Statement with his help will be easier to achieve and help at a later stage should this information have to be used at a public inquiry.

A critical evaluation of the applicant's submitted material is essential and should be made following a model to be supplied. Further training will be provided in this respect in due course.

Sometimes the relevant LPA may need to be persuaded to release copies of the Environmental Statement but increasingly larger applications are becoming available on CD.

The amount of time available to respond to the application and to consider the Environmental Statement will invariably be limited. That being the case, do not underestimate the time required to undertake all the relevant paper work and a proper field assessment.

If necessary a Holding representation should be submitted to the LPA with a clear indication that a further detailed submission will follow. In complex cases it is helpful to discuss cases with LPA officers.

**Confidence in doing this will grow with experience but again it is important to remember to work in conjunction with CPRW's Renewable Energy Advisor.**

### **What issues are important in judging impact ?**

This is the most difficult part of the exercise as there is a tendency to be influenced by personal agendas and preconceived perspectives. If CPRW's representation is to be robust, it is important to try to consider the proposal as objectively and impartially as possible using an approach which reflects the key principles upon which current CPRW policy is based.

In simple terms CPRW's policy means that for a development to be acceptable, it needs to be clearly proven that

- The renewable benefits of the scheme significantly outweigh the impacts of the development
- The following **environmental and landscape qualities** of the site and its surroundings are not seriously compromised.

If the proposal does not pass this test it will be unacceptable.

It is also important to show that each application has been considered on its individual merits. Hence in judging the acceptability or otherwise of a proposal it is important to decide whether it satisfies the following criteria

The key issue which must be judged first is impact on the landscape character of the site and its surroundings

### **Landscape Integrity.**

Does the scale or nature of the development and any buildings associated with the scheme, **significantly** harm the physical integrity of the site or its surrounding landscape or the visual, ecological and cultural character or qualities of the site?

Further guidance is currently being prepared to help you understand how to interpret the term "*significance*"

Where a proposal is judged to have a significant affect it will clearly be unacceptable especially if its energy benefits are small. In other instances where the impact does not reach the significance threshold then the following other factors may mean that overall the scheme is unacceptable

### **In addition it is important to consider the following**

#### **Diversity within the landscapes**

Does the development compromise the relationship of features or the diversity of natural forms which exist on the site or which make up its setting and which have been conditioned by years of use or management?

#### **Scale**

Does the size and location of any installation compromise the proportion, form and scale of the landscape in which it is located or features within it?

## Space

Does the presence or scale of the development result in the overall loss of the existing sense of openness and solitude. This characteristic should only be sacrificed where the national interest requires it and no realistic alternatives are available;

## Accessibility

Does the development prevent, restrict, endanger or diminish the ability of the public to experience the landscape and enjoy the countryside.

## Siting

Can the location of the scheme be justified as the optimum site for the development in the locality? Have alternatives been considered and reasons given why they are not as suitable as the proposed site.

Proposals which fail to satisfy these considerations either because of their direct individual or cumulative impacts will be unacceptable.

## Deciding and describing the degree of impact

Quantifying the significance of the impact that a proposal has on any one of the above aspects is difficult. Field experience however soon improves this judgement. The following provides a helpful way of considering and thereafter describing the degree impact. ( These terms are in the process of being refined )

**Dominant:** Where the development has a major or overpowering effect to the extent that it becomes primary focus and permanently and detrimentally changes the status of what is being judged.

**Prominent:** The development has a particularly marked impact on the issue under consideration but not to the extent that it is that much greater than any other existing features of relevance.

**Moderate** The development is one of many features, none of which are more important or intrusive than any other.

**Insignificant** The development has little discernable or detrimental impact on the character of the location or its surrounding, to the extent that it would not appear out of place in that location or setting.

In deciding how these terms relate to “significance” then Dominant and Prominent are both at the top and bottom end of significant, whilst moderate and insignificant would not be considered to have enough impact to cause concern

When assessing these various elements consider the impact of the scheme on the site and from each of the selected viewpoints.

### **Cumulative Impact**

Whilst the above helps consider the impact of individual proposals, it is also important to judge the way in which the scheme will add to the impact of other such schemes in the area or increase the effect of other significant developments which already exist in the landscape. In some instances a despoiled landscape can accept further change and hence the cumulative effects are acceptable. Elsewhere the opposite will be the case

Proposals should therefore be considered in relation to existing, consented and planned projects in the vicinity, in terms of both their simultaneous visibility from individual vantage points and their sequential visibility when moving around the area in general.

## **Mitigation**

Although a wind power scheme may be unacceptable as a result of this initial assessment, the analysis may reveal that with certain changes or if certain conditions were imposed on the scheme when consent was granted, then it could be acceptable.

Users of this guidance are reminded that CPRW policy does not preclude supporting on shore wind proposals so long as they are in the right place and do not unacceptably affect the character of the site to be used. There may for instance be a number of industrial, commercial, semi urban or brown field sites where turbines could be located without undue detriment to the landscape of that area

If the degree of change required however is so significant then clearly the option of introducing mitigating measures to compensate for its impact are unlikely to be acceptable to the developer. In this case an objection should be sustained

## **Gauging local opinion**

Branches should be aware that proposals will be controversial, and capable of both dividing the local community and forging new alliances and friendships within it. These circumstances create obvious opportunities and pitfalls. While the feelings of the local community may not always coincide with CPRW's terms of reference, it is important that they are tested and borne in mind. Objections based on residential amenity (for example) should only influence CPRW if there are also clear landscape or countryside enjoyment issues.

Strength of local opinion is however an important tool which can be used either to support or undermine the conclusions which have reached. Sheer weight of numbers and petitions are useful but they need to be orchestrated so that people supporting CPRW's position do so in the full knowledge of the position that the organisation has taken.

Support from a local AM or MP is extremely valuable as would be that of the locals Community Council or local Councillor. It is important however

to ensure that any Councillor who is supportive is not directly involved in canvassing others on the Planning Committee, or else the developers can claim that the decision taken by the Authority was biased.

Finally when lobbying local people and decision makers, ensure that the grounds for doing so reflect the fact that the Authority has contravening its own adopted planning policies if the development was granted.

### **Reaching a conclusion**

Careful evaluation of the impacts of the proposal using the suggested approach should make decisions about the acceptability of the scheme easier and more logical. What is crucial however is the weight to be given to each consideration or combinations of them. i.e. the cumulative effect. In some instances the individual effect on each aspect may not be significant but the collective effect of all of them would be. In these circumstances the conclusions will be straight forward, in other instances they may not. In such instances, individuals are advised to seek guidance and a second opinion from CPRW's Wind Energy Advisor.

Similarly when making a decision about the acceptability of the scheme, its benefits in terms of the renewable energy produced need to be balanced against the degree of environmental impact the project is causing. Energy output should not however be determinative where obvious conflicts arise with CPRW's objects.

Once a conclusion has been reached, the findings of the evaluation must be tested against the relevant Local Authority policies to see how they match. Again it should become apparent whether the proposal conforms with or conflicts with the relevant Local Authority policies. If in doubt contact the CPRW's Wind Energy Advisor.

### **Making a representation to the relevant Planning Authority**

Most individuals who undertake assessments of wind installations will probably be familiar with the process and mechanism of submitting written responses to relevant Planning Authorities.

When making representations about wind schemes, it is however particularly important to set out clearly the following

- The reasons why the proposal is unacceptable
- The Local Authority's policies which the proposal contravenes.
- Why in CPRW's view the proposal does not conform to policy.

Examples of the form and content of representations which have been submitted in the past by CPRW can be provided for guidance purposes if required.

A number of options exist for the responses and for consistency it is suggested that the following terminology should always be used

**Objection,**

The scheme is not acceptable as it contravenes CPRW policies and those of the Authority. The list of reasons should explain why.

**Conditional support**

The scheme would be acceptable if it were altered or the conditions or measures suggested formed as part of the planning approval.

**Support.** The scheme is acceptable and supported by CPRW

For the purposes of consistency, it is advisable to forward the initial response to CPRW's Adviser before dispatching it to the Local Authority at least seven days before the deadline for submission. This provides adequate time to amend or supplement any representations.

Summaries of the submission to the LPA are useful and should be produced for each scheme as these can be sent to interested parties, and used as information leaflets to brief individual councillors. As mentioned previously however care should be taken when discussing cases with elected members whose independence and ability to vote may be compromised by excessive contact.

**Liaison with CPRW Head Office**

Wind power is an important national issue for CPRW, so contact needs to be maintained with Head Office and CPRW's Adviser, throughout.

As experience increases or problems arise, meetings and further briefing will be arranged.

Likewise progress on applications will to be logged, so that the CPRW database can be kept up to date for the benefit of others who wish to know the status of any particular scheme.

March 2005

## Appendix 1

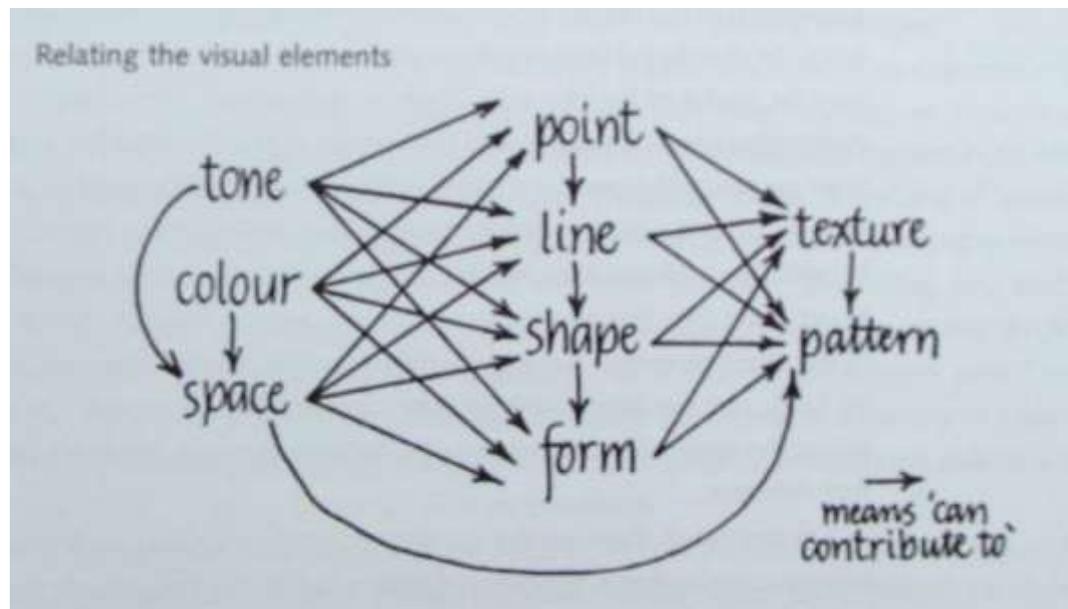
### 1. Defining the visual elements and the sense of place of the site.

**Sense of place** is that combination of physical characteristics which makes the site different from somewhere else. Factors which contribute to sense of place include:

- Physical features or resources
- Visual elements of the location
- Intangible or associative values

In the case of physical characteristics, consideration of the site will have revealed what natural, wildlife, historical, cultural or tourist features of are of importance

So far as the visual elements are concerned, describing what is important can be difficult to express in words. The following diagram highlights some of the elements which are helpful in considering the visual components of a site and its setting.



The relationship of these nine elements may at first seem complex but in fact is fairly simple and is based on the way in which some elements can contribute to others.

The three elements on the left represent different qualities or kinds of surface or space.

The four elements in the middle represent different but related kinds of marks or objects which occupy space, either the two dimensional space of surfaces or the three dimensional space if they are forms in their own right.

The remaining two elements texture and pattern are more complex as they are made up of combinations of the simpler elements.

It is useful therefore when assessing the visual characteristics of a site and its surroundings, to think about their composition in these three ways. Having done this, it is possible to build up a profile of what are the defining elements of the site and its surrounding landscape, which are important, what the relationships between them are and which are likely to be affected most by the proposal

The outcome of this analysis should be a list of features and characteristics and the extent they relate to each other and hence how they contribute to the character of the site.

This collection of landscape attributes are the “**material considerations**” against which the impacts of the scheme need to be judged. They are also the factors against which relevant Development Plan policies should be tested.

## Appendix 2

Suggested revised CPRW Policy March 2005

### On-Shore Wind Power generating proposals

CPRW will oppose any onshore wind power proposal which has a significant adverse impact on the landscape of rural Wales having particular regard to:

1. The existing landscape character of the site and its wider landscape setting and the impact of the proposed development upon the landscape character of those areas;
2. The existing views, into and out of, the site and the wider landscape and the impact on those views of the proposed development;
3. The effect upon the public, whether resident or visiting, arising from the development.

Matters which will be taken into account when evaluating landscape character, views, effects on the public and significance of impact, will include:

- *Sense of place, tranquillity, wildness or openness;*
- *Landscape form, elevation and other natural features;*
- *Land use;*
- *Integrity and diversity of landscape;*
- *Land cover, vegetation, and buildings;*
- *Biodiversity and nature conservation;*
- *Archaeological, historical and cultural features;*
- *Public access to the site and the wider area;*
- *The sensitivity of the landscape to change;*
- *The scale, form, design, location and layout of the development;*
- *The value placed upon the views by the public;*
- *Cumulative impact arising from proximity to other wind power development or other landscape detractors.*

In making this judgement the benefits of the scheme in terms of the amount of energy it generates will be judged against the degree of its impact on the site and its surroundings.