

PROPOSED WIND TURBINES AT WETHER DOWN, EAST MEON

SUMMARY POINTS

Impact on landscape of two 126m¹ high wind turbines on the second highest part of the Hampshire Downs:

- Would be an alien industrial intrusion that would change the character of one of the most tranquil parts of the new South Downs National Park
- Position on the top of the ridge would mar the outstanding quality of the recreational experience of users of the South Downs Way National Trail and of much of the surrounding countryside
- Not only local hilltops such as Old Winchester Hill and Beacon Hill but a great swathe of some of the most prized landscape in the country would be affected
- No large wind turbines have been permitted in an already-designated national park.

Planning considerations:

- Announcement of South Downs National Park.
The purposes of designation are conservation and enhancement of natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the national parks area. This purpose is enshrined in law and must be given great weight, as must opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the national park
- Government guidance
PPS 22 (Renewable Energy) requires that renewable energy development must only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the purposes of designation will not be compromised and that adverse effects on landscape must be clearly outweighed by the benefits.
- South East Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy).
Planned addition of 115mw of renewable generation to be met by a variety of means in Hampshire and IOW. Priority to be given to less sensitive parts of the countryside. In designated areas renewable energy must demonstrate that development will not undermine the objectives that underpin the purposes of designation.

¹ For comparison: London Eye 135m Salisbury Cathedral = 123m, St Paul's=108m, Nelson's column 51.5 m. Height of centre of E Meon above sea level: 100 m Ht of Wether Down: 234 Ht of turbine: 359 m. So the top of the turbine is twice the height of the Down, seen from the valley floor.

EHDC Local Plan

Energy generation proposals will only be permitted if they do not harm the special landscape quality of the designated landscape, or views into or out of it.

- **South Downs Management Plan**
All land management and development control decisions to conserve and enhance landscape character. It is anticipated that there will be no areas within the South Downs that accommodate large wind turbine developments without detriment to the natural beauty of the South Downs
- **South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment**
Wether Down ridgeline is a key landscape sensitivity and its maintenance as an open and undeveloped skyline is regarded as a major land management consideration within the landscape character area. Development considerations require the maintenance of a clear, undeveloped ridgeline and the avoidance of tall structures

Contribution of the Proposal to reducing climate change:

- Using government formulae, we calculate a theoretical carbon saving of some 4,000 tonnes pa.
- Because the wind doesn't blow constantly, fossil fuel burning stations will have to keep running (though not generating) to provide back-up, further reducing the justification for this development.

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

VW website and leaflet claims

CPRE figures

Output:

17,000 MWh

10,407 MWh²

Households supplied:

3,700

2,214³

CO2 saved (based on tonnes/MWh):

7,400 t⁴

3,850 t⁵

² Annual load factor is a consequence of the intermittence of wind supply to the turbines. Volkswind appear to be using a annual load factor of 38.8%, which is not even achieved offshore. There are no large wind turbines in Hampshire to provide a measured annual load factor. The measured annual load factor for the South West quoted in BERR Energy Trends September 2008 is 23.76%, and this figure has been used in the following calculations

2.5MW x 2 x 24 hours x 365 days = 43800 Megawatt hours per year theoretical output.

43800 x 23.76% annual load factor = 10406.88 Megawatt hours. .

³ 10407 MWh divided by 4.7MWh average usage per year per home = 2214 homes

⁴ Volkswind appear to be using a figure of about 0.43 tonnes of CO2 saved per MWh, which complies with advice given to its members by the British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) (0.43t/MWh)

⁵ We believe the correct figure to be 0.37 t/MWh, as confirmed by BERR in Parliament.

10407 MWh x 0.37 tonnes of CO2 saved per MWh = 3850 tonnes of CO2 saved.