

## APPENDIX 3: WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Set out below are the main policy provisions of the County Development Plan with regard to wind energy development based on the following:

- (i) Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2006 (DoEHLG, June 2006) and the preceding draft guidelines;
- (ii) Development policies set out in the South Tipperary County Development Plan 2003 and associated Variation No. 1 SEA, Environmental Report 2006;
- (iii) Phase 1 of the South Tipperary County Landscape Character Assessment;
- (iv) The Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007; and,
- (v) Sustainable Energy Ireland Wind Atlas 2003.

Taking cognisance of the above, the county is divided into three main landscape categories, based on the capacity of the landscape to facilitate such development. The associated maps identify the three following areas: areas unsuitable for wind energy development, areas preferred for wind energy development, and areas open for consideration.

<b>WIND 1:</b>	<b>General Policy Statement on Wind Energy Development</b>
It is the policy of the Council to support, in principle and in appropriate locations, the development of wind energy resources in South Tipperary. The Council recognises that there is a need to promote the development of 'green electricity' resources and to reduce fossil fuel dependency and green house gas emissions in order to address the global issue of climate change, and to comply with European and international policies with regards to renewable and sustainable energy resources. It will be an objective of the Council to ensure the security of energy supply by accommodating the development of wind energy resources in appropriate areas in the county.	

<b>WIND 2:</b>	<b>Government Legislation and Guidance</b>
It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all wind energy development in the county complies with the provisions of all applicable government legislation and guidance on wind energy development and renewable energy resources. 1	

<b>WIND 3:</b>	<b>Preferred Areas for Wind Energy Development</b>
It is the policy of the Council to ensure that wind energy development shall only be permitted in areas as detailed below, and as identified on the associated wind energy maps: Preferred Areas – wind energy development in these areas shall generally be considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to proper planning and sustainable development, and the guidelines set out in this policy document. Areas Open for Consideration – wind energy development in these areas may or may not be appropriate, depending on the character of the landscape and the potential impact of the proposed development. Any impact on the environment must be low and subject to proper planning and sustainable development, and the guidelines set out in this policy document. Unsuitable Areas – wind energy development in these areas is not permitted. These areas either have a special or unique landscape character, and the main objective is conservation.	

In addition to the requirements of Article 23 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2008 and Chapter 5 of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG) 2006, the Council will require the submission of the following information in support of all planning application for wind energy development:

- (i) Longitudinal site sections showing clearly details of all structures and ancillaries proposed on the site;
- (ii) Details, maps, drawings etc as required to indicate connections to the national grid;
- (iii) Predicted noise and shadow flicker outputs from the proposed wind energy development to determine impact on nearby residents;
- (iv) Details, maps, drawings etc as necessary showing requirements for additional ancillary equipment/infrastructure;

<sup>1</sup> Note: as of the date of this document, the current government guidelines on wind energy development are the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, June 2006).

- (v) Hydro geological survey of the site, with particular reference to significant impacts and mitigation measures required in the vicinity of proposed turbines, access roads, borrow pits and drainage channels. Details of any blasting should also be provided; and,
- (vi) Details of total predicted noise levels at noise sensitive locations, significant impacts thereof and mitigation measures as necessary.

<b>WIND 4:</b>	<b>General Considerations for Applications for Wind Energy Development.</b>
It is the policy of the Council that when assessing planning applications for wind energy development, the Council will require compliance with policy INF 7, the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG) 2006 and the criteria set out below.	

- (i) Site location in terms of its suitability designation (e.g. Preferred Areas, etc);
- (ii) Visual impact of turbines and of ancillary development (such as access roads, boundary fencing, control buildings and grid connections), having regard to the ZTV within South Tipperary and neighbouring counties and Appendix 3 of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG) 2006;
- (iii) Siting and location;
- (iv) Spatial extent, scale and design of wind energy developments;
- (v) Cumulative effect having regard to issues raised in point (b) above and the effect of other wind energy developments in the area;
- (vi) The impact on natural and built heritage, particularly Annex 1 bird species, protected mammals, macro invertebrates, fish etc, designated landscapes and habitats<sup>2</sup>. The developer should liaise with the National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) if Annex 1 species are present at or in the vicinity of the site;
- (vii) Impact on geology and ground conditions with particular consideration given to significant impacts such as bog bursts, landslides etc during all phases of the development<sup>3</sup>. Sufficient information must be provided to allow ground conditions to be adequately assessed;
- (viii) Impact on existing built environment, particularly neighbouring residential properties and other sensitive amenity areas;
- (ix) Landscape and visual impacts of operation and decommissioning. Special regard should be had to Table 1 of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG) 2006; and,
- (x) National policy on wind energy (e.g. Government legislation and guidelines).
- (xi) The impact of any proposal for wind energy development on surrounding tourism and recreational related activities and the compatibility of same will be carefully considered in the assessment of any planning application. The Planning Authority will endeavour to liaise with Bord Fáilte and regional and local tourist bodies during the assessment of planning applications for wind energy development which may impact on tourism / recreational related activities and will consider any observations received accordingly.

The Council will refer to current Government legislation and guidelines with regard to development management standards for wind energy development and associated ancillary development.

<b>WIND 5:</b>	<b>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)</b>
It is the policy of the Council to require wind energy development to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in compliance with Government legislation, policy or guidelines which pertain at time of consideration of the planning application. The Council may if it considers necessary, require the preparation of an environmental assessment for sub-threshold development.	

<sup>2</sup>Lands to which the EC Birds Directive (79/490/EC), Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), Habitats Regulations (SI 94 of 1997), and Natura 2000 Sites apply. Particular species include Hen Harriers, Golden Plover, Red Grouse and Merlin.  
<sup>3</sup> Reference should be made to the Geological Survey of Ireland, Report on Landslides, with relevant details to be submitted by a suitably qualified engineer.

Note: the current requirement under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2008 is that an EIA is required for the development of installations for the harnessing of wind power for energy production with more than 5 turbines or having a total output greater than 5 megawatts.

<b>WIND 6:</b>	<b>Conditions on Wind Energy Development</b>
<p>It is the policy of the Council that when granting planning permission for wind energy developments, to have regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and in particular Chapter 7 of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG) 2006. In addition, the Council may include conditions regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Surface water management plans;</li> <li>(ii) Environmental management plans for all phases of the development;</li> <li>(iii) Limiting construction to a certain part of the year;</li> <li>(iv) Duration of the planning permission and eventual decommissioning of the development;</li> <li>(v) Landscaping;</li> <li>(vi) Surveys on birds and relevant protected species and other baseline environmental data collection; and,</li> <li>(vii) Ongoing monitoring during operation of the wind energy development.</li> </ul>	

<b>WIND 7:</b>	<b>Auto Producers</b>
<p>It is the policy of the Council to facilitate, where appropriate, small scale wind energy development by auto producers/micro renewables where energy generated is required in order to meet the immediate needs of the development provided the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The energy will be primarily generated to be used on the site;</li> <li>(ii) The impact of noise on nearby residents will not be significant;</li> <li>(iii) The visual impact on nearby residents will not be significant;</li> <li>(iv) Shadow flicker will not impact on the amenity of nearby residents; and,</li> <li>(v) Visual impact will be minimal.</li> </ul>	

Auto producers can be defined as bodies / persons / companies that seek to develop small scale wind developments in order to meet their immediate energy requirements. Similarly, micro-renewables include non-commercial renewable energy development which provides electricity to a single end user. In all cases the Council will have regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG) 2006.