

RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGIES – GUIDANCE NOTES FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

New National legislation has been introduced promoting a more favourable planning climate for renewable energy proposals. It is urging planners to "promote and encourage, rather than restrict" renewable energy schemes. These include proposals to generate energy from natural sources such as wind, water and the sun.

New national schemes are being introduced which support small-scale renewable energy generation, for example Feed-in Tariffs (FITs) which have been introduced to increase the level of renewable energy in the UK towards our national target of 15% of total energy from renewable sources by 2020 (up from less than 2% in 2009).

The FITs scheme offers three financial benefits:

- A payment for all the electricity you produce, whether you use it yourself, or
- Export it into the grid, in which case you get an additional bonus payment, plus
- For any energy you produce and use yourself, you will reduce your electricity bill

FITs are available to Households, Businesses, Schools, Hospitals, Farmers, Care homes and entire communities who come together to invest in a renewable scheme from which they will all use the electricity and share the income. FITs also apply to most types of renewable energy generation up to 5 mega watts and which are supported by the Renewables Obligation¹.

In addition to FITs which cover the generation of electricity, a further scheme has been introduced to cover heat, called the Renewable Heat Incentive, which is due to be introduced in 2011 and which will provide a fixed income for every kilowatt hour of heat produced. There will also be extra income, should you be able to link to a heat network.

Is it necessary to gain planning permission, listed building consent or building regulations consent?

Call the Council on (01983) 823552 in the first instance for confidential advice. The Council will be able to confirm whether or not your proposal falls within permitted development regulations (will not need permission) or requires planning permission. If we confirm that planning permission is required we will forward copies of the relevant application forms to you. Forms are accompanied by guidance on how to make a planning application and what information will be required to support your proposals. In addition to this the Council's website contains help and advice on [how to make a planning application](#).

Please note that some proposals, due to their scale and likely impact will need to be considered under the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. If your proposal requires this you will be told during pre application discussions with the Council's Planning Services team.

If your building is included on the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (a "listed building"), you will need to obtain listed building consent for the installation of a new

¹ A Renewables Obligation Certificate (ROC) is a green certificate issued to an accredited generator for eligible renewable electricity generated within the United Kingdom and supplied to customers within the United Kingdom by a licensed electricity supplier.

energy system. It is important not to affect the appearance or the fabric of the building; this may mean that it is not possible to install solar panels directly onto a listed building. Instead consider using solar tiles on outbuildings or erecting panels in your garden. If your property is in a Conservation Area, or adjacent to a Listed Building, it is important to ensure that proposals conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area. This may mean that new technologies can only be sited where they are not visible from important buildings, views or areas.

Useful links for information with regard to renewable technologies and the Historic Environment:

[Microgeneration in the Historic Environment](#) English Heritage Guidance August 2008

[Micro wind generation and traditional buildings](#) English Heritage guidance, 2007

Information required to support proposals for wind turbines

You should use the guidance notes that accompany planning application forms to identify what detailed information will be required to support your proposal, however in general terms:

- *Proposals at sites which are NOT in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB):*
 - Proposals for 1-2 turbines which are up to 15m high (to the tip of the blade) will not require a photomontage showing the location within the landscape or building setting.
 - Proposals for 3 or more turbines up to 15m high (to the tip of the blade) will require photographs illustrating the turbines in-situ (superimposed upon the photograph) at the correct scale.
 - All wind turbine proposals will require noise reports and this must include up-to-date data on background noise at the site itself, together with an assessment of the changes to background noise levels beyond the cartilage of the site.
 - If proposals are to be connected to the grid, although part of a separate permitting regime proposals should indicate an indicative routing diagram for grid connection.

- *Proposals at sites which are WITHIN the AONB:*
 - All proposals should be supported with a photomontage illustrating the turbines in-situ at the correct scale.
 - All proposals should be supported by a visual impact assessment of the proposals.
 - All proposals will require noise reports and this must include up-to-date data on background noise at the site itself, together with an assessment of the changes to background noise levels beyond the cartilage of the site.
 - If proposals are to be connected to the grid, although part of a separate permitting regime proposals should indicate an indicative routing diagram for grid connection.

You are strongly advised to seek **pre-application discussions** with the Planning Service before submitting applications and if you believe your site is in a sensitive location, to employ a planning consultant. Specifically, for any sites within the AONB it is recommended that you seek a formal screening opinion from the Planning Authority which will confirm whether or not an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required. For all proposals within the AONB, pre-application advice would also usefully identify those points beyond the site from which visual impacts should be considered.