



Torridge District Council Wind Energy Policy



May 2010

Please note that this guidance document has been adopted by Torridge District Council but it does not constitute a Development Plan Document nor is it a Supplementary Planning Document and therefore it does not hold any formal planning policy or statutory development plan status. One of the main aims of the document is to provide an engagement tool between the relevant parties. It is hoped that the guidance will result in applicants and/or developers approaching the Council at the earliest opportunity in order to set up discussions between the relevant stakeholders and to ensure that all issues are addressed before an application is put forward. The document has also been provided as an informal guidance document for Torridge District Council staff.

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1 Introduction

Torridge District Council occupies an area of about 384 square miles of northwest Devon, 21,4% of which is covered by a landscape designation. The area is predominantly rural and had a population of roughly 65000 (source: ONS) in 2007. The northern portion of the District is part of the North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the coastline includes extensive stretches of Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Lundy Island is a Marine Nature Reserve and other protected areas occur throughout the District, in particular Culm grassland. Parts of the district are included in the Biosphere buffer and transition zones. The natural landscape varies between intimate wooded valleys and extensive open moorlands. The natural landscape heavily influences the dispersed settlement pattern and is highly valued by both local residents and tourists.

The Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016 identified most of Torridge District as 'Area of Search for Wind based Energy Production' and wind energy applications are received on a regular basis. However, the Devon Structure Plan will be replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South West, which sets sub-regional targets for renewable energy. For Devon this target is 151MW and the draft RSS says that a minimum cumulative target of 850MWe installed capacity is expected to be met by 2020 from a range of onshore renewable electricity technologies. Torridge District Council recognises the need to contribute to meeting the sub-regional target of 151MW in order to reduce the use of fossil fuel combustion and consequently CO² emissions.

The UK government's Energy White Paper – 'Meeting the Energy Challenge' (Dtl, 2007) states that renewables are key to its strategy to tackle climate change and deploy cleaner sources of energy. The recent publication of 'The UK Renewable Energy Strategy' (HM Government, July 2009) further confirms the Government's support for renewable energy, including wind energy. Planning Policy Statement 22, Renewable Energy (ODPM, 2004) provides national guidance and the publication of 'Wind Power in the UK – a guide to the key issues surrounding onshore wind power development in the UK' by the Sustainable Development Commission (2005) addresses wind energy in detail. The report shows that the UK government accepts that wind energy can contribute to meeting the challenge of climate change and it is aimed primarily at those responsible for making decisions about onshore wind power developments, including planning officers, local councillors and local energy and sustainability officers. It explains the issues surrounding wind power in the UK and whilst it could act as a 'good practice' guide for those involved in decision-making, it does not address the difficulties experienced by decision makers when dealing with wind farm applications, which are largely the result of the lack of any meaningful guidelines.

2 Need and Purpose of policy statement

Torrige District Councillors decided to form a wind energy steering group in order to prepare a policy statement that will set out the expectations of the Council with regards to wind energy proposals. Unfortunately, PPS22 and its companion guide do not provide clear guidance with regards to safeguarding residential properties, wildlife (including protected species) or designated landscapes and it is believed that such clear guidance would enable more balanced judgement of planning applications. The aim of this document is to provide clear guidance to prospective developers, and it is hoped that the planning process will be considerably speeded up if developers follow this guidance. The guidance also advocates a more transparent process, which should result in positive engagement with those likely to be affected by wind energy development, which should also contribute to achieving wider acceptance of such schemes.

Although Planning Policy Statement 22 states that the local approach to protecting landscape and townscape must be consistent with PPS22 and does not preclude the supply of any type of renewable energy other than in the most exceptional circumstances, Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change, Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1, says that *“planning authorities should alongside any criteria-based policy developed in line with PPS22, consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low-carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure the development of such sources, but in doing so take care to avoid stifling innovation including by rejecting proposals solely because they are outside areas identified for energy generation”*. This policy statement will not identify suitable areas for wind energy development, but, as stated above, set out a process and clear guidance that the Council would wish developers to follow when applying for onshore wind turbines. The Council believes that such a process is needed in recognition of the North Devon Biosphere and associated buffer zone and transition zone, much of which expands across Torrige District.

3 Guidelines for Wind Energy Development

3.1 Guidelines for Wind Energy Development

Small-scale turbines

This document is aimed at larger scale wind turbines (onshore), i.e. Single turbines with a height of up to 15m are not included. Proposals for two or more turbines with a height of 15 or more should follow the engagement process set out below and contact the Council with details of their proposal. The engagement process will determine the information that should be provided by the developer.

Community wind energy

The Council is in favour of community energy schemes, including wind energy, and it would welcome proposals for such schemes from both community groups and developers.

Prior to the submission of a planning application, Torrridge District Council would expect that one or more anemometer masts of a representative height, i.e. the hub height of the proposed turbines, are located in the proposal site for a time period of at least 12 months, as recognised in guidance provided by the British Wind Energy Association (Best Practice Guidelines for Wind Energy Development, BWEA, November 1994). Alternative technology for the measuring of wind speed data would be acceptable, for example the use of the pulsed-laser system. Actual site measurement will provide more accurate wind speed data than an approximate estimate and computer modelling. The wind speed data from such measurements shall be made available to Torrridge District Council and other interested parties as part of the planning application. The wind speed data can be treated as confidential and does not have to be made public, but it is seen as essential information that should accompany planning applications for wind turbines. At this stage, it is also recommended that developers should contact statutory bodies⁽¹⁾. This would enable the amendment of the scheme should this be necessary, prior to the submission of the application, which should not only reduce the application time but provide important responses/comments early on in the development process.

3.2 Stakeholder Engagement

The second step would be a pre-planning engagement process, and discussions involving the Local Planning Authority and Parish(es)/communities, and/or other relevant organisations (depending on the proposal site), should commence. The Local Planning Authority will advise the developer/applicant on how to best consult with the local community and a stakeholder engagement should be agreed.

3.3 Local and Wider Community

At this stage the developer should also consider approaching the local and wider community in order to keep people informed but also to start discussions and/or negotiations regarding community benefits, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Renewables Advisory Board document "Delivering community benefits from wind energy development: A Toolkit" (July 2009).

3.4 Distance Recommendations

Torrridge District Council is aware of the restrictions placed by PPS22 with regards to separation distances from wind turbines but nevertheless it would like developers to consider the application of Torrridge District Council's distance recommendations. These distance proposals should be seen as a starting point for discussions. The Council seeks to safeguard the amenity of residents and the minimisation of visual impact on the landscape. It recognises that noise and visual impact assessment might allow for wind turbine locations at distances of less than 500 and 600m, as in

1 Statutory bodies would include: Natural England, English Heritage, Devon Wildlife Trust, RSPB, CPRE, MoD, Civil Aviation Authority, Highways Agency, Environment Agency, Western Power Distribution, South West Water, Devon County Council Highways Authority, CSS Spectrum Management Services Ltd, ITC Office of Communications, National Grid Wireless, National Grid Transco, Joint Radio Company, BBC Research and Development, Arqiva, British Telecom, Orange.

some cases, lesser separation distances might be sufficient or not required for safeguarding purposes. Site-specific measurements will therefore determine separation distances from noise sensitive properties and distance to designated landscapes will be determined by landscape and visual impact assessment.

	Distance (metres)
Residential settlements/dwellings	600m
General settlements, villages, tourist development, campsites/caravan parks	600m
Isolated dwellings	600m
Designated landscapes, i.e. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), Coastal Protection Zone (CPZ), Natura 2000 sites	500m
Woodland and hedgerows	50m buffer to the edges of the rotor-swept area
Named water courses & water body (A water body is a certain clearly distinguishable part of surface water, such as a lake, a stream, river or a part of a stream or river)	Fall-over distance
Motorway, A-, B-Roads and County Highways	Highways Agency distance recommendation of blade tip height + 50m
Bridle ways	Minimum of 200m (Non statutory recommendation of British Horse Society)
Footpaths	Wind turbines should not oversail
Railway lines, shipping canals	Fall over distance + 10%
Power lines	Rotor diameter x 5 ("Overhead Line Separation from Wind Turbines", National Grid, September 2008)
Directional radio towers, transmitters, directional radio routes	Fall over distance

	Distance (metres)
Distance to existing and proposed wind energy schemes with a capacity of 5MW or more	10km+ unless the topography allows for shorter distances between existing and planned schemes

Distance Recommendations

The distance guidance to woodlands and hedgerows has been recommended by Natural England. The formula to work out the distance from a woodland or hedgerow can be found in the document 'Bats and onshore turbines' (NE, 2009, p.2).

3.5 Key Issues

Scoping and screening opinions would be provided in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 1990, identifying the issues the EIA should address. If an EIA were not required, Torridge District Council would wish the developer to fill in the checklist provided in Appendix 1. Normally an EIA would address the following issues:

- Local amenity, i.e. noise & visual effects;
- Community;
- Biodiversity;
- Bats and birds;
- Cultural heritage;
- Landscape and visual impacts;
- Local economy;
- Soils and hydrology;
- Highways and rights of way;
- Telecommunications; and
- Aircraft and radar;

The Appendix 1 checklist is project-related and site-specific and addresses the same issues as an EIA but it would be a 'voluntary' exercise, different from an Environmental Statement (ES) for the purposes of the EIA Regulations. Nevertheless, it would provide the Local Planning Authority with detailed information that is likely to speed up the decision-making process.

3.5.1 Local Amenity

It is generally accepted that noise and visual impacts are the main planning related issues that need to be considered with regard to local amenity. Landscape and visual impacts will be dealt with separately and other local amenity issues, such as shadow flicker and electromagnetic radiation, are addressed in the PPS22 companion guide, which provides advice to developers on how to deal with these issues.

Noise from wind turbines can cause an impact on local amenity and it is therefore necessary for schemes to be well specified and designed and to site them at a sufficient distance from noise sensitive development as this would ensure that increases in ambient noise levels are acceptable. It is anticipated that a separation distance between residential properties and quiet leisure businesses and wind turbines can be agreed with prospective developers that ensures that such noise impacts are minimised. Developers should therefore identify any noise sensitive development and carry out a noise assessment to determine whether or not the proposed wind turbines would cause any potential impact.

The developer should carry out the noise assessment against any background noise, in accordance with PPS22 companion guide and ETSU-R-97 'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms' or any future revised guidance issued by the UK government on the assessment of noise.

3.5.2 Community

Local communities are most likely to be directly affected by wind energy development and a range of planning related issues are often raised as concerns, most notably noise, landscape impact, impacts on the local economy and shadow flicker. Wind energy development could have a range of positive and negative impacts on the local community, for example they might provide a landowner with the opportunity for rural diversification or provide opportunities for community based schemes and education resources. Developers should therefore consider if a wind energy scheme would have positive, negative or neutral effects on the issues raised by a local community. Because the process set out in this paper expects that discussions between the developer, Local Planning Authority and community would take place prior to the submission of a planning application, it is expected that the concerns raised by the community could be addressed and likely impacts mitigated against or minimised.

3.5.3 Biodiversity / Ecology

Wind energy schemes can contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases, which in turn would lead to a reduction in climate change and its impacts on biodiversity globally and in the UK. However, wind energy schemes also have the potential to impact on biodiversity and nature conservation, both in a positive or negative way. Protection from inappropriate development for features of international and national importance is provided by national guidance and circulars as well as regional, structure plan and local plan policies. Other areas and features of nature conservation and enhancement are protected by additional policies, including hedgerows.

Protected species:

All bats and various bird species are protected and wind energy development can cause a risk that needs to be avoided or minimised and therefore developers are required to carry out bat and bird surveys. For bats, the survey needs to establish roosts, flight lines, feeding areas, hibernation or swarming sites around the proposal

site in agreement with Natural England. The survey should establish the appropriateness of the wind energy scheme, including its design and location. The use of the formula recommended by Natural England (June 2009) should ensure that the distance of wind turbines to woodlands and hedgerows contributes to the protection of birds and bats and other species that are likely to be affected, such as dormice, badgers, otters etc. The survey requirement outlined in PPS9 should be followed and survey data must be submitted with the application. Desktop studies and an ecological assessment showing what further survey work is needed should be provided by the developer and agreed with relevant interest groups. Surveys must establish presence of species, identify impacts, and propose mitigation and/or compensation prior to the application being submitted. The potential for harm has to be identified for protected species and other species that are likely to be affected. An assessment of potential impacts will have to be carried out to ensure that such harm can be avoided, reduced or mitigated against.

3.5.4 Designated Sites

Torrige has a number of international and national statutory designations and county and local designations both for habitats and species. The Council would like to see the application of an agreed separation distance between the wind turbines and international and national designations, based on the findings of a landscape and visual impact assessment. Such an assessment would be agreed with relevant bodies and it should provide information on the likely effects on such designated sites. Mitigation or compensatory measures would have to be proposed by the developer and agreed with the Council and relevant stakeholders .

The key international and national designations in Torrige are (please see maps, Appendix 2):

International:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC);
- Braunton Burrows Biospheres Reserve (transition zone only).

National:

- Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).

New wind energy proposals will need to demonstrate that they would not adversely affect the conservation value of an internationally designated site. Also, wind energy schemes should not impact on species or habitats outside of a designated site that might cause adverse impacts on the integrity of the site or cause a significant impact on the size, distribution, structure or function of a population of a species for which a site was designated. Each new wind energy development needs to be assessed in accordance with the Habitats Regulations Assessment in order to determine if

the proposed development would be likely to have significant effect, alone or in combination with other plans or projects on the site of features associated with an international designation.

Wind energy schemes will need to prove that they would not cause adverse impacts on a nationally designated site (SSSI) and strict measures will need to be taken in order to ensure that harmful effects on a SSSI are avoided or mitigated against.

Torrige also has a Local Statutory designation and numerous Local Site Designations and wind energy proposals will need to provide evidence of appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures in order to ensure the protection of these sites.

3.5.5 Cultural Heritage

Torrige's built environment contains a large number of historic settlements and buildings and these historic settlements, parks and gardens and field patterns form an important part of the historic landscape. Listed buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments provide special interest and the built heritage of the District is substantial and much of it has statutory protection. Wind energy schemes will have to consider their impact on the cultural heritage and the historic environment. Proposals would be expected to demonstrate that there would not be any significant impact on the qualities of the designations and direct damage to archaeological remains needs to be avoided. As part of the design and environmental assessment processes, the development should consider the effects it may have on the following aspects:

- Archaeological remains;
- Historic buildings and structures;
- Designated and undesignated sites and areas;
- Effects on settings of designated and undesignated sites and areas;
- Effects on cultural landscapes such as the North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Braunton Burrows Biosphere Reserve;
- Historic character of towns and villages and their associations with the wider landscape;
- 'Designed' landscapes, e.g. parks and gardens

The setting of historic sites and the visual amenity of a landscape could be affected by wind energy development. Wind energy schemes are normally located in the open countryside, in high or exposed locations and such areas of open landscape are often valued for their wildness, remoteness and tranquillity or they may contain historic remains. It is therefore necessary that the likely effects of a proposal on these areas be assessed.

3.5.6 Landscape and Visual

In the absence of a Landscape capacity assessment specifying the suitability for wind energy it is recommended that prior to any application the developer provides detailed information on how the proposed scheme would integrate into the natural

landscape and/or townscape, taking into consideration the existing landscape character areas identified in the Torridge District Local Plan 1997-2011 and explained in [The Torridge Landscape](#) – An Integrated Assessment of the District's Natural Character, Final Report (CBA, 1995).

A Landscape Character Assessment is currently being undertaken for Torridge and once this work has been completed it will be possible to produce a landscape sensitivity assessment to wind energy development in Torridge. The landscape sensitivity document would provide technical support on the suitability of landscape character types and turbine size and types and scale of development in Torridge. The landscape sensitivity assessment could add to a Development Management Document at a later stage but until the above documents are available it is important that prospective developers carry out landscape and visual impact assessment in accordance with 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Landscape Institute & Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment, 2002) and 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland' (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002). Additional information on the Torridge Landscape can be found in "The Culm" (Natural England, Character Area 149⁽²⁾).

The local authority has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and proposed wind energy development needs to consider likely impacts on the AONB and its setting within the landscape and visual impacts assessment.

3.5.7 Local Economy

Concerns are often raised regarding negative impacts on the local economy, including the tourism economy, in particular where the tranquillity of tourism enterprises is likely to be affected. Communities are concerned that wind energy development will result in negative impacts on the landscape character and visual quality and that as a result less people will visit the area. Developers should therefore ensure that any impact on the local economy is minimised or mitigated and that it is explicitly shown how the minimisation or mitigation will be implemented. Consideration should be given to employing local labour and using locally sourced and/or recycled materials, in particular for the construction of bases, access roads and other ancillary structures.

3.5.8 Soils and Hydrology

Wind energy development could result in adverse effects on soils, hydrology and water quality of a site and its surrounding watercourses. This is of particular importance in the Biosphere transition zone, which includes the rivers Taw and Torridge that run through the North Devon Biosphere Reserve into the sea. Braunton Burrows is the Biosphere 'core' and also a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It is therefore important that a wind energy proposal would not cause significant harm to the integrity of local water sources, as such damage could have far reaching

2 http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/jca149_tcm6-5605.pdf

consequences. Potential impacts on groundwater must be considered as wind turbines have very large foundations that could impact on ground water flow and there is also the risk of pollution, in particular during the construction phase. The developer must therefore undertake a water interest survey to identify all boreholes, springs and wells (and surface water features), followed by an assessment of risks to identified features and mitigation measures.

3.5.9 Highways and Rights of Way

Access to a wind energy site is important and a particular consideration is the suitability of the road network with regards to being able to accommodate the large vehicles necessary to transport the wind turbine components. The developer would be expected to carry out an assessment of the full route to be used and including the site access. This assessment needs to demonstrate to the Highways Authority that the road network can accommodate the loads as well as identifying any measures required but also taking into consideration any nature conservation interest on the route and landscape and visual impacts.

Adequate distance should be provided between wind energy development and public rights of way. There is no statutory separation distance between wind turbines and Public Rights of Way (PROW) and PPS22 states that 'not oversailing public rights of way' is the minimum separation distance and the recommended fall over distance is considered adequate. The importance of existing and planned rights of way will be taken into consideration. Natural England recommends that separation distances for National Trails should be 4 x the height of the turbine and for other bridleways 3 x the height. Impacts of wind turbines on PROW and National Trails such as the Tarka Trail and Coast Path should be included as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

3.5.10 Telecommunications

Developers need to consider the likely impacts of wind energy proposals on radio signals, local TV receptions and telecommunication systems, including those used by the police and emergency services. Developers need to establish if their proposal would lead to disturbance and provide mitigation measures to reduce any negative impact. In the past the BBC or Ofcom used to respond to wind turbine enquiries with an assessment of the predicted impact on domestic TV reception but since the BBC developed an online tool, which has been used extensively by developers, it has been decided by the BBC and Ofcom to no longer respond to enquiries from wind farm developers. Torridge District Council would therefore expect developers to provide evidence that they have consulted the online tool and the results obtained as part of their planning application, including information of the impact of the proposed wind farm on TV reception. Evidence is required that the predicted impact would not merit further investigation. If such evidence cannot be provided, the inquirer should approach the main UK TV transmission company who is able to undertake surveys on a commercial basis and provide more complex modelling in order to prepare a report detailing the potential impacts.

3.5.11 Aircraft and Radar

Wind turbines have the potential to cause a variety of effects on aviation, ranging from physical safeguarding, generation of unwanted returns on primary radar, affecting the performance and propagation of SSR, navigation aids and communication facilities, through to consideration of turbulence. However, both aviation and wind energy are important to UK national interests and both industry sectors have legitimate interests that must be balanced carefully as the two industries have to co-exist. Beyond physical and radar related issues, other potential issues will include aviation charting and promulgation and aviation lighting requirements. The Civil Aviation Authority has received a significant number of pre-planning/planning enquiries associated with wind farm development and there is the possibility that the proliferation of wind turbines in any particular area might potentially result in difficulties for aviation that a single development would not have generated. This implies that the aviation industry could object to proposed wind energy development in an area that was previously acceptable and not objected to. Developers and other interested parties should therefore refer to aviation guideline documentation, in particular the Department for Trade and Industry (now the Department for Energy and Climate Change) sponsored 'Wind Energy and Aviation Interests' and Civil Air Publication 764. Early consultation between developers and the relevant authorities should ensure that wind energy would not cause adverse impacts on the use of aerodromes and radar and any other navigation systems.

3.5.12 End of life of wind energy scheme

It is expected that the land be restored to its former use when the operation of the wind turbines has ceased. The following condition would be included in a planning permission for a wind energy scheme:

6 months prior to the permanent decommissioning of the turbines a scheme for restoration of the site shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall make provision for details of the removal of the turbines and associated equipment; restoration details to return the land to its former use and the phasing of works. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

4 Conclusion

The aim of this document is to provide clear guidance and support through the pre-planning and planning stages for wind energy schemes by facilitating engagement and discussion between the relevant parties and it is hoped that developers will take advantage of this guidance. It is recognised that it is important that the full range of issues associated with wind energy development is taken into account and that detrimental impacts are minimised. Currently there is only one operational wind energy scheme in Torridge but planning permission has been granted for two more and it is anticipated that more applications will come forward. The development of additional wind energy schemes will impact on the environmental capacity and the emphasis on the relevant issues might change over time. It might then become necessary for this guidance document to be reviewed and amended. The Council recognises that wind energy technology is constantly evolving and it would therefore expect that the wind turbine schemes implemented should be the most efficient and sustainable in the long-term.

5 Consultation

Appendix 1

Checklist for project-related and site-specific environmental assessment of wind energy proposals

Distance recommendations:

	Distance (metres)
Residential settlements/dwellings	600m
General settlements, villages, tourist development, campsites/caravan parks	600m
Isolated dwellings	600m
Designated landscapes, i.e. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), Coastal Protection Zone (CPZ), Natura 2000 sites	500m
Woodland and hedgerows	50m buffer to the edges of the rotor-swept area (Natural England, 2009)
Named water courses & substantial bodies of water	Fall-over distance

	Distance (metres)
Mmotorway, A-, B-Roads and County Highways	Highways Agency distance recommendation of blade tip height + 50m
Bridleways	Minimum of 200m (Non-statutory recommendation of the British Horse Society)
Footpaths, Public Rights of Way	Wind turbines should not oversail
Railway lines, shipping canals	Fall-over distance plus 10%
Power lines	Rotor diameter x 5 ("Overhead Line Separation from Wind Turbines", National Grid, September 2008)
Directional radio towers, transmitters, directional radio routes	Fall-over distance
Distance to existing and proposed wind energy schemes with a capacity of 5MW or more	10km+(unless the topography allows for shorter distances between existing and planned schemes)

1. Proposal characteristics:

1.1 Size and extent of proposal:

1.1.1 Number of turbines	
1.1.2 Total area required	
1.1.3 Type and extent of areas of hardstanding	
1.1.4 Type and extent of access lanes/tracks	
1.1.5 Turbine model	
1.1.6 Hub height	
1.1.7 Rotor diameter	
1.1.8 Tower design	
1.1.9 Noise level at rated output	
1.1.10 Type and extent of mains connection	

1.1.11 Type and extent of development (road system)	
1.1.12 Other auxiliary plants	

1.2 Description of expected/likely emissions:

During time of construction:

1.2.1 Acoustic emissions	
1.2.2 Other emissions?	
If so, that type and likely intensity?	

During operation of turbines:

1.2.3 Acoustic emissions	
1.2.4 Other emissions?	
If so, what type and likely intensity?	

1.3 Assessment of potential accidents/hazard risks?

1.3.1 Breaking off of turbine elements (e.g. rotor blades)	
1.3.2 Collapse of entire turbine in gale	
1.3.3 Ice breaking off the turbine	

1.4 Will the wind energy scheme lead directly or indirectly to adverse impacts?

If so, which ones?	
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1.5 Have alternative project designs been examined?

If so, which ones and what was the outcome?	
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2. Site characteristics

A prevention oriented assessment of the environmental value and sensitivity of the site is expected, taking into account likely impacts on human beings and flora and fauna.

2.1 Existing uses in the area likely to be affected:

yes/no?

Residential areas?	
Leisure and recreation?	
Farming, forestry or fisheries?	
Transport?	
Commercial/industrial?	
Public use?	
Strategic site/within development boundary?	
Wildlife/nature conservation site	

2.2 Cumulative impacts with existing or planned wind energy schemes?

If so, where and how many?	
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2.3 Are there existing environmental impacts within the proposal site or a wider area that could be affected by the current proposal?

If so, type and intensity:	
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2.4 Have national or international environmentally quality limits been exceeded within the site or a wider area that is likely to be affected by the current proposal?

If so, which ones?	
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2.5 Are there existing or planned wind energy schemes within a 5km radius of the proposal site?

If so, which ones?	
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2.6 Special interests in the area of likely impact with regards to the quantity, quality and regenerative capacity of biodiversity

Fauna	
Flora	
Habitats	
Landscape	
Ground water	

2.7 Would the proposal impact on particularly sensitive sites or designated landscapes?

	Significant impact	Insignificant impact	Importance of the area
2.7.1 Strict nature reserve			
2.7.2 Wilderness area			
2.7.3 National Park			
2.7.4 Natural monument			
2.7.5 Habitat or species protected area (i.e. SPA, SAC)			
2.7.6 Resource protected area (e.g. a protected groundwater zone)			
2.7.7 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)			
2.7.8 Biosphere Reserve			
2.7.9 Devon Wildlife Area			
2.7.10 Other ecological, agricultural or cultural important areas			

Reason:	
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2.8 Would the proposal affect migratory routes of birds or bats?

If so, which species and in what way?	
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2.9 Would the proposal affect a Conservation Area, Listed building or scheduled monument?

If so, which ones:	
Type and intensity:	

2.10 Would the proposal affect buildings or areas of historical or pre-historical importance?

If so, which ones:	
Type and intensity:	

3. Assessing potential impacts on the environment

The potential significant impacts of proposed wind energy schemes on the environment are to be assessed, taking into consideration the likely effects on water, soil, plants, animals, landscape, cultural and other assets.

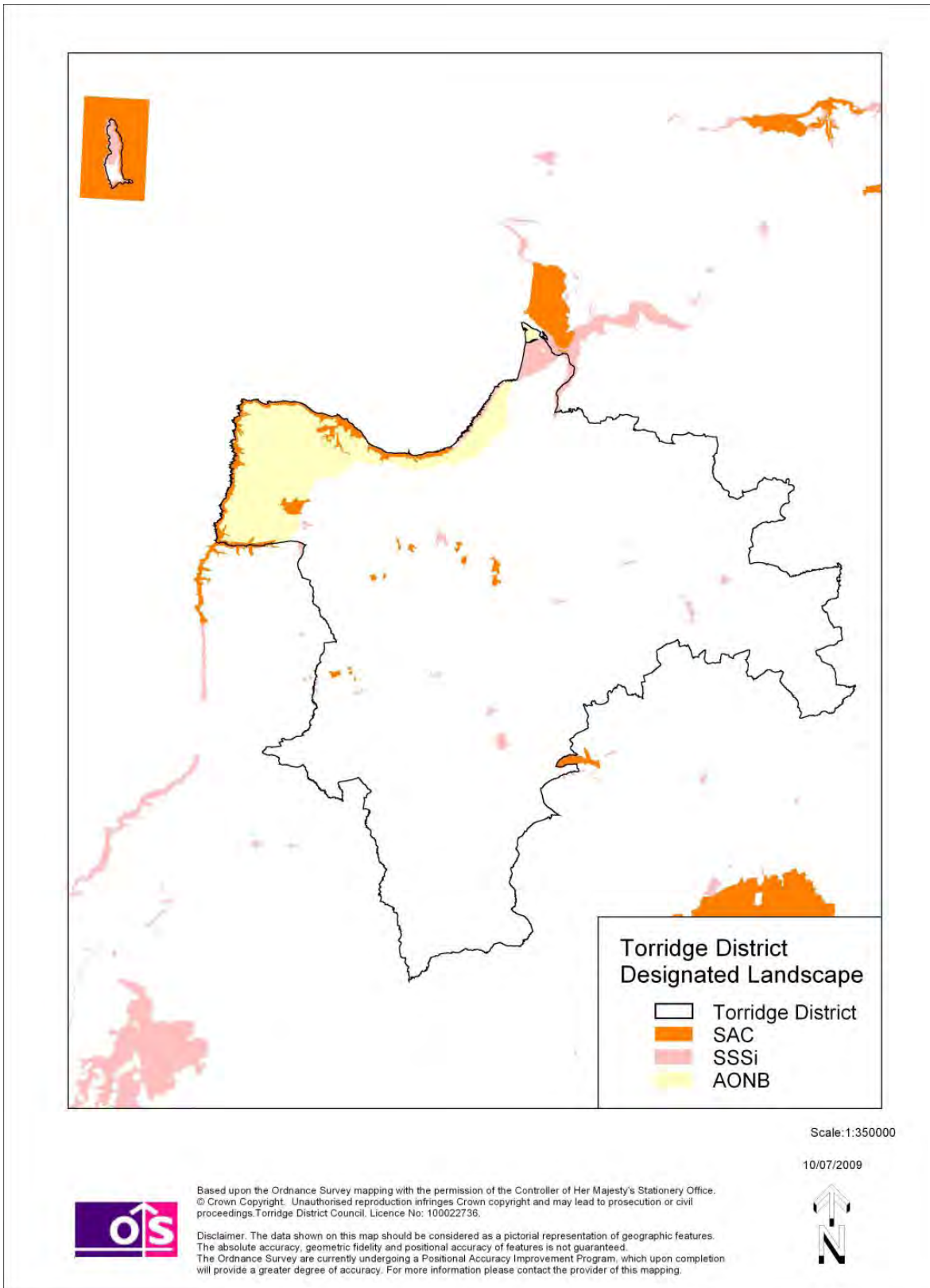
	Significant	Insignificant	Reason
3.1.1 Soil			
3.1.2 Water			
3.1.3 Biodiversity (in total)			
3.1.3.1 Plants			
3.1.3.2 animals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bats • Birds • Other 			
3.1.3.3 Habitats			
3.1.3.4 Landscape			
3.1.4 Human beings			

	Significant	Insignificant	Reason
3.1.5 Cultural and other assets			
3.1.6 Others			

Summary of findings:	
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Cumulative impacts with existing or planned wind energy schemes?	
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Appendix 2



Designated Landscapes

International Designations:

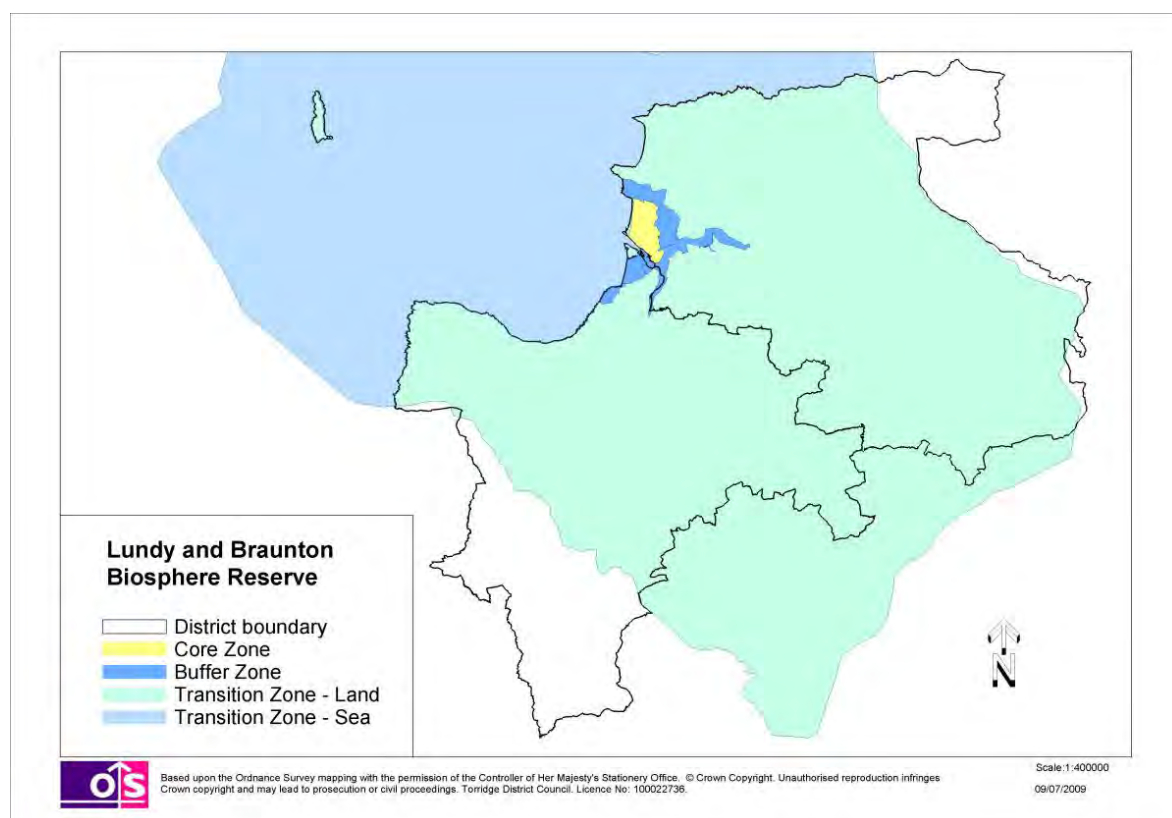
SACs (Special Areas of Conservation):	Grid Reference	Area (hectares)	Additional designations
1. Culm Grasslands	Various	357.8	SSSI/NNR (part)
2. Lundy Marine	SS 130 482 – 140 435	13900.0 approximately	SSSI (part) /MNR (part)
3. Tintagel – Marsland – Clovelly Coast (part)	SS 212 175 – 230 278 – 315 254	~ 1173.8	SSSI

National Designations:

SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest):	Grid Reference	Area (hectares)	Additional designations
1. Beaford Moor, Dolton	SS 580 147	31.6	None
2. Bradworthy Common, Bradworthy (2 parcels) ⁽¹⁾	SS 325 149 SS 332 150	24.1	SAC
3. Brendon and Vealand Fen, Pancrasweek	SS 281 069	18.3	None
4. Brendon Farm (North), Thornbury (2 parcels)	SS 366 078 SS 368 077	16.1	None
5. Bursdon Moor, Hartland ⁽¹⁾	SS 267 200	144.2	SAC
6. Common Moor, East Putford (2 parcels)	SS 373 177 SS 374 180	53.9	None
7. Common Moor, Langtree	SS 460132	17.1	None
8. Deptford Farm Pastures, Meddon, Hartland (2 parcels)	SS 273 184 SS 275 187	22.2	None
9. Dunsdon Farm, Pancrasweek (3 parcels) ⁽¹⁾	SS 307 083 SS 295 078 SS 311 075	39.2	SAC
10. Dunsland Park, Bradford	SS 409 051	26.8	None
11. Halsdon, Dolton	SS 555 125	56.8	None

SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest):	Grid Reference	Area (hectares)	Additional designations
12. Hobby to Peppercombe, Alwington/Clovelly/Parkham, Woolfardisworthy ⁽²⁾	SS 320 242 – 383 242	~224.0	SAC
13. Hunshaw Wood, Little Torrington	SS 510 160	18.6	None
14. Kingford Fen, Kingford Mill, Pancrasweek (2 parcels)	SS 281 059 SS 281 063	7.4	None
15. Kismeldon Meadows, Woolfardisworthy (2 parcels) ⁽¹⁾	SS 351 171 SS 343 172	32.4	SAC
16. Lundy, Lundy Island ⁽³⁾	SS 134 458	~346.4	SAC (part) MNR (part)
17. Mambury and Stowford Moors, East Putford/Bulkworthy (2 parcels) ⁽¹⁾	SS 390 162 SS 386 174	39.5	SAC
18. Marsland to Clovelly Coast, Clovelly/Hartland/Welcombe ⁽²⁾	SS 212 175 – 445 323	~949.9	SAC
19. Mermaid's Pool to Rowden Gut, Abbotsham/Alwington	SS 403 266 – 415 285	~156.5	None
20. Northam Burrows, Northam ⁽⁴⁾	SS 445 305	~422.5	None
21. Popehouse Moor, Winkleigh	SS 647 097	3.2	None
22. Small Brook, Pancrasweek (2 parcels)	SS 313 065 SS 316 066	14.7	None
23. Taw-Torridge Estuary (part), Bideford/Northam (2 areas) ⁽⁴⁾	SS 455 262 – 445 323 SS 449 325	~1336.5 ^x	None
24. Thorne and Doves Moors, Buckland Brewer (2 parcels) ⁽¹⁾	SS 413 157 SS 412 145	78.4	SAC
25. Westward Ho! Cliffs, Northam ⁽⁴⁾	SS 420 291 – 434 296	~33.4	None
26. Whiteleigh Meadows, Black Torrington	SS 415 030	81.9	None

1. Part of the Culm Grasslands SAC, which is a multiple site comprising seven separate SSSIs: six in Torridge and one outside.
2. Part of the Tintagel – Marsland – Clovelly Coast SAC, which extends into North Cornwall.
3. The Lundy Marine SAC and Marine Nature Reserve (MNR) extends inland to the Highest Astronomical Point of Tides and offshore over an area outside the Torridge Plan boundary. It includes only about 40 ha within Torridge District, comprising the intertidal zone, which overlaps the Lundy SSSI.
4. The Northam Burrows SSSI overlaps marginally both with the Taw – Torridge Estuary SSSI (comprising a potentially variable area of about 29.3 ha common to both) and with the Westward Ho! Cliffs SSSI (including a potentially variable area of about 6.6 ha common to both). ~ The precise area of some coastal SSSIs and of the estuary may vary, dependent upon the precise extent of the littoral.



Braunton Burrows Biosphere Reserve

www.unesco.org.uk

'Biosphere reserves are sites recognized under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme, which innovate and demonstrate approaches to **conservation and sustainable development**. They are of course under national sovereign jurisdiction; yet share their experience and ideas nationally, regionally and internationally within the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. There are 553 sites worldwide in 107 countries'.

References

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2. Deutscher Naturschutzring (DNR), 'Proposal for an International guideline to an environmentally and socially compatible development of wind energy', 2004;
3. Department of Trade and Industry, 'Meeting the Energy Challenge – A White Paper on Energy' May 2007;
4. [Joint Nature Conservation Committee](#) (JNCC), Protected Sites
5. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Planning Policy Statement 22, Renewable Energy, 2004;
6. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Planning Policy Statement 1, Delivering Sustainable Development, 2005
7. Department for Communities and Local Government, Planning Policy Statement, Planning and Climate Change, Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1; 2007;
8. Department for Communities and Local Government, 'Environmental Impact Assessment: A guide to good practice and procedures', A consultation paper, June 2006;
9. Natural England, 'Bats and onshore wind turbines', interim guidance, February 2009;
10. Revision 2020, Final Report to GOSW and SW RA, Peter Capener and Wardell Armstrong, 2005
11. Sustainable Development Commission, 'Wind Power in the UK', 2005
12. Torridge District Local Plan 1997 –2011, European and National Designations, p. 142-144



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