

Draft policy for wind turbines

The Frithelstock Parish Council has developed this policy in response to personal reports of residents in the North Devon area, and in consequence of the meeting in Alverdiscott on 19 November which representatives of Torridge District Council failed to attend.

In the light of Torridge Planning Department's inadequate and unacceptable performance over planning applications, the failure of the Planning Department to follow the TDC's own policy on wind turbines, it has been decided that FPC should adopt a policy about such planning applications and installation of wind turbines within the Frithelstock Parish as a proportionate response to a legitimate aim. **The TDC policy is has loopholes that allow for specific conditions to be waived which the FPC find unacceptable – in effect there are no set conditions.**

We cannot accept that we can only approve or otherwise, any application for a wind turbine, based solely on 'land use'. The FPC understands that in granting any permission – the land used for the construction becomes a 'brown field' site. (The generation of power is a manufacturing process and not an agricultural one).

At some date in the future, when the turbine has been de-commissioned, removed, or otherwise redundant, the land must be returned to a 'green field site' for agricultural use only, with all foundation work, sufficient to carry out agricultural work, removed. Otherwise in approving applications the site, in the long term, will be the same as accepting the construction of a factory in the fields. **TDC's policy states 'it is expected'... that the land will be returned to its former use when the operation of the turbines has ceased': this is unenforceable.**

Draft policy on applications for wind turbine

1 Where wind turbines, not exceeding 50 feet high, are proposed – providing all other statutory and local planning regulations are met, and all the power generated is mainly for the applicant's use, we have no objections. Such applications **MUST** take into account the visual and noise impact on neighbours' land / homes / and or property. FPC will refer to TDC's Wind Energy policy for reference and guidance in approving any application.

2 Where applications are for turbines that generate excess power that is to be sold back into the National Grid, approval will only be given if the following conditions are met:
a) For turbines over 20Kw, the nearest dwelling should not be less than the minimum distance set by TDC's policy. This limit is set aside if all the owner(s) of any property(ies) that falls within TDC's minimum distance writes to confirm support of the application.

TDC's policy states in 3.4 (Wind Energy Policy) 'The Council seeks to safeguard the amenity of residents... It recognises that noise and visual assessment might allow for wind turbine locations at distances of less than 500 and 600 metres...' The standard distances stated are:

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| Residential settlements/dwellings | 600m |
| General settlements, villages, tourist development, campsites/caravan parks | 600m |
| Isolated dwellings | 600m |
| Designated landscapes (Are of outstanding natural beauty etc) | 500m |
| Woodland and hedgerows | 50m buffer to edges of rotor-swept area |
| Names water courses and water body | Fall over distance |

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| Bridle ways | Min 200m (Non statutory recommendation of British Horse Society) |
| Footpaths | Wind turbines should not over-sail |
| Railway lines, canals | Fall over distance + 10% |
| Power lines | Rotor diameter x 5 ('Overhead Line Separation from Wind Turbines' National Grid 2008.) |

- b) Any installation should not adversely affect surrounding buildings and their use or value.
- c) The FPC needs to be assured that all safety issues are adhered to at all times and regular maintenance is undertaken – and FPC has access to maintenance records if requested.

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