

Subject:	Confirmation of South Pennine Wind Energy Landscape Study by Julie Martin Associates/LUC as an evidence base document to be taken into account when making DC decisions	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	26 th November 2014
Report of:	Principal Planner-Forward Planning	Portfolio Holder:	Operations Services and Development Control
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached:	No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required: No	Attached:	No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That the South Pennines Wind Energy Study be adopted as policy guidance for assessing the landscape impacts of Wind Energy developments and that the mapping system be placed on the Council website
1.2	All future minor amendments to the Guidance to be delegated to the Director of Business in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To inform members of the production of an updated landscape assessment for wind turbines and seek support for the adoption of the document as guidance for the consideration of new applications.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **Regenerating Rossendale:** This priority focuses on regeneration in its broadest sense, so it means supporting communities that get on well together, attracting sustainable investment, promoting Rossendale, as well as working as an enabler to promote the physical regeneration of Rossendale.
 - **Responsive Value for Money Services:** This priority is about the Council working collaboratively, being a provider, procurer and a commissioner of services that are efficient and that meet the needs of local people.
 - **Clean Green Rossendale:** This priority focuses on clean streets and town centres and well managed open spaces, whilst recognising that the Council has to work with communities and as a partner to deliver this ambition.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- Industry representatives may question the content of the report but this is unlikely given that the original document received widespread support.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 The existing Julie Martin Study on Wind Turbines and the Landscape was published in January 2010 as part of the Core Strategy Evidence base. The Study has proved helpful in analysing the impact of wind energy proposals and for supporting development control decisions. However the original Study focussed on large turbines and the analysis has grown progressively more out of date as new turbines are constructed. Therefore four of the authorities involved in the original Study (Burnley, Calderdale, Kirklees and Rossendale) plus Barnsley decided to update the work incorporating all turbines over 18m in height.
- 5.2 Aligned to the revised Guidance a completely new database of all wind turbines has been prepared linked to a mapping system. This will be particularly helpful in enabling the cumulative impact of future proposals to be considered. The intention is to keep this regularly updated and place a link to it on the Council's website allowing developers and members of the public to access information. This should help to reduce enquiries and staff time spent in responding to them.
- 5.3 Officers are currently considering the 12 turbine Rooley Moor planning application (2 turbines in Rossendale) which is expected to go to the December Development Control Committee. It would be very helpful if the new Guidance could be referred to in the relevant Committee Report. When the Scout Moor application is received in the New Year this Guidance will form an important reference document for considering that proposal. Adopting the document as an official Council document for consideration of the landscape impacts of wind turbines would give it more weight. It will also form part of the Local Plan evidence base.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 6.1 Development of wind farms within the borough have a financial benefit to the Council, particularly in the form of retaining 100% of business rates. In general the business rates on a 1 MWatt turbine are currently estimated at approximately £12k per annum.
- 6.2 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy does anticipate a new income stream arising from business rates commencing in 2017/18

7. MONITORING OFFICER

- 7.1 Comments are contained in the body of the Report.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 8.1 The Study has been undertaken as a technical exercise in discussion with the five sponsoring authorities. Development Control officers within the authority have been consulted to obtain their views, particularly with respect to the functionality of the wind turbine database and mapping.
- 8.2 The adoption of the proposed recommendations set out in this report does not propose new services, policies, strategies, or plans (or significant changes to or reviews of them). It does not propose decisions about budget cuts or service changes/reductions. It is determined therefore, that this report is unlikely to have any adverse impacts under the Council's Equality Policy or associated equality duties, and has not been assessed for equalities impacts.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The new Landscape Study updates the previous Study incorporating all the latest evidence. The interactive database and mapping system is an innovative approach which should be of assistance to officers; members and the general public. It is therefore recommended that the

new Guidance should be recognised as Council policy for considering wind energy applications.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
South Pennines Wind Energy Landscape Study (2014)	One Stop Shop, Bacup, OL13 8AP