



## Do you want to help shape guidance on wind farms in Cumbria?

We want to hear your views on guidance we are producing to help decide where wind farms might be built in Cumbria.

This leaflet tells you some basic facts about the guidance, where you can find out more and how you can tell us what you think.

### Who will the guidance help?

The guidance is designed to help anyone with an interest in wind farms. This might be developers and professionals considering new projects, local communities considering the impact of a proposed wind farm nearby, or interest groups, organisations and local authorities considering planning applications.

The Cumbria Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Document will eventually form part of the planning policy framework for Cumbria and help inform decisions on where wind farms might be built in the future. Now we want to hear your views and use them to help decide what's contained in the final guidance.

### What does it say?

The guidance has information on:

- why wind farms are needed
- why local people need to be involved
- the need to respect our landscape, ecology, heritage, local amenity and economy
- how landscapes can accommodate wind farms
- what developers should provide with an application.

### Why does it focus so much on landscape?

Due to the size and distinctive nature of wind farms they often have an effect on the surrounding landscape. But the effects vary depending on the nature of a landscape. The landscape and visual effects are often the most controversial aspect of any wind farm planning application. They are also the issues that are most complex to deal with and most difficult to minimise.

We have a diverse landscape in Cumbria that is valued locally and nationally. It is made up of 14 different types of landscapes including small wooded valleys, coastal plains, lowland farmland, urban areas and moorland. A map is included in the guidance showing where the landscapes are.

We want to be sure that everyone involved in deciding where wind farms might go is using the same information. To help do this a special study has been carried out to assess which of the 14 landscape types in the county might have the potential to accommodate more wind farms without suffering unacceptable harm.

The study looks at the value and sensitivity to change of each landscape type. It shows that some types would be harmed by more wind farms being built. But others might have the capacity to take a small wind farm of between two and five turbines, while others might have the potential to cope with between six to nine, or in a few cases, even more turbines.



## **Does it cover anything else?**

Yes, although the guidance concentrates on landscape and visual effects, it also tackles other planning matters relating to wind farms. Information can be found on noise, community issues, nature conservation, local economy, aircraft and telecommunications. Developers and planning authorities need to look at these just as carefully as landscape and visual effects to determine if a wind farm is really suitable for any area.

## **Does it identify sites for new wind farms?**

No, the guidance doesn't set out where wind farms are to be built — it only identifies broad areas where the landscape type might be able to accommodate a wind farm.

It will be up to developers with a specific proposal to carry out detailed studies looking at the landscape and visual effects. They will need to demonstrate exactly how a potential wind farm could be built and operated without causing unacceptable harm.

Wind farms are becoming part of our landscape. Their numbers across Cumbria and the country have grown substantially over the last ten years.

As the Government wants the UK to generate more of its energy from sustainable sources, to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions and combat climate change, the trend is likely to continue.

Cumbria County Council and the local planning authorities in Allerdale, Carlisle, Copeland, Eden, South Lakeland and the Lake District National Park are, together, producing guidance to help decide where wind farms might be best located.

The guidance comes in three parts which make up the *“Cumbria Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Document – Consultation Draft”*.

The consultation also includes a *“Sustainability Appraisal Report”* which sets out how the guidance will help Cumbria become more sustainable.

## **What to do next**

Copies of the guidance and sustainability appraisal report can be downloaded from the web address below.

[www.cumbria.gov.uk/planning-environment/policy/spd.asp](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/planning-environment/policy/spd.asp)

Your comments can be submitted there too. The link takes you to the county council website which contains all the information you need.

Or you can visit the websites of any of the local authorities involved.

For paper or electronic copies of the documents and response forms please contact:

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**Please return any representations by 4pm Friday 8 December 2006**

**You can get a copy of this leaflet or the full consultation guidance in different formats such as large print, Braille, audio, or in a different language by calling 01229 894401.**