

# Planning Policy Statement 18: 'Renewable Energy' (PPS18)

August 2009



PPS 18 was published on 11 August 2009 and it sets out the Department of Environment's planning policy for developments generating energy from renewable resources that require the submission of a planning application. Furthermore, PPS 18 encourages the integration of renewable energy technology and a more widespread application of Passive Solar Design (PSD) in the design, fitting and layout of new development.

PPS 18 is complemented by a Best Practice Guidance to Planning Policy Statement 18 and this should be read in conjunction with PPS 18 as it will be taken into account when assessing proposals.

PPS 18 sets out to facilitate Northern Ireland's national and international obligation in relation to climate change and help the UK to achieve its EU targets for renewable energy. PPS 18 outlines two main policies, one on Renewable Energy (RE1) and another on Passive Solar Design (RE2):-

## 1. Renewable Energy Development Policy (Policy RE1)

Policy RE1 states that development that generates energy from renewable resources will be permitted provided the proposal, and any associated buildings and infrastructure, will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on:

1. Public safety, human health or residential amenity;
2. Visual amenity and landscape character;
3. Biodiversity, nature conservation or built heritage interests;
4. Local natural resources, such as air quality or water quality; and
5. Public access to the countryside.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency has also published a draft supplementary planning guidance on 'Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes' (the SPG), which identifies landscape characteristics that may be sensitive to wind turbine development. The SPG is currently in draft form and will also be considered when assessing wind turbine applications.

## 2. Integrated Renewable Energy and Passive Solar Design Policy (RE2)

Planning permission will be granted for a development proposal which integrates renewable energy technology including microgeneration and PSD in its layout, fitting and design, where it meets the provisions of Policy RE1 and provides any technology that is appropriate to the location in terms of any visual or amenity impact it may have. Policy RE2 gives examples of new developments that provide the greatest opportunity for maximising the benefits that can be derived from integrated renewable technology and/or PSD, such as:

1. Large scale urban developments;
2. Public Sector developments;
3. Development in the countryside, including individual developments.

The main sources of renewable energy are wind, solar energy, hydro power, heat extracted from the air, ground and water and biomass. The Best Practice Guidance contains information on the current renewable energy technologies.

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The Department has stressed that failure to supply adequate environmental information to accompany and support planning applications for renewable energy projects, in particular large scale schemes such as windfarms, is often a significant reason for delay in determining such proposals.

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