



Wind Turbines and Green Energy

There has been a great deal of interest in wind turbines over the years and recently as a result of long term guaranteed Government incentives which can provide substantial regular incomes for farmers and landowners. Other technologies are available and are subjects of separate Acorus fact sheets.

PLANNING

Obtaining planning consent for wind turbines is generally perceived to be difficult, however Government planning policy is generally supportive, particularly of smaller scale wind farms. Predictably, due to the potential impact on surrounding countryside, planning permission for wind turbines in Green Belt or designated landscape areas may prove more difficult or require greater justification. To avoid complications or planning refusal, the siting and size of wind turbines is critical.

The Annex to Planning Policy Statement 1 - Planning and Climate Change and Planning Policy Statement 22 - Renewable Energy both provide useful insights.

LOCATION AND SITE SELECTION

The location of the site is critical given the intention is to achieve a good supply of clean wind. Consideration should be given to higher ground producing wind speeds of say 5-6 metres per second (12+ mph). Assuming the intention is to feed electricity back to the grid, three phase electricity needs to be close by to avoid excessive grid connection costs, in addition to proximity to existing farm buildings. Potential wildlife, air traffic, access and neighbours are other considerations which need to be assessed at an early stage.





- Capital can be paid off in 3 to 6 years
- Guaranteed income stream for 20 years (attractive to banks)
- Export tariff
- Potential to rent sites to outside or joint investors

ACORUS SERVICES

Acorus can initially carry out a desk top appraisal which would avoid excessive costs. If initial findings indicate there is potential for an on-site turbine, we can produce a feasibility report covering projected costs and income tax incentives. The report would also cover the opportunities for a single turbine, deal with the planning application and negotiate with contractors. Acorus can also undertake the project management and CDM Coordinator role under the Construction Design and Management (CDM) Regulations.



RENEWABLE ENERGY FEED-IN TARIFFS

Feed-in Tariffs (FITs) which came into force in April 2010, have done more than anything else to accelerate the installation of renewable energy capacity in Europe. Key points are:

- A regular income can be earned from every kilowatt hour (kWhr) generated. The latest tariff rates are available from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) website (www.decc.gov.uk)
- An additional bonus is available for power exported to the grid (Export Tariff)
- Payments last for 20 - 25 years
- Tariffs are index-linked to RPI
- Most renewable electricity qualifies
- Applies to household and business users
- New systems installed now will qualify
- Cumulative payment ceilings do not apply for different technologies on the same site ie. Wind, Photo Voltaics (PV), Hydro Electric and Anaerobic Digestion (AD) Plants

FUNDING

Key points to be considered when evaluating your costs:

- Feasibility report required
- Anemometer wind testing required
- Income stream varies with wind resource

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