

Review of Strategic Planning Policy on Renewable Energy

Welcome

This survey questionnaire seeks your views on existing (and future) strategic planning policy for renewable energy development in Northern Ireland as contained within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS):

www.planningni.gov.uk/spps (pages 90 - 93)

It is a key element of independent research being undertaken on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure. The overall research project aims to provide an updated evidential context to inform the best strategic planning policy approach for renewable energy development which furthers sustainable development and which is appropriate for the two-tier planning system.

The survey will close on Friday 22nd September at 5pm.

Element Consultants Ltd

1. This survey is split into sections, each one specific to a technology with a general question section at the end.

If you wish to answer specific sections, use the selection box below but please answer in order.

To answer all sections press the Next button and you will move through the entire survey.

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Wind Energy

Wind power makes the greatest single contribution to renewable energy generation in Northern Ireland and is recognised as a sustainable and mature technology for generating power. However, it is also recognised that there are strong and contrasting opinions in relation to this type of development around issues such as noise, visual amenity and environmental impacts.

2. Is the current strategic planning policy approach for wind energy development (both single wind turbines and wind farms) fit for purpose? If not, how could this be improved?

Yes

No

Comment

3. Do you consider that Northern Ireland has lessons to learn from other jurisdictions on strategic planning policy for wind energy development overall and specifically in relation to material considerations such as landscape, visual amenity, shadow flicker, separation distances, siting, site restoration and de-commissioning? If so, please explain how improvements could be made to strategic planning policy in Northern Ireland.

Yes

No

Comment

4. Do you have any views and/or suggestions on the strategic planning policy for where best to locate wind energy development?

Yes

No

Comment

5. Do you have any views and/or suggestions on the current use of ETSU-R-97 for the assessment of noise from wind turbines?

Yes

No

Comment

6. How should strategic planning policy address the repowering of existing wind energy sites?

Yes

No

Comment

7. Do you have any other comments or suggestions to inform the future strategic planning policy approach for wind energy development?

Yes

No

Comment

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Solar Energy

Solar power development is a growing renewable energy generating technology which now makes a measurable contribution to Northern Ireland's energy mix.

9. Is the current strategic planning policy approach for solar energy development fit for purpose? If not, please explain how improvements could be made?

Yes

No

Comment

10. Do you consider that Northern Ireland has lessons to learn from other jurisdictions on strategic planning policy for solar energy development overall and specifically in relation to material considerations such as landscape, visual amenity, separation distances, glint and glare, noise, siting, site restoration and de-commissioning? If so, please explain how improvements could be made to strategic planning policy in Northern Ireland.

Yes

No

Comment

11. Do you have any views and/or suggestions on the strategic planning policy for where best to locate solar energy development?

Yes

No

Comment

12. Do you have any other comments or suggestions to inform the future strategic planning policy approach for solar energy development?

Yes

No

Comment

13. This survey is split into sections, each one specific to a technology with a general question section at the end.

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Energy from waste - Biomass

Biomass fuels can be utilised to provide energy either by combustion or fermentation/digestion technologies. This includes wood, biodegradable waste and energy crops. Like other renewable energy technologies biomass development is covered by the SPPS and PPS18.

14. Is the current policy approach for biomass development fit for purpose? If not, please explain how improvements could be made?

- Yes
- No

Comment

15. Do you consider that Northern Ireland has lessons to learn (positive and/or negative) from strategic planning policy for biomass development in other jurisdictions? If so, please explain how improvements could be made to strategic planning policy in Northern Ireland.

- Yes
- No

Comment

16. Do you have any other comments or suggestions to inform the future strategic planning policy approach for biomass development?

Yes

No

Comment

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Energy from Waste - Anaerobic Digestion

Anaerobic Digestion is the process whereby organic material (plant and animal matter) is broken down by micro-organisms in a controlled, oxygen free environment (the anaerobic digester or 'bio-digester'). Planning policy for anaerobic digestion development is covered in the renewable energy section of the SPPS, PPS 18 and Draft Supplementary Guidance (June 2013).

18. Is the current strategic policy approach for anaerobic digestion development fit for purpose? If not, please explain how improvements could be made?

Yes

No

Comment

19. Do you consider that Northern Ireland has lessons to learn from other jurisdictions in relation to anaerobic digestion development overall and specifically in relation to material considerations such as: the types of material that can be used as a feedstock; landscape and visual impact; transport; traffic and access; odour; emissions and dust control; noise; and water environment? If so, please explain how improvements could be made to strategic planning policy in Northern Ireland.

Yes

No

Comment

20. Do you have any other comments or suggestions to inform the future strategic planning policy approach for anaerobic digestion development?

Yes

No

Comment

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Hydropower

22. Is the current strategic planning policy approach for hydropower development fit for purpose? If not, please explain how improvements could be made.

Yes

No

Comment

23. Do you consider that Northern Ireland has lessons to learn (positive and/or negative) from strategic planning policy for hydropower development in other jurisdictions? If so, please explain how improvements could be made to strategic planning policy in Northern Ireland.

Yes

No

Comment

24. Do you have any views and/or suggestions on the strategic planning policy for where best to locate hydropower development?

Yes

No

Comment

25. Do you consider that current strategic planning policy is adequately integrated with the process of obtaining an Abstraction and Impoundment licence? If not, how could this be improved?

Yes

No

Comment

26. Do you have any other comments or suggestions to inform the future strategic planning policy approach for hydropower development?

Yes

No

If so how should this be monitored?

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Energy Storage

Energy storage is an emerging technology which is playing an increasingly significant role in energy networks and is particularly relevant to some renewable energy technologies such as wind and solar power which cannot provide continuous generation. There are a number of very different storage systems available, ranging from very small scale (car batteries) to major industrial-scale developments (pumped storage hydro and compressed air storage).

28. Do you consider that Northern Ireland has lessons to learn (positive and/or negative) from strategic planning policy for energy storage in other jurisdictions? If so, please explain how improvements could be made to strategic planning policy in Northern Ireland.

Yes

No

Comment

29. What are the key factors that should be taken into account in developing future strategic planning policy for energy storage if appropriate?

Yes

No

Comment

30. Do you have any other comments or suggestions to inform the future strategic planning policy approach for energy storage?

Yes

No

Comment

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General Questions

31. Are the aim and objectives of the SPPS' Renewable Energy policy (reproduced below) appropriate under the reformed two-tier planning system?

The aim of the SPPS in relation to renewable energy is to facilitate the siting of renewable energy generating facilities in appropriate locations within the built and natural environment in order to achieve Northern Ireland's renewable energy targets and to realise the benefits of renewable energy without compromising other environmental assets of acknowledged importance.

The regional strategic objectives for renewable energy are to:

- ensure that the environmental, landscape, visual and amenity impacts associated with or arising from renewable energy development are adequately addressed;*
- ensure adequate protection of the region's built, natural, and cultural heritage features; and*
- facilitate the integration of renewable energy technology into the design, siting and layout of new development and promote greater application of the principles of Passive Solar Design.*

Yes

No

Comment

32. Is the current level of strategic planning policy prescription for renewable energy development within the SPPS appropriate to ensure effective local operational planning policy and guidance within Local Development Plans?

Yes

No

Comment

33. Do you have any views and/or suggestions on the introduction of a strategic planning policy that requires all new developments to meet a percentage of its energy needs from on-site renewable energy sources?

Yes

No

Comment

34. Do you consider that current strategic planning policy appropriately addresses the terrestrial elements of off-shore marine developments? If not, how could this be improved?

Yes

No

Comment

35. Do you consider that there is sufficient connection between Energy Policy and Planning Policy for Renewable Energy? If not, how could this be improved?

Yes

No

Comment

36. Is existing Planning Guidance that supports the current policy approach for Renewable Energy development fit for purpose? If not, how could this be improved?

Yes

No

Comment

37. Do you have any other comments or suggestions to inform the best strategic planning policy approach for onshore renewable energy development overall?

Yes

No

Comment

38. Thankyou for contributing to the survey.

We intend to hold review meetings for consultees to discuss the findings of this survey.

We would welcome your attendance.

If you would like to attend an open meeting to review the survey please complete the fields below

Name

email address

Mobile

Your Location