Cairngorms
NATIONAL PARK
Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh

PLANNING

Cairngorms National Park
Local Development Plan

POLICY 7 - RENEWABLE ENERGY
Supplementary Guidance

Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan
Supplementary Guidance
Policy 7 – Renewable Energy

This Supplementary Guidance provides further information and detail on how to comply with **Policy 7 – Renewable Energy** in the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015. It forms part of the Local Development Plan and carries that weight in decision making. This Supplementary Guidance should be read alongside the Local Development Plan policy.

This document is available in large print on request. Please contact the Cairngorms National Park Authority on 01479 873535. It is also available to view at **www.cairngorms.co.uk**

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Policy 7 Renewable Energy Supplementary Guidance

Policy Requirements	Information Required
All Development	
All renewable energy developments	• Locational information including reasons for technology, specific equipment proposed; location; proposals to minimise impacts during construction, operation, restoration and for longer term • Design assessment including all ancillary development • Access and traffic management assessment including access to and around the site during construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposal which should be agreed with the relevant roads authority • Cumulative impact assessment
Additional technology specific planning requirements	
Hydro developments	• Locational assessment –landscape character assessment; visual impact assessment; a CMS; restoration method statement; ZTVs and photomontages • Impact on water environment – demonstrate no detrimental impact on other hydro schemes in the catchment, any private water supply in the catchment and aquatic hydrology of the site and surroundings • Impact on recreational interests – results of contact with recreation groups and steps taken to minimise/mitigate impacts identified • Impact on peat and soil – information on local topography along length of scheme including peat depths; location of key rock heads; location of glacial-fluvial deposits
Wind energy developments	• Locational assessment – provision of required information (ZTV map covering appropriate radius; list of agree viewpoints; wireline drawings and photomontages from those viewpoints; design statement for multiple turbines; 8 figure grid reference for each turbine); a CMS • Noise assessment – results of contact with Environmental Health authority and steps taken to minimise noise impacts identified • Shadow flicker – detailed information on flicker disturbance minimisation; design including turbine of minimum of 10x blade length from sensitive properties • Other interests – results of contact with MoD and Civil Aviation Authority
Biomass developments	• Traffic management arrangements associated with biomass delivery and transfer
Energy from waste	• Feedstock information • Market information for generated power • Traffic management arrangements associated with feedstock deliveries which ensure no detrimental impact on neighbours

Meeting the requirements of the Policy

1. Proposals will be assessed to ensure that adequate consideration has been given to the impact on the site, the wider impacts on the surroundings, the impact on the National Park and its special qualities, and the impact on local communities. You must therefore include, as part of your application, information on how your development will contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the special qualities of the National Park.

All renewable developments

Locational assessment

2. You must consider the technical feasibility and capacity of the site chosen and provide a reasoned justification for this, both within the context of the local setting, and at a National Park-wide scale. Supporting information should include the reasons for the choice of technology, the specific equipment being proposed, the location, and the proposals for minimising impacts during construction, operation, restoration and for the longer-term.
3. Details of plans for restoration and reinstatement at the end of the lifespan of your development should also be submitted along with your planning application.
4. The assessment of the location chosen will be a key determining factor in gaining planning consent. Key to the success of any scheme will be the impact the proposal has on the special qualities of the National Park. Only once this has been fully justified will the other elements of the proposal be assessed. The Landscape Toolkit will be used in the assessment of all relevant applications.
5. When requested you must be prepared to supply locational information in GIS shape file format.

Design assessment

6. You must include within the information supplied, details of the specific equipment being proposed, the location, and the proposals for minimising impacts during construction, restoration and for the longer-term.
7. You must include within the assessment all ancillary development. This should include borrow pits, river crossings (including bridges where required), turbine houses, car parking, construction compounds, control buildings, substations, and grid connections. You must also include detailed plans to restore and reinstate the site at the end of the lifespan of your development.

Access and traffic management

8. All new tracks and means of access required to service the development site must be included in the application. This includes the route of any tracks required, details of any river crossings and design of bridges where necessary, design of the track itself, details of any borrow pits required for the track construction, mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts on any water courses present, and finally information on reinstatement arrangements as appropriate.
9. Where access to the site during construction and operation is not possible from the existing road network, detailed access arrangements and traffic management plans may be required. In the event that road improvements are required, these will be undertaken before construction commences.
10. Details of any deliveries associated with the operation of any renewable energy scheme must also be considered to minimize disruption and reduce the impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

11. All access arrangements should be agreed with the relevant authority roads division. You should also contact Transport Scotland where there are any potential impacts on trunk roads.

Cumulative impact

12. All renewable energy developments have the potential to have cumulative impacts when assessed against other developments in the locality. All proposals must ensure that the cumulative landscape and visual impacts of the development have been assessed and identified impacts minimised.

13. A cumulative assessment of potential landscape and visual effects should be undertaken based on established routes through the landscape (including public roads and recreational routes) and destination (including key summits, waterfalls etc).

Additional technology specific planning requirements

Hydropower

Locational assessment

14. The landscape and visual impacts associated with hydro schemes are not necessarily proportionate to the size of the energy output of a scheme, but more to the degree and extent of disturbance and long-term change. As all hydro power developments will have a landscape and visual impact, the level of this impact is a critical factor in determining any application.

15. Applications should include an assessment of landscape character and visual impact in the construction phase, restoration phase (1-5 year), in the long-term operational phase and decommissioning. This should be measured against the best available information regarding landscape sensitivities.

16. The assessment of construction impacts should be supported by information on soils and topography, an evidence based construction method statement (with reference to other schemes and similar conditions) that includes detailed plans and cross-sections for all component parts of the scheme, and an assessment of the effects of disruptions on access and amenity. A Construction Method Statement (CMS) is likely to be required.

17. You must demonstrate that your proposal has no unacceptable detrimental impact or that impacts are adequately minimised on the water environment, including other hydro schemes in the catchment, the hydrology of the site and surroundings and any private water supply in the catchment and groundwater dependent wetlands.

18. The assessment of restoration effects should be informed by a restoration method statement (again with reference to successful and unsuccessful restoration in similar situations) that includes plan and section information, details of plant and seed materials and the ongoing protection and management of restored and reinstated areas.

19. The assessment of longer-term landscape and visual impacts should be informed by details of ongoing scheme management (access in particular) and include Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs) and photomontages of key components that will have a long- term effect, such as access tracks, turbine houses, intake weir and impoundment, and the effect on water features.

Impact on water environment

20. You must demonstrate that your proposal does not have a detrimental impact on, and will not be affected by:
    - other hydropower schemes (planned or operational) in the same catchment; and
    - any private water supply in the source catchment; and
    - the water environment and hydrology of the site and its surroundings, including soil and peat: and
    - aquatic ecology (eg as a result of reduced flows).
21. You must consider the cumulative impacts of your proposal on water flows during and after construction and morphology of river systems.

Impact on recreational interests

22. Many hydro power developments will have an impact on recreational interests in the National Park, and it must be ensured that this impact is minimised and/or managed. In designing your development you must demonstrate that you have contacted the relevant interest groups, and made appropriate provision that enables recreational interests to continue alongside your development.

Impact on peat and soils

23. Reducing the impact on landscape and ecology of any hydro power development is dependent on working with the soils and drainage of the location. Information on local topography, hydrology and soils is required to enable a realistic assessment to be made of the impact and to inform any mitigation required. Soils information along the length of the scheme should include peat depths and the location of key rock heads and glacial-fluvial deposits.

Other information

24. A Controlled Activities Regulations licence is likely to be required for hydro power developments.
25. Noise assessments should achieve acceptable levels. You must check with the relevant authority's environmental health service for details of what is required for your development and then submit that information with any planning application
26. An Environmental Impact Assessment may also be required.

Wind energy

Locational assessment

27. The landscape and visual impacts associated with wind energy schemes are often the main determining factor for any proposal. These impacts will be assessed on the degree and extent of disturbance and long-term change. As all wind energy developments will have a landscape and visual impact, the level of this impact is a critical factor in determining any application.
28. For wind turbines under 15 metres height to blade tip, a basic photomontage and information from the supplier about the turbine should be submitted.
29. For wind turbines of between 15 and 30 metres height to blade tip, a basic level of Visual Impact Assessment should be carried out and submitted. This should include:
    - ZTV map covering an area up to 20km (radius) from the turbine;
    - wireline drawings and photomontages from a limited number of key viewpoints;

- viewpoints to be agreed with the planning authority, and Scottish Natural Heritage where appropriate;
- design statement in the case of multiple turbines; and
- eight figure grid reference for each proposed turbine.

30. Developments involving wind turbines over 30 metres height to blade tip are not compatible with the special qualities of the National Park and are not considered to be appropriate. Existing wind turbines can be a significant constraint to further potential wind energy development. You should avoid contributing to a situation where multiple single turbines are visible from settlements, visitor sites, and where multiple turbines are visible in combination or in sequence.

31. A construction method statement is likely to be required.

Noise assessment

32. You must demonstrate that you have minimised the noise impacts of your development. Noise assessments should achieve acceptable levels. You must check with the relevant local authority's environmental health service for details of what is required for your development and then submit that information with any planning application.

Shadow flicker

33. All wind energy developments can cause shadow flicker. You must demonstrate that you have minimised the impacts of shadow flicker associated with your development. Turbines should be a minimum of 10 times the rotor diameter from sensitive properties1 to avoid shadow flicker.

Other information

34. Military Aviation interests – The MoD defence infrastructure organisation must be contacted if a proposed wind turbine is 11 metres to blade tip or taller, or has a rotor diameter of two metres or more. You must demonstrate that your development meets any requirements that are forthcoming.

35. Civil Aviation Interests – you must demonstrate that your development meets the requirements of civil aviation interests as set out in Scottish government Circular 2/2003.

36. An Environmental Impact Assessment may be required.

Trunk road considerations

37. When siting wind turbines in the vicinity of a trunk road, turbines should:
    - be set back a minimum of 1.5 times the height of the wind turbine (from ground level to the uppermost tip of turbine blade) away from the nearest kerbline of the trunk road carriageway;
    - not form a distraction to trunk road users particularly where drivers are required to manoeuvre, react or make decisions (eg junctions, bends etc); and
    - be sited to ensure that vehicles on the trunk road would not be facing towards it with a low sun behind it, such as on early winter mornings, otherwise the turbines should be sited at a distance 10 rotor diameters away from the carriageway.

1 Sensitive properties include: residential properties, care homes, educational buildings, hospitals, cemeteries, some visitor facilities and accommodation, and land allocated for future development.

Biomass developments

38. Details of the type of biomass to be used in the development will be considered, along with any associated transportation and amenity issues. The means of transferring the biomass product from its transport into the storage facilities at the site will be an important factor in assessing any biomass development.

39. An Environmental Impact Assessment may also be required.

Energy from waste

40. The National Park is not near any significant sources of waste and any energy from waste plants would therefore necessitate significant transport of waste from outwith the National Park. The National Park is therefore not considered to be the place for large-scale energy from waste plants. Energy from waste schemes will only be acceptable where they make use of a local source of waste, and where the energy/heat being produced is used in the locality of the development.

41. You must demonstrate where the feedstock for your development comes from, and where the resulting heat/power will be used. You will also need to consider other regulatory constraints on the storage and management of waste. Further information available at **www.sepa.org.uk.**

42. You must demonstrate that any transport movements related to your scheme and the means of getting the feedstock from its transport and into its storage facilities, do not have detrimental impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties/activities. A traffic management plan may be required.

43. Biomass/Anaerobic digestion developments must comply (as appropriate) with the Waste incineration Directive and Local Air pollution Control.

Solar power

44. Solar energy proposals are required to be assessed against all other policies.