

## POLICY LINKS

The matrix below cross-refers Energy Policies to other Structure Plan policies which are, or may be, of particular relevance. The Plan however should be read as a whole.

Structure Plan Policy	Links to other policies
EN.1 Renewable Energy Facilities	SD.1, SD.2
EN.2 Wind Turbines	CTC.1, CTC.10, CTC.12, CTC.13, CTC.14
EN.3 Waste to Energy	WD.3

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## 11. ENERGY

### Introduction

**11.1** Major environmental problems are associated with the generation and consumption of energy. By far the most important of these is the emission of gases such as carbon dioxide caused by the burning of fossil fuels which contribute to global warming, acid rain, and ozone depletion. As well as their impact on air quality and climate, traditional energy sources are finite and there is a need to find renewable sources of energy that cause minimal harm to the environment and ideally are infinite.

**11.2** PPG12 Development Plans (December 1999) advises that energy generation, including renewable energy, is a key issue for inclusion in development plans.

**11.3** Policies for the location of new development can contribute to a reduction in energy use by influencing patterns of travel. These are set out elsewhere in this Structure Plan. Similarly, the siting and orientation of development can influence energy use and policies to encourage energy conservation by this means should be included in Local Plans in accordance with the broader Structure Plan policy framework and in particular those policies on Sustainable Development set out elsewhere in the Structure Plan.

**11.4** The policies in this Chapter of the Structure Plan deal specifically with the conservation of finite energy sources (for example coal and oil) by the promotion of renewable energy sources in line with PPG22 Renewable Energy (February 1993).

**11.5** The exploitation of renewable sources of energy clearly depend upon their presence in a particular area. For example, wind power will only be viable in areas exposed to high annual mean wind speeds. The acceptability of renewable energy projects must be judged in the light of their impact on the objectives of the Structure Plan and should always be assessed against the harm they may cause to the local environment.

**11.6** There are a number of potential sources of renewable energy in Worcestershire which could supply local or sub-regional needs. On a local level, the most likely sources of renewable energy generation are solar, biogas, energy crops and wind power.

**11.7** Solar energy is the conversion of sunshine/light into electricity (active solar energy) and the capture of heat and light from the sun around buildings (passive solar energy). It is likely that this form of energy generation will be viable in the County and should be encouraged in new and existing developments where it does not adversely harm other aspects of the environment.

**11.8** Biogas is the by-product of composted horticultural/agricultural waste which can be used directly as a fuel, or converted to electricity. It is difficult to establish the exact potential of this source of energy which is dependent on agricultural policy and the availability/promotion of local processing facilities.

**11.9** The feasibility of producing energy from farm crops such as straw, oil seed rape, and forest waste/short rotation coppicing, provides a theoretical capacity in a County with extensive rural areas such as Worcestershire, but the conditions to exploit this potential relies on both Government policy and agricultural policy and also the availability of processing facilities.

**11.10** The existence of areas of high land around the County similarly, in theory, offers the opportunity to develop on a local scale renewable energy from wind turbines provided landscape intrusion is minimised.

**11.11** The County Council has a statutory duty to prepare a Waste Local Plan, one of the aims of which will be to reduce the amount of waste production which will have numerous environmental benefits. However, waste production from domestic and commercial sources will continue to be substantial for the foreseeable future, and there is potential to

produce energy from the by-products of waste, either directly or through conversion to heat. At a County level, there is potential for substantial energy generation from the incineration of waste and electricity generation from landfill (methane). This already takes place at the Hill and Moor and Penny Hill waste disposal sites.

## Policies

### Renewable Energy Facilities

#### Policy EN.1

**Proposals for the development of facilities to provide renewable energy will be supported subject to the other policies of the Structure Plan, particularly those relating to the local environmental effects of development.**

#### Explanatory Memorandum

**11.12** Development proposals for harnessing renewable energy sources including those for Combined Heat and Power (CHP) will generally be supported, and assessments of proposals should be carried out in the light of other policies contained in this Structure Plan to ensure that the same considerations are given to the location and development of renewable energy facilities as to other development. This applies in particular to an examination of the possible environmental implications of such proposals.

**11.13** In addition to other Structure Plan policies, PPG22 Renewable Energy (February 1993) requires that reference should be made to the need to take account of local, regional and national requirements in terms of energy generation.

### Wind Turbines

#### Policy EN.2

**Proposals for the development of individual wind turbines or small clusters will be allowed, provided that they:**

- (i) do not cause unacceptable harm to the surrounding environment, in particular sensitive landscapes;**
- (ii) do not cause unacceptable harm to nature conservation interests;**
- (iii) do not result in excessive noise pollution; and**
- (iv) are acceptable in relation to other policies in the Structure Plan.**

#### Explanatory Memorandum

**11.14** Proposals for wind turbines as a renewable energy resource will be supported. They should be assessed against other policies contained in this Structure Plan to ensure that the same considerations are given to the location and development of wind turbines as to other development.

### Waste to Energy

#### Policy EN.3

**Proposals for facilities for the generation of energy from landfill waste or from the incineration of waste will be endorsed subject to other policies in the Structure Plan and if they provide the best practicable environmental option.**

#### Explanatory Memorandum

**11.15** There is potential within Worcestershire for energy generation from both methane gas from landfill waste and the incineration of waste. Whilst such proposals will be supported, they should conform to other Structure Plan policies on the general location of development, minimising the harm they may pose to the natural and built environment. Prior to the consideration of the incineration of waste every effort should be taken to minimise waste levels through the reuse, recycling and composting of materials which can be recovered from the waste stream.

**11.16** Incineration of waste should normally include the generation of energy as a key element of the project and should form part of a sustainable plan for waste management. It is, however, acknowledged that there may be instances where there is need for the incineration of material and where the generation of energy is not a practical option (for example, chemical waste).