



**STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND
CULTURAL HERITAGE
(Draft text 19/8/13)**

**IN RELATION TO AN APPLICATION BY RES UK & IRELAND LIMITED
DATED
27 MARCH 2009
FOR CONSENT TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE A WIND TURBINE
GENERATING STATION
IN
POWYS, MID-WALES**

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INTRODUCTION

1. This Statement of Common Ground is prepared jointly by Powys County Council, Cadw, Clywd Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) and RES UK & Ireland Limited ('RES') in relation to an application for consent pursuant to section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 to construct and operate the Llanbrynmair wind turbine generating station in Powys, Mid-Wales.
2. This Statement of Common Ground relates to Cultural Heritage.
3. The following Reason for Objection was issued by Powys County Council on 27 September 2012: "5. *It is considered that the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on cultural heritage*".
4. Cadw and CPAT do not object to the Development on cultural heritage grounds.

SITE LOCATION

5. The site lies to the northwest of Nant yr Eira Valley between Llanbrynmair and Llanerfyl in Montgomeryshire, Powys, approximately 8km northwest of Carno. The site is centred on grid ref: E294500, N306500. The site covers approximately 1,700 hectares, or 4,200 acres. The site consists of agricultural land (principally for cattle and sheep) and woodland.
6. The application site is located within the Carno North Strategic Search Area B as defined by Technical Advice Note 8: Planning for Renewable Energy (July 2005).

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

7. The proposed development is for the construction and operation of a 30 wind turbine generation station at land between Nant yr Eira Valley and Llyn Gwyddior in Montgomeryshire, Powys, Mid Wales, and for a direction under section 90(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act that planning permission for the development be deemed to be granted ('the Development').
8. In addition to the wind turbines, the Development includes on site tracks, underground cabling and crane hardstandings, a communications mast, a permanent (80m high) free standing lattice wind monitoring mast, electrical transformers, electrical connection works and a substation control building.

APPLICATION HISTORY

9. In March 2009, a section 36 consent application under the Electricity Act 1989 was submitted by RES to the Department of Energy and Climate Change ('DECC') for a wind energy development of up to 43 turbines on land between the villages of Llanbrynmair and Llanerfyl in Powys. An Environmental Statement ('ES') accompanied the Section 36 consent application.
10. Between April 2010 and August 2012, five Supplementary Environmental Information ('SEI') documents were submitted in response to further requests for information made by PCC and Countryside Council for Wales, (now Natural Resources Wales).
11. In August 2013, in line with the Inspector's timetable, RES submitted a Consolidated Environmental Statement ('CES'). The CES provides an updated assessment of all of the potential environmental effects of the Development. A further SEI assessing the cumulative effects of the Development in combination with the four other wind farm applications and the proposed grid connection, will be submitted in advance of Inquiry Session 4 (Cumulative Session).

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

12. The Statement of Common Ground identifies the relevant national, regional and local policy and legislation relating to cultural heritage as applicable to the Development. They are:
 - i. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
 - ii. National Policy Statements for Energy (EN-1) and Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)
 - iii. Planning Policy Wales (5th Edition, November 2012)
 - iv. Technical Advice Note 8: Renewable Energy
 - v. Welsh Office Circular 60/96 (Planning and the Historic Environment – Archaeology)

vi. Powys County Council UDP 2001-2016, including the following policies which are of particular relevance:

- Policy UDPSP3 – Natural, Historic & Built Heritage
- Policy ENV11 – Development in Conservation Areas
- Policy ENV14 - Listed Buildings
- Policy ENV16 - Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest
- Policy ENV17 - Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites
- Policy ENV18 - Development Proposals Affecting Archaeological Sites

CULTURAL HERITAGE

13. An assessment of the potential effects of the Development on cultural heritage is set out in Chapter 7 of the CES.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND BASELINE RESULTS

14. Details of the methodologies and baseline results for the Development are set out in Sections 7.4 and 7.5 of Chapter 7 of the CES.

15. The parties to this Statement of Common Ground are in agreement that:

- i. The methodologies set out in Section 7.4 for baseline surveys and the assessment of effects are appropriate and conform to relevant guidance.
- ii. The scope of the baseline surveys, reported in Section 7.5, is sufficient to fully inform the assessment of potential effects of the Development on the heritage resource including both the windfarm site and the offsite highway works.
- iii. There are two designated historic assets within the windfarm site: a prehistoric round barrow at Ffridd Cwm y Ffynnon (Scheduled Monument, MG314) and a post-medieval farmhouse at Abercannon (Listed Building Grade II, 17942).

- iv. There are 48 undesignated historic assets within the windfarm site (listed in Table 7.4 of the CES), recorded either in the CPAT Historic Environment Record or the National Monuments Record of Wales. A further 38 assets (listed in Table 7.5 of the CES) were recorded during the course of surveys for this Development. There are some examples of prehistoric funerary monuments but the majority of assets are post-medieval agricultural features with a few farm buildings and numerous examples of sheepfolds, boundaries, clearance cairns and small quarries.
- v. There are 50 Scheduled Monuments within 10km of the proposed windfarm (listed in Table 7.6 of the CES). 35 of these assets are prehistoric ritual and funerary sites of Neolithic and Bronze Age date but prehistoric settlement sites and medieval assets are also represented.
- vi. There are no examples of Grade I Listed Buildings within 10km of the proposed windfarm but there are five Grade II* assets, comprising three houses and two medieval churches (listed in Table 7.7 of the CES). There are 43 Grade II Listed Buildings within 5km of the proposed windfarm (listed in Table 7.8 of the CES). The majority of these assets are examples of houses and outbuildings, primarily on farms. Other asset types represented include milestones, churches, inns and bridges.
- vii. There are two Conservation Areas within 5km of the proposed windfarm, in the villages of Llan and Pont Dolgadfan, both 5km south-west of the Development.
- viii. There are no examples of either Registered Landscapes of Historic Interest or Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest within 10km of the proposed windfarm.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS

- 16. An assessment of the potential effects of the Development on cultural heritage assets, is set out in Section 7.7 of Chapter 7 in the CES.
- 17. The parties to this Statement of Common Ground are in agreement that:
 - i. Potential effects of the proposed development on the cultural heritage resource can be described in two categories:

- Direct physical effects; and
 - Effects on setting.
- ii. Direct physical effects describe those development activities that directly cause damage to the fabric of a historic asset. Typically, these activities are related to construction works. In the present case they could include excavation of a foundation for the turbine, creation of the access track and the excavation of service trenches for example. The offsite highway works could also give rise to direct physical effects. It follows that effects of this type can only occur within the construction footprint of the development
 - iii. Further direct physical effects are unlikely to be experienced during the operational life of the wind farm. Similarly, the decommissioning of the wind farm would not lead to further direct physical effects, assuming that the works are carefully managed and restricted to areas already disturbed during construction.
 - iv. The layout of the windfarm has been designed where possible to avoid any adverse effect on known historic assets; as a result only three recorded assets would experience direct physical damage during construction works (listed in Table 7.11). These are an area of clearance cairns (N10), a single clearance cairn (N36) and one area of probable peat cutting (N24). In addition to the adverse effects on known historic assets, there would be potential for adverse effects to currently unrecorded assets within the construction footprint of the windfarm. None of these effects will be significant.
 - v. Careful design of the offsite highway works has ensured that no known historic asset would be directly affected during construction works. There remains potential for construction works to disturb currently unrecorded historic assets. In most locations the highway works small areas closely linked to the existing road and its verges and the potential for disturbance of historic assets is low.
 - vi. Effects on setting of historic assets occur when the presence of a development changes the surroundings of a historic asset in such a way

that it affects (beneficially or adversely) the heritage significance of that asset. The proposed development has the potential to affect the significance of historic assets through visual change in setting, but only for assets where the wider landscape makes a substantive contribution to their heritage significance. Other environmental impacts of the proposed development have been considered as potential causes of effects on setting but have been discounted.

- vii. Operation of the windfarm would affect the heritage significance of three historic assets through visual change in their settings. There would be adverse effects of Minor Significance on a hillfort at Moel Ddolwen (Scheduled Monument), the Church of St Mary, Llan (Listed Building Grade II*) and Llan Conservation Area. Operation of the windfarm would also affect the character of the historic landscape surrounding the windfarm, leading to a moderate visual impact on the historic landscape.
- viii. All of these effects due to visual change in setting would be fully reversed when the windfarm was decommissioned.
- ix. Change in setting due to the off-site highway works would not lead to any adverse effects on the significance of heritage assets.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- 18. An assessment of the cumulative effects of the Development on the cultural heritage resource], is set out in Section 7.10 of Chapter 7 of the CES. It should be noted that a further Statement of Common Ground with respect to the cumulative effects of the Development in combination with the other proposed developments, in SSA B and SSA C, will be issued in advance of Inquiry Session 4.

ON-SITE/OFF-SITE MITIGATION MEASURES

- 19. Proposals for a programme of archaeological works intended to offset damage to historic assets during construction and decommissioning works are set out in Section 7.8 of Chapter 7 of the CES. Other mitigation is embedded in the design of the Development. The parties to this Statement of Common Ground are in agreement that:

- i. Where the exact location, extent and character of a historic asset was known, the turbine and infrastructure layout for the windfarm has avoided foreseeable effects upon the majority of assets. This may be considered embedded, or primary, mitigation.
- ii. Not all assets can be avoided and the construction phase of the proposed development would lead to the disturbance of clearance cairns and an area of former peat cutting. It is also possible that other undetected archaeological features may be present within the construction footprint.
- iii. Mitigation of any adverse impact on these archaeological features (known or unknown) during construction works would be achieved through an appropriate programme of archaeological works which would offset the adverse effect.
- iv. A specification for a suitable programme of archaeological works would be prepared and submitted to CPAT (as archaeological advisors to Powys County Council) for approval prior to the commencement of construction works, including the off-site highway works.
- v. Groundworks during decommissioning have the potential to damage archaeological features in previously undisturbed areas of land. The decommissioning phase should be designed so as to avoid further disturbance of known archaeological features encountered during construction works. All site works should be carefully controlled to minimise the potential for accidental damage. A decommissioning management plan would be prepared in advance, in line with relevant legislation, guidance and policy at the time.
- vi. In the context of windfarm development, harm to the significance of an asset due to change in its setting can generally only be mitigated through modifications to the design of a development. As a result, all of the mitigation achieved here is already embedded in the design of the development.
- vii. Opportunities to reduce the operational impact of the windfarm on the setting of historic assets have arisen as a consequence of the reduction in turbine numbers. Two principal benefits were achieved, in both cases

through the removal of turbines at the western edge of the windfarm (R1, R2, R3 , R28, R29 and R30).

- viii. Removal of these turbines increased the minimum distance of a turbine to round barrow MG314 from 250m up to 1km. This is the only Scheduled Monument within the windfarm site. Removal of the same western turbines also considerably reduced the level of visual change for Listed Buildings in and around the village of Llanbrynmair. As a result all of the Listed Buildings close to the windfarm in this area would experience little or no visual change in their settings from the current 30 turbine layout

This Statement has been agreed by:

Signed.....

On behalf of [PARTY]

Date.....

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Signed.....

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