



Allerdale Borough Council

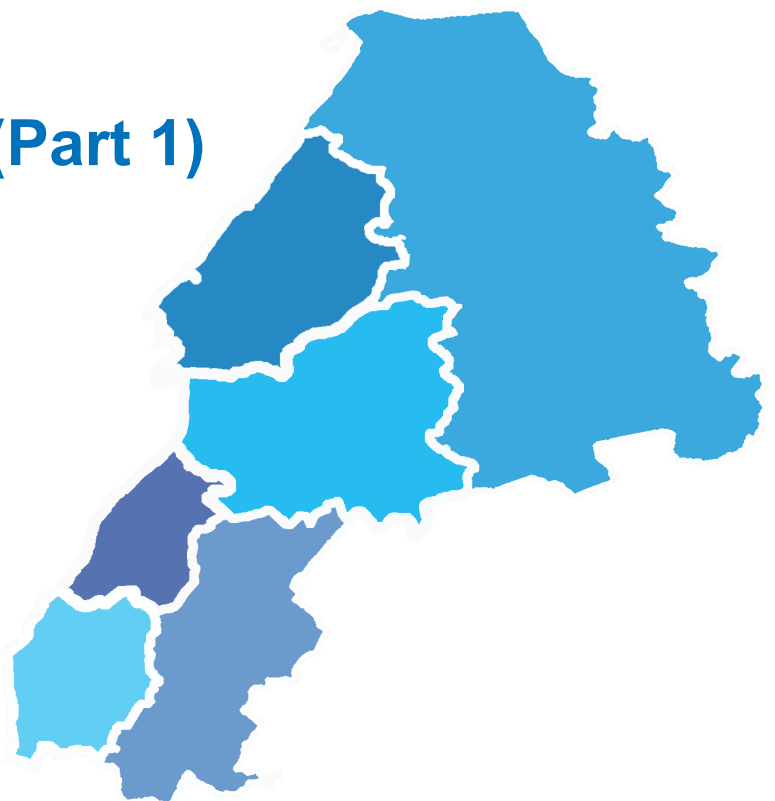


Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1)

Position Statement Main Matter 13:

Energy provision

January 2014



Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1) Examination – Allerdale Borough Council Position Statement January 2014

Matter 13 - Energy Provision - Its Role at National and Local Levels

Introduction

1. This Statement has been produced by Allerdale Borough Council to outline its response to the matters raised by the Inspector for the Hearings [ED3] into the Submitted Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1) Development Plan Document (DPD) [CD1].
2. These Statements form the main basis for the Council's submission to the Hearings. They relate to the elements of the DPD that have been raised by the Inspector as matters to be discussed. Where appropriate the Statements draw upon and cross-refer to the main sources of information used in the preparation of the DPD such as the outcomes of public consultation, the Sustainability Appraisal, the evidence base and the supporting Topic Papers. Core Document numbers are given where appropriate.

Position of the Council regarding Matter 13

3. The approach to energy provision is soundly based. It is justified on the basis of up to date and robust evidence and is effective on the basis that the Council is confident that the framework is deliverable. The approach has been strengthened by proposed modification from a number and range of representations.

National Policy

4. The Government actively promotes and supports renewable energy developments as part of UK future energy mix. Under the European Renewable Energy Directive (2009) the UK government has legally committed to generating 15 percent of energy from renewable sources by 2020. This target provides the context to the Governments on-going promotion of renewable technologies and transition to a

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low-carbon energy production. Additionally, through the UK's Climate Change Act (2008) the government has set a legal target to reduce green house gas emissions by 34%, compared to 1990 levels, by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050.

5. National planning policy on renewable energy development takes a positive stance and clearly states that local authorities must take the same positive approach towards renewable and low carbon energy developments.
6. Planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places sustainable development at the centre of plan making and decision taking. The Framework establishes the encouragement of renewable energy as part of one of the twelve core principles of the planning system while it also states that planning plays a key role in supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
7. Furthermore, the NPPF is clear that Local Planning Authorities should, develop a positive strategy, designed to maximise energy from renewable and low carbon sources. Policy should also ensure that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including potential cumulative impacts.
8. DGLC published new planning guidance for renewable and low-carbon energy projects in July 2013 to emphasise the importance of environmental protections, community concerns and other factors in deciding applications. It is to be used by local authorities alongside the NPPF to help deliver new renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure, having due regard to environmental protections and the planning concerns of local communities.
9. The guidance covers biomass, hydropower, active solar technology (photovoltaics and solar water heating), solar farms, and wind turbines.

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Renewable Energy Evidence

10. The Cumbria Renewable Energy Capacity and Deployment Study (2011) **[EB11]** considers the renewable energy potential across Cumbria and provides the evidence to support renewable energy policies within Local Plans. It considers an extensive range of renewable energy sources, translating potential into a realistic deployable capacity up to 2030, taking into account environmental and technical constraints.
11. As of April 2011 the overall level of renewable energy currently deployed across Cumbria was 295MW of which 70% (207Mw) is located within Allerdale Local Plan Area. The Study found that Cumbria has a high natural resource for renewable energy and suggests that there is a realistic modelled potential for an extra 80MW by 2030. Evidence is clear Allerdale has delivered the vast majority of renewable energy in Cumbria. However, as it also has a large number of high quality landscapes and designations, the level of resource that is realistically achievable is significantly reduced.
12. Provision of renewable energy is a key issue for many communities in Allerdale. The Consultation Statement **[CD8]** demonstrates that a high number of representations were received through the preparation of the Local Plan both on the Allerdale Local Plan Preferred Options (231) and Pre-Submission (39). The representations were largely objections to the earlier Preferred Options, while there was a level of support for the approach taken in the Local Plan (Part 1) Pre-Submission Draft.
13. The Council has closely followed national policy and carefully considered the conclusions of **EB11** in addition to community concerns to develop Policy S19

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‘Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Technologies’. The Council is satisfied that Policy S19 provides a positive framework for the development of renewable energy while ensuring that adverse impacts including any cumulative are addressed satisfactorily.

Local Plan Strategy

14. The Allerdale Local Plan sets a positive framework for the development of renewable energy across the Plan Area reflecting both national planning policy and local evidence **[EB11]**. The policy adopts a criteria based approach to encourage acceptable proposals to come forward. This approach addresses each proposal on its merits, and works in conjunction with other local plan policies to ensure that any impacts are, or can be made acceptable. The policy has been developed to address all scale of development, and ensures impacts are considered on their own, and cumulatively. A Topic Paper **[TP5]** has been produced to provide evidence to support the policy approach.

15. The Policy acknowledges that in some cases the large scale nature of some renewable technologies can give rise to impacts which could make them unacceptable; such as large wind turbines on protected landscapes such as the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site. Within these sensitive landscapes the policy works in conjunction with the other relevant plan policies and ensures that renewable schemes are in keeping with the aims and objectives of the designated areas **[SD22 and SD23]**, and of a scale that will result in minimal impact. Matter 16 provides further detail on this issue.

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Proposed modifications

16. As a result of the Regulation Consultation 20 a number of modifications have been proposed by the Council [**CD2, CD3 and CD4**]. These relate to a number of issues from a range of representors. Seven 'minor' modifications **m64, m65, m66, m67, m68, m69** and **m70** have been proposed [**CD3**] related to typographic corrections and provide greater clarity regarding the focus of the policy. Four 'major' modifications have also been proposed [**CD4**]. Two of the modifications provide more clarity on the application of the policy **MM61** and **MM64** [**CD4**]; a further modification has been proposed as a result of discussions with Natural England regarding the Habitats Regulation Assessment and to improve clarity on the consideration of the Natural Environment including Natura 2000 sites **MM62** [**CD4**]. Furthermore, a final proposed modification ensures greater consistency in general and with the NPPF **MM63** [**CD4**].