

# Unlocking the planning system for onshore wind –lessons for England and Scotland from Wales

## Or “*What is wrong with lines on maps?*”

Why is it that onshore wind farms should be treated different to any other areas of land use planning?

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# Structure of Presentation

- Start with proposed policy environment in Scotland
- Lessons from Wales
- Lessons from NE England
- Conclusions

## A change of approach in Scotland ?

### SPPG 6 : Renewable Energy: Consultation Draft

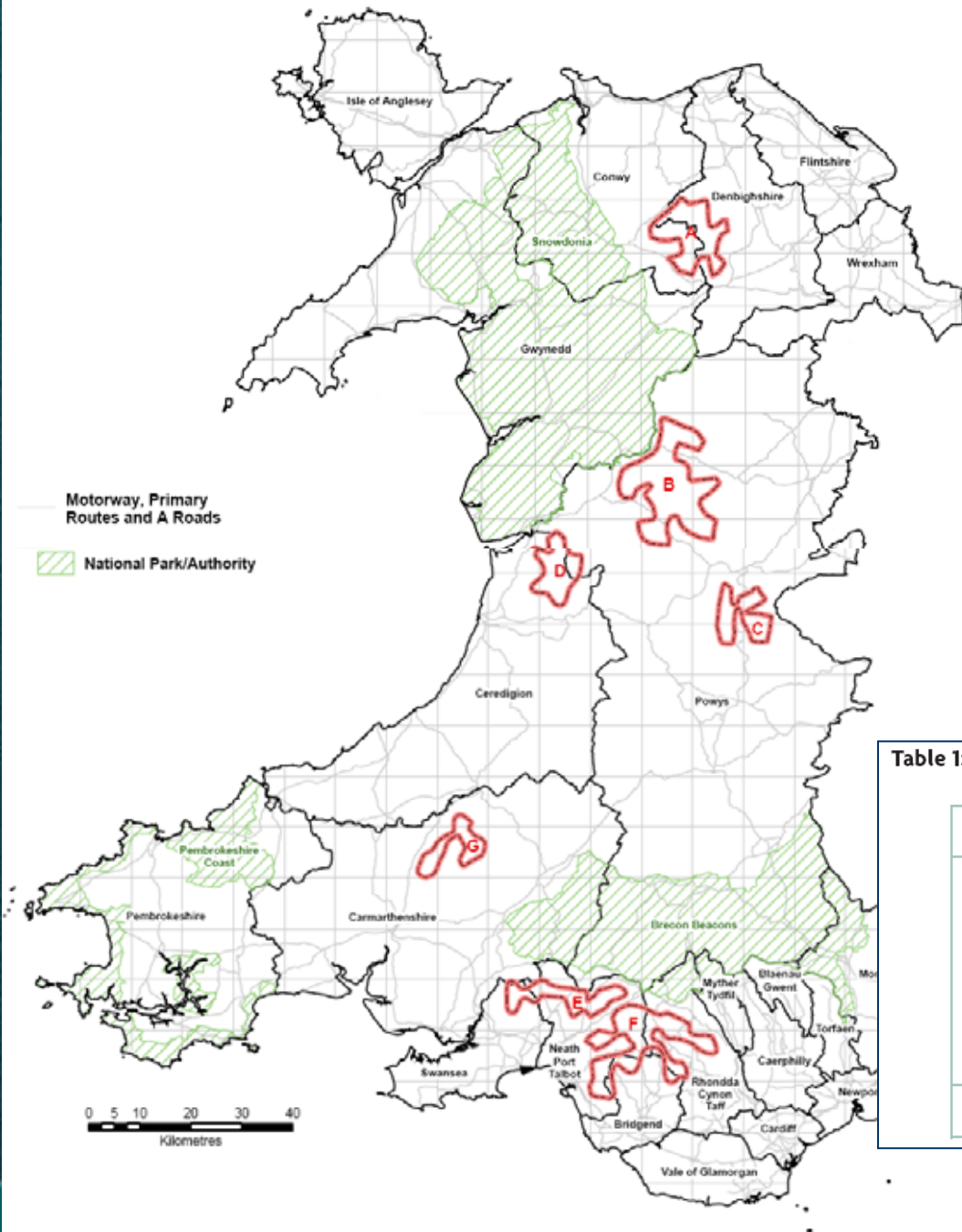
- *10- Planning authorities should use the development plan process to set the framework for considering proposals for all renewable energy developments in their areas. This framework should in particular include the identification of **areas of search** for onshore wind farm developments.*
- *This process should enable planning authorities to set local contributions which should be expressed in terms of Megawatts*

# Wales: An exercise in spatial planning ?



# Wales -TAN 8

- TAN 8 is honest and explicit about the magnitude of development required, the scale of landscape change and requirements on all parties to ensure delivery



**Table 1: Indicative Capacity targets for SSAs**

Strategic Search Area	Capacity
A Clocaenog Forest	140MW
B Carno North	290MW
C Newtown South	70MW
D Nant-y-Moch	140MW
E Pontardawe	100MW
F Coed Morgannwg	290MW
G Brechfa Forest	90MW
<b>Total</b>	<b>1120MW</b>

## Is TAN 8 Working ?

- In my view yes, but post-TAN 8 refinement process has been slower than hoped
- General acceptance of the strategic approach by all parties but acceptance of the scale of change in some areas takes time
- Statutory consultees on board
- 100s of MWs in the pre-planning stage outside FC land, first few large applications are in.
- Instigator of FC National Wind Farm programme in Wales – over 500MW opportunity
- Recently supported by Planning Inspectorate

# The North–East of England

A large, rusted metal sculpture of a person standing on a grassy hill, with a blue sky and clouds in the background. The sculpture is a stylized human figure with a long, horizontal bar across its chest, resembling a cross or a signpost. The background shows a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds and a green, grassy field.

NE England has similar issues to Wales and Scotland

*High levels of developer interest*

*High quality landscapes*

*High level policy commitment to climate change*

## UK Government Energy White Paper ( Summer 2006 )

- Para 7.27 “[UK] Government has decided to give greater clarity on the strategic issues relating to renewables. As such, we are publishing, as part of this white paper, a clear statement of need. This is to be used as a *material consideration*, along side PPS22 in England and TAN8 in Wales”
- Annex Statement of need -“planning policies should not place unjustified restrictions on renewable developments”
- Is this an admission of failure with PPS 22 ?

## Main Delivery Document: PPS 22

- Leads to a lack of transparency/honesty as to what will be required for all parties
- Allows onshore wind component to be hidden in wider renewable energy mix
- Fails to indicate the scale of the solution required
- Offers no guidance on thresholds of acceptability
- Offers no guidance on whether a concentration or dispersal approach to larger wind farms is best

## Overall critique of PPS22 and the Companion Guide

- Over reaction to LPAs not being sufficiently pro-renewable development and concerns over their ability to pro-actively plan such a new form of development
- Leaves the initiatives squarely with the wind industry to lead the agenda
- This alienates the public and stakeholders
- Relies on a plan-led system that cannot keep pace with developer interest or government policy
- Will not deliver the “wind power stations” needed

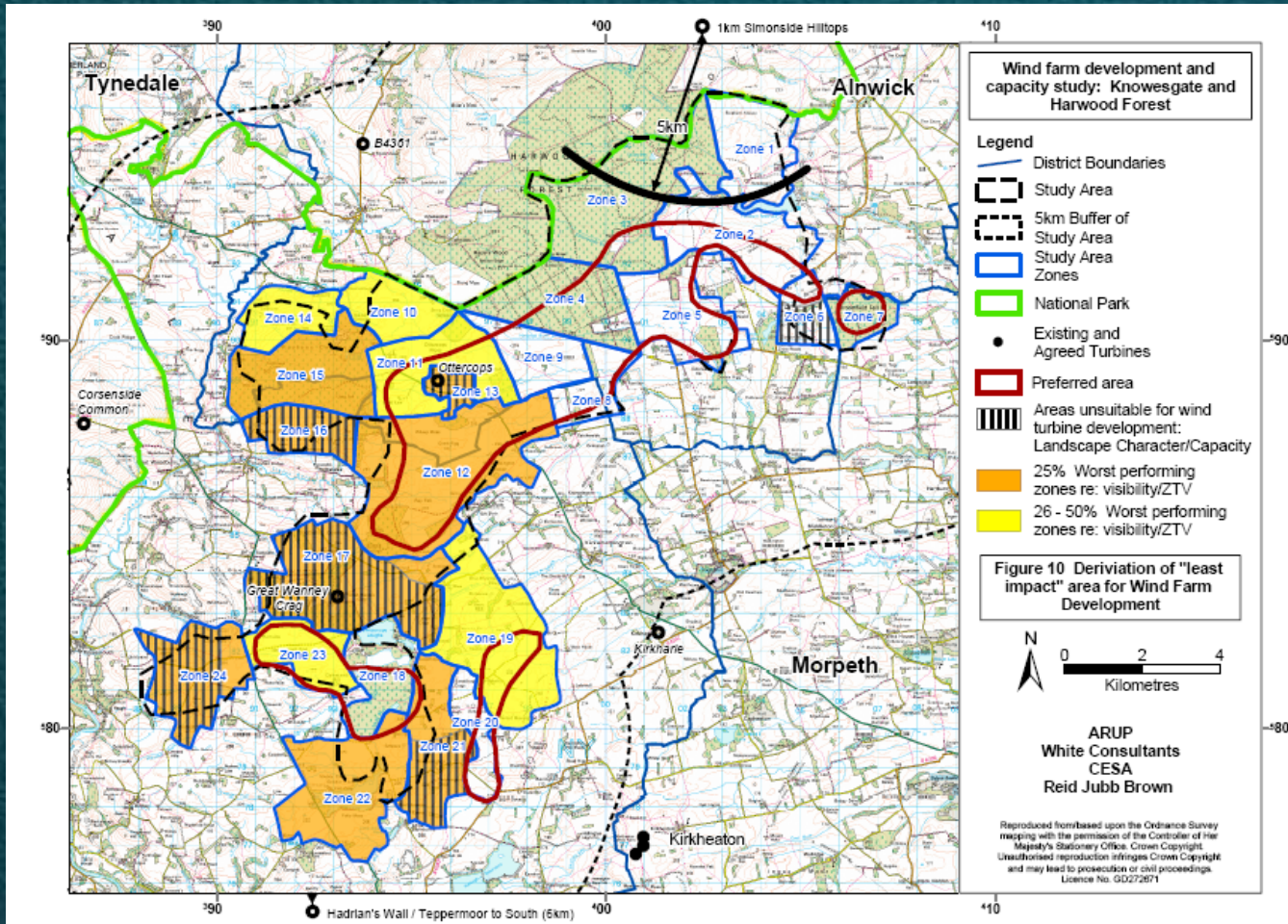


# NE Planning Context

- Regional Renewable Energy Strategy (evidence based incl. Grid )
- The W's
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- NCC and other County Structure Plans
- Further refinement of the W's



# Knowesgate and Harwood Forest “least impact” area for development -200-300MW



Within this area wind farms may be acceptable ( subject to more detailed assessment )  
Outside this area highly likely to be unacceptable

Not desirable to see whole “least impact” area developed

Development of the whole “least impact area” would lead to a wind farm landscape

# Development Scenarios

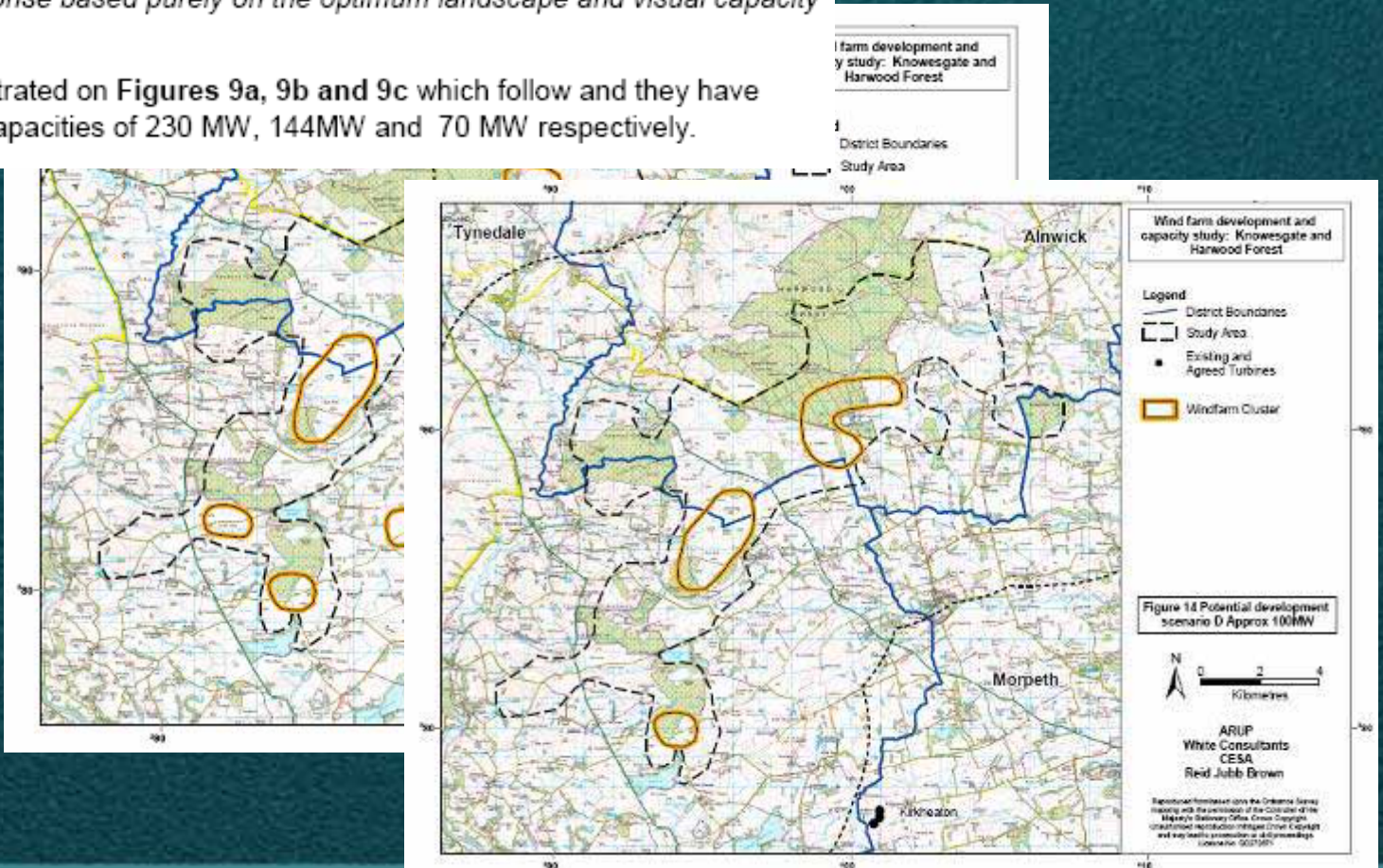
**Scenario A** Emphasis on a strongly positive response to the RSS/County structure plan renewable energy policies delivering high energy production levels.

**Scenario B** A neutral response to the RSS/County structure plan renewable energy policies delivering levels of development approximately in accordance with the Draft RSS

**Scenario C** A response based purely on the optimum landscape and visual capacity of the area

These Scenarios are illustrated on Figures 9a, 9b and 9c which follow and they have estimated development capacities of 230 MW, 144MW and 70 MW respectively.

As an output, three scenarios, plus preferred scenario Output represents a pragmatic balance between target aspirations and landscape protection



# Conclusions

- PPS 22 is not working well for onshore wind, any different in Scotland ?
- Some elements of the thinking from Wales and NE England needs considering
- In English Regions ( and Scotland ? ) -greater honesty and transparency on the implications of regional and county level renewable energy targets is needed
- Lines on maps should be considered, as long as they are evidence based
- Large wind farms should be planned in a manner similar to other development types
- There is a lot of cumulative landscape guidance around but it relates almost without exception to the techniques of assessment, not on thresholds of acceptability.
- An English National Spatial Plan for major renewables ?