



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government



Planning Circular Letter

Circular PL 20-13

20 December 2013

To: Each County/City Manager,
Each Director of Planning,
Each Town Clerk of Planning Authorities,
An Bord Pleanála.

Review of Wind Energy and Renewable Energy Policies in Development Plans

This circular letter concerns the preparation or review of renewable and/ or wind energy strategies, whether as part of the preparation of a new Development Plan or a variation of an existing plan.

As you are aware, there are a number of policy initiatives presently under review and development in relation to renewable energy generally and wind energy, specifically:

(i) Focussed review of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines

As recently indicated in Circular PL 19-13 of 11 December 2013, this Department has recently commenced public consultation on draft revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines focussing on the issues of noise (including distance from dwellings) and shadow flicker. The closing date for receipt of comments is 21 February 2014, following which revisions to the existing 2006 Guidelines will be finalised and issued to planning authorities under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended); and

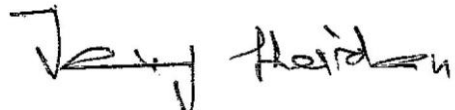
(ii) Renewable Energy Export Policy and Development Framework

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) has just completed the first stage of public consultation on a proposed Renewable Energy Export Policy and Development Framework for the purposes of examining the potential for export of renewable energy, including wind energy, initially to the UK.

This framework will be informed inter alia by the carrying out of assessments under the SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) and Habitats Directives. DCENR will

shortly commence preparation of the scoping report for the SEA which will be published in Quarter 1 2014 and will then begin the Stage 2 consultation period.

As the preparation or variation of local authority Development Plans must take account of all relevant and up to date national policy, it is therefore advised that until both of the above national policy review processes have concluded, local authorities should defer amending their existing Development Plan policies as part of either the cyclical review or variation processes. They should instead operate their existing Development Plan policies and objectives until the completion of these processes and advised otherwise by this Department.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry Sheridan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

Terry Sheridan,
Principal Officer,
Planning Section.