



Powering Preston a Civic Wind Energy Case Study

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Energy

INTRODUCTION



- The concept
- Why wind for Preston
- Powering Preston
- Resources & funding
- Key barriers to success
- Key risks
- Next steps

THE CONCEPT



- A new opportunity to generate power to sell to fuel poor communities at a price within Council Control
- A new opportunity to generate cash to reinvest in Council services
- One of the first UK 'Civic' renewables schemes of a large scale
- Preston taking advantage of its natural resources. (Land availability in Council ownership and wind)

WHY WIND?



- Clean and cheap to generate
- Quiet and efficient
- Preston = A windy part of the UK
- Wind turbines are reliable, generating 70% - 80% of the time
- Successful UK wind energy industry (for support & maintenance)
- Job creation opportunities in renewables for Preston

POWERING PRESTON



- Good business case for 3x3MW turbine project
- Puts Preston on the renewables map
- 4 Nr Council owned sites evaluated (of suitable scale)
- Site evaluation considered 'Deal Breakers' in detail. i.e. ground conditions, available wind speed, neighbourhood & community impact, aviation, grid connection, ecology etc.
- Riversway site chosen as most suitable. (Relatively remote, brownfield site, approx 32ha)

Riversway site



RESOURCES & FUNDING



- £300k development fund established (at risk) to achieve a planning consent
- £12m Cap-Ex required to construct 3 x 3MW turbines
- Sources of funding considered, prudential borrowing, partnering (APSE Energy?) community shares etc.
- Net return £2m P.A. x 20years
- Payback period = 6 years
- Use/reinvestment of potential surplus is a key Member decision
- Huge potential for community engagement to help decide spending priorities

KEY BARRIERS



- Land availability = ok (Council owned)
- Wind Speeds = ok (tested via anemometer for 15months)
- Ecology = ok (with some land mitigation for migrating birds)
- Public perception = ok (tested via local press)
- Radar = work in progress, (solution exists but is expensive, need partners to share costs)
- New Government policy(?) = NOT ok! Onshore wind at risk?

KEY RISKS



- New Government = new policy direction for onshore wind?
- Radar/aviation solution remains unaffordable
- Failure to achieve a Planning Consent (a Council applying to itself for permission has no right of appeal)
- Members 'staying power' – long term project, Preston 4yrs to date, Bristol 10 years to 'go live'

NEXT STEPS



- Analyse new Government Policy when it emerges
- Seek partners for radar/aviation solution (2 private sector possibilities at present)
- Complete Environmental Impact Assessment & remainder of project plan
- Submit Planning application

CONCLUSION



- This is an 'Iconic' and ambitious Civic project for Preston
- Demonstrates a strong renewable energy commitment by the Council
- Significant carbon reduction for the City
- Significant opportunity to benefit Preston's fuel poor communities
- Support for Council finances and future of discretionary services
- Alignment of green and corporate agendas to reduce climate impacts create jobs & support Preston's economy
- **AMBITION = HARD WORK, COMMITMENT, STAYING POWER!**



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