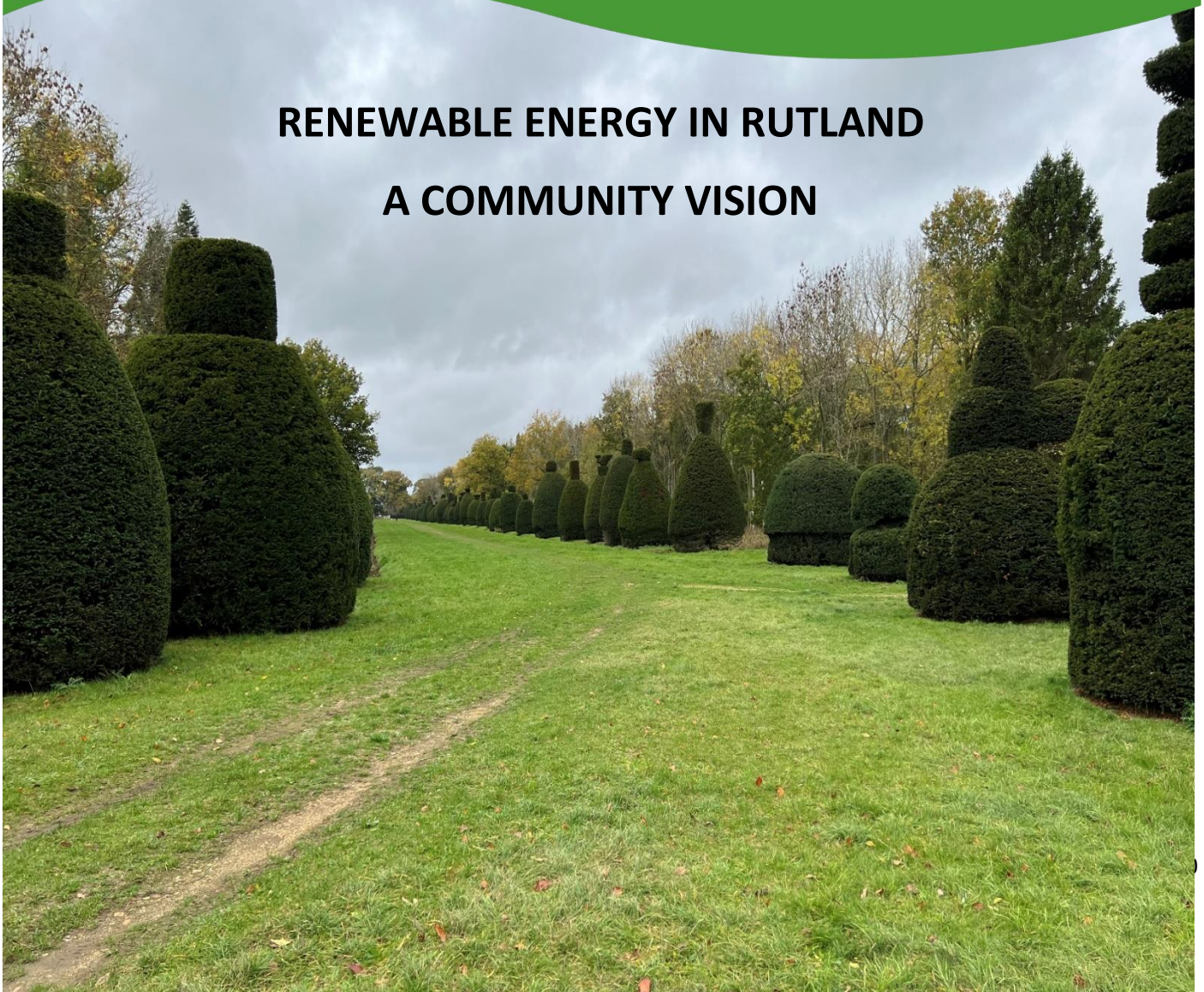
The countryside charity

RENEWABLE ENERGY IN RUTLAND

A COMMUNITY VISION



CPRE The Countryside Charity

We believe in countryside and green spaces that are accessible to all, rich in nature and playing a crucial role in responding to the climate emergency.

With a local CPRE group in every county in England, we're advocating nationwide for the kind of countryside we all want: one with sustainable, healthy communities and available to more people than ever, including those who haven't benefited before.

We stand for a countryside that enriches all of our lives, regenerating our wellbeing, and that we in turn regenerate, protect and celebrate.

Some people might remember us as 'The Campaign to Protect Rural England' – our previous name, and one of several in our long history. We've worked for almost a century to support and promote the countryside, and we'll be doing this for generations to come. That's why we call ourselves 'the countryside charity'.

Front Cover Image

Nature in harmony with human enterprise – The superb Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue

The Rutland Community Vision

"It is too easy for local communities to have external plans imposed upon them before they have chance to consider their options. A local community knows its own landscape, and it is important that potentially conflicting pressures can be brought together in a way which is acceptable to local people and their neighbourhood. This community led vision for Uppingham and Rutland, debated over several months, takes the view that..... "

1. No large solar arrays should be allowed on farmland. Sustainable food production on quality land is vital; therefore only brownfield sites such as disused military bases should be considered suitable for large arrays
2. Off shore wind should form a core part of the nation's solution
3. On shore wind can be appropriate where wanted by the community e.g. schools and county planning policy
4. Solar arrays should be encouraged on domestic and commercial rooftops
5. The New Rutland Local Plan and the county's neighbourhood plans should support a solar 'roof top' strategy namely, 'encouragement' for existing dwellings and a 'mandatory requirement' for all new dwellings
6. Rutland, with its neighbours, should explore the case for hosting one of the new generation of miniature nuclear reactors thereby increasing generating capacity in the region.

CPRE – The Countryside Charity

CPRE is the countryside charity that campaigns to promote, enhance and protect the countryside for everyone's benefit, wherever they live. With a local CPRE in every county, it works with communities, businesses and government to find positive and lasting ways to help the countryside thrive today and for generations to come.

CPRE Rutland

CPRE Rutland is an independent charity established to act as the Rutland branch of the national charity. In line with the forthcoming UK constituency boundary changes, which will incorporate Stamford, it is proposed that the charity will soon be re-constituted as the new Rutland and Stamford Countryside Charity widening its sphere of influence, but retaining its 'CPRE Rutland' role as its core activity.

What Does CPRE Do?

CPRE connects people with the countryside so that everyone can benefit from and value it. The charity promotes rural life to ensure the countryside and its communities can thrive. It empowers communities to improve and protect their local environment. As part of its core campaigning activity, CPRE explores and promotes the role of the countryside in tackling the climate emergency, including seeking ways to increase resilience and reduce impacts. In addition to its planning, land use, housing, transport and rural health and wellbeing roles, the charity is actively involved in the issue of renewable energy and the sustainability options available to the UK. This publication explores a local community vision for future energy provision in Rutland, having initially considered such a vision for the market town of Uppingham in Rutland, the smaller of its two towns.

CPRE Membership

CPRE Rutland welcomes new members. Its subscription rate for 2023 is only £5 per month. Those interested in volunteering to work on CPRE projects are also very welcome. Further details are at www.cprerutland.uk

Conversation Partners

CPRE is grateful to a number of participants and supporting organisations for helping to facilitate the delivery of four community workshops and the production of this community vision publication. Thanks are due to:-

1) The Rutland Times for publishing an article inviting community participation in the project
2) The Uppingham Neighbourhood Forum for publishing an article in its quarterly newsletter inviting community participation
3) Community Partnership Uppingham First for facilitating the workshops and the production of this publication
4) Uppingham Town Councillor and local company 'ClockedIn' proprietor Mark Shaw for his 'renewables' knowledge and experience
5) Local graphic artist Sarah Hatherill for her illustrations and workshop participation
6) Rotarians and CPRE Lead Members Carolyn Cartwright (Planning) and Malcolm Touchin (Research) for their workshop facilitation and subject expertise
7) Workshop participants and Rutland residents John Cartwright, Trevor Colbourne, Margaret Simpson BEM, Tony Streeter, Dr Paul McDonald, Michael Robertson, Robert Apel, Christopher Clark and Phil Marston MBE.
8) Workshop Venues: The Falcon Hotel Uppingham and The Normanton Park Hotel on Rutland Water.

Illustration 1 - Workshop No 3 led by CPRE members Carolyn Cartwright and Malcolm Touchin

About Rutland (Source - Wikipedia)

Rutland is a ceremonial county and unitary authority in the East Midlands, England. The county is bounded to the west and north by Leicestershire, to the north east by Lincolnshire and to the south east by Northamptonshire.

Its greatest length north to south is only 18 miles (29 km) and its greatest breadth east to west is 17 miles (27 km). It is the smallest historic county in England and the fourth smallest in the UK as a whole. Because of this, the Latin motto *Multum in Parvo* or "much in little" was adopted by the county council in 1950. It has the smallest population of any normal unitary authority in England. Among the current ceremonial counties, the Isle of Wight, City of London and City of Bristol are smaller in area.

The only towns in Rutland are Oakham, the county town, and Uppingham. At the centre of the county is Rutland Water, a large artificial reservoir that is an important nature reserve serving as an overwintering site for wildfowl and a breeding site for ospreys.

Rutland's older cottages are built from limestone or ironstone and many have roofs of Collyweston stone slate or thatch.

About Uppingham

Uppingham lies to the south of Rutland just off the A47 between Leicester and Peterborough, 6 miles (10 km) south of the county town, Oakham. It has a population of circa 5k. The town is well known for its heritage high street and town centre conservation area, its famous public school and its outstanding state schools. Uppingham's antique and art galleries make it a popular destination as is its beautifully restored coaching inn, The Falcon Hotel. Uppingham was named "best place to live in the Midlands in 2022" by *The Times* newspaper which commented on the town by calling it "a discerning market town with art, heart and smarts — plus the magnificent Rutland Water". The town's environment is championed by Uppingham in Bloom which regularly wins awards. Uppingham is renowned for its community spirit making it an ideal host for a public debate on the issue of renewable energy.

The Planning Context

Rutland is currently preparing a new Local Plan which is likely to be in place by 2025. A first draft of the plan is expected to be published for public consultation in the autumn of 2023. Uppingham, Oakham and Barleythorpe, Barrowden and Wakerley, Cottesmore, Edith Weston, Greetham, Ketton & Tinwell, Langham, Market Overton, North Luffenham, Whissendine and Wing have Neighbourhood Plans either 'made' or under preparation.

Uppingham is currently updating its Neighbourhood Plan and is presently (April 2023) evaluating the statutory and public consultee responses to its Regulation 14 edition of the plan. This plan makes little reference to renewable energy solutions for the town.

The new Rutland Local Plan will update a 12 year old policy on acceptable locations for onshore wind turbines and offer a number of new polices around renewables including solar. Langham and Uppingham have existing solar farms of a modest size approved. There is no existing policy requiring a commercial or domestic rooftop approach to solar panels. Rutland currently has solar farm applications under consideration which will cover over 2% of its countryside. This compares with the national position of 0.1%.

For the purpose of this publication the Rutland policy position at April 2023 applies.

The Climate Emergency and the Countryside

As councils and countries declare a climate emergency, the impact is already clear in our daily lives. The seasons are on the move, crops grown for generations fail and some species hover on the brink of extinction. Our countryside is changing - and we need to make sure it does so in a way that helps mitigate the impacts of the climate emergency and sustain a countryside that we can all cherish.

In recent years, floods from heavy rainfall have brought to life the devastation a changing climate has on our daily lives. Images of sandbags piled up outside doors, submerged cars in flooded streets and local shops ruined by muddy water are now all too common.

Farmers struggle to grow our food and maintain their livelihoods in the face of such extreme weather, pushing the resilience of the countryside and its embattled communities to the limit. Some of our most cherished natural icons, such as English oak trees and beloved wildlife like hedgehogs and bumblebees, face challenges to adapt to changing weather patterns. Ecosystems are facing collapse and the biodiversity of our countryside is declining unabated. All of this threatens the look, feel and health of the landscapes we know and love.

The decisions that we make now, and the approaches that we take, will shape our countryside and its communities for years to come. It's essential that we get it right from the start.

We know that achieving net zero carbon emissions is currently being interpreted as requiring a huge number of new renewable energy developments, many of them to be sited in rural areas. As currently evidenced in Rutland with the Mallard Solar Farm national infrastructure project and the very large Exton Estate and Pilton Solar Power Station proposals, this raises the prospect of potentially enormous landscape impacts, as well as new income streams, arising from the energy transition.

It is CPRE's view that the need for rapid action must not be at the expense of the conservation and enhancement of our precious landscapes. For new renewables in the countryside to be successful, local people must be closely involved in the decision making process to minimise the impacts of new developments on landscapes and allow for a just transition to net zero.

That is why CPRE has created the Community Visioning process – to empower the people of parishes like those in Rutland to set out where and under what circumstances they believe that new renewable energy could be sited within their local landscape.

The Community Visioning Process as Implemented in Rutland

The process used to create this vision was developed by CPRE, building upon previous work with the Centre for Sustainable Energy. It involved a series of four workshops in which residents of Uppingham and Rutland came together to discuss how they felt renewable energy could be appropriately integrated within their local landscape.

In the first workshop attendees discussed their connection to Uppingham and the countryside around it. Residents identified areas in the local landscape that are particularly familiar or cherished, as well as those places that they felt less positively about and the parts of their countryside that were important to them but had been lost due to landscape change. The discussion ranged over aspects of Uppingham's countryside that residents felt are particularly distinctive and their emotional response to the landscape, how they would describe it and how it made them feel. This discussion set the context for how residents would react to potential changes to their landscape as a result of new renewable energy developments.

The second workshop focused on issues to do with energy infrastructure and how much electricity Uppingham residents need. This discussion began with attendees talking about their awareness and opinions of pylons, wires and other types of energy infrastructure in the countryside around them. The workshop then considered how this might change as we use more electricity generated renewably in order to reduce local carbon emissions.

Following dialogue with Western Power (the local electricity infrastructure organisation) and the exploration of the strengths and limitations of a CPRE suggested working tool, the CESAR spreadsheet (developed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy), workshop delegates were able to explore how much renewable electricity might need to be generated for Uppingham in the future. The potential landscape impact of different types of technology required to meet the needs of local residents and businesses were then examined. Solar panels and wind turbines contribution to solving the current energy crisis was explored. Given the high cost and potential economic and social impact of the current energy market, it was perhaps not surprising that delegates were also concerned about the need to retain some traditional fuels as an interim step to the satisfactory delivery of renewables. Delegates were also concerned that local and national policy makers should acknowledge the next generation of miniature nuclear reactors.

By the end of the second workshop residents had suggested a mix of new renewables that they would be willing to see integrated into the Uppingham landscape.

In the third workshop delegates used maps of the local landscape to identify locations for where the new renewables suggested in the second workshop could be sited. The roof mounting of solar panels was considered essential or, if land mounted, a brown field site not in full public view. Small turbines were considered a possibility in two locations. They also discussed the inadequacy of energy data just for Uppingham and the need to mount a fourth workshop to look at data for the whole of Rutland. Consideration was also given to who could realistically own and profit from new renewable energy schemes in Uppingham, for example schools and colleges with sufficient land to minimise impact on the surrounding countryside.

In a fourth workshop, as requested by vision delegates, consideration was given to the needs of Rutland as a whole. With additional delegates present, a résumé of the outputs of the first three workshops was offered and followed by an existing county policy led discussion on the siting of possible renewables. Because of the existing proliferation of ground based solar applications mentioned earlier, priority was given via study of the county map to the possible location of onshore wind turbines, roof mounted solar and nuclear. The need to sustain the use of existing non renewables for a limited period to address the current cost and availability of non-renewables was also acknowledged.

It was also thought that the impact on the landscape of these schemes could be minimised and even deliver benefits to nature and wildlife locally. Working together attendees filled in a map of Rutland where and how new renewable energy could be generated locally in the future, which forms the basis for this community vision.

A resume of the energy research undertaken and planning policy shared for the workshops follows.

National Energy Consumption

While there is widespread agreement that demand for electrical energy is set to increase significantly as the country moves closer to the net zero target, there is rather less consensus as to the precise needs, the rate at which demand can be expected to grow, or the most appropriate way to meet these needs. According to

the figures for 2022 from DUKES[1], total UK consumption for that year was 333.2 TWh[2] out of a potential maximum supply of some 670 TWh. Projections of growth in consumption vary from as little as 10% by 2040 to as much as 10 times, at least in terms of domestic needs. More precise estimates clearly depend on a range of factors, but in particular the rate of take up of electric vehicles and electrically powered heating systems.

Rutland's Needs

As regards Rutland's needs, simply taking the requisite proportion of the DUKES figures gives a total consumption for the county of 198 GWh. Figures in the CESAR tool, on the other hand, suggest an average domestic consumption per household of 4189 KWh or some 73 GWh for the county as a whole, while non-domestic consumption comes out at about 270 GWh, giving a total for the year of 343 GWh. Note that figures in the tool are from 2019.

According to Western Power, the authority which distributes electricity to Rutland (and many other places), figures of 2.5 KW per domestic property[3] and anywhere between 45 and 269 KW for industrial users could be taken to represent average use. On this basis, the totals would be 38.2 GWh for domestic, 191 GWh for industrial (assuming an average per business of 100KW) and an overall figure of about 230GWh, only slightly greater than the total derived from the DUKES figures.

Future needs for the 2550 houses expected to be built in Rutland by 2040 (based on a build rate of 150 per year for 17 years), and assuming the demand of 6KW per property suggested by Western Power, would amount to an additional 13.4 GWh.

Impact of Proposed Facilities

The proposed installations for Rutland could have a power output of about 800KW for the medium wind turbines and just 100KW for the smaller turbines. Assuming that they will generate power at these levels for about one third of the time, this will yield:

- 2 Small Turbines – 200 KW for 2365 hours per year – 473MWh
- 3 Medium Turbines – 2.4MW for 2365 hours per year – 5.68GWh.

For the solar panels, they would be fitted to approximately 5812 older properties (one third of the current 17,428 homes) and 2550 new build properties. With an average yield of 4KW for 960 hours per year, they would provide a total of 32.1GWh. With the wind turbines, the total would be 38.25GWh. These calculations are based on the figures in the CESAR Spreadsheet but do not include any allowance for solar panels on non-domestic roofs.

The outputs from both solar and wind are clearly weather dependent. They can be evened out by using batteries, which would add to the cost and complexity of installations.

Nuclear Power

Consideration should also be given to the use of nuclear power. The Government has a target of providing some 25% of the nation's needs in this way by 2050. A Small Modular Reactor (SMR), such as that produced by Rolls-Royce, could provide 470 MW continuously, equating to an annual provision of around 4.1 TWh, considerably more than enough to meet Rutland's needs.

National Grid Connections

The National Grid is currently struggling to accommodate many of the emerging demands for both additional supply and new sources of electricity, as its capacity is in many places limited to meeting existing demands and by traditional power station locations. These limitations restrict the locations where new facilities can

1 DUKES – Digest of UK Energy Statistics, published annually by the UK Government

2 One Kilowatt-hour (KWh) is the consumption of 1KW of electricity for a period of 1 hour, i.e. a unit as normally billed to customers. 1 MWh equals 1000 KWh, 1 GWh equals 1000 MWh and 1 TWh equals 1000 GWh or 1bn KWh.

3 A higher figure of 6KW was suggested for new build properties.

be connected and lead to delays in meeting additional demands. These will be significant factors in planning for moves to renewable energy sources.

Need for Coherent Strategies

In addition to use for renewable energy installations, land is needed for many other purposes, in particular for agriculture, housing and infrastructure, as well as for leisure, tourism and to provide adequate green spaces. It is important to maintain suitable balance amongst these various uses, and CPRE Rutland reiterates the call for a national land use strategy to underpin this critical process. There is also a strong case for a more coherent national strategy for the implementation of renewables around the country to ensure that critical resources, not just land but also the many rare earth elements[4] and other materials essential to the technologies required, will be used most effectively.

As stated elsewhere in this publication, in Rutland there are already a number of applications to install solar farms, amounting in total to some 2% of the area of the county, some of it prime agricultural land. This compares to the current national average of just 0.1% and the target of just 0.3% needed to fulfil the national requirement for ground mounted solar installations. There is clearly an urgent need for a county wide strategy for the realisation of renewable energy facilities to limit provision to what is really needed and to ensure that sufficient land is retained for other critical needs, especially Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land, which should in any case be preserved for agricultural use in accordance with government policy.

The Potential for Renewable Energy Developments to be Accommodated Within Rutland's Landscape

A Planning Perspective

Government guidance states that all communities have a responsibility to help increase the use and supply of green energy. CPRE Rutland recognises the need to accommodate renewable energy developments but with the proviso that the scale and location of development should be appropriate to the needs of the community and the capacity of the landscape. Proposals should encompass concerns about any potential adverse impact on landscape, agriculture, tourism, and the built environment, especially on the approach to settlements. It is noted that Government advice stresses that the planning concerns of local communities should be properly heard.
The important elements to consider are:-

- The requirements of the technology
- Potential impacts on the local environment, including cumulative impacts
- Landscape characteristics

It is important to take into account the distinctive landscape areas within Rutland, as each will have different capacity limits. The debate on renewable energy now includes the need to protect agricultural land. This has been acknowledged as an important element in any assessment of a proposal, given that food production in the UK is becoming increasingly important. Similarly, the attraction of Rutland as a tourist destination is paramount. The Rutland Landscape Character Analysis by David Tyldesley and Associates (31.5.2003) states that, "Environmental quality of the County of Rutland, particularly of the landscape is very high. It is widely appreciated by residents and visitors"

In summary, five areas, taken from the landscape analysis, have been assessed as follows:
High Rutland - in the west and central parts of the County – Uppingham is in this area. Moderate potential for small groups in the northern part.

4 Mining of Rare Earth Elements provides low yields and is subject to significant geopolitical constraints. Some projections suggest that there may not be sufficient of these materials to meet the growing demands world-wide.

Vale of Catmose - To the north and south of Oakham and including the town of Oakham - moderate potential for single small turbines.
Rutland Plateau - To the north and east of the county - it is identified as having the highest potential for turbine development.
Rutland Water Basin - A single unit of a distinctive landscape type - reservoir and its immediate surroundings. Low potential for development any turbine development.
Welland Valley - Along much of the southern boundary of the County where the river Welland forms the boundary with Northamptonshire. Low potential even for turbines.

Taking each type of provision in turn:

Turbines -This CPRE document primarily seeks to assess the impact of smaller sized turbines of less than 50 metres in height. All turbines clearly need unimpeded access to a consistent wind flow in open locations. According to advice within Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) – "Wind Turbine Developments, November 2012", there is high potential to accommodate a single large turbine on land to the north of Cottesmore. Elsewhere in the northern and eastern part of the Rutland Plateau capacity is considered moderate. Moderate capacity for individual small turbines is indicated in parts of High Rutland and the Vale of Catmose but capacity is considered low across much of south and central Rutland, where panoramic views from ridges need protection. The Rutland Water basin is considered of low capacity and unlikely to be supported by Rutland CPRE.
Notwithstanding the SPG advice, CPRE Rutland would primarily wish to support development of small to medium turbines in preference to the very large options. Single turbines should relate to existing agricultural or industrial buildings. These could be accommodated, for example, on the edge of school playing fields but avoiding sensitive skylines, without undue impact on amenities. See the possible Uppingham Community College and Uppingham School illustrations. For the purpose of this study three medium sized turbines are proposed to the north of Rutland.

Solar Arrays - Rutland already has an established array, located to the east of Uppingham on sloping terrain. Further proposals are under consideration some of which are extensive and on good quality agricultural land. This is not considered a good option. Preference should be given to making use of space on roofs of buildings especially those of large commercial facilities. Failing that, brownfield land or sites with low ecological value, such as disused industrial land, airfields or quarries should be considered in preference to open greenfield sites. All new residential and commercial properties should ideally incorporate solar panels on suitable roof slopes unless they are in conflict with conservation policies.

Nuclear Reactors - Modern technology is moving towards the development of small scale nuclear reactors which could be accommodated without environmental detriment within a secluded location, distant from settlements. CPRE Rutland considers that such development located within disused airfields or quarries could meet this requirement and provide a significant contribution to the future energy supply of the region.

In summary, CPRE Rutland supports 'green' development, which would satisfy the community requirements to accommodate renewable energy facilities, provided that these are appropriate in scale to the Rutland landscape and environment and proportionate to the community's needs.

CPRE Rutland considers that It is most important that the local authority identifies suitable areas for such development so that consistent planning control can be applied to speculative proposals in unsuitable locations. This is clearly the remit of the new Local Plan but somewhat urgent given the threats posed by the current large solar farm proposals.

What Might it All Look Like?

The scale and visual impact of turbines with the choices available was debated. With regard to scale, an illustrative turbine drawing based on the windmill at Whissendine is below.

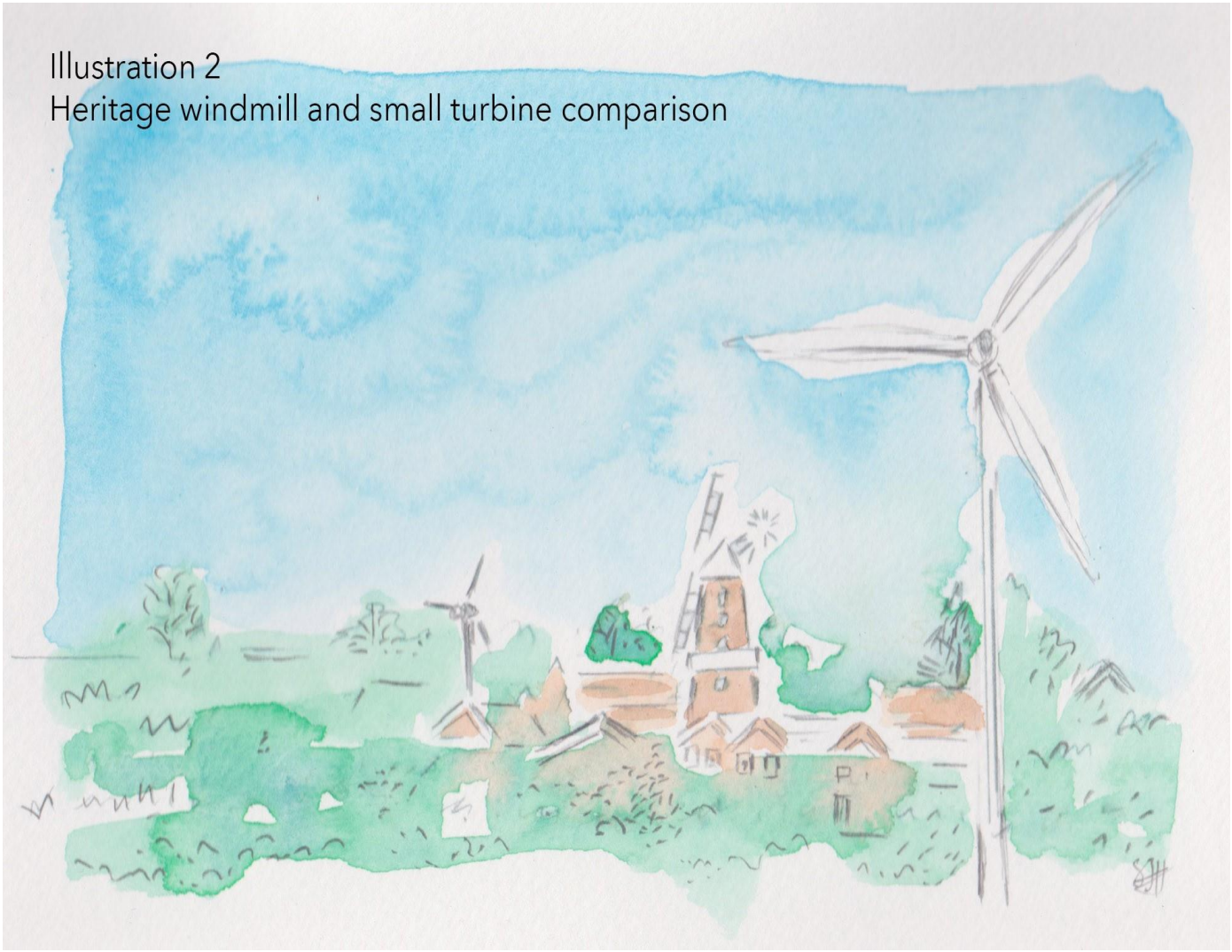


Illustration 2 – Heritage windmill and small turbine comparison

Illustrations of Proposed Installations

In total the workshop attendees proposed a vision for the future of renewable energy in Rutland which includes:

- 2 small wind turbines in Uppingham
- 3 medium wind turbines to the north of Rutland
- The option of a miniature nuclear reactor on an ex-military brownfield site
- Solar panels installed on at least a third of existing and all new houses/commercial properties across the county.

Roof Mounted Solar

It was suggested that further low carbon solar energy could be boosted by an aim to retro-fit roof mounted panels onto approximately 30% of the existing housing stock in every Parish, subject to the degree of financial incentives available to encourage uptake. It was also noted that a more consistent and proactive approach would be required to policies relating to buildings within Conservation Areas.

Wind Power

A possible small turbine at UCC meeting two thirds of consumption (Could be off grid)

Illustration 3 - UCC Small Turbine

For the period 1.11.20 - 31.10.21 UCC electricity consumption was:-
Total units used 364,369.65 - (307,082.87 day units and 57,286.78 night units)
Total cost for the period £47,649.96 (£41,622.49 day and £6,027.47 night)

A possible small turbine at Uppingham School meeting half of estimated consumption (Could be off grid)

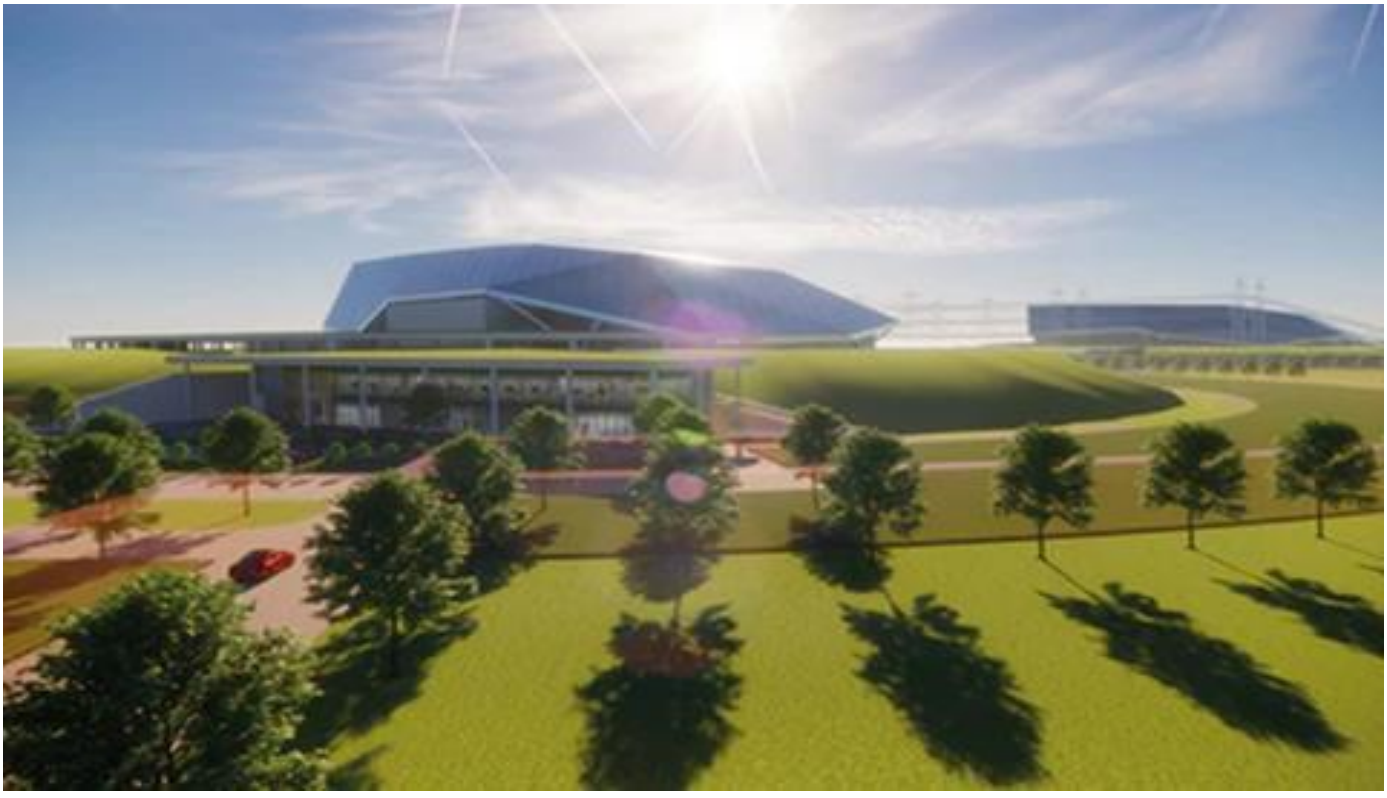
Illustration 4 – Uppingham School Small Turbine

Three Medium Turbines to the North of Rutland (Within current RCC Policy)

2.4MW for 2365 hours per year – 5.68GWh

Illustration 5 – Three medium turbines on the Rutland plateau

A Mini Nuclear Reactor Site (Courtesy of Rolls Royce)



The Benefits to Rutland of a Low Carbon Future

In total, the new renewables that residents of Rutland have proposed as suitable for the local countryside in the county would generate more than its domestic and commercial needs. Throughout the discussions that created this vision, it was clear that Rutland residents want to be careful not to sacrifice the beauty of the local landscape for the sake of generating a commodity (electricity). However, there was also a recognition that having appropriate scale and well sited renewable energy in the area could bring valuable benefits to the county.

If the schemes proposed in this vision were to go ahead, residents would like to see some of the financial returns be invested back into the community to enhance the local landscape in other ways, for instance through heat pump subsidies for buildings thought suitable. Similarly, there was a clear desire for solar and wind to bring investment in genuine biodiversity improvements such as local hedge and verge planting to support pollinators, provide wildlife corridors and prevent soil erosion. In other similar CPRE workshops it has also been suggested that the creation and management of new networks of hedgerows to shield 'brown field' solar developments could provide an important source of land based employment and training in rural skills for young people in the county.

Finally, there was a clear feeling that any growth in renewable energy generation across Rutland should also translate into lower prices for local residents so that clean energy produced in the county also helps to tackle fuel poverty.

The Next Steps

This document marks the beginning of a conversation. This vision for the future of renewable energy in the Rutland landscape should appear in some form in updated Neighbourhood Plans and the new Rutland Local Plan. In the interim, by setting out a clear proposition for where, how and on what conditions more renewable energy could be generated in their local area, this community vision gives the residents of Rutland a powerful tool to help pursue a countryside of their choice. Too often the shift to low carbon energy across England has become divisive and confrontational when rural communities have been presented with a proposed scheme in their landscape which they have had little input on and must either accept or reject. By developing this proactive vision for the future, the residents of Rutland have sent a clear message about the importance of their landscape and what renewables done well would look like in their local context.

In summary, this community vision shows that the residents of Rutland are prepared to play a significant role in the effort to avert the climate emergency. This vision would generate enough low carbon electricity not just to meet the needs of Rutland now, but also well into a future based around electric cars and electric heating in their homes. Rutland residents have shown that they are in favour of renewable energy not just in principle, but would also support hosting new installations in their countryside as long as these developments are sited sensitively to protect or enhance the stunning views across their landscape. There is an especially clear appetite for renewable energy schemes with a limited footprint that contribute to the restoration and enhancement of the habitats, nature and wildlife that Rutland residents clearly value so much.

There are many steps the residents of Rutland can now take to make their community vision for the future of renewable energy in their landscape a reality. There are discussions to be had with the county council to see this vision incorporated into the new local plan and neighbourhood plans. Western Power (the local distribution network operator) will also be an important partner, to ensure that Rutland has the right infrastructure to support the renewable energy residents want to see. This vision could be used to proactively seek out landowners and renewable energy developers who would be interested in bringing forward one or more of the schemes for which residents have shown support. Or, perhaps most excitingly, this document could be used as a plan for establishing a community energy scheme in Rutland with residents coming together to design and implement their own renewable energy development, with the profits flowing back to the local community.

CPRE will continue to support the residents of Rutland as they take this community vision forward. For any readers outside Rutland, CPRE has a network of local branches across the whole of England who could partner with other interested organisations to develop a neighbourhood's own community vision for the future of renewable energy in their local landscape.

Policy Recommendation - A CPRE Rutland Green Energy Charter

CPRE Rutland closes this renewable energy research project by suggesting that words are not enough. Urgent action by policy makers is what is required. In Rutland this could take the form of adopting a local charter as suggested below.

The New Local Plan and supporting Neighbourhood Plans should:-

1. Update the 12 year old county policy map identifying sites suitable for renewable sources of energy
2. Ensure that no big solar arrays are allowed on productive farmland. Sustainable food production on quality land is vital, therefore, only brownfield sites such as disused military bases or quarries should be considered suitable for large arrays
3. Support on shore wind of an appropriate scale where wanted by the community e.g. at schools and colleges
4. Encourage solar arrays on existing domestic and commercial rooftops and mandate them for all new buildings
5. Enable, where desired and viable, the option of community ownership of energy supply
6. Require significant bio diversity gain from all renewable energy proposals
7. Ensure that Rutland, with its neighbours, explores the case for hosting one of the new generation of miniature nuclear reactors thereby increasing generating capacity in the region.

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Registered Charity No: 500480 Contact chair@cprerutland.uk Tel: 01572 823465

With some content founded on earlier CPRE studies
Grant aided by CPRE

Back Cover Pictures
Rutland homes, sports clubs and other premises that have got the message.

April 2023


Uppingham Town