

Report by Alan Woodman

Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group – 8 December 2014

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The need to use renewable energy is a more recent pressure affecting many protected areas, from within and outside their boundaries. Government requirements to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and the need to secure alternative sources of energy will have an increasing impact upon development within Gower, its landscape and seascape.' (Gower AONB Design Guide November 2011, Page 12, 2.14 point 4)

Currently the Unitary Development Plan governing Gower AONB gives no clear framework or policy for deciding applications for renewable energy installations within the AONB. The Gower AONB Design Guide gives some guidance.

An increasing number of houses within the AONB have domestic scale solar panel installations either on the roof or within their gardens. Already a number of small, commercial ground mounted solar arrays have received planning approval. An application for a large scale commercial array at Ilston was recently refused planning permission by the Authority; this decision may be the subject of an appeal.

Wind turbines and tidal generation both within and outside the AONB boundaries could impact significantly on the landscape.

The Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group should have a strong, clear policy on renewables and advise / lobby the Council in it's development of the new Local Development Plan.

Alan Woodman