

7. **Tourism**

This section comprises 4 sub-sections:

- 7.1 The Developer's Claims
- 7.2 Surveys Contradicting the Developer's Claims
- 7.3 The Ruby Country Initiative
- 7.4 The Failure of Wind Farms as Tourist Attractions

Planning Policies and Guidelines examined in this section:

NATIONAL: DCLG's Good Practice Guide on Planning & Tourism

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL: TO3

7.1 **The Developer's Claims**

7.1.1 In paragraph 9.4.2 of the Environmental Statement, Bolsterstone states:

'Surveys of public attitudes to windfarms provide no clear evidence that the presence of windfarms in an area has any adverse impact on local tourism.

Once operational, school and other educational trips would be encouraged.'

7.1.2 In paragraph 3.5 of the applicant's Design and Access Statement is the comment:

'There are no plans to make the land publicly accessible, however the Developer may allow prearranged educational visits.'

7.1.3 Readers are directed to paragraph 3.3.3 of the ES to find support for the first claim in paragraph 7.1.1 above. TDC officers are directed to section 7.2, below, of this report, which contradicts these findings, *or the interpretation of these findings*, in those surveys. Before this application is determined, Bolsterstone should explain to TDC and local residents exactly how often it intends encouraging school and other educational trips, knowing that someone would have to be employed and paid to courier such trips. Sufficient parking spaces and toilet facilities for tour groups have not been incorporated into the plans. This suggests that encouraging educational trips is merely an afterthought and there is little intention to follow the promise through if the application is approved.

7.1.4 TDC officers are also directed to Section 6: Safety Considerations, of this DTOG report where it is shown that the developer has undertaken no formal risk assessment for the operational phase of this wind farm project. Risk assessments by school's would preclude any educational visits by groups of pupils on safety grounds.

7.1.5 On its website for the Dunsland Cross Wind Farm, Bolsterstone has been trying to put a positive spin on the proposal in advance of the application being submitted:

'Tourism

A tourism and socio-economics assessment has been undertaken looking at both the direct and indirect effects of the windfarm upon the local area.

The investment in Dunsland Cross Windfarm has the potential to generate a range of economic and social effects and opportunities for local businesses, most notably employment opportunities and local spending. Examples of direct opportunities for local contractors would include haulage, turbine base and access track construction, the supply of building materials and mechanical, electrical and supervisory services.

No footpaths or other public rights of way will be directly impacted by the development. Tourist attractions in the wider area include the seaside resorts of Bude, Bideford and Clovelly, as well as Winsford Walled Garden, 4km south west of the site and Holsworthy Rural Life History Museum 5km to the west. No significant effects on these receptors have been identified.'

7.1.6 Bolsterstone's *'tourism and socio-economics assessment'* appears in section 9.4.1 of its ES. It says much the same as the website entry whilst trying to add significance criteria to the figures quoted.

7.1.7 The whole of the second paragraph in the statement in paragraph 7.1.4 above is irrelevant to tourism and DTOG's response to it can be found in Section 3: Misleading Claims, paragraph 3.3.64. The third paragraph clutches at straws and shows that **the developer has no understanding whatsoever of tourism in this area**. Bude, Bideford and Clovelly are all 13 - 20 miles away and most tourists access these places from the A39 without ever going near Dunsland Cross. Nothing that has happened in the Holsworthy area has ever had an effect on visitor numbers in these resort towns. Visitors staying in holiday cottages and B&Bs in the Dunsland Cross area may well visit these resorts on day trips. If the wind farm is built they may still visit these resorts - but they will do so from their newly-chosen accommodation well away from the Dunsland Cross Wind Farm (see paragraph 7.2.6 below).

7.1.8 Holsworthy Museum is an excellent resource but it is a very small attraction and is simply a supplement to a holiday in this area. It is not the reason why tourists come here. The same can be said of Winsford Walled Garden, though that is particularly likely to suffer if the Chilla Moor Wind Farm is built behind it.

7.1.9 The one thing Bolsterstone needed to mention in its tourism assessment is missing: **The Ruby Country Initiative**. This is so important to this area that the whole of section 7.3 below is dedicated to it.

7.2 Surveys Contradicting the Developer's Claims

7.2.1 A document researched and written by Candida Whitmill for, and on behalf of, the Small Business Council was published in February 2006 and revised in June 2006. It is entitled: *'UK Energy Policy: The Small Business Perspective & The Impact on the Rural Economy.'* In the Executive Summary on page 2 the following statements are made:

*'This report surveys the intense debate now taking place as to why the chosen strategy (ie UK Energy Policy: DTOG) is not achieving its objectives. We believe that a principal factor is to be found in the increasingly controversial renewable energy policy, which is widely criticised for its lack of balance and its **over-emphasis on onshore wind** at the expense of other technologies.*

This study focuses attention on one particular area of potential impact in the United Kingdom, the impact on tourism, an area dominated by small businesses and of pivotal importance to the rural economy as a whole. Twenty-five percent of all registered businesses are in rural areas.

The rural visitor economy is worth £14 billion in England alone and supports up to 800,000 jobs. Research shows that for an average 75% of visitors, the quality of the landscape and countryside is the most important factor in choosing a destination. **Between 47% and 75% of visitors felt that wind turbines damage the landscape quality. In North Devon turbines would deter 11% of visitors, at a cost of £29 million and the loss of 800 jobs.** ... In the South West, just a 5% overall reduction in visitor numbers would lose the region £400 million and 15,000 jobs. Because of the multiplier effect, a reduction of visitors can have far-reaching consequences for the overall regional economy, a fact richly illustrated during the Foot and Mouth crisis. The evidence shows that in some areas, 49% of all sectors of rural businesses experienced a negative impact.

We argue that the current trend towards high levels of wind energy development onshore presents an unacceptable threat to rural businesses and runs counter to almost all other aspects of Government policy relating to the rural economy.'

7.2.2 Quoting from 'The Value of Tourism', a South West Tourism report of 2004, and English Heritage's 'State of the Historic Environment Report' (2002), on page 11 Ms Whitmill explains the 'multiplier effect' mentioned above:

'Rural tourism is unique as a major employer, income generator and source of social cohesion that both supports and depends on the countryside. The economic impact of the visitor economy is extensive, and the multiplier effect ripples through rural communities via suppliers, shops, pubs, restaurants and services. The scale of this knock-on effect can be appreciated from the fact that of the annual £8 billion visitor spend in the South West, accommodation accounts for just 29%.

*The success of these rural enterprises is inextricably linked with the maintenance and conservation of a healthy and attractive rural environment. English Heritage confirms that **40% of employment in tourism depends directly on a high quality environment, rising to 60-70% in rural areas.** The unique beauty of the UK's countryside is a fundamental element of the industry's marketing strategies. The regional tourist boards capitalise on the countryside for their national and international campaigns. Likewise, thousands of small businesses market the rural product via their websites and brochures. Research confirms that **the quality of the natural landscape is cited by up to 80% of domestic visitors as the key factor in determining their choice of destination.** (The North Devon Biosphere Reserve promotional material quotes 78% of staying visitors as citing conserved landscape as their reason for visiting: DTOG). This is true whether the visitor is a spectator or active participant in the landscape. As previous landscape preference studies have shown, individuality of perception is still capable of reaching synonymous conclusions; people choose to visit an area because of their enjoyment of the quality of countryside and landscape.*

*Evidence is rapidly accumulating to confirm that **visitors to our landscapes and countryside do not want to see industrial wind turbines.** Tourism businesses and organisations are becoming concerned about the impact on their bottom lines if they were to lose their irreplaceable rural appeal.'*

7.2.3 Research specific to North Devon is included in the Small Business Council Report on pages 13 and 14:

*'A small study of face-to-face interviews with twenty-eight tourism businesses in North Devon took place in 2004. **With one exception, all the businesses were concerned about visitor reaction to wind turbines.** As one owner pointed out, "We understand what our customers enjoy as we talk to them every day they are here."*

*A research study in 2004 sought the views of a random UK sample of 1,500 holidaymakers, who have either actually taken a holiday in North Devon or shown an interest (by ordering a brochure). Of the 446 replies, 93% had visited North Devon before and 94% were planning to take another holiday again in the near future. When asked what features attracted them to North Devon, 95% chose beautiful countryside. 'A good place to relax' was nominated by 85% while 'beaches' scored 75%. **The importance of landscape and countryside on holiday was the most important or one of the most important factors for choosing North Devon according to 72% of the visitors.***

Measures were taken to evaluate visitor opinion of wind turbines before and after informing the respondents that turbines in excess of 300 ft were being planned for North Devon. At the beginning of the survey 34% were generally favourable and 66% unfavourable towards turbines. After the size and location of the turbine proposals was revealed, the number of 'unfavourable' visitors rose to 84%.

*However, while 77% of visitors disagreed with siting wind turbines in the countryside, nearly 72% said offshore would be acceptable to tourists and 61% suggested at the sides of main roads, industrial sites and motorway service stations. There was also considerable support for other renewables, particularly tidal and wave. **If onshore wind was necessary then 49% would elect for one large wind farm rather than numerous smaller clusters (21%) but 30% still insisted they would prefer not to see them at all.***

*When asked if wind farms would affect their choice of holiday destination, just less than 50% claimed that they would still choose North Devon. A further 39% said they would choose North Devon but subject to the size and location of the wind farms. **Eleven percent would stay away from North Devon altogether.** This is the lower boundary to the estimate of number of visitors lost. Visitors claimed that if they found wind turbines on their arrival and had not been previously informed, 15% would complain to their tour or holiday operator and around **28% stated they would not go back to that area again.**'*

7.2.4 In assessing the economic impact of reduced tourist numbers, the SBC report concludes:

'Applying this at regional level, if visitor numbers were reduced by just 5% ... The South West region would lose £400m a year and around 15,000 jobs. It should be emphasised that these estimates take no account of the high level of repeat business tourism attracts. More than 93% of visitors to North Devon have visited before ... It is therefore conceivable, indeed likely, that the actual economic impact of wind turbines would be much higher and the replacement of lost repeat visitors a considerable challenge.'

7.2.5 The final recommendation in the report is:

'6. The effects on the rural economy of onshore wind development should be a material consideration in the determination of the applications for development and should constitute part of the cost benefit analysis'

7.2.6 In a letter to one of the many tourist businesses in the area, available for viewing on the Chilla Against Turbines website (www.chilla-against-turbines.co.uk), Malcolm Bell of South West Tourism states:

'South West Tourism is fully committed to developing a sustainable tourism industry, which minimizes the use of energy, the production of waste, the impact of tourists on the environment and the maximizing of benefits to the host community and local economy. South West Tourism is fully supportive of the development of renewable energy and supports the careful planning of such facilities.

However, we also recognise that the region's environment is a key motivation for visits to the SW and that we need to ensure that this asset is maintained. Tourism spend not only impacts tourism businesses but the wider economy. For every one pound spent by a tourist, 30p finds its way to the food and drink sector, 27p to the retail sector, 11p to the attraction sector, 10p is spent on travel and only 22p is spent on accommodation.

Research around the UK on the expected impacts of wind farms on tourism is inconclusive with results ranging from positive to neutral to negative responses. A recent in-depth piece of research looking at 'The Economic Impacts of Wind Farms on Scottish Tourism' (March 2008) provides some particularly relevant and useful findings.

When questioning tourists in areas where they were likely to have seen a wind farm, it reinforced previous experience that for most tourists (75%) the perceived impact on landscape is positive or neutral with respondents that had seen a wind farm more positive than those that had not.

*However, in another part of the research, concerns did emerge. **18% said they would not visit an area if a wind farm was constructed while most individuals (63%) prefer a landscape from the hotel/B&B/cottage bedroom without a wind farm which brought out a difference in opinion between a transitory view (e.g. moving on a road) and a static view (e.g. from a bedroom). It is therefore not surprising that the research also concluded that there would be a drop in revenue.** It also concludes that it is the initial intrusion into the landscape rather than the scale that is significant and that having fewer larger developments would have less of a negative impact, in general, on tourism.*

In its recommendation the study concludes that "the impacts in local areas are important enough to warrant specific consideration by planning authorities. These should include the following:

*The number of tourists travelling past on route to elsewhere
The views from accommodation in the area
The relative scale of tourism impact i.e. local and national
The potential positives associated with the development
The views of tourist bodies"*

It argues strongly in favour of developers producing a Tourist Impact Statement as part of the Environmental Impact Analysis.

*Given that there are potential risks to tourism, we would urge that a precautionary and informed approach is taken. We feel that **approval should not be given before a professional and fully independent tourism impact study has been undertaken and the results carefully studied.***

Let us ensure that such decisions are made on hard facts not emotions. South West Tourism would be more than happy to advise and support such an impact study and would support any decision made based on a strong professional evidence base.'

7.2.7 Bolsterstone's 'tourism and socio-economic assessment' (ES, Chapter 9) falls far short of that envisaged in the penultimate paragraph above.

7.2.8 DTOG notes that in paragraphs 9.2.2 and 9.2.3 of the applicant's ES it is clear that SW Tourism was one of 8 websites examined for information. There is no indication that SW Tourism was consulted, however. Only 1 consultation was sought: that was Devon County Council. Had SW Tourism been consulted, it is likely the developer would have received the letter from Mr. Bell detailed in paragraph 7.2.6 above.

7.2.9 Mr. Bell's balanced assessment is to be welcomed in the arena of claim and counter-claim surrounding this subject. His pinpointing of the issue of tourists being happy to drive past a wind farm as long as they do not have to see them in their destination is **very significant** for this area, however. The explanation for this is given in the next section: The Ruby Country Initiative.

7.2.10 Recommendation: CONDITION
Torrige District Council must ensure that Bolsterstone provides a professional and fully independent tourism impact study, as recommended by South West Tourism, before this application can be determined.

7.3 The Ruby Country Initiative

7.3.1 The Torrige District Council website (www.torrige.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=8665) notes the following:

'Ruby Country is a partnership initiative to develop a rural regeneration project for 45 parishes surrounding Holsworthy and Hatherleigh, an area severely affected by Foot and Mouth disease in 2001.

Ruby Country takes its name from the county's ruby red cattle, which have a long proud history. It is used as a symbol to represent how important farming and economic activity is in maintaining the beautiful landscape.' (See photograph of Ruby Reds grazing Whiteleigh Meadow on the final page of Appendix A)

7.3.2 The Ruby Country Initiative is supported by Devon County Council, Devon Renaissance, Devon Wildlife Trust, The Forestry Commission, Hatherleigh Area Project, Holsworthy Market

and Coastal Town Initiative, North Devon Biosphere, Torrridge District Council and West Devon Borough Council. Figure 25 below shows that Dunslund Cross is right in the heart of Ruby Country.

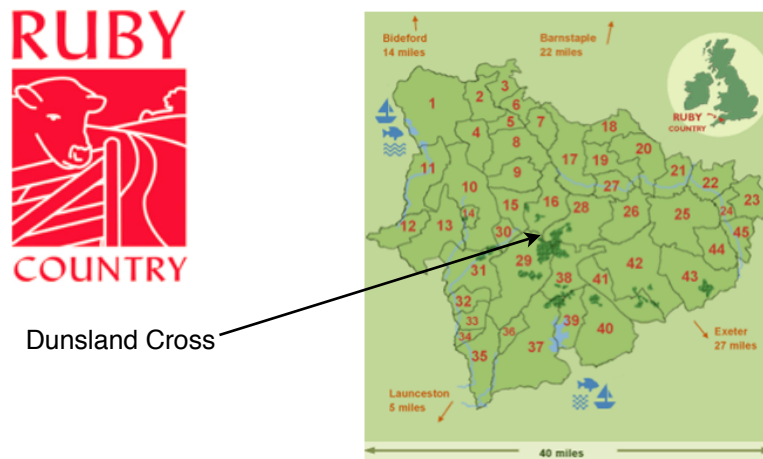


Figure 25

7.3.3 The Ruby Country website (www.therubycountry.co.uk) makes the following points:

The Ruby Country Initiative was started after the Foot and Mouth outbreak in 2001 to help build a stronger and more robust local economy and community.

Ruby Country is very much "undiscovered Devon". A haven of tranquility, with some of the blackest night skies in the UK, a visit to Ruby Country is a visit to deepest, darkest Devon, where you can experience the peace and quiet of being truly off the beaten track.

Building on the traditional strengths of agriculture and forestry, developing sustainable tourism and highlighting the fantastic wildlife - including the rare culm grassland - in the area, the aim of the project is to put Ruby Country on the map!

The need for the turbines to be lit (see Section 3.4: The Visual Impact: Lighting of Turbines) will mean the end of 'the blackest night skies' at Dunslund Cross.

7.3.4 In the Frey and Hadden report (see Section 5: Noise and Health Concerns, paragraph 5.1.15) paragraph 22 on page 90 includes the comment:

'Countryside Tourism, by its very title, is supported by people seeking solitude, walking and a contrast to urban and suburban living. Tourism customers will not find solitude and unspoilt rural landscape where wind farms have industrialised the area.'

7.3.5 Any development which deters tourists from staying in the Ruby Country area will negate six years of effort and funding by the initiative to restore the number of visitors booking holiday accommodation and holiday activities in the region. Around 2,082 businesses trade in Ruby Country (Source: Ruby Country Website). In April 2008 the Ruby Business Network was inaugurated. Just 6 months later 239 of these businesses are listed in 16 categories in the Ruby Country directory and the number is growing steadily as more businesses see the strength in working together and sharing ideas. Amongst these signed-up businesses are 3 hotels (including 1 resort hotel), 8 B&B's, 3 pubs, 4 campsites and 13 self-catering accommodation businesses. In the listings are two businesses which are likely to be particularly

affected by a wind farm at Dunsland Cross. The Bickford Arms, which has 5 rooms available for tourists, will be only 500 metres from a turbine. The Edwardian Guest House (Tempani) will be 560 metres from the same one.

7.3.6 Holsworthy County Councillor Mr. Des Shadrick has made a particular effort to attract cyclists to the area by getting National Cycle Route 3 re-routed through the safest and most tranquil part of Ruby Country. This takes it within 250 metres of the proposed turbine positions at Dunsland Cross (see Section 6: Safety, paragraph 6.5.5). The comment from the article in the Holsworthy Post on 26th June, 2008 entitled '*Holsworthy councillor delighted with financial boost for cycleways*', is repeated here:

*'It will put real capacity in our Ruby Country Initiative, which highlights the natural capital of the countryside, and be part of our arching strategy to make Devon the greatest county. We can showcase holidays that have a low carbon footprint where we provide **a quality facility for people to walk and cycle and horse ride off road in a safe and secure environment.**'*

In addition, Cllr. Shadrick is reported as saying:

'We must not let this opportunity slip, for the cycleway can be an economical lifeline for shops, pubs and all businesses in our area.'

7.3.7 The newsletter of West Devon District Council on 10th June, 2008 had the following comment:

'Cycling along Ruby Way

THE first major section of the Ruby Way, part of the emerging National Cycle Network in Devon, has been opened at Halwill Junction. The Ruby Way, the backbone of Ruby Country, will be a cycle/walkway from Hatherleigh via Holsworthy to Bude.

It was funded by Devon County Council, the South West Regional Development Agency and the Landfill Tax Credits scheme. The cost of the scheme was £156,000.'

7.3.8 With regard to horse riders, efforts are underway to re-route and improve the bridleway which crosses Whiteleigh Meadow. These efforts will be to no avail if note is taken of a recent survey by The British Horse Society which received 116 responses to a consultation document sent out to 400 Bridleway Officers, Development Officers and Affiliated Bridleway Groups. The consultation related to riding horses near wind turbines. The following two slides are from a Power Point presentation on the consultation:

Problems?

The Main Problems Reported Were:

- Turbines casting shadows
 - Noise from turbines
 - Flying Ice in winter
 - Movement of blades
- All of the above upsetting the horse and often unseating the rider or causing them to fall

Respondents were also asked if the presence of turbines would deter them from taking their horse to a given place e.g an equestrian holiday.

- Of the 99 people who answered the question, 66 would not take their horse on holiday where there were turbines present (65%)
- The main reasons were:
 - Their horse had never seen a turbine and they would be unsure of its reaction
 - Unnecessary risk
 - Scenery and views spoilt

7.3.9 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) produced a guide in May 2006 (reprinted July 2006) entitled 'Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism'. (<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/151753.pdf>) As the name suggests, it is intended for Local Planning Authorities. In section 2.4 on page 8 of the guide is the statement:

'Tourism can bring many broader benefits that will contribute to the economic and social well being of local communities as well as to individuals. It can:

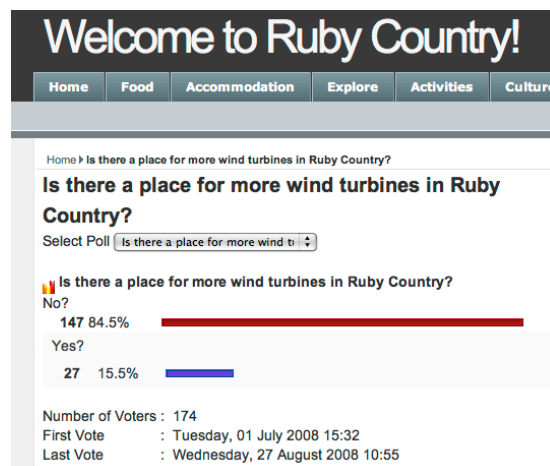
- *provide a catalyst for growth in the area, raising its profile and stabilising out-migration.'*

In section 2.6 on page 9 is the following statement:

'Tourism depends heavily on the natural and built environment and can also be the key to maintaining and enhancing the environment:

- *The economic benefits of tourism in particular can help sustain and improve both the natural and built physical environment.*
- *In rural areas the health of the environment and of the community depends on the viability of the local economy. So areas which attract visitors for their scenic beauty and which enjoy income from tourism will be better able to afford to sustain the local environment.'*

7.3.10 A poll was held between 1st July and 27th August, 2008 on the Ruby Country website asking for reactions to the wind farm proposals for the area. The result shows that **84.5% of the respondents do not want wind farms in Ruby Country.** (See also Section 12: Public Consultation).



7.3.11 Lest there still be any doubt that wind farm development in Ruby Country will have anything other than a negative impact on the numbers of tourists choosing to holiday here, the last word in this section is given to Mr. Zyg Gregorek, the proprietor of Anglers' Paradise. (<http://www.anglers-paradise.co.uk/>). Anglers' Paradise is a quality holiday business situated on the Chilla Road near Halwill Junction. It has won six tourism, food and accommodation awards since 1990. It now employs 45 people.

7.3.12 This business now finds itself threatened by two wind farm proposals: the Dunsland Cross Wind farm proposal 3 miles to the north west and the Chilla Moor Wind Farm proposal 1 mile to the east. Softly-spoken at the second public meeting for the Chilla Against Turbines opposition group on 9th September, 2008, Mr. Gregorek spoke of his fears for his business. He said that he has a great deal of new and repeat business resulting from anglers spreading the word of their holiday enjoyment after staying at Anglers' Paradise. If having wind turbines on either side of his business makes his clientele seek alternative destinations (or if ground vibrations from the Chilla turbines adversely affects his fishing ponds) then his business faces collapse. He made a simple statement which made the situation so real in human terms:

'A 20% drop in tourist numbers means a 40% drop in staff.'

7.3.13 This ratio, applied across all tourist-related businesses, would devastate the Ruby Country and kill the initiative which so many people are trying so hard to make a success.

7.3.14 Recommendation: REFUSAL

The Ruby Country Initiative will be adversely affected if this wind farm application is approved. Local jobs in the tourism industry will be lost. For this reason the application should be rejected.

7.4 The Failure of Wind Farms as Tourist Attractions

7.4.1 The best Bolsterstone can do to argue that this wind farm might be an attraction in the area is to suggest that school parties and other interested groups will be encouraged to take escorted tours of the site once it is operational (paragraph 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 above).

7.4.2 Section 6: Safety Considerations, of this report shows that this is unlikely to happen if a proper risk assessment has been done. (Even if Bolsterstone hasn't done one, school teachers must and these would preclude any visit placing pupils in danger zones of turbines.)

7.4.3 The subject of wind farms as tourist attractions is covered comprehensively in Candida Whitmill's report for the Small Business Council (see paragraph 7.2.1 above). In it she says:

'It has been argued by those lobbying in favour of wind power that tourists would view wind farms as attractions, rather than deterrents. A statement on the Friends of the Earth website reads, "There is no evidence to suggest that wind farms deter tourists, indeed many wind farms are themselves tourist attractions." However, this contention, which is widespread, is not borne out either by research or in practice. The following table summarises the results of the surveys already referred to:

RESULTS OF VISITOR SURVEYS:	% of visitors who DISAGREED that wind turbines were an added attraction
VISITOR DESTINATIONS:	
Scotland	74%
Wales	67%
North Devon	53%
Cumbria	28%

Furthermore, empirical experience from sites with constructed wind farms is not encouraging. North Cornwall hosted the first UK wind farm, built at Delabole in 1991. Ten years later a new £5.5m visitor centre was developed on the site with funding from Europe and the South West Regional Development Agency. The Gaia Energy Centre thus opened with much publicity in August 2001. It was expected to attract 100,000 visitors in its first year, rising to 150,000 in its second. Less than 15,000 visitors actually toured the site and financial difficulties led to the centre going into administrative receivership in March 2003.

The new owners, Neoventator of Surrey also failed to turn around this 'tourist attraction'. The centre was closed in September 2004 after just three years of operation. Chief Executive, Ian McIvor, said, "Sadly, just like many eco-attractions, they're not sustainable, there's just not enough interest. When we are talking about an exhibition on renewable energy it is not high on holidaymakers' list of fun things to do while they are on holiday." Having successfully fought a planning appeal, Neoventator is selling the site as an environmentally friendly suite of offices for an estimated £2m.

In 1999 at Swaffham in Norfolk, Ecotricity built what was then one of the tallest turbines in the world. A key feature for the 1.5 MW turbine was a 65m high viewing platform designed by Sir Norman Foster. The adjacent Ecotech Visitor Centre was a £3m Government funded project run by the Ecotech Charitable Trust. Due to financial difficulties the centre was closed to visitors in October 2002. The Trust Chairman revealed that the cash crisis arose because they had forecast substantial income from tourism, but in the event satisfactory visitor numbers had not materialised. A new company Ecotech Centre Limited was established with loans from the local district council and Norfolk County Council. The land and buildings are owned by Breckland District Council and were leased to the Trust for a term of 99 years at a fixed peppercorn rent. In May 1999 the Trust's interest in the property was valued at £1,200,000. When the Trust ceased activities in November 2002 it reduced the value of the leasehold interest to zero. This allowed the new company to take over the 'fixed assets' of the company for £48,000. The Independent Auditors Report stated that in both the case of the Ecotech Charitable Trust and its subsidiary, Ecotech Enterprises Limited, "financial records were not accurately maintained" and of the Trust; "employees responsible are now not available to provide explanations." Ecotech Centre Limited continues its commercial activities, and the turbine is still open to visitors. In the last financial year, tourism brought in just £11,543.

While there are financial questions that could be asked of these publicly funded projects, it does suggest that **the failure of both the centres was due to the fact that the visitors do not accept wind farms as tourist attractions.'**

7.4.4 Devon County Council Policy TO3: Tourism Development in Rural Areas, states:

'Outside the settlements referred to in Policies TO1 and TO2, the following types of tourist development will be acceptable:

5. visitor attractions / activities related to, and sympathetic with, Devon's natural or historic heritage; ...'

It has been demonstrated in this section that the Dunsland Cross Wind farm will not be a tourist attraction so policy TO3 is not satisfied by this proposal.

7.4.5 Recommendation: REFUSAL

The Dunsland Cross Wind Farm application should be refused because the wind farm is likely to have a negative economic effect on tourism in Ruby Country. DCC policy TO3 is not satisfied because the wind farm itself will not be a tourist attraction.

Summary of this section:

Bolsterstone has not had a full, professional and independent socio-economic assessment done to show the likely impact on tourism of this proposal.

The wind farm is likely to deter tourists from staying in Ruby Country.

The Ruby Country Initiative will be adversely affected if this application is approved.

The wind farm will not be a tourist attraction and is, therefore, not satisfying the requirements of policy TO3.