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A BULLETIN OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

# Conservation

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## Adapting to a Changing Climate



**Climate change is happening. But what will it do to our historic environment? And how can our knowledge of the past help us adapt to the future?**

Climate change is nothing new. Erected at a time when Ceorwall's climate was striving to cool down, the Bronze Age Men Gura longstone now stands in the shadow of the St Briscoe Downes Winkham, the latter a monument to a new phase of rising temperatures. © English Heritage Photo Library

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to be mapped and overlaid on the maps derived from the Historic Environment Record and characterisation work. The potential cumulative impact of further proposals for the wider area also needs to be considered. There should not, however, be a presumption that, because wind turbines are visible from an historic asset or intrude on views of it, there should be an objection to the proposal.

In the case of Hadrian's Wall the key issue is to assess the impact of the proposals on OUV. This is focused on the wall as part of the second-largest imperial frontier in world history, and one where the military and geopolitical strategy that created it, and its development over more than 300 years, can still be read from the physical evidence in the landscape. On the west coast of Cumbria the outlook northwards along the coast, and across the Solway to Scotland from the Roman fort at Maryport, provides a readily understandable view of the frontier landscape. Wind-farm proposals inland from these sightlines are less likely to impinge to a significant extent on the ability to appreciate the frontier, even though some turbines will be easily visible. Conversely wind farms that interrupt these sight lines, or strongly distract views between the Roman defences, may have a detrimental impact on the OUV of the World Heritage Site, and should be resisted.

It is approaches such as this that will be needed to assess the impact of wind farms on the

historic environment in individual cases, moving away from the 'because it's there' argument to a more developed measurement of impact on significance. It will then be for local planning authorities, and in some cases the Secretary of State, to measure the renewable energy benefits against historic environment factors and reach an informed decision.

REFERENCE

English Heritage 2005. *Wind Energy and the Historic Environment*. London: English Heritage.

**Mitigating the National Trust**

Rob Jarman

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The National Trust has recognised the importance of climate change to its interests since the early 1990s, when it started to understand the very serious implications of accelerating sea-level rise for its extensive and important coastal ownership. The Trust's concern rapidly extended to cover the impacts of extreme climatic events such as floods and droughts, heat-waves and cold, and storms, on all its interests.

The Trust knows that it must reduce its own contributions of greenhouse gases while also adapting to unstoppable climate change. It is too profligate in its use of energy, especially of electricity and of oil for heating, and takes short-term economic decisions about investment in

Conservation is best achieved by appropriate re-use. Gibson Mill, West Yorkshire, is a self-sufficient 'power station' – using solar PV (left) and hot water panels, log stoves (right) and small hydro to provide all year round electricity and heat for the National Trust's visitor cafe, community rooms and education centre. ©NTFL

