

RENEWABLE ENERGY LANDSCAPE CONSIDERATIONS FOR PONSANOOTH PARISH NDP.

- 1.1 This report summaries the landscape considerations considered in preparing the renewable energy policies [CC2 Wind Energy and CC3 Solar Power] set out in the Ponsanooth Parish Neighbourhood Development. It references the:
- National Planning Policy Framework and Practice Guidance.
 - Climate Emergency Development Plan Document a Renewable Energy Landscape Sensitivity Assessment
 - The Ponsanooth NDP Local Landscape Character Assessment
 - The Ponsanooth NDP Historic Environment Report
 - Parish Council’s aspiration to support the introduction of renewables in the interests of the community and to address climate change, air pollution, and energy insecurity.
- 1.2 **National Planning Policy Framework.** NPPF 2024 Paragraphs 161 to 169 say that plans should provide a “positive strategy” for renewable and low-carbon energy and give “significant weight” to such schemes when determining applications.
- 1.3 **National Planning Policy Guidance** paragraph 007, advises that “Local planning authorities should not rule out otherwise acceptable renewable energy developments through inflexible rules on buffer zones or separation distances. Other than when dealing with set-back distances for safety, distance of itself does not necessarily determine whether the impact of a proposal is unacceptable”.
- 1.4 **The Renewable Energy Landscape Sensitivity Assessment** was carried out in preparing the Climate Emergency Development Plan Document. It gives recommendations as to the landscape impact of new wind energy turbines and solar PV installations in a set of 33 Renewable Landscape Units [RLU] across Cornwall.
- 1.5 Ponsanooth Parish is within 3 Renewable Landscape Units described in the assessment:
- RLU 06 Carnmenellis
 - RLU 07 Redruth, Camborne and Gwennap
 - RLU 09 Fal Ria, Truro and Falmouth

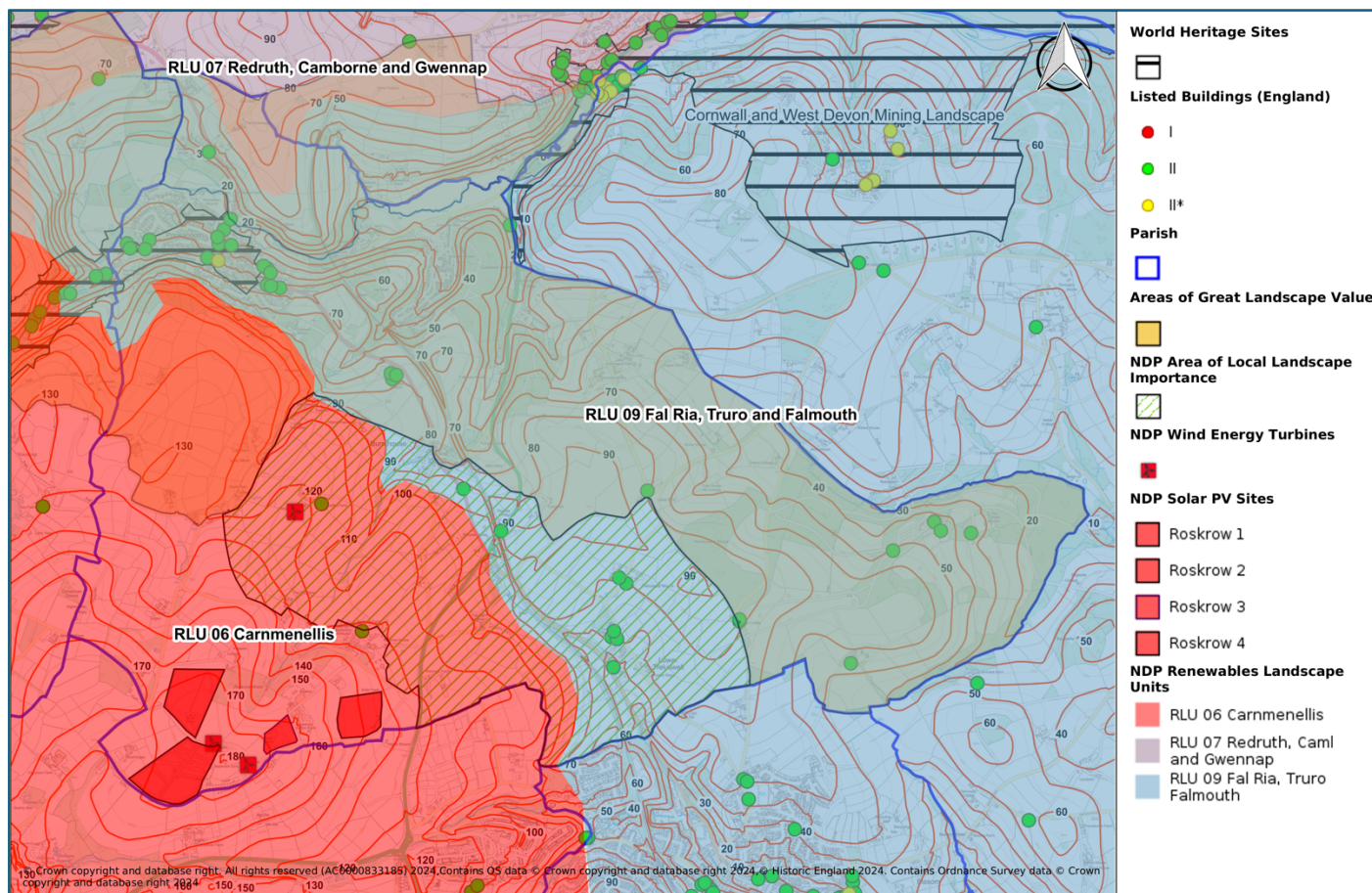


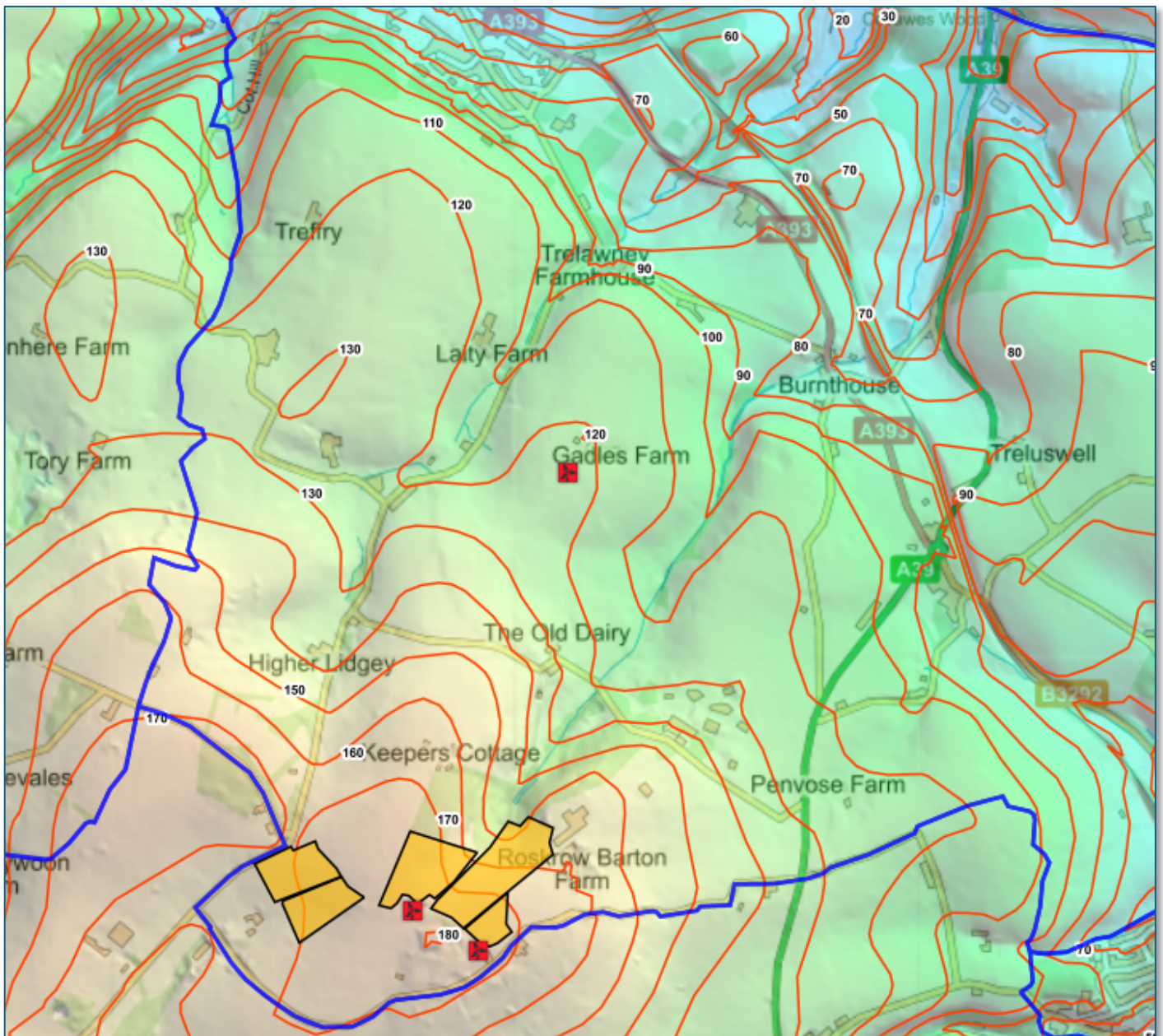
Figure 1: Renewable Landscape Units and Constraints, Ponsanooth Parish.

1.6 When considering installations, they are described in generalised ‘bands’ as follows:

FIGURE 2: RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT SIZE BANDS		
BAND	WIND*	SOLAR PV
BAND A	(18-25m)	(≤5ha)
BAND B	(26-60m)	(>5 to 10ha)
BAND C	(61-99m)	(>10 to 15ha)
BAND D	(100-150m)	(>15 to 30ha)
• To blade tip.		

RLU 06 Carnmenellis

- 1.7 The Parish is on the eastern edge of the RLU which comprises of an open, gently undulating and large-scale elevated plateau (reaching 250m at Carnmenellis), cut by many radiating stream valleys and dropping to lower ground at the edges of the area. In the Parish two small tributaries of the River Kennal split this area into three parts of gently rising ground, leading south-westward to a small plateau at Roskrow. Most of this land is Agricultural Grade 3 [uncategorised] so some of it could fall into 3a, the 'Best and Most Versatile' category that NPPF policy seeks to preserve.



- 1.8 The land within the eastern portion of this RLU in the Parish is within either the St Gluvias AGLV, or the candidate new AGLV [proposed in the interim as an Area of Local Landscape Importance in the Ponsanooth Parish NDP].
- 1.9 **This RLU corresponds to Landscape Character Area LCT1 - Rising Land in the Ponsanooth NDP Local Landscape Character Assessment.** In summary, to preserve and enhance the distinctive characteristics of LCT1, the LLCA recommends the following key measures:

- **Minimise Visual Impact:** Avoid developments on high ground to reduce adverse effects on landscape character and views.
- **Protect Medieval Field Patterns:** Prevent further erosion of these patterns and explore restoration in areas where they have already been lost.
- **Preserve Farmsteads and Hamlets:** Ensure extensions are sympathetic to their character.
- **Enhance Natural Features:** Protect and enhance Cornish hedges and trees with appropriate buffers and native planting to support biodiversity, climate resilience, and landscape integrity.
- **Restore Ancient Woodland:** Avoid development on former ancient woodland sites and explore opportunities for their restoration.
- **Maintain Footpaths:** Retain existing connections and explore opportunities for new ones.
- **Support Biodiversity in Farming:** Encourage agricultural practices that enhance biodiversity, protect soils, and contribute to carbon sequestration, aligning with Environmental Land Management (ELM) objectives.

1.10 **Wind Energy.** The RELS assessment notes that the wider plateau's large-scale landform, simple land cover, and human-influenced features suggest low sensitivity to wind energy development. However, prominent landform features and visible historic mining and quarrying remains on the skyline increase sensitivity.

1.11 In the Parish at Roskrow Barton on a relatively small plateau, there are two 75m Band C turbines each of 850 kW. [There is also a small 5kw turbine of 15m height at Gadles Farm].

1.12 Applicable to the area within the Parish **the RELS assessment concludes that none of the landscape is suitable for Band D turbines, although it may be appropriate to extend the development at Roskrow Barton with an additional 75m turbine**, as an odd number of turbines in this location would present a more balanced composition than an even number. Occasional single turbines up to Band B could be considered in the 'wider landscape' providing that the scattering of turbines is minimised to avoid significant cumulative impacts on landscape character.

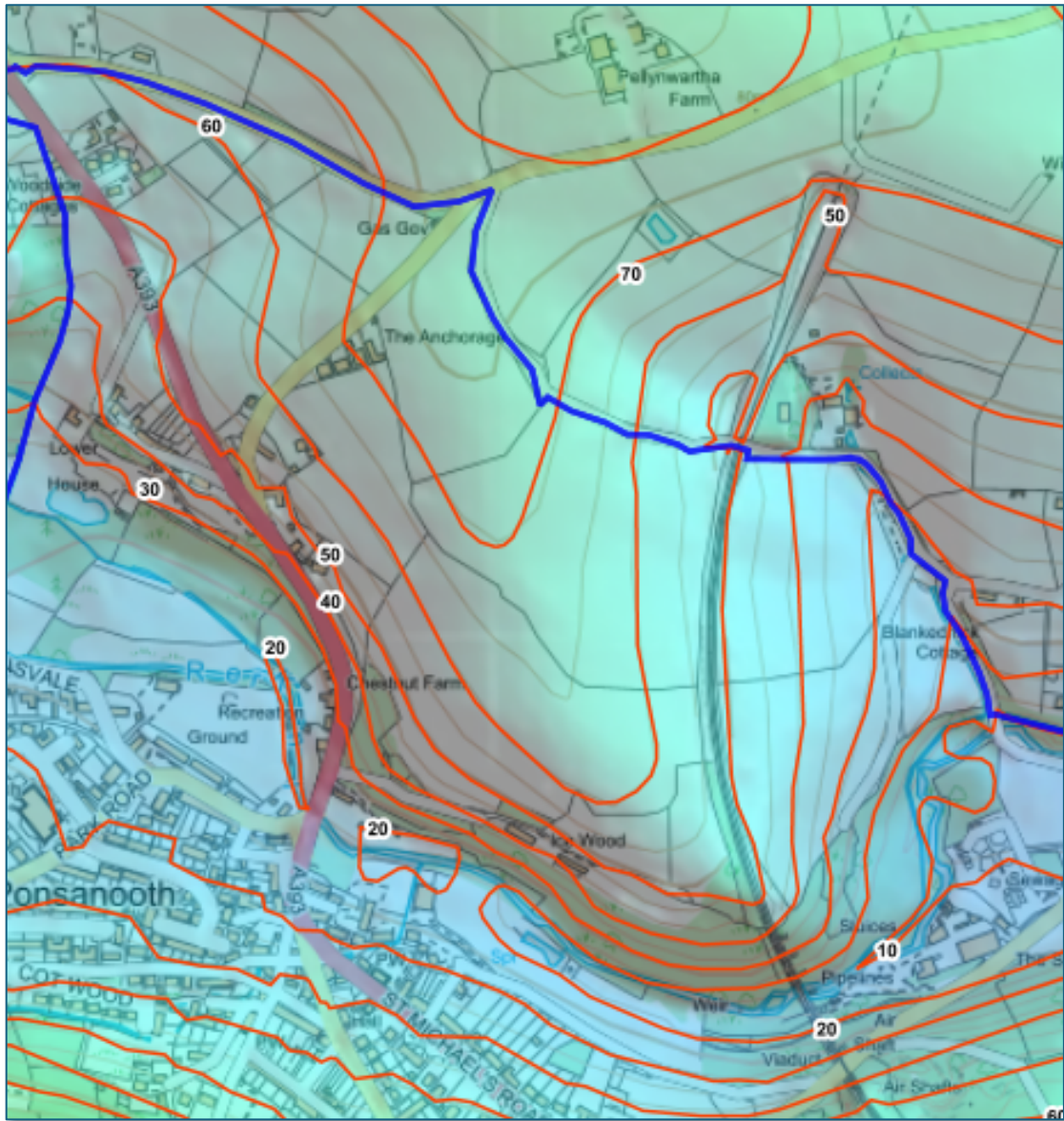
1.13 It provides the following additional guidance for the LRU that is of relevance to Ponsanooth Parish:

- Align with existing landscape characteristics, maintaining a simple and cohesive design.
- Use consistent turbine designs and heights within a given area.
- Avoid historically significant locations.
- Focus on larger-scale field areas, steering clear of small-scale historic landscapes.
- Ensure developments do not overshadow or obscure key historic landmarks.
- Avoid vulnerable historic landscape areas like 'Upland Rough Ground' and 'Ornamental' parkland.
- Consider visibility from local viewpoints and popular routes to maintain a balanced visual impact.
- Protect mining and quarrying heritage, as well as scenic qualities like engine houses, stone walls, and landmark prominence.

- 1.14 **Solar PV.** The RELS Assessment notes that whilst landform undulations and existing human influence suggest lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the wider plateau's openness, pastoral/semi-natural character, and irregular small to medium-scale field patterns increase sensitivity.
- 1.15 In the Parish there is a Band D, 8.9 MW Solar farm development at Roskrow Farm (21ha) which despite its size is well hidden from view, being enclosed by hedgerows and woodland.
- 1.16 Applicable to the area within the Parish **the RELS assessment concludes that none of the landscape is suitable for Band D solar PV development due to its sensitivities, but there are further opportunities to locate Band A, B and C developments within the more sheltered and folded land**, including enclosed valleys and along the A394 road corridor. Woodland and Cornish hedges should be utilised to provide screening.
- 1.17 It provides the following additional guidance for the LRU that is of relevance to Ponsanooth Parish:
- Prevent solar PV developments from becoming a dominant characteristic or altering the overall landscape character.
 - Ensure multiple developments are of similar scale and design, maintaining simplicity and reinforcing landscape-character ties.
 - Space developments apart to avoid a cumulative defining influence on the landscape experience.
 - Integrate developments into the farmland mosaic rather than allowing them to dominate.
 - Locate developments in less visible areas, such as gentle landscape folds, to reduce their impact.
 - Avoid remnant heathland and areas highly vulnerable to solar PV, such as 'Upland Rough Ground' and 'Ornamental' types.
 - Preserve strong medieval field patterns by limiting development in adjacent fields and keeping PV panels away from field edges.
 - Use existing landscape features like Cornish hedges and woodland for screening, ensuring compatibility with the landscape.
 - Protect views from local viewpoints and popular routes, ensuring balanced visibility of developments.
 - Avoid close-quarters, side-on visibility of solar PV developments.
 - Prevent adverse effects on historic mining and quarrying remains, Cornish hedges, irregular field patterns, and wooded valleys.

RLU 07 Redruth, Camborne and Gwennap

- 1.18 Only a very small area of landscape within the Parish falls into this RLU, in the form of a spur of the higher ground to the north-east of Ponsanooth village. It is also within the St Gulas AGLV.



- 1.19 **Wind Energy.** The RELS assessment notes generally that although the presence of human influence and relatively low scenic quality of the wider RLU could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development, the relatively small scale of the landscape, the high density of distinctive mining heritage features on the skyline, and the complexity of the landscape heighten levels of sensitivity. This is considered to be particularly true of that small part of the RLU that projects into the Parish, overlooking Ponsanooth village and the WHS.
- 1.20 The RELS assessment considerations relate mainly to the A30 corridor well to the north of the Parish. In relation to the area in the Parish, **the only recommendation from the Assessment that could be relevant is that** occasional single turbines up to Band B could be considered within the wider landscape of the RLU although the scattering of turbines should be minimised to avoid significant cumulative impacts on landscape character. It also says that larger turbines should be located on higher ground and in areas of larger scale fields, away from the complex small-scale historic landscapes.
- 1.21 **Solar PV.** The assessment notes that in this RLU the presence of some hidden lower lying areas, arable farmland, existing human influence and the relatively low scenic quality could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development. It says there are opportunities to locate Band A, B

and C developments within the more sheltered and folded land, including enclosed valleys, utilising woodland and Cornish hedges to provide screening. Minor wooded valleys across the landscape could also provide well-screened locations for Band A and B solar PV developments, although these should be sited within farmland, not semi-natural habitat to retain the valleys' naturalistic characteristics and habitat interest. None of the landscape is identified as suitable for Band D solar PV development due to its sensitivities.

1.22 This area falls within the **Landscape Character Area LCT2 – Undulating Land in the Ponsanooth NDP Local Landscape Character Assessment**. In summary, to preserve and enhance the distinctive characteristics of LCT1, the LLCA recommends the following key measures:

- **Preserve Scenic Quality:** All landscape management must prioritize the area's scenic quality and ensure development does not harm biodiversity, landscape character, or views.
- **Scale and Character:** Development and alterations should align with local policies, respecting the area's character and scale, particularly within designated areas (AGLV and ALLI).
- **Tree and Woodland Conservation:** Avoid removing mature trees, encourage broadleaf woodland management, and integrate trees into the landscape for climate and ecological benefits.
- **Maintain Historic Features:** Conserve historic elements like bridges, Cornish hedges, and gardens, ensuring repairs use local materials and reflect the area's character.
- **Protect Narrow Lanes:** Avoid widening or straightening characteristic lanes to preserve traditional features.
- **Combat Climate Change:** Utilize underused land for tree planting and support ecosystem services.
- **Promote Sustainable Practices:** Control invasive species, and encourage sustainable hedge and verge management to support wildlife and wildflowers.
- **Rewilding Opportunities:** Explore the ecological potential of scrubland or underutilized fields to benefit the natural environment.

- 1.23 The Parish is on the south-western edge of the RLU which comprises the valley of the River Kennal and its tributaries, this part mostly being designated for its landscape quality as an AGLV, and ALLI [and candidate AGLV], referred to in the RELS Assessment as one of the many radiating stream valleys dropping to lower ground at the edges of the area. Much of it is ALC Grade 2 and Grade 3 [unclassified] so a large area could be Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land.
- 1.24 **Wind Energy.** The RELS assessment notes that although the large-scale landform of low rounded hills and presence of human influence (particularly around Truro and Falmouth) could indicate lower levels of sensitivity to wind energy development, the tranquil character of many parts of the landscape, the presence of landmarks on the skyline and high scenic quality heighten levels of sensitivity. The landscape's intimate wooded creeks would be highly sensitivity to wind energy development, although the hills outside the AONB would be less sensitive. Most of the area is rated as having Medium-High and High sensitivity to new wind turbine developments so it is excluded from the area shown as being suitable for wind energy in the CEDPD.
- 1.25 **Solar.** The RELS assessment notes that although the presence of human influence and sense of enclosure on lower slopes and folds in the landscape could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the open upper slopes ..., the predominantly pastoral character, presence of steep slopes and high scenic quality heighten levels of sensitivity. The landscape's intimate wooded creeks...would be highly sensitivity to wind energy development. However, the

enclosed wooded valleys scattered throughout the RLU and larger modern fields would be less sensitive.

- 1.26 The RELS assessment says that there may be opportunities to locate a small number of well sited Band A or occasional Band B developments within the more sheltered and folded land, ensuring that development does not occur on the landscape's prominent and pastoral valley slopes, using screening provided by high hedges and woodland. Possibly minor wooded valleys could also provide well-screened locations for Band A solar PV developments, although these should be sited within farmland, not semi-natural habitat to retain the valleys' naturalistic characteristics and habitat interest. None of the landscape is identified as suitable for Band C or D solar PV developments due to its sensitivities.
- 1.27 This RLU corresponds mainly to **Landscape Character Area LCT2 – Undulating Land but also elements of LCT3 - Steep Sided Valley, LCT4 - Low Lying Land (fluvial), and LCT5 - Low Lying Land (estuarine) in the Ponsanooth NDP Local Landscape Character Assessment**. In summary, to preserve and enhance the distinctive characteristics of LCT1, the LLCA recommends the following key measures:
- **Protect Scenic Quality and Biodiversity:** Prevent activities that harm biodiversity, protected species, or the area's scenic quality. Preserve valued landscape character, views, and avoid out-of-scale or inappropriate development, especially in sensitive areas like the AGLV.
 - **Preserve and Enhance Natural Features:** Avoid removing mature trees, conserve woodlands, and encourage broadleaf woodland expansion. Recognize trees' role in climate resilience and ecosystem services, using underutilized land for tree planting.
 - **Sensitive Development:** Ensure all development respects the character, scale, and materials of existing settings. Avoid prominent skyline developments and minimize light and sound pollution.
 - **Historic and Cultural Preservation:** Protect and manage historic features, gardens, and settlements, using locally sourced materials for repairs and enhancements.
 - **Infrastructure and Access:** Avoid creating new access tracks; improve safe footpath connections while protecting traditional features like winding lanes, Cornish hedges, and historic structures.
 - **Sustainable Practices:** Promote awareness of biodiverse habitats in waste or wilderness areas, manage invasive species, and ensure land use enhances environmental and ecosystem benefits. Monitor runoff and effluent discharge to prevent flooding and water pollution.

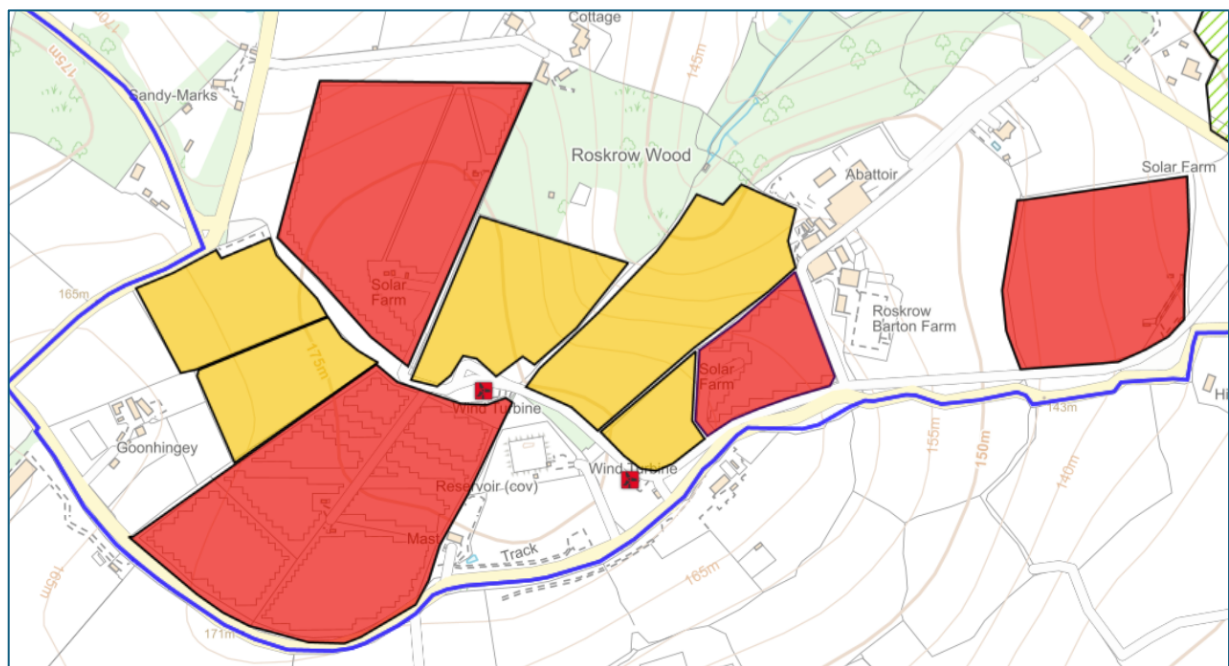
Conclusions on Wind and Solar Energy

RLU 06 Carnmenellis

- 1.28 **Wind.** As the eastern sections of the RLU within the Parish are in the AGLV and ALLI [and candidate AGLV], and the northern part is close to the WHS overlooking the village and its historic setting, it is concluded that any additional wind turbine development should be directed to the area in the south-west, around Roskrow Barton, which is in a less sensitive area and already hosts various forms of installation, plant and equipment. This would need to not exceed

75m in height, and result in an odd number of turbines, not exceeding 5, including the repowering of the existing two turbines which are now in the last few years of their expected design life. Location of turbines at this location also has the advantage of being away from noise sensitive areas such as settlements and in an area which is less tranquil close to the A394 corridor.

- 1.29 Elsewhere only small scale [sub Band A] farm-scale wind turbines for localized energy generation should be permitted. All would be subject to CEDPD Policy REN 1.
- 1.30 **Solar.** More widespread Solar PV might be possible in this RLU but only at a small scale [Band A or B] and in locations where the topography and landscape features allow for more effective integration into the farmed landscape of in the AGLV and ALLI, and where the land is not Best and Most Versatile agricultural classification.
- 1.31 At Roskrow Barton, outside these more sensitive areas, there are fields on mostly ALC grade 4 land between the extant elements of the existing solar farm, sufficient to accommodate a further 10.2 ha of PVs, which would bring the total site up to approximately 31 ha, at the top of the Band D category. Although there might be some concern that such an expansion could have a cumulative effect of making the site into the dominant characteristic of the overall landscape character in the area, there are good hedgerows and a woodland present which provide screening, the topography largely prevents long-distance views, and there is already existing plant [solar PV, reservoir and wind turbines] so it is unlikely that the site would be any more prominent in the landscape than it is currently.



RLU 07 Redruth, Camborne and Gwennap

- 1.32 **Wind.** It is concluded that, in view of its highly visible position to the immediate north and east of the village and WHS, within the AGLV, any turbine development here would harm the historic and landscape character associated with the settlement. None of the RLU in the Parish is suitable for wind energy turbines other than very small scale [sub Band A] single units providing energy support to a farm or domestic unit.

- 1.33 **Solar.** For the same considerations as above, it is concluded that **Solar PV**, other than very small-scale ground mounted and domestic roof-top PV, should not be located in this part of the RLU.

RLU 09 Fal Ria, Truro and Falmouth

- 1.34 **Wind.** It is concluded that, in view of the area of the RLU in the Parish being outside the 'Suitable areas for wind energy' mapping in the CEDPD, which is based on the RELS assessment, no wind turbine development should be allowed in this area other than small scale [sub Band A] farm-scale wind turbines for localized energy generation.
- 1.35 **Solar.** Taking into account the RELS assessment, it is concluded that only well sited Band A or occasional Band B developments should be permitted in the Parish area of the RLU. Small-scale ground mounted and domestic roof-top PV should also be permitted.

Policy Proposals

- 1.36 The following policy wording is proposed:

Policy CC X1 1.

1. **Proposals for the erection of new or replacement of existing wind turbines will be supported where:**
 - a) **They meet the requirements of Policy RE1 of the Climate Emergency DPD;**
 - b) **Follow the guidelines set out in the Cornish Renewable Energy Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2020 or any successor guidance.**
 - c) **Are set back sufficiently from occupied buildings and roads to ensure that there is no risk from structural failure [toppling], detached blades or ice-throw, and that turbine blades oversail the highway or a public right-of-way.**
2. **The replacement of existing wind turbines and additional wind turbines at Roskrow Barton [shown on Map 15 by green diagonal lines] will be supported providing the development consists of an odd number of turbines, not exceeding 5, and subject to criteria 1a) to 1c) above.**
3. **Elsewhere [shown on Map 15 by blue diagonal lines] only small scale [sub Band A] farm-scale and domestic wind turbines for localized energy generation will be supported, subject to criteria 1a) to 1c) above.**

Policy CC X2

1. **Proposals for additional solar PV development at Roskrow Barton [shown on Map 15 by green diagonal lines] bringing the existing site up to the maximum Band 'D' size [approx. 30ha] will be supported providing it**
 - a) **meets the requirements of Policy RE1 of the Climate Emergency DPD, and**
 - b) **follows the guidelines set out in the Cornish Renewable Energy Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2020.**
2. **In the area shown by blue diagonal lines on Map X2, Band 'A' and Band 'B' developments will be supported providing they meet criteria a) and b) above.**
3. **Elsewhere only very small-scale ground mounted and domestic roof-top PV will be supported.**

