

These conditions, alongside general statutory environmental provisions, are aimed at the prioritisation of preserving or strengthening the core qualities of the relevant landscape over realisation of the turbines. This option is regulated in a separate article in the PSR (Provincial Spatial Regulation [*Provinciale Ruimtelijke Verordening*]) (Wind Turbines in Rural Areas article).

4.2.2.1/4 stated locations in general

opinion of: 054, 059, 086, 189

Summary: Good idea that PSSV (Provincial Spatial Structural Vision [*Provinciale Ruimtelijke Structuurvisie*]) is making room to establish wind energy. The locations (A12, Amsterdam-Rhine Canal) seem very suitable (alongside existing major infrastructures). Expresses the hope that the province will also encourage the actual installation of wind turbines. (54) By choosing locations alongside infrastructure and in industrial areas, the province of Utrecht is making spatially intelligent combinations that bring cohesion between different policy areas, in line with the Utrecht Area Agenda. The spatial impact differs significantly for each location and the province does not make the reasoning which formed the basis for the sustainable energy map sufficiently clear. (59) Fewer difficulties with urban wind locations or near large-scale industrial areas outside the Green Heart, such as Lage Weide near Utrecht or the Lopik industrial park. However, regional or local support is a condition. The province will never be able to impose locations on municipalities. (86) Too many locations have been designated for wind energy. In particular, objections to locations that affect the open landscape of the western peatland area. Therefore opposed to the location along the Amsterdam-Rhine Canal near Baambrugge, the already previously dismissed locations along the A2 near Breukelen and along the A12 near Woerden and the location in the Lage Weide industrial area. These locations are all in, or are adjacent to, the open environment. (189)

SP (States Provincial [*Provinciale Staten*]) response: Firstly, we would like to say that we appreciate the support for the wind energy task. In consultation with stakeholders, we are going to encourage and support realisation where possible. At the same time, since the Draft was compiled, we have been dealing with an altered Government configuration, which requires us to change the search areas as stated in the draft PSSV. We will explain why below.

We are committed to contributing to sustainable energy provision. A more sustainable energy supply is not just a matter of different energy production. Efforts must also be made to limit demand, carefully coordinate supply and demand, and implement innovative practices in transport and storage. Energy production can occur in various ways, each with different considerations regarding sustainability and spatial impact. The PSSV focuses on the spatial opportunities for energy production with a significant spatial impact, seen on a regional scale, and where specific initiatives can be expected. Another factor for us is that a sustainable society is about more than sustainable energy production. The quality of the living environment also plays a role. The core qualities of our landscape are a part of this. After the publication of the Structural Vision 2005-2015, the core qualities of the landscapes were defined in greater detail in the Utrecht Landscapes Quality Guide. This Quality Guide forms part of the spatial policy in the PSSV. Moreover, we see the impact on the landscape in a broad context. In this sense, it is not only the visual impact that plays a role, for instance disruption or reinforcement of patterns, but also the usage, for instance an increase in heavy vehicles on previously quiet country roads or dikes.

We cannot and do not want to achieve the concrete realisation of policy goals on our own. This applies to the elaboration of the Utrecht Landscapes Quality Guide as well as to policy proposals

with a major spatial impact on these qualities, such as energy production. Realisation of regionally extensive spatial initiatives requires good coordination between and direction from the regional authorities. The chances of realisation increase considerably if regional authorities can agree on the implementation of the policy. This means that we are firmly committed to obtaining municipal administrative support, especially in the case of wind energy. This support is therefore also included in the draft of the PSSV as a condition for further realisation, in addition to our vision of the spatial acceptability of areas and the preconditions for further elaboration. Both the appreciation of the landscape in our considerations and the importance of administrative support in the implementation thereof are also apparent from our coalition agreement (April 2011).

We have included extensive search areas in the draft PSSV. Offering ample search areas provides flexibility for further discussions about the final placement variations. However, recent legislative changes and motions have changed our vision of offering a wide search area for further consultation. The Crisis and Recovery Act, in combination with the (second amendment of the) Electricity Act and recent promises in the Lower House indicate that provincial search areas in provincial structural visions are guiding the possibilities for placement of wind turbines. They are guiding in the sense that after being included in a structural vision, control is no longer in the hands of the province combined with the municipality, but of the applicant. The condition of municipal administrative support has thereby become contrary to the law. This means that theoretically a search area could be included in its entirety for wind turbines, limited only by the statutory provisions (such as noise, etc.), regardless of our vision for further elaboration within the search area. In light of the major spatial impact, we also consider it undesirable, from the perspective of proper spatial planning, that neither we nor the municipality have final control over the actual placement variations within the search areas.

Based on this, from our management philosophy and from the desire to carefully weigh up the various interests, we will narrow the search areas in comparison to the draft PSSV. We will include areas for which we know in advance that we can agree on possible placement variations, and for which there is consensus with the municipality. The PSSV will therefore focus on the search areas for which there is municipal support and which we consider acceptable with regard to spatial planning. Consequently, after the PSSV has been enacted, there will be administrative support for these areas to actively develop actual placement options together with municipalities and initiators. In addition, via the Spatial Action Programme, we will implement the PSSV via the 'sustainable energy integrated' project. A project which is broader than just wind energy.

In the Green Heart Frontrunner (December 2008), the Green Heart provinces agreed to safeguard this area from new wind energy initiatives. For our territory, 'new' is understood to mean initiatives after the former proposals in the Wind Plan 2004, included in our Structural Vision 2005-2015. By changing the locations in the Green Heart, for which there is no longer any support, to locations closer to the urban environment, for which there is in fact support and the possibility of realisation, the PSSV continues to comply with the principles of the Green Heart Frontrunner, even though we are proposing a new location in the Green Heart. In concrete terms, this means that we are including the following search areas in the PSSV:

- Houten, along the Amsterdam-Rhine Canal near Goyerbrug, in conformity with the municipal structural vision;
- Nieuwegein, Het Klooster, in conformity with municipal proposals;
- Utrecht, Lage Weide and Rijnenburg;

- Vianen, Polder Autena, in conformity with municipal proposals.

SP resolution: Modify PSSV and wind energy location object by confining the search locations to: Houten, along the Amsterdam-Rhine Canal near Goyerbrug; Nieuwegein, Het Klooster; Utrecht, Lage Weide and Rijnenburg. Include the rejected locations, which were already included in the Structural Vision 2005-2015, in the explanatory notes, both in text and on a map, as possible future wind energy locations, without already designating them now.

4.2.2.1/5 Abcoude wind energy location

opinion of: 092, 106, 142, 169, 233

Summary: Petitioners object to the search location for wind turbines along the Amsterdam-Rhine Canal to the east of Baambrugge for various reasons. They will detract from the cultural and historical value of the nearby Historical Manor House Zones of Gein and Angstel.

(92) Image-distorting impact; does not fit with the (small) scale of the culturally and historically highly valuable Gein area, a historic manor house zone, nor with the Defence Line of Amsterdam. (106) Devastating effect on the natural and landscape value of the Gein area, part of the National Ecological Network and also a recreational area. (142) Large impact on the landscape. (233) There is no support from the administration of the municipality of De Ronde Venen. (106, 169, 233)

SP response: The municipal administration of De Ronde Venen (169) has stated that it does not support realisation. In order to offer a sufficient, feasible chance of realisation and to maintain control over the actual placement, we do not consider the inclusion of this search area desirable from the perspective of proper spatial planning. To keep the area in mind as a potential future wind energy location, the location is nonetheless indicated on the map in the PSSV. In doing so, we do not need to make further comments on the other opinions submitted by the petitioners. See also the answers to the opinions 054, 059, 086, 189 under 4.2.2.1 stated locations in general.

SP resolution: Modify PSSV and wind energy location object by removing the location along the Amsterdam-Rhine Canal near Baambrugge and recording the location as a potential future wind energy location in the explanatory notes in the PSSV.

4.2.2.1/6 Breukelen wind energy location

opinion of: 077, 093, 093a, 166, 177, 284

Summary: Petitioners object to the search location for wind turbines along the A2 near Breukelen. Realisation of turbines was stopped at this location in 2009 (77). Support from the residents of Stichtse Vecht is lacking, and therefore the municipal administration is also against placement of any turbines (77, 284). The location is too close to the village Nieuwer Ter Aa and a very short distance from a number of historical farmsteads, as well as the Oukoper mill (93). It is an assault on the open landscape in the Green Heart and the nearby meadow bird area (77, 93). Disadvantages are: a disrupted horizon; unpleasant working and living area; shadow casting effect; assault on the health of local residents; loss in value of houses and farms (93). The climate benefit is symbolic and the turbines cannot be made profitable without subsidisation (77, 93a, 166, 177). Farmers want to generate sustainable energy with solar collectors on barn roofs. Provide subsidies for this instead of

for wind turbines. This has less of an impact and also solves the problem of asbestos roofs (93a, 166, 177).

SP response: The municipal administration of Stichtse Vecht (284) has stated that it does not support realisation. In order to offer a sufficient, foreseeable chance of realisation and to maintain control over the actual placement, we do not consider the inclusion of this search area desirable from the perspective of proper spatial planning. To keep the area in mind as a potential future wind energy location, the location is nonetheless indicated on the map in the PSSV. In doing so, we do not need to make further comments on the other opinions submitted by the petitioners. See also the answers to the opinions 054, 059, 086, 189 under 4.2.2.1 stated locations in general.

SP resolution: Modify PSSV and wind energy location object by removing the location along the A2 near Breukelen and recording the location as a potential future wind energy location in the explanatory notes in the PSSV.

4.2.2.1/7 Lage Weide wind energy location

opinion of: 059, 076, 114, 116, 284, 319

Summary: There is a well-known specific initiative for the Lage Weide wind energy location (116). Research this location in more detail and ensure that the turbines can be realised (76, 114). Research shows that a good wind farm can be achieved here within the standards, in terms of wind, available land, and landscape integration (59, 76). Turbines on Lage Weide combine infrastructure and industry and fulfil the policy intention of focusing on sustainable energy provision when restructuring industrial areas (NV Utrecht) (59).

Political and civic support for the realisation of turbines at this location is partially dependent on the preconditions set by the municipality in combination with spatial possibilities (116). There are also many proponents of the plans for wind turbines on Lage Weide (319). Petitioner 284 is against the Lage Weide search location, due to the lack of support for wind turbines in the municipality, which borders the municipality of Utrecht.

SP response: We appreciate the support for the realisation of wind energy turbines at the Lage Weide search locations. We will definitely uphold this search location. This location is also within the red contours. In this area, municipalities are free to build wind turbines at more locations than we are currently proposing. Before arriving at the search areas, we weighed up the areas in which we consider wind turbines acceptable. This deliberation is based on statutory environmental rules, such as noise standards, the location of vulnerable areas and the core qualities of the various Utrecht landscapes. We consider the Lage Weide location to be suitable for the placement of wind turbines. Further research and elaboration of the search area will be carried out by the municipality and market players. We are aware that realisation at this location is not an easy task. We consider administrative support to be vitally important in this regard.

SP resolution: no reason for modification.

4.2.2.1/8 Woerden wind energy location

opinion of: 086, 118, 180, 191, 199, 215, 232, 233

Summary: The petitioners are against the wind location to the west of Woerden. Petitioner 180 is also against wind turbines in the urban area of Woerden. Arguments: The Woerden-West location was rejected by the former Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (86, 191), it has already been democratically decided not to install wind turbines here (118) and there is no support for turbines within the municipality (191, 233). Furthermore, it is suggested that the Green Heart National Landscape / open (peatland) landscape is too fragile (86, 191, 199, 215, 232, 233), turbines are not suitable for the Venster Bodegraven-Woerden (191, 199, 232), wind turbines impair the intrinsic value of the nearby Linschoten estate (180) and there are residential areas that are too close, while there must be a distance of at least 2000 due to visual disturbance and noise nuisance (191). The request is to designate this area as a safeguarded area *par excellence* for wind turbines (180) and to place wind turbines at locations that are suitable for this landscape, such as adjacent to large-scale industrial areas (199) or bundled at national level (215).

SP response: The municipal administration of Woerden (232) has stated that it does not support realisation. In order to offer a sufficient, foreseeable chance of realisation and to maintain control over the actual placement, we do not consider the inclusion of this search area desirable from the perspective of proper spatial planning. To keep the area in mind as a potential future wind energy location, the location is nonetheless indicated on the map in the PSSV. In doing so, we do not need to make further comments on the other opinions submitted by the petitioners. See also the answers to the opinions 054, 059, 086, 189 under 4.2.2.1 stated locations in general.

SP resolution: Modify PSSV and wind energy location object by removing the location along the A12 southwest of Woerden and recording the location as a potential future wind energy location in the explanatory notes in the PSSV.