

County Clare Wind Energy Strategy

**Methodology
SEA**

**Appropriate Assessment
Issues Raised**

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Legislative and Policy Framework

Developments greater than 100mw or 50 turbines can go through Strategic Infrastructure Act

Domestic turbines up to 13m exempted development under SI 83- 2007;
Agricultural, industrial turbines upto 20m exempted development SI 235 – 2008

Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations 436 - 2004

A proposed variation of a development plan under section 13 of the Act shall be accompanied by or include an environmental report.

The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors

Appropriate Assessment – required under the Habitat Directive. Concerns impact on Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas

Key Objectives of Brief

To revise and update existing Wind Energy Strategy in light of change in national policy, technology and reflect 2006 Planning Guidelines for Wind Energy

To balance the need to provide for renewable energy with other broader planning and environmental considerations

To identify in particular strategic sites in the County of county/regional/national significance

To undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment of Strategy

Methodology



DoEHLG Guidelines informed methodology

Planning Review – to identify areas of interest to developers

Geographical Information System – mapping system for wind resources and constraints

Consultation – review of public submissions and fact finding meetings with Eirgrid, Irish Wind Energy Association, Shannon Development

Fieldwork – assessing emerging areas

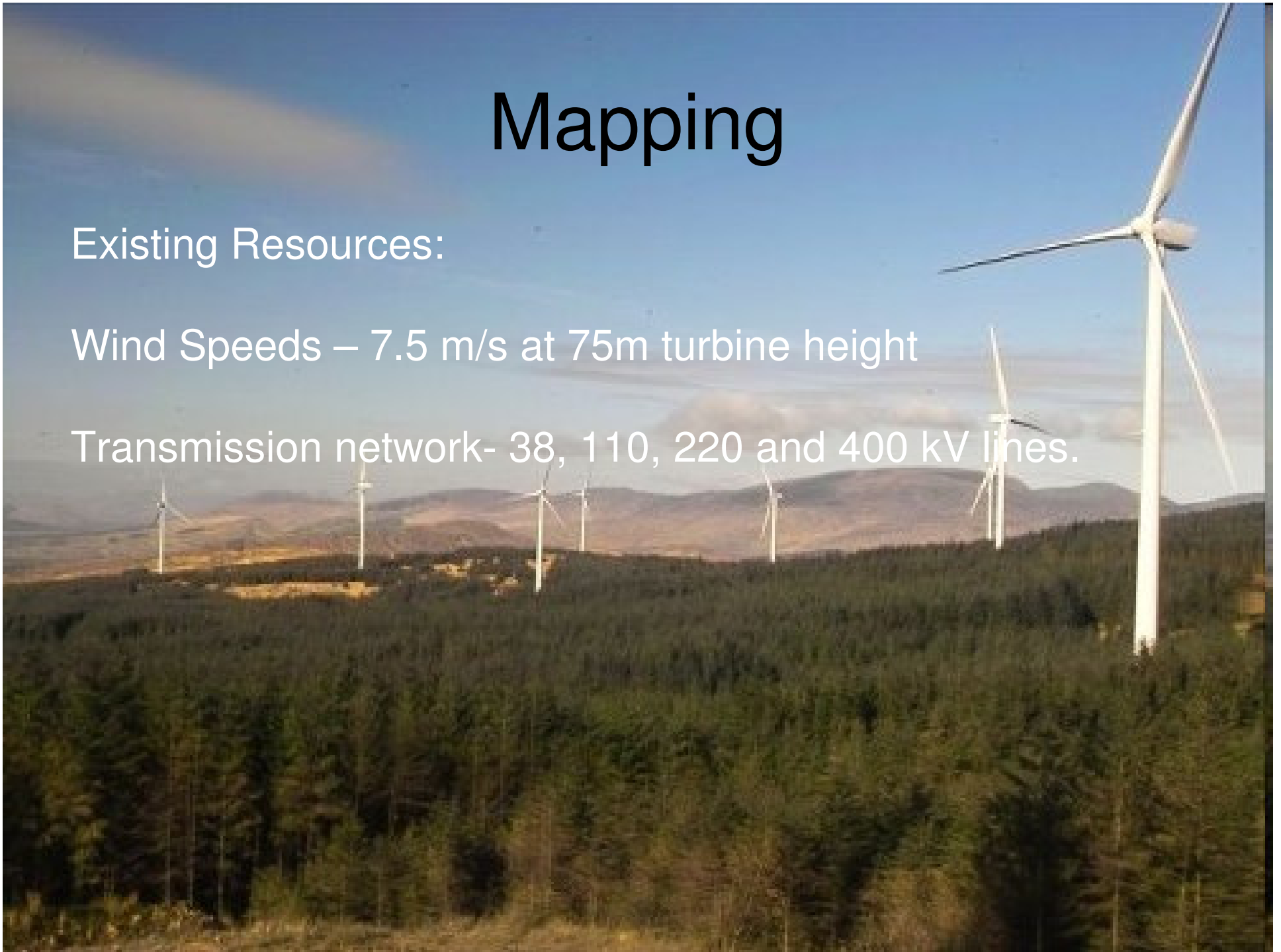
Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment have informed the above. Additional consultation with NPWS, EPA, GSI, DoEHLG and DCMNR

Mapping

Existing Resources:

Wind Speeds – 7.5 m/s at 75m turbine height

Transmission network- 38, 110, 220 and 400 kV lines.



Mapping



SACs, SPAs, NHAs and pNHAs – natural heritage designations – particularly significant for upland peat areas, watercourses and lakes, bird species

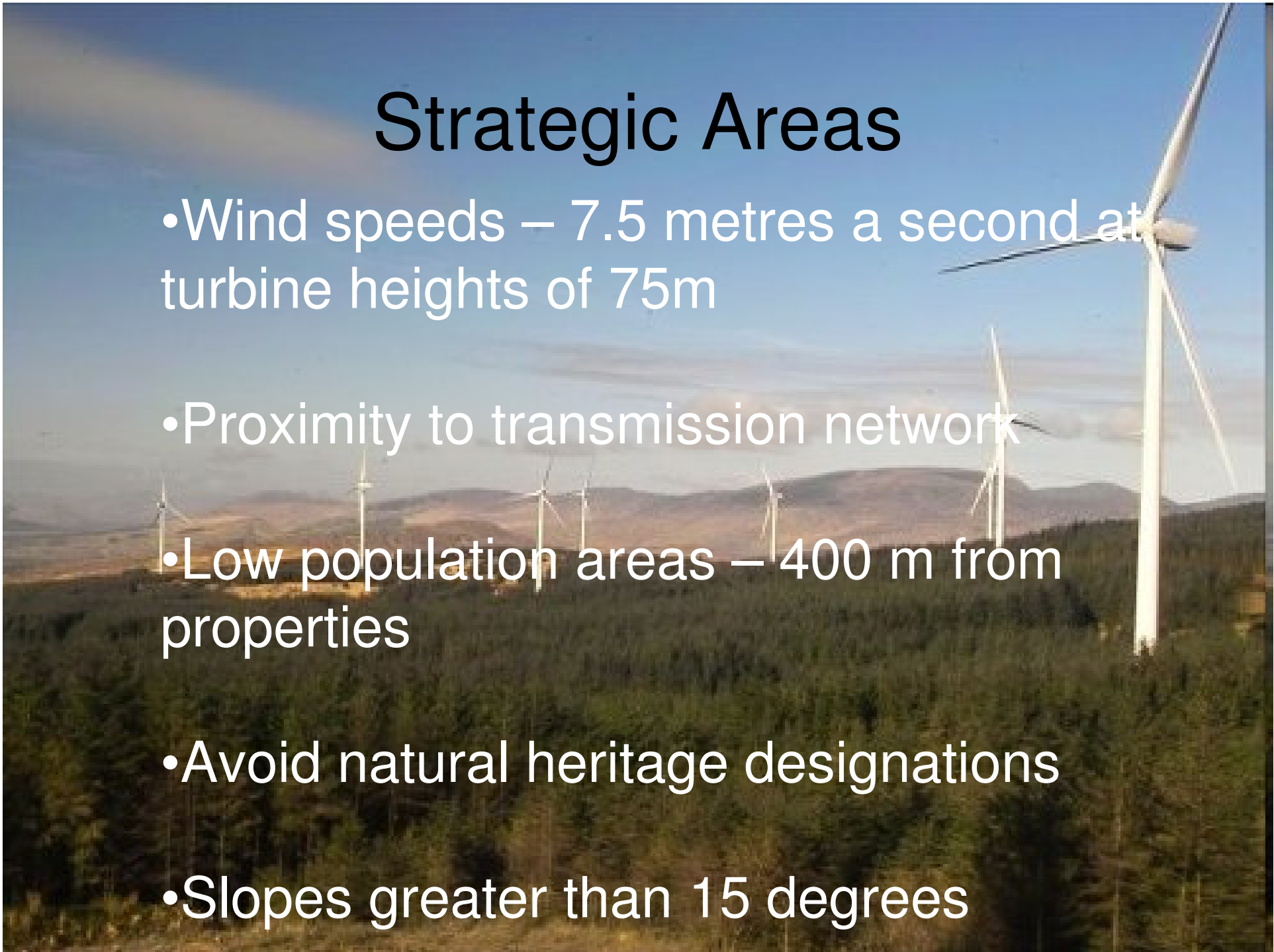
Scenic Routes and Visually Vulnerable designations in CDR

Geodirectory – database of properties receiving post. Used this information to identify areas 400m from property

Landslide susceptibility – slopes greater than 15 degrees, crossed with information on soil types – better addressed at site level

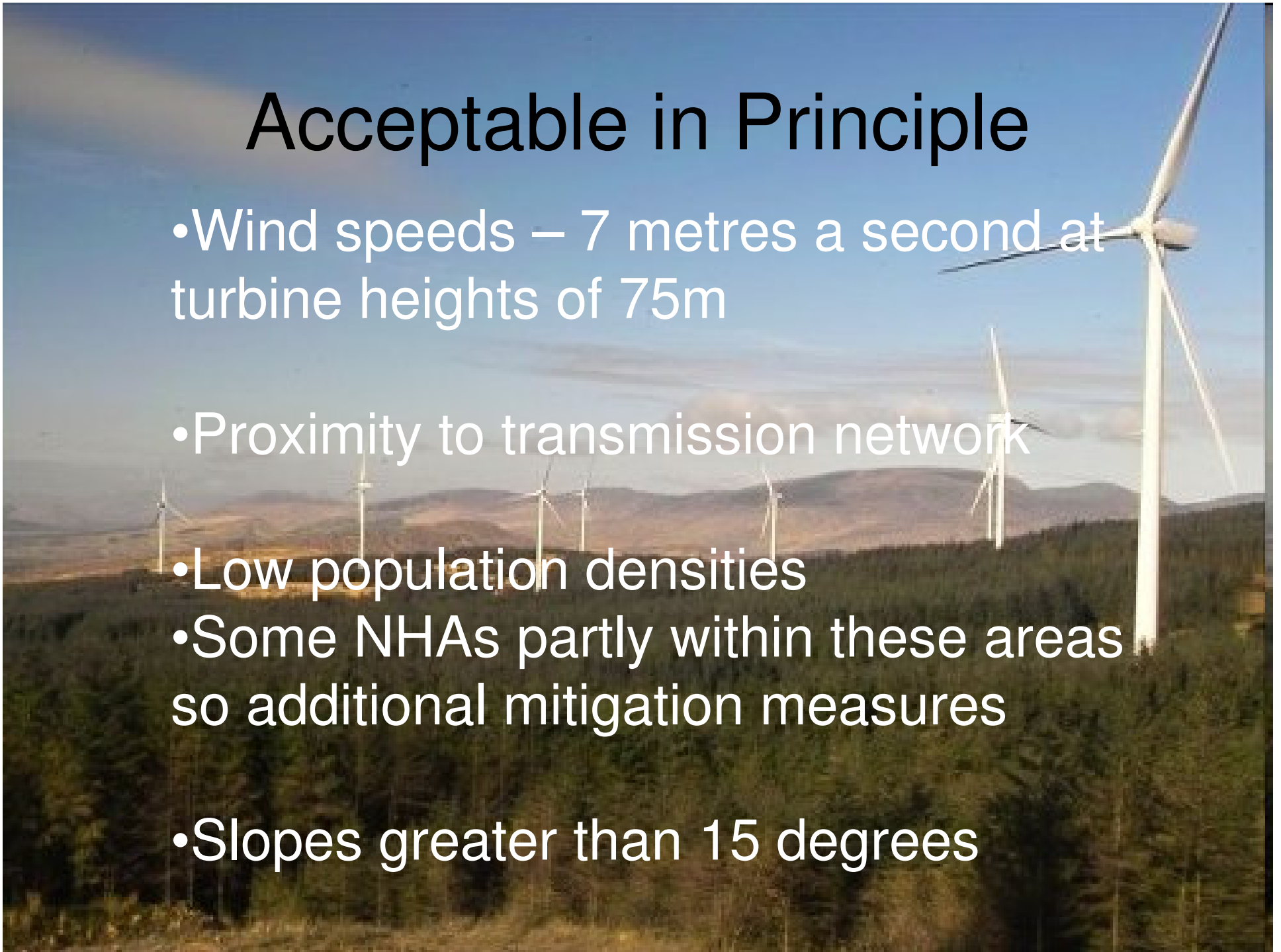
Strategic Areas

- Wind speeds – 7.5 metres a second at turbine heights of 75m
- Proximity to transmission network
- Low population areas – 400 m from properties
- Avoid natural heritage designations
- Slopes greater than 15 degrees



Acceptable in Principle

- Wind speeds – 7 metres a second at turbine heights of 75m
- Proximity to transmission network
- Low population densities
- Some NHAs partly within these areas so additional mitigation measures
- Slopes greater than 15 degrees



SEA Environmental Issues

environmental topics –

biodiversity, fauna, flora

population, human health,

soil and geology

water,

air, climatic factors,

material assets,

cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage,

Landscape

and the interrelationship between the above factors



Wind Energy Strategy SEA key issues



Biodiversity, flora and fauna

Water


Soil and geology – landslide risk and susceptibility

Landscape and visual

Population and human health

Construction and operational activities.

Wind Energy Strategy Mitigation Measures



Mitigation Measures from the SEA and AA brought into 'General Considerations' Section of the Strategy.

Highlight environmental issues and the ways in which such potential impacts can be addressed through planning and design.

Main advice to potential applicants and serves as a checklist