

Ref: AE/wind turbine

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Dear Sirs

### **RE OPPORTUNITY FOR ECO-SCHOOLS TO WIN A FREE WIND TURBINE WORTH £20,000**

ENCAMS has been approached to work in partnership with ARG (the umbrella company for Homebase and Argos) to offer one lucky Eco-School the opportunity to have their very own wind turbine installed in their school grounds completely free of charge.

Wind turbines are a growing phenomenon in the UK. Wind energy is an abundant natural resource - it is non-polluting, clean and sustainable. The UK has one of Europe's windiest climates and therefore wind energy is expected to be an important element in achieving the UK government's commitment to reduce CO2 emissions to 12.5% below 1990 levels by 2010. More specifically it is Government policy to achieve 10% of the nation's electrical requirements from renewable sources by 2010.

The turbine has been designed and developed by Iskra Wind Turbine Manufacturers Ltd of St Anns Nottingham with the assistance of DTI funding. It has a 5m diameter rotor and sits on a 12m free-standing tower. It has been specifically designed for low noise operation and minimal visual impact. The turbine can not only be used to meet the electricity demands of your school but excess energy can be sold back to the national grid, providing your school with a source of income.

In order to be eligible to win the wind turbine your school will need to complete a detailed feasibility study, which will include securing planning permission from your local council. However, in the first instance you must consider the bullet points listed beneath which will highlight whether your school should continue on to the application stage.

#### **Key Application Criteria**

The first stage filter criteria for schools self selection should include:

1. The school should have a site for a turbine that is 100m+ from the nearest line of sight residential neighbour. This is due to the worst-case, rural summer night time, scenario for noise. People with windows open, and a gentle breeze, enough to spin the turbine, but not significantly increase background noise. If there are trees, buildings or any other features removing line of sight, these would act as a sound barrier between the turbine and neighbours. In this case the separation distance may be reduced to 70m.
2. The site should have more than 5 m/s average annual mean wind speed. This can be determined by putting the schools postcode into <http://www.iskrawind.com/windchecker.htm>
3. They should have a site that is well removed from areas of regular congregation, i.e. at the bottom of the school field.
4. Not within line of sight with an airfield (unlikely but possible!)

5. They must first have permission from the land owner, if relevant, to pursue such a project
6. The turbine must not be sited on the other side of a public road from the school. This may add significantly to the installation costs.
7. There should be a site open to free airflow, i.e. not surrounded by tall (over 10m) trees. This is especially important looking towards the SW, the prevailing wind direction.
8. The site should not be in an SSSI. This can be found by typing the schools grid ref into <http://www.natureonthemap.org.uk/>

The results of these filter criteria can also be used later by suitable schools to aid in a more detailed feasibility study. In fact if you have already looked at these criteria it may get you thinking of ways of incorporating the process into lesson plans!

It is envisaged that qualifying schools will be able to conduct their feasibility study and secure planning permission by the end of May 2006. Completed application forms will need to be submitted to ENCAMS by June 2006 and the winning school will be notified in early July so that the wind turbine can be installed ready for an official unveiling in September 2006.

This is a fantastic opportunity for Eco-Schools to be at the forefront of environmental innovation and your entry will receive technical support and advice throughout the process. Unfortunately, there is only one wind turbine available to give away free of charge. Winning is not everything though! All schools that have successfully completed their feasibility study, and obtained planning permission, will receive assistance from Iskra to help them seek alternative funding through such schemes as the Government's Low Carbon Buildings Program.

If you can answer 'yes' to the key criteria outlined above and you would like to register your school's interest in this competition please e-mail [carl.thurston@encams.org](mailto:carl.thurston@encams.org) for an application pack.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this exciting opportunity!

Yours sincerely



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