

PRESS RELEASE



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Grasp opportunities before Feed in Tariff deadline

Many will have heard about the opportunities available to farmers and land owners for renewable energy production. These opportunities have become particularly attractive following the Feed in Tariff (FiT) announcements in April of this year, but these attractive tariffs will be changing and reducing in April 2012 for new schemes, so it is imperative that decisions are made soon for farmers to take advantage of these present higher tariffs.

The Government guaranteed Feed in Tariff income is paid for by energy companies, and for Photovoltaic (Solar) Energy this is guaranteed for 25 years. While wind energy might offer the most attractive returns, the highly political nature of turbines can often make them very difficult to get through planning. So BCM have targeted the solar market for clients to consider renewable energy investments.

There are two different options in regard to solar; field scale is, as it sounds, the development of solar units in a field. A 1 megawatt field scale requires at least five acres of land and will produce an annual return of approximately £300,000. For a building scale, i.e. using solar panels on a roof, this has a return on investment of around 8-12%. Pretty impressive in the current economic climate.

There are of course some basic issues to consider. For a field scale as an example you need flat or south facing land, preferably not in a national park or area of outstanding beauty, not overlooking residential buildings and in close proximity to the National Grid. For a roof scale scheme the important issues are for the roof to be south facing, the proximity and capacity to the national Grid, and the design and construction of the roof.

Knowing where to start with these projects can be especially confusing, so BCM have teamed up with a number of independent firms to offer impartial advice as to the best renewable energy opportunities available for each individual case.

Partners: Iain Curry Andrew Bays Henry McCowen Ros Foreman Alastair Wilson James Fraser

Every renewable scheme should be considered on its own merits, but BCM is particularly focused on the possibilities surrounding electricity generation including solar PV, hydro electric and wind turbines. This is as a result of the favourable FiT rate currently offered together with the natural opportunities that farmers and land owners have with their available resources in our area.

While electricity generation is attractive at the moment, the forthcoming renewable heat incentive is expected to make ground source and air source heat systems equally attractive in the very near future.

If solar energy schemes are not of interest at this stage, one point to bear in mind if there is a plan to erect a new building, is its siting and design. Simply rotating a building through 90 degrees to face south, or incorporating an unusual building shape to allow for a much larger south facing roof space, could allow the opportunity to pursue solar opportunities in the future,.

With modern farm buildings generally considered as depreciating assets, there are exciting opportunities to recoup money in the long term through retro-fitting or incorporating solar panels into a building's roof.

BCM are working with a number of firms to offer solutions to individual energy needs. Schemes range from capital intensive projects to essentially risk free letting of roof space or land to other businesses who invest capital in technology, while you take a guaranteed rent, for up to 25 years.

Time is of the essence because whatever scheme is under consideration, you need to have it up and running before April 2012 – this sounds a long way away but with planning and building considerations to take into account this is actually quite a short timescale.

For further information please contact Chris Horn at BCM on 01962 763900.

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