From Tim Yeo MP, Chairman

Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP
Secretary of State
Department for Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

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DCLG’s policy towards onshore wind

As the cheapest renewable energy technology, onshore wind is well placed to help the Government achieve its aim of promoting secure, clean and affordable energy supplies. Billions of pounds worth of investment have been made in the onshore wind sector over the past few years, supported by a policy framework which makes the UK one of the most attractive countries in the world for renewable energy investment.

Several companies have approached my Committee troubled by the number of onshore wind applications being rejected by your Department. They are concerned that these rejections are sending a negative message to board rooms in the UK, Europe and the wider world and could see investment directed elsewhere. This could be very unhelpful for the Government’s ambition to reform the electricity market, promote growth and reduce the deficit.

It is imperative that the UK should maintain its reputation as a great place to invest and continue to attract energy companies looking to build low carbon generation capacity, including onshore wind farms. I would, therefore, be grateful if you could outline your Department’s policy towards onshore wind, clarify whether it has changed, and explain why there appears to be an increase in the number of onshore wind applications being rejected by your Department.