

Alan Macdonald is an acknowledged expert in impact visualisation and the author of *“Wind farm Visualisation, Perspective of Perception”*, (published in 2012 by Whittle Publishing). Reference should be made to his book for the full arguments against bland acceptance of photographic visualizations prepared in accordance with Landscape Institute and other “industry guidance”.

Alan has worked with Highland Regional Council and many others to set improved Standards for wind farm visualisation, mainly because prevailing industry guidance does not stand up to scientific scrutiny or empirical testing. Because of the extent of wind farm development in their area, Highland Regional Council has arguably had more experience in visual impact assessment than any other Authority.

Working on behalf of a Local Community “objectors group”, Alan reviewed the applicant’s visual impact assessment for a development involving three very large wind turbines in Kirklees in 2014 and a copy of his book was loaned to Kirklees Council’s planning department. Appropriate objections, including Alan’s objections to the applicant’s visual impact assessment, were submitted to Kirklees Council. However, the application was ultimately withdrawn, because of unacceptable impact on the South Pennines SPA.

The essence of the argument against Landscape Institute guidance is that, whilst a 50mm photographic lens is traditionally said to produce an image closest to the human eye, it does not do so with “wide-angle” landscape images or distant objects. This is because of the way that photographs are produced and the way that the brain interprets them.