



A tourist observation - or the yellowing of England

Posted by [Heading Out](#) on May 28, 2006 - 3:17pm

Topic: [Alternative energy](#)

Tags: [biodiesel](#), [north of england](#), [wind energy](#) [[list all tags](#)]

As the crews stroke the Elvet, and the [Durham Cow](#) ruminates on an uncertain future, it is time again to visit the Land of the Prince Bishops and note some changes. Some forty years ago the land was dotted with pit heaps, some 26 underground coal mines had been producing coal from seams perhaps 700 ft below ground for up to a hundred years or more apiece, and the spoil bands dominated the landscape. But coal and its miners were not popular, and so now, as one drives around it is hard to find much evidence of that history. The land has been restored, and fields of rape and tall wind turbines now control a landscape where coal mining references are found only in the names of the odd village, the halves of a pit wheel, buried at the end of a housing estate, or the lone statue of a pit pony and his tub, isolated in a roundabout.



And from [last year's visit](#)



The commitment to alternate forms of energy is alive and highly visible in the Northern part of the UK. Each time I visit, I see more wind turbines, and, up here, concerns about the view change are evidently non-persuasive. A picturesque shot of [Lumley Castle](#) now will require a little photoshopping to remove the thin white lines that poke above the trees behind it. Here, perhaps unlike the [Mendip Hills](#) (where a Telegraph correspondent lives), energy supply needs will be less controversial. Similarly if you want to record your vacation with pictures, you have to accept that "England's green and pleasant land," is increasingly yellow with the oil-producing rape. On the other hand, a quick trip to my comments on a visit [last year](#) sees that it contains the comment, relating to a local vicar's protest at the potential installation of wind turbines at Tarry (where my eighth-generation ago ancestor mined coal).

It would be one of those ironies of man, if a land that once hosted a series of mines across the fields and moors is now considered too beautiful for the more environmentally friendly windmills. I will remain dutifully silent about the other message.

The world is increasingly involved in finding alternate sources of power, and the impact of these, and other efforts around the world, that are now bearing fruit will certainly reduce the impact that the reduction in conventional oil production would otherwise bring. The displacement of the need to import oil with the use of this domestic supply will alleviate a little of the pressure that is building around the world as supplies tighten. But, in the tightening of that supply, we are not yet always sensitized to all the impacts of tragedies occurring elsewhere.

As we write about, and debate the next Hurricane season, for example, we tend to focus considerable attention on the GOMEX along the Gulf Shore. But hurricanes and typhoons are, in their impact on global production damaging not only in the Gulf, where a considerable portion of Mexican production also is found, but also in the deep water recovery zones around the world, and off China. The loss of production from [one field](#) was, this time, quite low [around 22 kbd](#) but nevertheless it is an indication that these tragedies and loss of life and energy can occur globally.

For the curious



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