



**Press Release**

**30 August 2017**

**For immediate release**

## **Another bite at Scotland's wild land**

### **Mountaineers call for absolute protection for wild land following judicial review**

Mountaineering Scotland is calling for absolute protection for wild land in planning policy following the outcome of a judicial review which upheld Ministerial approval for a wind farm which encroaches on a wild land area in one of Scotland's most valued landscapes.

Views from iconic northern mountains such as Ben Loyal, Foinaven, Arkle, Ben Klibreck and Scotland's most northerly Munro, Ben Hope, will be impacted by the 22-turbine Creag Riabhach wind farm, with five of the turbines actually standing within a wild land area.

In October last year Scottish Ministers gave permission for the development to go ahead, but Danish businessman and landowner Anders Povlsen, whose Wildland Ltd owns the neighbouring Ben Loyal, Kinloch and Hope & Melness estates, raised a judicial review to examine the decision in favour of the wind farm, on the Altnaharra Estate.

Lord Boyd of Duncansby, today found against Wildland Ltd's position, saying it was not for the court to judge whether wind farms should be allowed on designated wild land areas, but to assess whether Scottish Ministers had acted properly with respect to existing policy.

Mountaineering Scotland CEO David Gibson said "While we respect the decision of the court, the decision of the Minister to approve this wind farm will render an extraordinary, world-renowned, wild and open landscape completely ordinary.

"This outcome emphasises why the Scottish Government must change its present policy. Wild land areas must get the same absolute protection as National Scenic Areas and National Parks. Time is running out for Scotland's most precious natural asset – its landscape - as more and more wild land is eroded by development.

"The irony is that there is no need for the Creag Riabhach development – there is already enough operational and consented capacity to meet the Scottish Government's generation target."

**Ends**

**Notes for editors:**

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### **About Mountaineering Scotland:**

- Mountaineering Scotland is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains.
- Mountaineering Scotland provides training and information to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.
- The Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with over 14,000 members representing hill walkers, climbers and mountaineers, funded through a combination of membership subscriptions, non-governmental grants and investment from sportscotland, which supports public initiatives and services in mountain safety, mountain training and the development and promotion of mountaineering activities.
- Mountaineering Scotland also acts for 75,000 members of the BMC or British Mountaineering Council on matters related to Landscape and Access in Scotland.
- Mountaineering Scotland landscape and access work is supported financially by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust and the BMC
- Mountaineering Scotland has launched the ClimbScotland initiative to encourage young people to participate in climbing and support their progression. It offers a dedicated website and a development team, which will introduce young people to climbing at schools, climbing walls and via youth organisations with a range of activities and events, while developing kids clubs and providing specialist support to parents, volunteers and teachers.
- Mountaineering Scotland is the national governing body for sports climbing. It offers pathways to climbing coaching, organises and promotes a range of regional and national climbing competitions, and manages the Scottish climbing and bouldering teams. It contributes to the management of the GB teams with the ultimate aim of seeing a Scottish athlete achieve a podium position in the Olympic Games.
- Mountaineering Scotland is the new name for the Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS), which acts to represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering.
- Mountaineering Council of Scotland remains the registered company name.
- The MCofS is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and incorporated in Scotland. Company number SC322717.
- Mountaineering Scotland, The Granary, West Mill Street, Perth PH1 5QP