

By email to: Econsents_Admin@gov.scot

Ms Nicola Kennedy
Energy Consents Unit
The Scottish Government
5 Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
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6 January 2023

Dear Ms Kennedy

Drummond Wind Farm, Lochearnhead: Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report

ECU reference: ECU00004700

Background and Context


1. SSE Renewables has applied for a scoping opinion for a wind farm north and east of Glen Tarken, north of Loch Earn. The scoping proposal is for 14 turbines of 180m BTH.
2. Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with more than 16,000 members and is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains. We represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering, and provide training and information to mountain users for safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.

Assessment

3. Mountaineering Scotland's concern at this stage is ensuring that the proposed viewpoints will allow a comprehensive assessment of the proposed development from a mountaineering/hillwalking perspective should an application be made.
4. The nearest operational wind farms are Braes of Doune, 16km south, and Calliachar c.22km northeast. These distances emphasise the 'pioneer' nature of the proposed development, intruding into an area with very little and distant sight of wind farms currently.
5. The proposed location is surrounded by popular and nationally significant hills, mostly Munros (separate mountain summits with a height over 3,000 feet, or 914.4 m). The potential impact on hillwalking is clear when 14 of 20 proposed viewpoints are upland ones. We endorse the inclusion of Viewpoints 1,2,6-8, 9, 11,12, 15-20.
6. There is a gap in medium-distance upland viewpoints in the southwest quadrant. We suggest that the inclusion of the Corbett Meall an t-Seallaidh (GR NN541234) is appropriate, as other proposed upland viewpoints in this quadrant are around 2-3 times the distance of Meall an t-Seallaidh (c.12km) from the nearest turbine. Corbetts are separate mountain summits over 2,500 feet (762 metres) and under 3,000 feet (914.4 metres).

7. The Report states that photomontages will be prepared for viewpoints within 20km, with wirelines for greater distances. We suggest that the inclusion of a photomontage for Ben More (VP15) at 22.2km would be useful as it is a highly popular summit destination for hillwalkers.

Yours sincerely


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