



The Mountaineering Council of Scotland

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27 January 2016

Dear Sirs

Bargrennan Wind Farm - Formal Scoping Request

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the scoping request for the proposed Bargrennan Wind Farm.

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCOFS) is an independent organisation with more than 12,000 members who are hill walkers, climbers and ski tourers. It was established in 1970 as the national representative body for the sport of mountaineering in Scotland. We are recognised by the Scottish Government as representing the interests of mountaineers living in Scotland. We also act in Scotland for the 75,000 members of the British Mountaineering Council (BMC), which fully supports our policy relating to wind farms and contributes direct financial support to our policy work.

The MCOFS recognises the need to move to a low carbon economy but it does not believe that this transition need be at the expense of Scotland's marvellous mountain landscapes. It objects only to proposals that we regard as potentially most damaging to Scotland's widely-valued mountain assets, consistent with our policy as set out in our document *Respecting Scotland's Mountains*.

Regarding the proposed development, we were surprised to receive such a proposal for up to 15 turbines of up to 137m blade-tip height southwest of Glen Trool.

Surprised, because a smaller proposed development (fewer turbines of lower BTH) overlapping the new proposed site was refused planning permission in December 2012 (having initially been submitted in 2009) and it is not clear how the new proposal can avoid the adverse effects that led to the previous scheme's refusal.

The changed baseline context has established a clear pattern of (operational and consented) development with which the proposed development is discordant. It is for the applicant to try to produce an EIA that squares this circle.

Hill-walkers are key receptors of development in this area.

There will be clear views of the development from summits and ridges along the western Galloway Highlands from **Shalloch on Minnoch** south through **The Merrick** to **Larg Hill** and, slightly more distant and separate, **Cairnsmore of Fleet**.

The Merrick is an obvious viewpoint, around 10km from the proposed development. **Benyellary** and **Bennan** are closer but give similar angles of view to The Merrick. **Lamachan Hill** gives a different angle and is similarly close to the development. **Cairnsmore of Fleet**, although somewhat more distant, gives a further different angle.

The preliminary ZTV shows visibility from the 'wild' inner core of the Galloway Highlands, with a sightline down Glen Trool, and this should be represented by a viewpoint in the vicinity of **Craignaw**.

We hope that addressees will find these comments helpful.

Yours sincerely

David Gibson
Chief Executive Officer