

## **Hill of Fare Windfarm**

### **Cluny, Midmar and Monymusk Community Council response to scoping report.**

Dear Stephen

On behalf of Cluny, Midmar & Monymusk Community Council our response to the scoping report for the proposed Hill of Fare Windfarm is as follows:

#### 1. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- a) 3.13 The developer implies that the Strategic Landscape Capacity Assessment relevant in Aberdeenshire may be out of date. We believe that this is not the case for the Hill of Fare and that there is unlikely to be a change in the new Local Development Plan. Due to its prominence from all sides it has a high visual sensitivity.
- b) 3.15 The principles of best practice according to which the LVIA will be carried out appear to be dated from 2013. This seems a very long time ago, considering how technology and in particular size of turbines have altered so much since that date. There is concern that they are not fit for purpose with such an intended project.
- c) 3.20 In terms of the distinction between landscape and visual effects we believe that such is the scale of the intended turbines that it will be impossible to engineer protected views, therefore the two individual scoping elements may not be relevant.
- d) 3.27 The Residential Visual Amenity Assessment for all properties within 2 km of all proposed turbines and the screening discussed within this, does not negate the sound elements to the turbine effects, even if flicker can be reduced or ruled out.
- e) 3.29 As well as the 15 viewpoints the developer is proposing for landscape and visual impact assessments, we believe that due to the proposed scale of the turbines there should be other viewpoints such as Mither Tap (NJ 682 224), Westhill (NJ 814 073), North Monymusk (NJ 682 177), Clachnaben (NJ 616 865).
- f) 3.40 To imply that there will be no significant effects on landscape character is incorrect and therefore all necessary visuals of a high quality need to demonstrate this from all directions. There is already a large demand for such visuals.
- g) 3.44 In terms of the scoping points regarding aviation warning lighting we believe that there is not already a significant artificial lighting effect on the Hill of Fare, certainly from the north side and therefore it would be wrong to discount the hugely significant effect that lighting on all 17 turbines would have not only on the immediate but also further afield landscape. Scoping points for this and visual illustrations should take into account the size of these turbines.

- h) 3.47 In terms of the cumulative effect we do believe that the 4 turbines in Midmar which are under 50m in height should however be included in the cumulative impact assessment. They already effect people who are going to be further affected, so are important to those in the immediate vicinity.
- 2. a) 5.32 Ornithology - Based on local information we would request that Curlew are scoped in to the assessment
- 3. a) 6 Ecology - The Environmental Impact Assessment should include fish and therefore a habitats regulation assessment, as this area is so close to the River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC). From experience with other significant development projects within the Dee and Don Catchments, this is in our opinion a very important conservation safety measure.
  - b) Ice Throw from Turbine Blades – We do believe that ice build-up has proved to be a major issue in winter months, on blades, following on from which ice throw has great implications from such large turbines. We would request that this is a part of the scoping report.
- 4. a) 7 Hydrology - Due to the large number of private water supplies to the north of the Hill of Fare, some of which may run further than 2km from the Hill itself, we believe that there is a requirement for the scope of monitoring to be out with the 2km described.
- 5. Noise
  - a) We note again that the “best practice” guidelines in considering the potential noise issues caused by the proposed development are once again taken from material produced as far back as 2013 and even 2011. This concerns us.
  - b) 8.6 It is not intended to look into specific frequencies in relation to noise caused by the Turbines, for instance low frequency. This concerns us, as continuing low frequency noise, as is produced by turbines, causes huge stress to people living in the vicinity. We would suggest that this be included in the scoping measures.
  - c) We would suggest that the Planned Acoustic Assessment, which includes proposed locations for background noise measurement surveys, must make sure that these are not carried out within the range of area affected by the turbines already located in Midmar. (H138)
  - d) Assessment of cumulative noise impacts caused by the development should also take into account the areas already having to deal with turbine noise, such as at grid points NJ 666 059 and NJ 664 064
- 6. Infrastructure

- a) Onward travel of generated power into the Grid. We would like to see visuals of the intended infrastructure required to transport the energy created into the local or national grid. This is of course specifically in the area on and surrounding the Hill of Fare itself, which will have a major effect on the neighbourhood. We understand that the application for access to the Grid, is separate to the planning application, however they are both very much a part of the eventual physical changes which will be felt by the local communities and must be factored into scoping for the project.

These are the points which we wished to bring to your attention at this stage, on behalf of Cluny, Midmar and Monymusk Community Council.

The thrust of this is not to support or object to the project proposal, but a list of observations on the proposed scoping.

Regards

Richard Fyffe