

KILNINVER AND KILMELFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL
CLACHAN WIND FARM, PUBLIC MEETING AND DISCUSSION
DRAFT MINUTES

The above public meeting was held on Tuesday 28th February 2012 at Kilmelford Village Hall.

Present: Nigel Mitchell (NM) Chair, Antoinette Mitchell (AM) Planning Officer, Matthew Anderson (MA) Vice Chair & Treasurer, Stuart Cannon (SC) Assistant Vice Chair, Lucy Files (LF) Secretary, Sarah Edwards (SE), Colin Clark (CC), John MacLean (JM)

Also in attendance were Councillor Louise Glen-Lee (LG-L Cllr ABC), Mr Rory Young (RY)(Developer of proposed Wind Farm) and 35 members of the public.

Not Present: Peter Hammick

THE MEETING OPENED AT 8.00pm WITH MATTHEW ANDERSON IN THE CHAIR

INTRODUCTION

MA thanked Rory Young for attending this meeting and discussion to clarify his plans for the wind farm and to answer questions. MA then explained that he had been asked to take the Chair for this discussion in the interests of maintaining transparency and impartiality on behalf of the KKCC. MA's chairing of this discussion would allow NM to speak and pose questions without any conflict between the role of Chair and personal interest.

Members of KKCC introduced themselves.

MA then defined the structure of the meeting as follows:

First speaker - Mr Rory Young
 Questions
 Speakers in support of Clachan Wind Farm - 5 minutes per speaker
 Speakers against Clachan Wind Farm - 5 minutes per speaker
 Speakers with relevant contributions to make – 5 minutes per speaker
 Floor opinion
 Telephoned opinion
 KKC Councillors to vote on the issue

A representation from KKCC to be submitted the next day

MA made it clear that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss only the planning application for Clachan Wind Farm and that comments must be limited to matters pertinent to the Clachan application

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

Mr Young spoke briefly to introduce himself and state his willingness to be as open as possible. He said that he was well aware of profound concerns within the community regarding the impact of the proposed wind farm on the landscape as follows:

- a) Concerns about inaccuracies of montages
- b) Concerns about the fact that the turbines would be contiguous to The Toad of Lorne
- c) That the turbines would be intrusive

Questions

Q. Could Mr Young provide the source of his information for the verified emissions data?
 A. Mr Young can get back to KKCC with this information.

Q. What is the footprint payback time?
 A. Between 7 and 11 months and this includes payback for manufacturing, concrete and transport. Mr Young stated that this could be verified by University studies.

Q. The Oban Times had stated that the people of Clachan Seil might benefit from subsidised electricity. Could Mr Young clarify how this would work?

A. Clachan Wind Farm would be tied to selling electricity to a specific company. Locals could sign up with this company and get electricity at a reduced rate. This is not guaranteed but it is a possibility.

Q. Will renewable cost be higher?

A. Generally you pay an 8% premium on renewable energy.

Q. There is no anemometer mast up on site so there is no means of collecting data.

A. A 15 metre mast has been on site for 3 months. The data, however, has been taken from a mast at Moleigh and from Alt-Dearg at Lochgilphead.

Q. These masts are not in situ where the wind farm is proposed.

A. The information is accurate and the Met Office has records going back for years. It is also very conservative.

Q. Why are no anemometer masts up?

A. Access problems, they couldn't be sited in the winter. They will go up in the spring.

Q. What percentage will be contributed to the National Grid?

A. Doesn't have a clue.

Q. How will the turbines be erected if it has been a problem putting up an anemometer (met mast)?

A. The big turbines will have all the installation equipment and roads will be in place for access.

Q. Who makes the turbines?

A. The manufacturer is German (Enercon), parts and spares are all available in the UK.

Q. Is Mr Young jumping the gun with a planning application if the met mast (anemometer) is not even up? Surely things are not far enough down the line for planning.

A. The mast does not measure mean wind speed but turbulence and wind shear. Mr Young is confident the site will produce the figures predicted although he doesn't have specific data.

Observation: In information put out to the community Mr Young claimed that the closest distance between the wind turbines and the nearest Kilninver property would be 2600 metres. This distance refers to the closest property in the **village** of Kilninver but the **area** of Kilninver extends to the Atlantic Bridge. Duachy, a property in the Kilninver area is 880 metres from the nearest turbine.

Q. When construction starts foundations can be moved within an area (micro siting). How big an area is this variance to be?

A. Anything up to 20 metres but Mr Young needs to verify this.

Q. If one site was unsuitable would building cease?

A. Geophysicists have surveyed the area. This should not happen.

Q. Has there been a survey on how the equipment is to get to the site? It will not be possible to get the blades over the Kilninver Bridge.

A. An analysis has been done for the bridge. A sweep path analysis has been done on the longest component and the data says it is possible to transport over Kilninver Bridge.

Q. Kilninver Bridge is unstable. What is in place for repairs to this bridge? Is there insurance?

A. The Roads Dept is a statutory consultee and has a decision to make. The Roads Dept can object if there is a roads issue.

Observation: If the bridge were to go it would be a disaster for everyone on Clachan Seil. Mr Young must accept responsibility.

Q. What is planned for eventual decommissioning?

A. The turbines would be recycled, the substation would be taken down and the concrete foundations would be covered, re-seeded and reinstated for agriculture. Planning permission will include decommissioning and a bond will be put in place to pay for this.

Q. Why is Mr Young pursuing a wind farm when Raera has been turned down?

A. Mr Young feels there is a possibility it will go through.

Q. Will there be warning lights on the turbines?

A. National Air Traffic Control is a statutory consultee.

Q. Regarding decommissioning, is it definite that the wind farm would be taken down?

A. Planning has a finite life. After 25 years the wind farm has to be taken down. There is no choice in this.

Q. Is there a maintenance plan? Is finance in place for ongoing maintenance?

A. No manufacturer gives a lifetime guarantee. Enercon gives a warranty of 8 – 15 years and will pay lost income if a turbine breaks.

Q. Is it the case that a maintenance programme is available for the full life of the turbines but this has to be paid into?

A. Yes this is so and the maintenance programme will be in place. The wind farm will be looked after for its life. The more energy produced the more is paid into the maintenance programme. All the maintenance is looked after by Enercon.

Q. Is it the case that it is up to the developer to buy into this contract?

A. Yes it is up to the developer. The maintenance contract for this wind farm will be in place for the full 25 years.

Speakers in Favour of this Wind Farm

Fiona Wylie (FW) asked to speak about the application in the context of the larger picture both nationally and closer to home. She gave her opinion that this matter is of national importance and the application should not be looked at in isolation.

MA responded that this meeting would look only at this application in the context of its impact on the part of Clachan Seil that falls within the Kilninver area.

Only one individual spoke in favour of this wind farm.

Speakers Against this Wind Farm

The salient points made and concerns raised by speakers against this wind farm are as follow:

Sarah Henderson

- . Loss of the right to roam on The Toad of Lorne
- . Restrictions on other areas where individuals can currently walk freely
- . Landscape littered with negative or intimidating signage
- . Flashing lights mounted on the turbines which will be seen for miles
- . Noise
- . Devaluation of property in the area around the wind farm. A local estate agent has advised to expect a 10% devaluation but anecdotal evidence from other wind farm areas suggests that this figure might be closer to 30%. This potentially represents considerable financial loss to the community. Who will be accountable for this loss?

Statement from Consultant Physician Dr Allan Henderson, a specialist in sleep disorders

- . There is no evidence that wind farms are safe and there is suspicion of harm. There are reports of individuals being made ill by wind farms erected nearby
- . No scientific study has been done to say that turbines are safe in health terms
- . The experts consulted thus far have been acoustic technicians and Ear Nose and Throat doctors, not specialists in sleep disorders
- . The effects of noise are dismissed by developers and the stats for sound levels are based on small turbines and are out of date
- . Sleep disruption is a clear cause of ill health
- . Damages have been awarded to people suffering ill health through turbines

Q. (Member of Public) Has there been any forecast of sound levels from the turbines and the distance that sound is likely to carry down Seil Sound?

A. (RY) There has been a full survey on sound which followed ETSU guidelines and WHO guidelines. A further full noise assessment will be required by planning

Q. The terrain includes hilly ground and consideration of how sound travels over water

A. This would be a highly specific survey, not a theoretical one. Sound receptors would be placed at Duachy, Clachan. Innish and by the Bridge

Q. A resident of Clachan Seil stated that at night time he currently enjoys blackness and silence apart from wildlife noises. Will there be a noise level from the wind farm and flashing lights?

A. There will not be a noise level but cannot answer about lights

Q. Will there be audible noise in Clachan Seil at night time?

A. Can't answer whether there will be noise. Turbines do make noise but surveys state that background noise is greater than the noise made by turbines.
If noise becomes a problem the turbines can be turned down or off

Q. What about pressure pulses and vibrations rather than actual noise? What is the route to getting something done about reducing this?

A. Complain to Environmental Health. If the turbines are in breach of Environmental Health the rotations can be slowed down

The Owner of Duachy (the property closest to the proposed wind farm)

- . Disruptive effects of pulsing, vibration and noise. There is medical evidence to support that these factors are disruptive to health
- . Worry about sleep deprivation
- . Loss of freedom. No longer able to walk on hills behind house
- . Concerns about ice on the blades, blades falling off, fire
- . Loss of beauty of the landscape which would have an industrial backdrop

Speaker about wildlife

- . The site for the proposed wind farm is not a dead area where there is no wildlife which has been suggested in Mr Young's literature
- . Mr Young has done an ecological survey stating that there are no butterflies. This is wrong, there are butterflies.
- . The ecological survey says there are no bats. There are bats
- . Migrating birds are flying up and down the area
- . Hooper swans are in the area and fly at turbine height
- . White tailed sea eagles are trying to nest on The Toad of Lorne

Q. (Rory Young) Is there any evidence of this?

A. It is expansion from Mull. Pairs are trying to nest on The Toad of Lorne as it is ideal for them

- . Ecological survey says there are no barn owls. There are barn owls
- . Ecological survey says there are no cliff-nesting birds. Ravens are nesting along the ridge
- . The community does not want the wildlife habitat destroyed.
- . Wildlife in the area is important to tourism

RY stated that a local ecologist from Oban was employed to carry out the survey, a bat detector was used in the collision risk area and the survey sent to SNH for approval. The speaker about wildlife responded that the survey was done in the winter time and out of season and this should have been picked up.

RY stated that extended surveys were carried out regarding swans. The objector responded that Hooper Swans use the area as a migration route. He added that Hen Harriers, which are very rare, are regularly seen in the area as are Golden Eagles (also rare). Records of sightings are kept. Also any Environmental Impact Assessment should have information on bats

RY reiterated that collision risks and the survey were done by an ecologist and supported by SNH

NM asked RY for copies of the raw data.

Stuart Reid from PACT (People Against Clachan Turbines)

- . Not everyone in PACT is against wind farms per se. PACT is against these turbines in this location. The wind farm will be in the wrong place
- . A lot of people will have their lifestyles changed and the landscape will be changed
- . The area is sensitive countryside of panoramic quality, a very scenic area
- . Argyll and Bute wind farm policy map shows this to be a constrained area and not suitable for this sort of installation
- . The wind turbines will be clearly visible in an area where the views are a key characteristic that enhance life and attract visitors
- . Most of the village of Clachan Seil will be within 2km of the site. The turbines would be unpleasantly overwhelming and not in the public interest. Also there would be health implications
- . Impact on archaeological sites and compromised protection of archaeological heritage. Worry about damage to sites which include an area of runrig, a bronze-age settlement, an ancient chapel and standing stones.
- . Particular concern about St Brendan's seat, a very ancient archaeological site. Access to this would be restricted during both construction and operation of the wind farm
- . Adverse effect on tourism with coach-borne tourism and sailing tourism being of particular concern
- . In summary, the harm done to the area would outweigh the benefits

RY responded as follows:

- . The siting of the wind farm follows the guideline 2km rule
- . Clachan wind farm will be smaller than the guideline based on the spatial framework
- . There will not be any restriction of access apart from during construction when access would be restricted for health and safety reasons
- . All archaeological sites have been identified and buffers have been placed around them. Protection of archaeology is taken very seriously
- . Noise from the wind farm will be within DEFRA guidelines. There are many reports stating that there is no evidence of harm to health from noise from wind farms
- . There is no evidence of properties being devalued by proximity to wind farms. Advised that people speak to estate agents near to wind farms
- . A MORI poll done in 2002 found that wind farms would not be a deterrent to tourism

Sarah Henderson stated that a postcard survey yielded 550 objections from tourists

Fiona Wylie spoke again in favour of the wind farm. Regarding potential impact on tourism she quoted wind farms in Cornwall as an example and stated that while there has been no official study of the effects on tourism there have been no complaints. In fact wind farms have had no impact at all on tourism

Q. Would yachting tourism at Puil Doran, a very beautiful, natural anchorage, be adversely affected by the proposed wind farm? It was stated that yachts people at Puil Doran voluntarily did a postcard survey in which several hundred said it would put them off.

A. RY responded that there has been no negative effect on the marinas at Inverkip and Ardrossan.

Q. Is Mr Young the developer?

A. RY responded that he is the developer while Greencat is the consultant who will do the development.

Q. Why is Mr Young doing this?

A. To create a viable business at Clachan Farm

Opinion from the floor.

People within Kilninver and Kilmelford Community Boundaries

For development 3
Against development 26

People outwith Kilninver and Kilmelford Community Boundaries

For development 0
Against development 25

People who telephoned

	Kilninver 39 calls taken	Kilmelford 23 calls taken	Arduaine 11 calls taken
For development	1	2	2
Against development	38	21	9

The KKCC was then called upon by the Chair to vote by show of hands. 8 Community Councillors were present and voted as follows:

For development	1
Against development	6
Abstentions	1 (The Chair)

Decision

Kilmelford and Kilninver Community Council will put in a recommendation to object to the proposed wind farm development at Clachan.