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Energy Consents Unit
The Scottish Government

2nd July 2024

KILMUN COMMUNITY COUNCIL, ARGYLL

**SCOPING OPINION REQUEST – GIANT’S BURN WIND FARM PROPOSAL,
ARGYLL & BUTE
Ref ECU00005007**

In reference to your consultation dated 29 February 2024 requesting comments on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed Giant’s Burn Wind Farm We attach a response from Kilmun Community Council.

Kilmun Community Council understand that the Proposal will consist of 9 turbines with a tip height of up to 200 metres (m) along with associated infrastructure. The Proposal will be located on land approximately 2.1km to the northwest of Dunoon in Argyll & Bute, and approximately 3.3km southwest from the boundary of Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park.

“Appropriate renewables in appropriate locations”

On the 11th June 2024 Kilmun Community Council held a meeting at the Younger Hall Kilmun and reorganised their normal meeting to give our residents an opportunity to discuss their concerns about the proposal from Statkraft to build a wind farm at the Giants Burn on the Cowal Hills.

At the end of the meeting a vote was taken about whether the residents approved or objected to the proposal. Only residents who lived in the catchment area of Kilmun Community Council were entitled to vote. Some residents had indicated they wanted to vote by proxy and a small number were online on zoom

6. A Community Vote to support or object to the location of Giant’s Burn Windfarm proposal

All residents, in the hall, online and by proxy voted unanimously to object to Statkraft’s proposal to build a windfarm at Giant’s Burn on the Cowal Hills.

Thus, Kilmun Community Council is taking the lead from our residents will object to the proposal to build a wind farm and Battery Storage facility at Giants Burn

The reasons residents wanted to object to the proposal were as follows:

All points below were made by residents at the meeting. Some residents have a high level of expertise in the areas discussed. The comments can be seen in the transcription of the Kilmun Community Council Meeting of 11th June 2024 which is available on the website of Kilmun Community Council.

<https://www.kilmuncc.co.uk>

The Environment where the Turbines would be located

- The area is on high quality peat (Type A and Type B) which is in itself a carbon sink and with the level of construction proposed this would be destroyed.
- The soil and root structure of the area would be interfered with and there can be an issue with concrete and peat-based soil which can kill the sphagnum moss and questions about this would be able to be recovered later.
- Because the turbines are proposed to be very tall the base of the turbine must be expanded massively, and they must be much bigger at the bottom which increases the concrete footprint needed. In addition, it is not just the turbine base that needs concrete but also for the hardstanding for cranes.
- It is commented by Statkraft there will be environmental run off and pollution which would have a negative effect on the rivers as well as the impact on the volume of run-off water into a drainage system which is already over capacity for the volume of water due to forest felling of the proposed site.

Wildlife

- It is recognised that there are raptors in the area with one habitat for the golden eagle.
- The proposed area contains marginal habitats (trees to open area) which is where birds really like as they can shelter in the woodland and hunt in the open
- There are red squirrels (and pine martins) in the area which can be easily displaced
- Cetaceans (dolphins, porpoises, and seals (resident) and visiting whales which are in the Clyde Estuary at present, are very susceptible to noise of the kind of sounds that come from a windfarm. A resident said they would not be surprised that the cetaceans were chased away from the whole of the Upper Clyde area by the noise from the windfarm.
- It is recognised that long wave sound will travel 10 times further under water than if it was on land.
- Infrasound is regarded as potentially detrimental to physical and mental health.
- In conclusion concerns were being raised not only about the turbines but the impact of the whole building and construction process.

Negative Visual. Impact

- A resident observed that this would be the first thing tourists would see when they visit the area.
- The windfarm would have an extremely negative impact of the visual appearance of the landscape from the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and is Gateway to the Highlands.
- It was said that as the area proposed is on the border of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park (Kilmun Community Council boundaries fall within the National Park) and the entire area is very popular with hikers and walkers. All the tourism that is based on walking, hiking, running and biking would be affected by, not only the sight of the windfarm, but also what would

be involved with the construction and the entire area will be out of bounds for some time.

- The area is a holiday destination because of its natural beauty and has many scenic walks. There are several holiday homes and self-catering properties who contribute to the local economy. Questions were raised about the detrimental effect the proposed wind farm could have on these businesses?
- It was stated that people have moved here because of the unspoiled natural beauty and residents are unhappy with the possible visual destruction of their landscape by a foreign state-owned company to produce electricity which will be exported, as Scotland already produces enough for its domestic market. In addition, profits generated would not stay in Scotland.
- Most residents were in favour of renewables, but it does depend on the location and that as a previous windfarm planning application was rejected as this was not a suitable site. The difference before and now is that these proposed turbines would be even higher. It has been stated by the Scottish Government that they want “**Appropriate renewables in appropriate locations**” and the consensus of our community is that the proposed location is not appropriate.

Noise / Flicker

- Many questions were posed regarding potential noise. What will the noise be like? Are we likely to hear the sound over here (in Kilmun) as well as in Sandbank? What will it be like at night as sound travels more at night when the temperatures are colder.
- The problem of low frequency sounds was raised and how this can affect the body and the possibility of infra sound which is lower than human hearing which possibly could be possibly quite injurious. This was felt was an aspect of the windfarm that needed to be investigated.
- Concern is about the flicker effect not only for here but from Gourock looking across. This has been an issue in other areas. It can be affected by certain times of the year when the sun is going down and can be seen from several miles away.
- As the proposed turbines are to be very high there were concerns raised about the lights which will be on the turbines which will shine through the night and of Flickering lights and a low booming sound

Transportation

- Concern was raised about the feasibility of transporting large turbines via the road network to the proposed location. The feasibility of transporting large blades to a site that does not have the infrastructure to do that. The increased use and slow traffic on roads which are not wide, could affect both tourism and the accessibility for the emergency services.
- Concern was raised about how often windfarms are being extended after they have been built.