

Development and Infrastructure Services
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Our Ref: 12/02202/PP
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11 December 2012

Giliane Mallia
SAC Commercial
Pentland Building
Bush Estate
Penicuik
EH26 0PH

Dear Ms Mallia

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED)

APPLICANT: Mr Adrian Tear

PROPOSAL: Erection of 3 wind turbines (74 metres high to blade tip) and turbine control building, formation of access road and hardstanding areas.

SITE ADDRESS: Ascog Farm, Balmory Road, Ascog, Isle of Bute, Argyll And Bute

I refer to the application (ref: 12/02202/PP) recently submitted in respect of the above. I also refer to our telephone discussion this morning.

Firstly, I can advise that, at the time of writing, the application has attracted a total of 571 representations – 504 objectors; 64 supporters; and 3 neither objecting nor supporting. Given the volume of representations, the application will require to be considered by the Council's Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee. In considering the application, the Committee will debate whether a discretionary hearing should take place prior to a decision being made. Without prejudice to the deliberations of the Committee, it is entirely conceivable that a hearing would take place given the level of interest that the proposal has generated.

Two consultation responses have been received recently which are of significance. Firstly, the Environmental Health Officer has provided his comments and a copy of these are enclosed. As you will note, a considerable amount of further work will be necessary to allow a full assessment of the noise impact of the proposal. I understand from our conversation today that your noise consultants are in direct contact with Mr Gorman and that there is recognition that further information will be required.

The second important consultation response is from Scottish Natural Heritage and a copy of their letter dated 10th December 2012 is also enclosed. As you will note, Scottish Natural Heritage have serious concerns regarding the scale of the turbines and layout of the proposed development.

This Department shares the views of Scottish Natural Heritage and also recommends that three further viewpoints require assessment. The first would be from the public road that runs to the immediate west of the application site and it might be reasonable to utilise the road adjacent to the dwellinghouse known as 'Braeside' as the main viewpoint.

The second assessment should be taken from the B881 public road that leads to the southern approach to Rothesay, at a point somewhere between the property known as '*Lochend*' and the property known as '*Crossbeg*'.

The third assessment relates to a viewpoint from the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay ferry crossing. I acknowledge the comments that you have made in your e-mail dated 3rd December 2012 regarding the difficulties of achieving a suitable field of view from a moving ferry. However, I am sure that you would agree that the proximity of the site to one of the key entrances to the Isle of Bute is an important issue that should be evaluated. I would be extremely grateful if you could give consideration as to how an assessment of this viewpoint could be technically achieved.

Given the concerns expressed by Scottish Natural Heritage (and shared by this Department) based upon the information already submitted in the Environmental Statement, it is unlikely that the further viewpoints which have been requested will diminish the concern at the visual impact of the proposed turbines. Furthermore, the significant additional work relating to the assessment of noise impact may not necessarily come to a favourable conclusion from the applicant's perspective. It is, of course, your prerogative to provide the necessary information but this may not be sufficient to overcome the significant concerns which the Department has.

I would be grateful if you could give the above comments your consideration and provide an answer to the following three questions:

- i. Please advise whether you wish to continue with the application or arrange for it to be withdrawn;
- ii. If you wish to continue, will you be arranging for the outstanding information to be submitted or do you wish the application to be determined as submitted;
- iii. If you intend to submit further information, what will be the timescale for this to be submitted to the Council.

I would be grateful for your response by 21st December 2012. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss any of the foregoing.

Yours sincerely

Planning Officer
Bute & Cowal
Development Management