

Energy & Climate Change Directorate
Energy Division

T: 0300-244 1258
E: lesley.mcneil@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Mr Donald Ross
Druim Ba Sustainable Energy
24 Great King Street
EDINBURGH
EH6 6QN



16 July 2013

Dear Mr Ross

REFUSAL OF CONSENT BY SCOTTISH MINISTERS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE DRUIM BA WIND POWERED ELECTRICITY GENERATING STATION NEAR DRUMNADROCHIT IN THE HIGHLANDS, IN THE PLANNING AREA OF THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL.

I refer to the Application made by Druim Ba Sustainable Energy Limited ("the Applicant") received on 16 March 2011 for consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 ("the Act") for construction and operation of Druim Ba wind farm electricity generating station on land within Druim Ba forest on the Blairmore Estate, 6 km north of Drumnadrochit, in the planning area of Highland Council, with a generating capacity of up to 69MW.

Consultation

In accordance with statutory requirements, advertisements of the Application had to be placed in the local and national press. The Scottish Ministers are satisfied that these requirements have been met.

Under Schedule 8 of the Act, the relevant planning authority is required to be notified in respect of a section 36 consent Application. Notifications were sent to The Highland Council as the Planning Authority, as well as to Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

A moderate level of public representations, including those from local residents, local objector groups and local Community Councils, has been received in relation to this development with 342 objecting and 437 representations in support. There is further information in relation to public representations below. The details of the main concerns and opinions expressed in the responses received from consultees are summarised in **Annex A** to this letter.

Public Local Inquiry

The planning authority, The Highland Council, objected to the proposal, and as the objection was not withdrawn, a public inquiry was held in accordance with paragraph 2 of Schedule 8 to the Act.

The Inquiry was held with Inquiry sessions occurring between 26 June 2012 and 4 July 2012 at Kiltarlity Village Hall. The Reporter, Mr Dan Jackman, conducted an accompanied site inspection, including inspection of adjoining residential properties, on 5 July 2012. The Reporter carried out unaccompanied site inspections of the area before, during and after the Inquiry sessions.

Main issues, findings and recommendations of the report.

The Reporter identified the key determining issues as:

- the need for the wind farm and national energy policy and guidance, and
- its environmental and other impacts (including landscape and visual impact upon the residential amenities of nearby houses and impact on tourism) bearing in mind the development plan, other policy guidance and the duties set out in Schedule 9

The Reporter's findings, conclusions and recommendations are set out in Chapter 8 of the PLI Report. He recommends that the Application for section 36 consent and deemed planning permission should be refused.

Environmental matters

In accordance with the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2000 the Applicant submitted an environmental statement in relation to the Application. The environmental information, as defined in those Regulations, has been taken into consideration by the Scottish Ministers. They are satisfied that the applicable procedures regarding publicity and consultation laid down in the Regulations have been followed.

In considering the Application, the Scottish Ministers have had regard to the desirability of the matters mentioned in paragraph 3(1)(a) of Schedule 9 to the Act and the extent to which the Applicant has done what it reasonably can to mitigate the effects that the wind farm would have on the natural beauty of the countryside and on flora, fauna and sites, buildings or objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest.

Scottish Ministers' Considerations

The Scottish Ministers have considered fully the Application, the environmental information, representations by consultees and other parties and the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Reporter. They are satisfied that they have enough information to allow them to determine the application.

Scottish Ministers agree with the Reporter on the key determining issues to be considered.

In general Scottish Ministers adopt the findings of the Reporter as their own, and agree with the Reporter that the scale of the detrimental environmental impacts of the proposed scheme outweighs its benefits.

Scottish Planning Policy

Scottish Ministers aim to achieve a thriving renewables industry in Scotland, the focus being to enhance Scotland's manufacturing capacity to develop new indigenous industries, particularly in rural areas, and to provide significant export opportunities.

They support the development of wind farms in locations where the technology can operate efficiently and environmental and cumulative impacts can be satisfactorily addressed. The criteria to be considered when considering applications for wind farms will vary depending on the scale of development and its relationship to the characteristics of the surrounding area. The design and location of any wind farm development should reflect the scale and character of the landscape. The location of turbines should be considered carefully to ensure that the landscape and visual impact is minimised.

Local Planning Policy – The Highland Council

The proposed development was assessed against the principal policy of the Highland Wide Development Plan, adopted in April 2012. Policy 67 - Renewable Energy Developments and Policy 28 – Sustainable Design are directly relevant to this proposal. Policy 67 is supportive of renewable energy development proposals, provided the Council can be satisfied that the location site and design would not be significantly detrimental overall, individually or cumulatively, having regard to 11 criteria. Policy 28 is a general policy and is supportive of developments which promote and enhance the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the people of Highland. Developments which are judged to be significantly detrimental in terms of the criteria will not accord with this Local Development Plan. Not all the 13 detailed criteria are relevant to a wind farm but some are, such as impact on residential amenity, impact of pollution and impact on the natural environment.

Scottish Ministers agree with the Inquiry Reporters View that the proposal is contrary to elements of the Highland Wide Local Development Plan.

Landscape and visual impact (including cumulative impact and impact on residential amenity)

Over two thirds of the objections received by Scottish Ministers were on the grounds of the detrimental impact the proposal would have on the landscape, the visual impact of the proposal, the proposal's proximity to settlements, the effect on the local amenity and the scale of the windfarm and turbines.

View of the Applicant

The site is not subject to any of the designations where wind farms should generally be avoided. The site location means it is contained from the south, west and east and views from Glen Urquhart and Loch Ness are screened. There are no large

settlements nearby and it is considered the large scale and simple nature of the landscape has the capacity to accommodate for the number and height of turbines proposed. Landscape and visual impacts are relatively localised and proportionate and not unusual for a proposal of this nature.

With regard to height, turbines must clear the trees so the forest dictates the height of turbines. Further, keyholing has a number of visual benefits, including the fact that it reduces the perception of the height of the turbines. If smaller turbines were used there would have to be more of them and the forest would have to be felled.

There would be no significant effect on any of the designated landscapes. There would be significant effects on only two landscape character types. These effects would only be local and would not extend to the whole landscape character type. There would be no cumulative landscape effects.

With regard to visual amenity, only 6 viewpoints would experience significant effects, only two would experience significant cumulative effects and only one would experience significant sequential cumulative effects.

The landscape and visual impact, including the cumulative impact, are limited and contained. They are proportionate and not unusual for a proposal of this nature. SNH did not object to this proposal.

With regard to local visual amenity, 27 residential properties would experience either major or moderate significant adverse visual effects. However, the impact is not so dominant, overbearing, overwhelming and oppressive that any of the properties would become an unattractive place to live. Views would be changed but not to the extent the proposal would be unacceptable.

Highland Council's View

The Council state the Applicant's landscape and visual assessments understate the degree of significance and that some impacts are adverse to a degree that is unacceptable. The visualisations provided by the Applicant understate the vertical scale of the proposal and the treatment of the existing forest is unrealistic because the existing forest will not remain more or less intact, which is what is implied in the assessment. Having visited viewpoints the Council are of the view that the impact would extend beyond 3km and, bearing in mind the large volume of receptors, would be unacceptable.

The Applicant's assessment of cumulative impact cannot be relied on because it omits two wind farms.

With regard to visual impact and residential community the Council is of the view that the Applicant's assessment is inadequate because the properties in question were not visited, the cumulative impact on nearby residents was not assessed, the nearest property is only 1017 metres away and in many cases all 23 turbines can be seen. The Council concluded there are too many turbines that are too high and too close to nearby residential properties and communities.

SNH's View

They agreed with the Applicant's assessment that there will be no significant landscape and visual impacts on any designated landscapes, and stated the siting and the layout of turbines do relate to the surrounding landscape. They did however, advise Ministers that the height of the proposed turbines does not reflect the scale and character of the immediate landscape features within the Rocky Moorland Plateau landscape and will have significant impacts on the landscape to the north. The wind farm would become a dominant element and create a confusing sense of perspective – contrary to para 187 of SPP. Smaller turbines would reduce the landscape and visual impacts but may have implications for woodland cover and scale of compensatory woodland required.

Druim Ba Say No's View

Druim Ba Say No considers that the proposal would have significant detrimental impacts, would not demonstrate sensitive siting and design and has not minimised the environmental impact. The Applicant's assessment understates the number of significant visual and landscape effects. The landscape and visual impacts would be unacceptable, not only across Glen Covinith but also in respect of nearby residential properties. Impacts would be much greater than suggested in the Applicant's assessments.

Combined Community Council Group's view

Combined Community Council Group state the turbines are too tall, too many and too close to houses and communities. The development would have adverse landscape and visual effects because of its dominance. Its impacts have been exaggerated, not mitigated, by virtue of misguided design choices. A significant number of people, including nearby residents and visitors, would appreciate these effects. This is inconsistent with Scottish Government and SNH guidelines.

Local Residents Group's view

Local Residents Group state the Environmental statement and local visual assessment underestimate the impact of the amenity of a large number of residential properties up to 3km from the site. Landscape and visual impacts would be unacceptable and the proposed turbines are too tall, too many and too close to houses and communities. There is overpowering evidence of adverse impact to residential amenity, including visual, noise and construction impacts

Reporter's findings

The Reporter found that with regard to landscape, the proposal would result in significant effects on the rocky moorland plateau and enclosed farmland character types. Due to the height and number of turbines these landscape effects are considered to be harmful. The proposal does not represent a good landscape fit and would be out scale with its surroundings.

With regard to visual effects the Reporter found that there are significant effects at 10 out of 25 agreed representative viewpoints, that the visual effects are harmful because the height and number of turbines introduce an excessively dominant visual feature and that the development's visual impact is emphasised because it would be out of scale with its surroundings.

The design choices made have exaggerated the landscape and visual impacts and have not minimised them.

The fact that 27 properties would experience either major or moderate significant adverse visual effects reinforces the Reporter's view that the overall landscape and visual impact of the proposal is unacceptable.

View of Scottish Ministers

The Scottish Ministers agree with the Reporter's findings and conclusions that the Drumm Ba development would have significant adverse landscape and visual impacts which are unreasonable and unacceptable.

Noise

Applicant's View

The night time limit of 43dB(A) set by ETSU-R-97 can be met in most cases and where there is a very marginal breach of this limit, it would be controlled through appropriate curtailment measures. Similarly, very few properties would breach the quiet day time limit of 35 to 40dB(A) and in those limited cases curtailment to achieve 40dB(A) is possible. There are relatively few properties nearby.

Subject to conditions suggested by the Applicant an acceptable degree of amenity would be safeguarded at all properties and a significant noise impact will not occur at any of the properties.

Highland Council's view

The lower ETSU-R-97 day time limit of 35dB(A) should be used and there are approximately 30 properties where that would be exceeded. With regard to night time the ETSU-R-97 limits are based on 1980 WHO guidelines but these were updated after ETSU-R-97 was published. Taking the updated WHO limits into account, the night time limit should be 38dB(A).

Drumm Ba Say No's view

Drumm ba Say No has concerns that the background noise levels are actually lower than assumed in the new study (DB 7.1). Up to 40 properties would experience levels over 35 dB(A). The appropriate levels for day and night time should be 35dB(A) because ETSU-R-97 allows that if the background noise levels for day and night are similar, which is the case at Drumm Ba. With regard to curtailment, mitigation by way of conditions is not practical.

Reporter's findings

The Reporter found that the Applicant did not provide sufficient justification for the use of the 40dB(A) lower day time limit, bearing in mind the very quiet background noise levels. The lower limit of 35dB(A) would be most appropriate. The Reporter found that there are over 40 properties where predicted noise levels would exceed this. It is unlikely that the wind farm could operate and meet the 35dB(A) limit without having to turn individual turbines off and it is undesirable to construct a wind farm and then have turbines not operate. The difficulty the proposal has in meeting acceptable noise limits is a function of the design choices made regarding the height and number of turbines. The likely noise from the wind farm would contribute to the detrimental effects on the amenity of several nearby properties.

Scottish Ministers' view

Scottish Ministers agree with the Reporter's findings and conclusion.

Tourism

View of Applicant

The Applicant states the concerns over the proposals effect on tourism are misplaced and that there is no evidence that wind farms have any significant impact on tourism. The Major research project sponsored by the Scottish Government concludes that wind farms do not have significant effects on tourism. The proposal would have tourism and recreational benefits.

Combined Community Council Group

The Combined Community Group are disappointed a tourism impact assessment was not prepared. The proposal will damage tourism and recreational interests and with it the local economy. It would deter others from creating the sustainable successful local business and social enterprises of the future, causing economic harm. The anticipated economic benefits of the proposal should be treated with caution.

View of the Reporter

The Reporter concluded impact on tourism is closely related to the overall landscape and visual impact. Tourists may experience the effect, but that if wind farms systematically deterred the numbers and spend from tourists then it is reasonable to assume evidence for this would be available. However he found no compelling evidence to conclude that the construction of a well-designed wind farm would have any significant impact on the number of tourists or spend from tourists.

Scottish Ministers' view

Scottish Ministers agree with the Reporter's conclusions on this issue.

Renewable Energy Benefits

The proposed project if consented could result in an increase in the amount of renewable energy produced in Scotland which is consistent with the Government's policy on the promotion of renewable energy and its target to generate 100% of Scotland's electricity demand from renewable sources by 2020. Scottish Government Officials estimate the wind farm would provide electricity for up to approximately 32,568 homes.

Environmental benefits of the proposal would accrue through the displacement of fossil fuels. The potential reduction in CO² emissions has been estimated by the developer to be over 0.114 mega tonnes per year over its 25 year operational life.

Although the scheme would bring clear renewable energy benefits, Scottish Ministers consider that these are outweighed by the adverse environmental impacts identified.

Economic Benefits

SPP advises that economic benefits are material issues which must be taken into account as part of the determination process. In this regard, the applicant considers that the benefits accrued would be:

- 1 Potential opportunities for direct benefit to the local community through a community fund. The 69 MW project is estimated approximately £310,500 per annum in Community Benefit.
- 2 Almost 1,000 ftes (full-time equivalent job years) are expected to be generated in Scotland by the project of which a high proportion (88%) would be work available to residents in the Highland area.
- 3 More than £20 million would be generated in the Highland area.
- 4 Approximately £40 million of GVA (gross value added) is expected to be generated in Scotland.
- 5 The construction phase is expected to generate an average of more than 50 ftes per year over two years in the Highland Area, more than 75 ftes per year in Scotland over the two year period.
- 6 The long term employment benefits from the project, however, will exceed the short term construction stage impacts, with potential job creation over 25 years totalling 450 ftes in the Highland area through community Fund Grants, and 170 ftes through active management of the forest funded by the project revenues, in addition to 100 annual maintenance and other operational ftes.

Although the scheme would bring clear economic benefits, Scottish Ministers consider that these are outweighed by the adverse environmental impacts identified.

Public Representations

Representations from members of the public are a material consideration in the determination of applications under The Electricity Act. In considering this topic Ministers have had cognisance of the nature of the approximate 779 public representations received during the consideration of the application, which included objections made by Abriachan Forest Trust, Glen Urquhart Community Council, Inverness West Community Council, Kilmorack Community Council, Kiltarlity Community Council and the Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society. 342 of these representations were objections with the majority raising issues covering potential detrimental impact the development may have on the visual amenity of nearby properties, landscape, tourism, local economy, wildlife and habitat. The scale and location of the turbines, noise, traffic and devaluation of property were also amongst issues raised.

Support was received from 437 individuals which included Beaully Community Council and Inverness Chamber of Commerce. Some of the reasons provided for support stated that the development is in a good location, helps meet climate change targets, clean source of energy, good source of energy, creates jobs and good for tourism.

Scottish Ministers are satisfied that some of the environmental issues could be appropriately addressed by way of mitigation, but are not satisfied that the benefits of

the development outweigh the remaining significant adverse landscape and visual impacts to the surrounding area, the visual impact from nearby properties and likely noise impacts on the residential amenity of nearby properties.

The Scottish Ministers' Determination

In reaching their decision, the Scottish Ministers have taken into account the environmental information submitted with the Application, including the Environmental Statement, the representations made by statutory consultative bodies and other representations received.

Scottish Ministers have also considered the Reporter's findings, conclusions and recommendations. Scottish Ministers agree with and adopt the Reporter's findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Accordingly, the Scottish Ministers **refuse the Application for consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989.**

In accordance with the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2000, the Applicant must publicise this determination for two successive weeks in the Edinburgh Gazette and one or more newspapers circulating in the locality in which the land to which the Application relates is situated.

A copy of this letter has been sent to the Planning Authority, The Highland Council. This letter along with the Public Local report has also been published on the Scottish Government Energy Consents and Deployment Unit website.

The Scottish Ministers' decision is final, subject to the right of any aggrieved person to apply to the Court of Session for judicial review. Judicial review is the mechanism by which the Court of Session supervises the exercise of administrative functions, including how the Scottish Ministers exercise their statutory function to determine Applications for consent. The rules relating to the judicial review process can be found on the website of the Scottish Courts –

<http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/session/rules/print/rules/CHAP58.pdf>

Your local Citizens' Advice Bureau or your solicitor will be able to advise you about the applicable procedures.

Yours sincerely


LESLEY MCNEIL

Branch Manager, Energy Consents and Deployment Unit
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers

Annex A

The main concerns and opinions expressed in the responses received from consultees are summarised.

Statutory Consultees

1. Following consultation **Highland Council** (a statutory consultee and Planning Authority) at a meeting of the Inverness, Nairn and Badenoch and Strathspey Planning Applications Committee on the 20 September 2011, the Council **objected** to this development stating:

- the development conflicts with policies E2 and G2 of the approved Highland Structure plan and Policy 68 of the draft Highland wide Local Development Plan as its size and massing would have a significant detrimental visual impact on properties/communities immediately adjacent to the site (north and south)
- The development conflicts with the Loch Ness (1) sub area identified within the Draft Supplementary Guidance: Onshore Wind Energy, April 2011. This policy seeks to prevent large scale wind farm cluster from growing to a point where it impinges upon views in the Great Glen; avoiding mirroring of wind farms from one side to other and to provide a respite gap/a protection area extending northwards from the Great Glen to beyond Cannich and Beaully to create a visual break from large scale wind farm development

2. This decision was entirely consistent with the Planning Services report to the Committee. The report highlighted that the Council reserved its position on several detailed matters including noise impact and the stability of the forest to withstand the effects of keyholing and the visual impact of key-holing.

3. On 24 April 2012, Highland Council updated their reasons for objections following subsequent changes to the statutory development plan and council policy. The updated reasons were as follows:

- The development conflicts with Policy 28 Sustainable Design and Policy 67 Renewable Energy Developments of the Highland wide Local Development Plan adopted on 5 April 2012 as its size and massing would have a significantly detrimental visual impact on properties/communities adjacent to the site (north, east and south).
- Taking into account cumulative impact of other wind farm developments particularly to the south of Loch Ness/Great Glen and to the north Fairburn/Garve/Easter Ross, this area at Druim Ba is seen as having no capacity to absorb large scale wind farm development as proposed, in light of the need to provide visual respite/a protection area extending northwards from the Great Glen to beyond Cannich

4. **Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (a statutory consultee)** commented that it only objects to proposals where there are natural heritage impacts of national

significance that cannot be avoided. SNH confirm no such impacts arise in this case. In relation to designated sites, SNH confirmed there would be no adverse impacts on the integrity of either the North Inverness Lochs Special Protection Area or the Balnagrathach Site of Special Scientific Interest but Scottish Government Energy Consents & Deployment Unit is required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment in view of the site's conservation objectives for the SPA's qualifying interest the Slavonian Grebe. SNH recommended conditions in order to mitigate impacts on European and nationally protected species in the form of a species protection plan covering otters, wild cats, red squirrels, pine martins and reptiles. SNH also suggested conditions for an ecological clerk of works, decommissioning and to avoid areas of deep peat they recommend the location of 1 turbine and crane pad/ access pad for another turbine to be reconsidered.

In relation to the landscape and visual impacts, Scottish Natural Heritage would agree with the Applicant that there would be no significant effects upon Cairngorm National Park, Glen Strathfarrar NSA and Glen Affric NSA. SNH also agreed there would be no significant impacts on the Moor Hills search area for wild land (SAWL) or the Monadhliath Mountains SAWL. They agreed the proposal would not affect the special landscape qualities of the Loch Ness SLA or impact on other SLA in the study area.

SNH state a key issue in relation to the character of the landscape around Druim Ba is its vast scale, how the turbines might change the perception of openness and the difficulty they might present in perceiving the true scale of the landscape. From viewpoints on A862 the turbines will often lie on the skyline appearing nearer than they are SNH stated the proposed 149.5m turbines would be out of scale with other elements within this landscape, becoming a dominant element in the landscape and creating a confusing sense of perspective. This is contrary to SNH's own guidance on "siting and designing wind farms in landscape". Lower turbines would reduce the landscape and visual impact of the proposal but would have other design implications. SNH therefore advise that the size of the proposed turbines are out of scale with the existing landscape features within the Rocky Moorland Plateau landscapes and will have impacts out to the Farmed Strath landscapes beyond.

SNH are also not clear how the woodland will be managed over the lifetime of the wind farm. If consent is granted, further information should be required by condition. There will be limited cumulative impacts with this proposal and existing wind farms. When travelling south on the A9 from Tain there is sequential visual impact from constructed and approved developments. The stretch of road from Tore to south of Inverness is currently free from visual impacts from turbines and creates a break. Consenting this development would fill the current gap. **Overall SNH does considers that the size of the turbines does not reflect the scale and character of the immediate landscape features and will have significant impacts on landscape features and will have significant impacts on landscapes to the north SNH do not consider the proposal, as submitted maintains a good standard of wind farm design.**

5. The hydrological impacts of the development have been assessed by the **Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)** (a statutory consultee) did not object to the Application subject to mitigation conditions that include addressing

ground water interests and pollution prevention.

Non Statutory Consultees

6. **Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB)** comments that the proposal could have impacts on watercourses, water quality and on migratory and other fish species, particularly during construction. The proposed development should be conducted in full consultation with the Beaully District Salmon Fishery.

7. **British Telecom** has indicated the project would not interfere with BT's current and presently planned radio networks.

8. **Civil Aviation Authority** had no objection and confirmed that if the turbines were below 150 m in height there would be no need for aviation warning lighting from a civil perspective. Any turbines or cranes etc. over 91.4 m in height would need to be marked on aeronautical charts to enable pilots to plan their routes safely. This can be achieved by notifying the Defence Geographic Centre, which maintains the UK database of aeronautical obstructions, and should be implemented through a planning condition if necessary.

9. **Forestry Commission Scotland** comments that the site was previously under various Woodland Grant Schemes. Felling has been carried out under these schemes but not restocking. There is no objection provided that a condition requiring a forestry plan to be submitted and agreed before work commences. This should include:

- The restocking of areas previously felled
- A restructuring plan taking into account the new turbine areas, the areas for other associated buildings, compounds and the new tracks. The plan must consider restructuring and management of the remainder of the woodland area and follow the best practice guidance on forest plans
- The areas of compensatory planting demonstrating the public benefits being lost and the benefits to come from the compensatory areas proposed.

10. **Halcrow Group Limited** technically assessed the information in the environmental statement regarding peat stability. It was concluded that the information provided was a sufficiently robust assessment of peat landslide risk. Out of 12 locations, only one was identified as significant for peat landslide occurrence, therefore Halcrow suggested site specific conditions are attached to any consent.

11. **Highlands and Islands Airport Limited** had no objection after it was confirmed that the site would not be visible to the Inverness radar installation.

12. **Historic Scotland** is content that any impacts on statutory historic environment interests are not at such a level of significance to warrant an objection to the proposal.

13. **NATS (En Route) Public Limited Company (NERL)** had no objection to the proposal.

14. **Ness and Beaully Fisheries Trust and Beaully District Fisheries Board** provided a joint response. They do not object to the proposal provided safeguards are in place to ensure against the deterioration of water quality in local watercourses of the Moniack and the Beaully River systems. Regular sampling of the aquatic environment needs to be made a condition of any consent before, during and after construction with regular liaison to consider the implications arising from the collected data.

15. **Ministry of Defence** did not object to the proposal, but in the interests of air safety, the Ministry of Defence requests that the turbines be fitted with aviation lighting. The corner most turbines and several turbines in the middle of the proposal should be fitted with 25 candela omni-directional red lighting or infrared lighting with an optimised flash pattern of 60 flashes per minute of 200 – 500 ms duration at the highest practical point. If consent were granted the Ministry of Defence would like to be informed when construction starts and ends, height of construction equipment and the latitude and longitude of every turbine.

16. **Marine Scotland Science – Freshwater Laboratory** had concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposal on salmon and trout in the River Beaully, particularly during construction. Best practice needs to be followed to avoid any impacts. A robust monitoring regime is necessary before, during and after construction, including suitable control sampling points likely to be unaffected. Where sampling indicates likely problems quick action must be taken.

17. **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds** does not object to the proposal providing that a Slovenian Grebe Conservation Plan is agreed by interested parties and made subject to a legally binding Section 75 agreement.

18. **Trunk Roads Network Management Division** had no objection to the proposal following assessment of the expected impact on parts of the Trunk Road Network.

19. **Visit Scotland** had no objection to the proposal. However, they highlighted the importance of tourism to the Scottish economy, and of Scotland's landscape in attracting visitors to Scotland. Visit Scotland requested any detrimental impact on tourism be considered fully, particularly when making decisions over turbine height and numbers.

20. **The Mountaineering Council of Scotland** had no comments, and **British Telecom, The Crown Estate, Ofcom, and the Joint Radio Company** all had no objection.