

Agenda Item	<b>5.4</b>
Report No	<b>PLN/050/21</b>

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** North Planning Applications Committee  
**Date:** 10 August 2021  
**Report Title:** 21/02801/PAN Bettyhill 2 Wind Limited  
Land 2375M SW Of Cairnview, Bettyhill  
**Report By:** Area Planning Manager – North

### **Purpose/Executive Summary**

**Description:** Bettyhill Wind Farm Extension - Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 35 years, comprising 11 wind turbines with a generating capacity of up to 50MW, access track, borrow pits, sub-station, control building and ancillary infrastructure.

**Ward:** 01 – North, West and Central Sutherland

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the submission of the PAN and highlight any material issues they wish to be brought to the attention of the applicant before the submission of an application for planning permission.

## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 This report informs the Planning Applications Committee of the submission of the attached Proposal of Application Notice (PAN).
- 1.2 The submission of the PAN accords with the provisions of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and was made valid on 07 June 2021. The PAN is a statutory requirement for planning applications for major or national developments and must be lodged at least 12 weeks prior to the submission of a planning application. Members are asked to note this may form the basis of a subsequent planning application.
- 1.3 The submitted information attached includes:
- Proposal of Application Notice (Application Form); and
  - Location Plan
- 1.4 The applicant undertook a public consultation event in Bettyhill Village Hall on 8 July 2021 and then held a virtual event on 15 July 2021 which will allow members of the public to engage in live discussion. The applicant is also going to undertake a second virtual event in September 2021.
- 1.6 The consultation was to be publicised and advertised in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements with adverts to be placed in the Ross-shire Journal and Press and Journal. The Planning Authority has confirmed that the adverts must be placed in the newspapers at least 7 days before each of the two consultation events. A maildrop will also be undertaken by the applicant to make people aware of the proposed development. The catchment area for this distribution will be within 10km of the site and to include all residents within the Bettyhill, Strathnaver and Altnaharra Community Council and Tongue, Strathy and Melvich Community Council areas.
- 1.7 The forthcoming application will be accompanied by a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) report explaining the consultation undertaken, feedback received, and any resultant amendments made to the planning application.

## **2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 2.1 The PAN provides notice of the developer's intention to submit a planning application classified as a Major Development. The proposed development is for the erection and operation of a eleven turbine wind energy development with the capacity to generate up to 50MW. The development will likely comprise wind turbines, access tracks, substation, control building, borrow pits, cabling and associated infrastructure.
- 2.2 The developer has been advised to seek pre-application advice from the Planning Authority through the Council's Pre-Application Advice Service for Major Developments prior to lodging any application.

### 3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The proposed development is located approximately 2km south east of Bettyhill and 10.8km west of Strathy. The development is on an area of open moorland adjacent to the original Bettyhill Wind Farm which comprises of two wind turbines at 110m to blade tip height. Based on knowledge of the area much of the site will likely be covered in peat.
- 3.2 There is an existing access to the site from the A836 which would require to be upgraded to serve the development as it currently is used for estate use and maintenance of the existing wind energy development. The area to the south of the proposed development is sparsely populated but there are a number of small settlements including Crask, Clerkhill, Farr, Swordly and Armadale to the north and north east of the site. There are no core paths located within or adjacent to the site, however the North Coast 500 and National Cycle Network 1 lies to the north of the site boundary.
- 3.3 To the eastern boundary of the site it abuts the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Special Protection Area, Ramsar site and Special Area of Conservation, as well as its component Sites of Special Scientific Interest. The area is rich in built and cultural heritage features with a number of these falling within the site boundary.
- 3.4 The site sits across two landscape character types: Rocky Hills and Moorland; and Sweeping Moorland Flows. The Kyle of Tongue National Scenic Area lies to the north west of the site. The Farr Bay, Strathy and Portskerra Special Landscape Area is to the north and north east of the site. Wild Land Area 38 Ben Hope – Ben Loyal is located to the west of the site.
- 3.5 When assessing a wind farm proposal, consideration of similar developments in proximity of the proposal for cumulative effects is required. The list below sets out some of the developments in the wider area which will require to be considered by the applicant in their cumulative assessments. However, the final list of developments to be considered by the applicant in their cumulative assessments will be subject to agreement with officers in due course:

#### Operational

- Bettyhill 1 – 3 turbines at 110m to blade tip height (1.2km north)
- Strathy North – 33 turbines at 110m to blade tip height (3.5km east)

#### Consented / Under Construction

- Strathy South – 39 Turbines at 135m to blade tip height (6.5km south-east)
- Limekiln – 21 turbines at 126-139m to blade tip height (22.5km east)

#### In Planning

- Strathy Wood – 13 turbines at 180m to blade tip height (THC raised objection) (7.6km east)
- Ackron – 12 turbines at 149.9m to blade tip height (16.5km east)

- Drum Hollistan 2 – 7 Turbines at 135m to blade tip height (18.9km east) (at appeal following refusal of application)
- Strathy South Variation – 39 Turbines at 200m to blade tip height (6.5km south-east) (THC Raised No objection subject to mitigation)
- Limekiln Variation – 21 Turbines at 149.9m to blade tip height (22.5km east)

#### **4.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the proposal:

##### **4.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan (2012)**

- 28 - Sustainable Design
- 29 - Design Quality & Place-making
- 30 - Physical Constraints
- 31 - Developer Contributions
- 51 - Trees and Development
- 53 - Minerals
- 54 - Mineral Wastes
- 55 - Peat and Soils
- 56 - Travel
- 57 - Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage
- 58 - Protected Species
- 59 - Other important Species
- 60 - Other Importance Habitats
- 61 - Landscape
- 63 - Water Environment
- 64 - Flood Risk
- 65 - Waste Water Treatment
- 66 - Surface Water Drainage
- 67 - Renewable Energy Developments:
  - Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
  - Other Species and Habitat Interests
  - Landscape and Visual Impact
  - Amenity at Sensitive Locations
  - Safety and Amenity of Individuals and Individual Properties
  - The Water Environment
  - Safety of Airport, Defence and Emergency Service Operations
  - The Operational Efficiency of Other Communications
  - The Quantity and Quality of Public Access
  - Other Tourism and Recreation Interests
  - Traffic and Transport Interests
- 68 - "Community" Renewable Energy Developments
- 69 - Electricity Transmission Infrastructure
- 72 - Pollution
- 73 - Air Quality
- 77 - Public Access

#### 4.2 **Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan, 2018 (CaSPlan)**

- No specific policies relevant

#### 4.3 **Highland Council Supplementary Guidance**

- Developer Contributions (Nov 2018)
- Physical Constraints (March 2013)
- Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (Mar 2013)
- Managing Waste in New Developments (Mar 2013)
- Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (May 2013)
- Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)
- Trees, Woodlands and Development (Jan 2013)
- Renewable Energy Strategy (May 2006)
- Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects (August 2010)

#### 4.4 **Scottish Government Policy and Other Guidance**

- Scottish Planning Policy (Jun 2014)
- National Planning Framework 3, NPF3 (Jun 2014) and the emerging content of NPF4
- PAN 33 – Development of contaminated land (Dec 2017)
- PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (Jan 2008)
- PAN 61 – Sustainable Drainage Systems (Jul 2001)
- PAN 64 - Reclamation of surface mineral workings
- PAN 68 – Design Statements (Aug 2003)
- PAN 75 – Planning for Transport (Aug 2005)
- PAN 1/2011 – Planning and Noise
- Energy Storage Planning Advice (July 2013)
- 2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy in Scotland

### 5.0 **POTENTIAL MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- a) Development Plan and other planning policy;
- b) Energy and Economic Benefits;
- c) Construction;
- d) Roads, Transport and Access;
- e) Water, Flood Risk, Drainage and Peat;
- f) Natural Heritage (including Ornithology);
- g) Built and Cultural Heritage;
- h) Design, Landscape and Visual Impact (including Wild Land Areas and cumulative impact);
- i) Noise and Shadow Flicker;
- j) Telecommunications; Aviation; and
- k) Any other material considerations raised within representations.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

6.1 The report presents the information submitted to date as part of the PAN. Summarised are the policy considerations against which any future planning application will be considered as well as the potential material planning considerations and key issues based on the information available to date. The list is not exhaustive and further matters may arise as and when a planning application is received and in the light of public representations and consultation responses.

## **7.0 IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Not applicable.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 It is recommended the Committee notes the submission of the PAN and advises of any material issues it wishes to be brought to the applicant's attention.

Designation: Area Planning Manager – North

Author: Simon Hindson

Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 – Proposal of Application Notice Form  
Plan 2 - Location Plan - Figure 1

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008

**The Council will respond within 21 days of receiving the Notice. It will advise whether the proposed Pre-application Consultation is satisfactory or if additional notification and consultation above the statutory minimum is required. Please note that a planning application for this proposed development cannot be submitted less than 12 weeks from the date the Proposal of Application Notice is received by the Council and without the statutory consultation requirements having been undertaken. The planning application must be accompanied by a Pre-application consultation report.**

<p>Applicant:</p> <p>Harry Lopes Bettyhill 2 Wind Limited</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>The Barn Ford Farm Aldbourn Marlborough SN8 2DP</p> <p>Phone: 07779727185 E-mail <a href="mailto:harry.lopes@edenrenewables.com">harry.lopes@edenrenewables.com</a></p>	<p>Agent:</p> <p>Susie Playford Associate EIA Project Manager SLR Consulting Ltd.</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>Floor 2 4/5 Lochside View Edinburgh Park Edinburgh EH12 9DH</p> <p>Phone: 07814050982 E-mail: <a href="mailto:splayford@slrconsulting.com">splayford@slrconsulting.com</a></p>
--	---

### Address or Location of Proposed Development

Please state the postal address of the prospective development site. If there is no postal address, please describe its location. Please outline the site in red on a base plan to a recognised metric scale and attach it to this completed Notice

The proposed development site is located on Bettyhill Common Grazings forming part of the Skelpick Estate, south east of Bettyhill, Sutherland in The Highland Council (THC) area. The Site is located on open moorland hill ground to the south of the main north coast road, the A836, approximately 2km to the southeast of Bettyhill. An approximate postcode for the site is KW14 7SS.

### Description of Development

Please include detail where appropriate – eg the number of residential units; the gross floorspace in m of any buildings not for residential use; the capacity of any electricity generation or waste management facility; and the length of any infrastructure project. Please attach any additional supporting information.

It is anticipated that the extension would comprise up to 11 turbines with associated infrastructure including external transformers, crane hardstandings, access tracks, cabling, borrow pits and a single substation including control building and ancillary services equipment. It is proposed that the turbines would have an installed capacity of up to 50MW.

### Pre-application Screening Notice

Has a Screening Opinion been issued on the need for a Proposal of Application notice by the Highland Council in respect of the proposed development?

No

If yes, please provide a copy of this Opinion.

Community Consultation [See checklist of Statutory minimum consultation attached]

State which other parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice.

Community Council/s

Date Notice Served

Bettyhill, Strathnaver & Altnaharra  
Tongue  
Strathy and Armadale

Week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> June

Names/details of any other parties

Date Notice Served

Farr North Community Development Trust  
Local Energy Scotland  
Bettyhill Common Grazings Committee  
Highland Council members for North, West and Central Sutherland

Week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> June

Please give details of proposed consultation

Proposed public event

Venue

Date and time

A physical public consultation event is being held at Bettyhill Village Hall on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021. This will be followed up with an online event on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021 which will be hosted on the Zoom webinar platform and a second online follow up in September 2021 (date TBC). The intention is that this extended period of consultation, over approximately two months, will allow us to engage effectively with as many local stakeholders as possible using a number of different methods for maximum inclusivity.

Newspaper Advert – name of newspaper

Advert date(where known)

Northern Times  
Press & Journal

Details of any other consultation methods (date, time and with whom)

- There will be a letter/postcard drop to all residents living within 10km of the proposed development site boundary, and to all residents within the Bettyhill, Strathnaver & Altnaharra Community Council boundary area, as well as residents in Tongue, Strathy and Melvich. This area has been chosen with the aim of increasing inclusivity beyond



the 10km boundary, helping to ensure that residents outwith 10km, who may have views on the proposed development, are notified of the proposed consultation events and are given an opportunity to comment and provide feedback on the proposals.

- Visits will be made to as many local residents as possible during the week 5-9<sup>th</sup> July.
- A dedicated site page on the applicant's website will be available, which will include a recording of the webinar(s), copies of Information Boards presented at public exhibition, and will provide opportunities to provide feedback on the proposals.

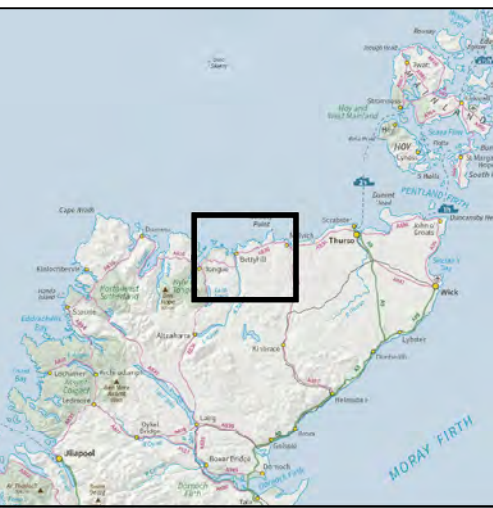
Signed ...Susie Playford..... Date...03<sup>rd</sup> June 2021.....





LEGEND

Application Site



## BETTYHILL 2 WIND LTD.

4/5 LOCHSIDE VIEW  
EDINBURGH PARK  
EDINBURGH  
EH12 9DH

T: +44 (0)131 335 6830  
www.slrconsulting.com

BETTYHILL WIND FARM EXTENSION  
PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE

**SITE LOCATION**

**FIGURE 1**

Scale 1:100,000 @ A3      Date JUNE 2021



08272.00003.0004.0 Site Location