

Kellie Kotze

From: Roger Croson [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2015 12:16
To: devplans
Subject: Comments on Planning for Onshore Wind Energy
Attachments: THC Answers to Spacial Framework.docx

Dear Sirs

Regrettably time has only permitted a brief response as attached. I sincerely hope that the Highland Council will find some way of safeguarding our world renowned landscape and the amenity of residents. It appears that these matters are of very limited concern to the Scottish Government.

Yours Faithfully

Roger Croson

Planning for Onshore Wind Energy
Comments by Roger Croson in Response to Questions Raised
Numbered Paragraphs relate to Numbered Questions

1. The minimum scale that the Spacial Framework should apply to should be a single turbine of 25m or more in height, making it a prominent feature on open landscape and clearly visible above most trees.
2. Apart from matters identified in Table 1 of SPP, other important considerations should include the avoidance of designated Special Landscape Areas, which are particularly important to local amenity, and areas where wind turbines and associated structures already impact detrimentally on residential communities, so that new developments would bring a cumulative impact.
3. The criteria to be considered for wind energy developments are well covered in the present Highland Wide Local Development Plan. Cumulative impact is a changing scene and needs to be re-appraised after each development. The impact of a few turbines appearing at intervals of just a few kilometres may be just as detrimental or more so than a larger cluster in one location. Associated new power lines and substations, and their impact on the landscape and amenity should also be taken into account. Regarding information available, consider Strathnairn where it is currently proposed to encircle the local community with wind energy schemes increasing from 2 to 8, and turbines from 73 to 120, together with a new 60 m high power line and a new substation to cater for the electricity generated. This is a clear example of how developments can proliferate in a relatively confined area once there is a foot in the door. Examination of the accumulating impact on landscape and amenity in this case will provide valuable information for setting broad criteria for the Spacial Framework.
4. The cluster and gap approach may be good in theory, except for residents adjacent to, or within sight of a cluster area. Also, there only needs to be one development approved in a gap area for the whole policy to be left in ruins.
5. To be meaningful, any Spacial Framework must take account of cumulative impacts in the way that the Caithness study has done, focussing on a multitude of local areas collated to form a wider view. If results of the Caithness study are to be ignored, then surely further studies must be undertaken in its place, along with assessment of other parts of the Highland Region. To ignore such information raises the question of will the Spacial Framework be of any real value?
6. The CLVA appears to be a thorough assessment, but time has not permitted site visits or detailed analysis to be made.

