

<b>Agenda Item</b>	5.1
<b>Report No</b>	PLN/035/20

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** North Planning Applications

**Date:** 20 October 2020

**Report Title:** 20/03727/PAN: Bluebell Wind Farm Limited  
Land Between Lochluichart And Loch Glascarnoch, Garve

**Report By:** Acting Head of Development Management

### **Purpose/Executive Summary**

**Description:** Erection of Lochluichart Wind Farm Extension II comprising up to 5 wind turbines of no more than 149.9m to blade tip height (with an overall generating capacity of up to 25MW) and associated infrastructure for an operational period of up to 40 years.

**Ward:** 5 – Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh

### **Recommendation**

Committee members are asked to note the submission of the Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) and highlight any material issues that they wish to be brought to the attention of the applicant before the submission of a planning application.

## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 This report informs committee members of the submission of the attached PAN which was received by the Council on 22 September 2020.
- 1.2 The PAN is a statutory requirement for full planning applications for major or national developments and must be lodged at least 12 weeks prior to the submission of a planning application. The submitted information attached includes:
- Location Plan; and
  - Proposal of Application Notice (PAN).
- 1.3 The prospective applicant has stated that in line with Covid-19 public health advice and temporary modifications made to the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, the prospective developer proposes to undertake an online public consultation. In addition, a community open day is also proposed at Garve Village Hall is proposed, however this is subject to this event being compliant with Covid-19 guidance at the time of the event. Consultation is anticipated to take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2020 between 2pm and 7pm.
- 1.4 The consultation will be publicised and advertised in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements with adverts to be placed within the Ross-shire Journal. A letter drop will also be undertaken, the catchment for which shall be the Garve and District Community Council area (187 households). The prospective developer will have a project website with feedback mechanism and has committed to ongoing attendance at Community Council meetings where appropriate.
- 1.5 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 Based on the description of development contained within the proposal of application notice, the proposal is for the development of 5 wind turbines of no more than 149.9m to blade tip height (with an overall generating capacity of up to 25MW) and associated infrastructure for an operational period of up to 40 years. This proposal is to be taken forward as an alternative to the consented Lochluichart Wind Farm Extension II (THC planning permission reference 19/01284/FUL) which comprises 5 wind turbines of 133m to blade tip height and was granted planning permission on 1 July 2020. The proposal would be the second extension to Lochluichart Wind Farm which was consented in January 2009.

## **3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 3.1 The proposed development is situated to the south of Loch Glascarnoch, 18km north west of Dingwall and immediately south of the A835(T). Settlements in the nearby vicinity are Garve (9km) and Contin (17km) which are located to the south east. The site would be accessed from the A835(T), the main route which serves Ullapool and communities across the west coast of Highland.

- 3.2 Other smaller clusters of residential properties within 10km include the villages of Lochluichart (4km south), Grudie (west of Lochluichart) and Gorstan (east of Lochluichart) which are located along the A832. The immediate area surrounding the site is sparsely populated with closest property to the proposal being located to the north east (Aultguish Inn).
- 3.3 The site itself forms part of an undulating upland open moorland landscape with large forestry blocks occupying the lower slopes. With the exception of the existing windfarms and associated infrastructure, the site is relatively free from infrastructure / built development.
- 3.4 The site does not form part of any statutory or non-statutory designated site for nature conservation, although there are a number of statutory designated site in the wider area within 10km. The site is also not located within any international or regional landscape designations. There are a number of Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) focused on the nearby mountain ranges within the vicinity of the site, particularly the Beinn Dearg – Fannich range directly to the west and Ben Wyvis to the east. The site is also close to two Wild Land Areas (WLAs) and important tourist routes to Wester Ross and Skye. Within the site there are no designated heritage assets with the surrounding area containing a limited number of historic environment features with their being one designated asset within 5km, comprising the listed Loch Glascarnoch Dam.
- 3.5 There are a number of operational, consented and proposed wind farms within the surrounding landscape (generally out to 40km). These include:

**Operational / Under Construction**

- Achany
- Auchmore
- Auchmore 2 (Gaoth)
- Beinn nan Oighrean
- Beinn Tharsuinn
- Beinn Tharsuinn Extension (Beinn nan Oighrean)
- Coire na Cloiche (Under Construction)
- Corriemoillie
- Fairburn
- Foulis Farm (Yellow Wells)
- Lochluichart Wind Farm (and Extension 1)
- Novar 1
- Novar 2
- Rosehall
- Yellowwells

**Consented**

- Braemore
- Belladrum

**Proposed**

- Kirkan
- Strathrory

- 3.6 The neighbouring proposal, Kirkan Wind Farm (THC reference 19/01861/S36), for 17 turbines at a blade tip height of 175m remains undetermined. Following the Highland Council's objection to this application in June 2020, this neighbouring application is now due to undergo Public Local Inquiry.

#### **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
- 52 - Principle of Development in Woodland
- 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
- 72 - Pollution
- 77 - Public Access

##### **4.2 West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan 2019 (WHILDLP)**

No policies or allocations relevant to the proposal are included in the adopted Local Development Plan.

#### 4.3 Highland Council Supplementary Guidance

- Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG) (Nov 2016) and Addendum Supplementary Guidance: Part 2b (2017);
- Developer Contributions (Nov 2018);
- Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013);
- Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013);
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (Mar 2013);
- Highland Renewable Energy Strategy & Planning Guidelines (May 2006);
- Standards for Archaeological Work (Mar 2012);
- Special Landscape Area Citations (Jun 2011); and
- Trees, Woodlands and Development (Jan 2013).

#### 4.4 Scottish Government Policy and Guidance

- Scottish Planning Policy (Jun 2014)
- National Planning Framework for Scotland 3 (Jun 2014);
- Scottish Energy Strategy (Dec 2017);
- PAN 1/2011 – Planning and Noise (Mar 2011);
- PAN 1/2013 – Environmental Impact Assessment (Jun 2017);
- PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (Jan 2008);
- 2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy (Jun 2011);
- Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement (Dec 2017);
- Onshore Wind Turbines (last updated May 2014);
- Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape (Aug 2017);
- Wind Farm Developments on Peat Land (Jun 2011); and
- Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map (May 2018).

#### 5.0 POTENTIAL MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- a) Development Plan;
- b) Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance;
- c) National Policy;
- d) Planning History
- e) Energy and Economic Benefits;
- f) Construction;
- g) Roads and Transport;
- h) Water, Flood Risk, Drainage and Peat;
- i) Natural Heritage Including Ornithology;
- j) Forestry;
- k) Built and Cultural Heritage;
- l) Design, Landscape and Visual Impact (including Wild Land Areas and impact of aviation lighting) both individually and cumulatively;
- m) Access and Recreation;
- n) Noise and Shadow Flicker;
- o) Telecommunications;
- p) Aviation;
- q) Decommissioning and Site Restoration; and
- r) Other Material Considerations.

## **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 members note the submission of the PAN and advises of any material issues it wishes to be brought to the applicant's attention.

Signature: Dafydd Jones

Designation: Acting Head of Development Management

Author: Peter Wheelan

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

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 - Location Plan

Plan 2 - Proposal of Application Notice

# PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE MOLADH BRATH IARRTAIS

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.**

Applicant: Bluebell Wind Farm Limited      Agent:

Address: 16 West Borough      Address:  
Wimborne  
Dorset, BH21 1NG

Phone No: 01202 847680

Email: n.sage@infinergy.co.uk

**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

Lochluichart Wind Farm is located on Loch Luichart Estate, 18km north west of Dingwall in the Scottish Highlands.

**Description of Development** Please include detail where appropriate – eg the number of residential units; the gross floorspace in m<sup>2</sup> 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.

Erection of Lochluichart Wind Farm Extension II comprising up to 5 wind turbines of no more than 149.9m to blade tip height (with an overall generating capacity of up to 25MW) and associated infrastructure for an operational period of up to 40 years.

This proposal is to be taken forward as an alternative to the consented Lochluichart Wind Farm Extension II (THC planning permission reference 19/01284/FUL) which comprises 5 wind turbines of 133m to blade tip height.

### 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?

If yes please provide a copy of this Opinion.

**NO**

### Community Consultation

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

Community Council/s

- Garve and District CC

Date Notice Served: **Same date as issue to The Highland Council**

Other Parties:

### Please give details of proposed consultation

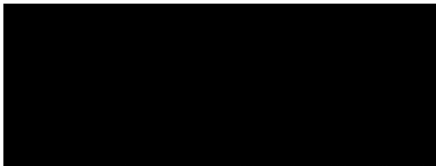
<b>Proposed public event</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Date and time</b>
Community Open Day*:	Garve Village Hall, Garve	4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> November 2020, 2-7pm
Online Consultation: n/a		4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 2020 2-7pm

<b>Newspaper Advert – name of newspaper</b>	<b>Advert date (where known)</b>
Ross-shire Journal	23 <sup>rd</sup> October & 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2020

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

- Newsletter outlining plans comprising Community Open Days/Online Consultation invitation and comment card circulated to all households within the community council area (187 households) up to one month prior to events;
- Project website with feedback mechanism; and
- Ongoing attendance at Community Council meetings where appropriate.

Signed



Date 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020

\*Conditional on being compliant with Scottish Government Covid-19 Guidance at the time of the event.



