

Agenda Item	5.1
Report No	PLN/014/22

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: North Planning Applications Committee
Date: 14 March 2022
Report Title: 22/00235/PAN: RES
Land 1580M SE Of Schoolhouse, Forss, Thurso
Report By: Area Planning Manager – North

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Cairnmore Hill Windfarm - Erection and Operation of Wind Farm
Ward: 02– Thurso and North west Caithness

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 February 2022. 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)
 - Location Plan
 - Supporting Cover Letter
- 1.4 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 has undertaken its initial public consultation online beginning week commencing 31 January 2022 at the following dedicated website www.cairnmorehill-windfarm.co.uk. Members of the public are able to comment by completing an online comments feedback form, as well as through a dedicated email address. The deadline for online representations is Wednesday 02 March 2022. In addition, members of the public were invited to comment via phone and video call appointment between 12 - 20h on 02 February 2022. The initial consultation was advertised in the John O’Groat Journal on 21 January 2022 and the Caithness Courier on Wednesday 26 January 2022, both dates are within the requisite seven day period prior to the live consultation event taking place.
- 1.5 In addition, the applicant has advised of their intention to undertake an in-person second public consultation event in Spring or early Summer. However, the date and venue of this event are yet to be confirmed while the event is conditional on Covid restrictions in place at the time. The Council has suggested that the applicant has a contingency plan to host an online event in the event of restrictions. The applicant has advised of their intention to advertise the event in the aforementioned Newspapers a minimum of seven days prior to the event. A Newsletter letter drop was carried out on 02 February 2022 to over 1,300 households in the area to advertise the first public consultation event and the applicant has advised a second newsletter drop will be undertaken for the forthcoming event too. In accordance with statutory requirements, Caithness West Community Council has received direct notification of the PAN from the applicant, as has Thurso Community Council. Council Officer’s have put a request to the applicant to notify Bower; Castletown; Halkirk and District; Melvich; Strathy and Armadale; and Watten Community Councils as there would be potential affects on residents and businesses within those community council areas. The applicant has subsequently advised that they do not intend to undertake these additional consultations. Officers will continue to engage with the developer on their consultation strategy.

- 1.6 Any forthcoming application will require to 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 proposal is a redesign of the recently refused Cairnmore Hill Wind Farm (ref. 20/03833/FUL), and is for the erection, operation, and decommissioning of a windfarm, which is anticipated to generate up to 21MW of electricity, comprising of:

- up to 5 wind turbines each with a maximum tip height of up to 138.5m;
- transformers and related switchgear at each turbine;
- turbine foundations;
- hard-standing areas for erection and maintenance cranes at each turbine location;
- a series of on-site tracks with associated water crossings;
- a site access route with any necessary road improvements works from public road network;
- a control building, substation compound and communications mast;
- a network of on-site buried electrical cables;
- a temporary construction compound with laydown areas;
- associated ancillary works;
- engineering operations; and
- energy storage unit and associated infrastructure

- 2.2 The developer undertook Pre-Application Consultation with the Council in 2016 for a scheme of an undetermined number of wind turbines (ref. 16/02062/PREAPP) at the location, under the name Taldale Wind Farm. No specific Pre-Application advice has been requested as of yet for the current scheme.

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The PAN boundary comprises 359ha of mixed agricultural ground with enclosed grazing fields on the lower ground to the north, west and southeast of the site, and, open moorland used for grazing on the higher ground. The site is within the Farmed Lowland Plain Landscape Character type, and is located south of the A836, approximately 5km west of Thurso, 3.5km WNW of Janetstown, 7.5km east of Dounreay, and 10km ENE of Reay.

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
- 36 - Development in the Wider Countryside

53 - Minerals
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
66 - Surface Water Drainage
67 - Renewable Energy Developments
69 - Electricity Transmission Infrastructure
72 - Pollution
77 - Public Access

4.2 **Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaS) (2018)**

The site is not covered by any specific development allocation or safeguarding notation within the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan.

4.3 **Highland Council Supplementary Guidance**

- Developer Contributions (November 2018)
- Flood Risk & Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
- Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (March 2013)
- Highland Renewable Energy Strategy & Planning Guidelines (May 2006)
- Managing Waste in New Developments (March 2013)
- Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance and Caithness Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal (2016 and 2017)
- Physical Constraints (March 2013)
- Special Landscape Area Citations (June 2011)
- Standards for Archaeological Work (March 2012)
- Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)

4.4 **Scottish Government Policy and Guidance**

- Scottish Planning Policy (Jun 2014)
- National Planning Framework for Scotland 3 and consultive draft NPF4 (Nov 2021).
- Scottish Energy Strategy (Dec 2017).
- PAN 56 – Planning and Noise.
- PAN 58 – Environmental Impact Assessment.
- PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage.
- 2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy.
- Onshore Wind Energy (Statement) (Dec 2017);

- Onshore Wind Turbines;
- NatureScot Siting and Designing wind farms in the landscape; and,
- Wind Farm developments on Peat Lands.

5.0 POTENTIAL MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- a) compliance with the development plan and other planning policy
- b) Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance
- c) National Policy
- d) Energy and Economic Benefits
- e) Construction
- f) Roads, Transport and Access
- g) Water, Flood Risk, Drainage and Peat
- h) Natural Heritage including ornithology
- i) Built and Cultural Heritage
- j) Design, Landscape and Visual Impacts (including on Wild Land Areas)
- k) Noise and Shadow Flicker
- l) Telecommunications
- m) Aviation
- n) Other material considerations

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The report presents the information submitted to date as part of the PAN. The policy considerations against which any future planning application will be considered have been summarised 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 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: If permitted the development would produce renewable energy.

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: Mark Fitzpatrick

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

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 - Location Plan

Plan 2 - Proposal of Application Notice



To: Mark Fitzpatrick

At: Planner - The Highland Council

From: Euan Hogg

At: RES

Date: 7th January 2022

Ref: 03226-002201

Proposal of Application Notice (PAN)

1 Introduction

1.1 This correspondence and its associated attachments form part of a PAN submission under the Pre-application Consultation Process (PAC) for a Major Development application, as defined by the Schedule of the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Development) (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

1.2 This PAN is submitted within the legislative context outlined in the following:

- The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 Section 35B(4) as inserted by the Planning Etc (Scotland) Act 2006; and
- The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 Regulation 6;

1.3 As means of background, the applicant submitted a planning application for an 8 turbine scheme in October 2020 (The Highland Council reference 20/03833/FUL). Since this application, the applicant has made changes to the design which have warranted the submission of a new PAN and as part of good practice, wishes to update interested parties who made representation at consultation events held in 2019.

1.4 The submission of this PAN is being made by the applicant, Renewable Energy Systems Ltd.

2 The Proposal

2.1 As set out in the Schedule of Regulation 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Development) (Scotland) Regulations 2009, Cairnmore Hill Wind Farm is defined as a

Major Development as the capacity is, or exceeds, 20 megawatts (MW) and does not exceed 49.99MW.

2.2 The proposed wind farm development at Cairnmore Hill will comprise:

- **Up to 5** wind turbines each with a maximum tip height of up to 138.5m;
- **transformers and related switchgear at each turbine;**
- **turbine foundations;**
- **hard-standing areas** for erection and maintenance cranes at each turbine location;
- **a series of on-site tracks** with associated water crossings;
- **a site access route with any necessary road improvements works from public road network;**
- **a control building, substation compound and communications mast;**
- **a network of on-site buried electrical cables;**
- **a temporary construction compound with laydown areas;**
- associated ancillary works;
- engineering operations; and
- **energy storage unit** and associated infrastructure

2.3 The address for the prospective development is as follows:

- Cairnmore Hill, Forss, Thurso, Caithness, KW14 7XU

2.4 Please refer to the attached plan for further details of the development site location and context.

3 Contact Details

3.1 As prospective applicant, Renewable Energy Systems are the primary point of contact for any enquiries relating to the development site. Please use the following contact details to get in touch:

Euan Hogg
Development Project Manager
RES Group
3rd Floor
STV
Pacific Quay
Glasgow
G51 1PQ
Telephone: 07500 045 754
Email: euau.hogg@res-group.com

4 Consultation

4.1 The prospective applicant will undertake consultation as per Regulation 7 of the Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013. The aim of the consultation is to inform and engage with the local community and key stakeholders on the

updated proposal, in order to ensure local people are aware of the design changes and have the chance to find out more and express their views. The key objectives are to:

- Engage with the community and facilitate a constructive consultation process which encourages people to share their views on the updated proposal;
- Assist the public in understanding the benefits and impacts of the updated proposal; and
- To add value and improve the quality of the proposal through meaningful and productive consultation.

4.2 In abiding with Regulation 7, part 2 (1) of the Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013, RES will serve the PAN to the following bodies:

- The Highland Council;
- Caithness West Community Council; and
- Thurso Community Council

4.3 Other key stakeholders whom RES proposes to consult with include:

- Ward Councillors for Thurso and Northwest Caithness (Ward 2)
- Constituency MSP for Caithness, Sutherland and Ross
- Constituency MP for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross

4.4 Two public consultation events will be held. Due to ongoing global pandemic, the first event will be held virtually. Details of the event shall be advertised in the Caithness Courier and Northern Times and published more than 7 days in advance of the events. The details of the public consultation events are outlined below:

Event 1

- Date: w/c 31st January 2022
- Venue: online

Event 2

- Date: TBC
- Venue: TBC

4.5 Adverts for the first public consultation event will be placed **John O’Groats Journal** on 21/01/2022 and in the Caithness Courier on 26/01/2022. Copies of these adverts can be found at the end of this report.

4.6 In addition to the consultation events above RES will be utilising the following methods for engagement with key stakeholders:

- Newsletters
- E-mails/Phone Calls/Meetings
- Project Website: www.cairnmorehill-windfarm.co.uk

4.7 RES will evaluate all of the methods of engagement used and will provide detailed findings within the PAC report submitted with the planning application. RES will ensure findings are presented with transparency and integrity. Please note that comments provided to RES at this time are not representations to Highland Council (the determining authority). If RES submits a planning application there will be an opportunity to make formal representations on the application to the Council.

NICKY



MARR

Twitter @nickymarr
www.nickymarr.co.uk

Word game is all the rage

HAVE you been bitten by the Wordle bug yet?

Just three months after Welsh software engineer Josh Wardle invented the word game for his partner to play, it now has more than two million daily users worldwide. And Mr Marr and I are two of them.

The aim is to guess a five-letter word in just six goes.

If you guess correctly, the letter changes colour, indicating whether it's in the right place.

It reminds me a little of the board-game version of Mastermind when played when I was a kid.

Wordle is free and ad-free, just Google "Wordle" to get it.

But its real beauty? You can only play once a day, so no matter how addicted you get, it won't steal your time.

But beware! Although Welsh, Josh lives in Brooklyn. Was anyone else stymied by the American spelling of "favour" last week?

Such lack of integrity is a sickening sight

AS I write (and forgive me, I file this column around a week before you get to read it) the news headlines are sickening.

And it strikes me that from all the headlines – those about Downing Street parties, Prince Andrew (no HRH required) and Novak Djokovic – there's something missing.

It's integrity. Integrity is defined as the quality of being honest, with strong moral principles.

In practice, it's about doing the right thing for the right reasons.

Not pushing the boundaries of decency, not doing whatever you fancy because you think you can get away with it, and not assuming you're deserving of better or special treatment, just because you're in a position of power.

Those working in Downing Street, with

their lockdown parties and cover-ups of the same, have made fools of the rest of us, those of us who obeyed the rules around mixing, shortened our horizons to live smaller lives, made sacrifices, missed loved ones, and clapped for the NHS on Thursday nights.

More than that, they are actually laughing at us.

Allegra Stratton sniggering at how to respond to journalists' questions about parties, Boris Johnston unable to keep a straight face when questioned about the garden party on the 20th of May, and a staff member sneaking out with a suitcase to buy more wine for the gathering that was held the night before Prince Phillip's funeral.

They all did wrong, and they knew they were doing wrong.

They thought they were a cut above the rules, then flagrantly disregarded them.

I am appalled though, sadly, I'm not surprised.

Prince Andrew? Don't start me.

I'm wondering if, by the time you read this, The Provost of Inverness will have asked The Queen to remove the title of Earl of Inverness from her youngest son, just as she has already removed his various military affiliations, royal patronages, and HRH title.

I know, innocent until proven guilty. And of course, Virginia Giuffre's case is a civil claim for damages and not a criminal trial.

“

Integrity is defined as the quality of being honest, with strong moral principles



PM Boris Johnson is in trouble.

But The Queen stripping Andrew of titles and royal responsibilities, combined with his own bizarre actions and excuses, speak volumes.

Of course, he denies any wrongdoing. But where is his humility? His integrity?

Presumably under a table in a Pizza Express in Woking.

And tennis star Djokovic?

He is perfectly entitled not to be vaccinated, but in making that choice, he must accept that it comes with consequences.

But who did he think he was, posing for photographs with children the day after testing positive?

Where was his integrity then? Did he assume we wouldn't find out?

We have all cut corners at times, pushed various boundaries, and often got away with it.

We've all done things we regret and wish we could take back.

But most of us own our mistakes and do what we can to put them right.

We don't spend our lives wondering how much we can get away with, then acting surprised – and outraged – when we are caught out.

Another fine mess – almost

IS your driving license still valid?

Weeks after being pulled over by police for an expired MOT, Mr Marr and I tripped up again – or at least he did.

By chance, he realised his driving licence expired last summer.

No, he's not 70 – that's a while off yet. But photo licenses must be renewed every 10 years.

He's sorted it now, avoiding a fine of up to £1000.

But while the DVLA website clearly confirms a reminder will be sent, nothing arrived.

Nada.

Is the DVLA asleep at the wheel? Or is someone eating our mail?

Either way, best check yours.



Cairnmore Hill Wind Farm Redesign

ONLINE EXHIBITION

RES is revising and optimising the design of its Cairnmore Hill Wind Farm proposal, located approximately 4.5km northwest of Thurso.

An **online exhibition** is being launched on **Wednesday 2nd February 2022** to inform the community and local supply chain about the revised design and to gather comments.

The exhibition will be hosted on the project website at www.cairnmorehill-windfarm.co.uk and will provide a range of information, including opportunities for the local supply chain to get involved in the project. Hard copies of materials will also be available from the date of the event, upon request, by contacting RES.

RES will be offering phone and video call appointments on **Wednesday 2nd February 2022** from 12 noon until 8pm to discuss any questions that people may have with regard to the proposal.

Appointments should be booked in advance with RES by calling 07900 193045.



Comments to RES on the proposal must be submitted in writing via a 'comments form' which will be available on the project website from the date of the event. Hard copy comments forms will also be available upon request. The closing date for comments is **Wednesday 2nd March 2022**.

For more information please visit www.cairnmorehill-windfarm.co.uk or contact Euan Hogg, RES Development Project Manager, at euan.hogg@res-group.com.

Please note that comments to RES at this time are not representations to the determining authority (The Highland Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the determining authority should an application be submitted.

Survey will restrict access to old castle

By Alan Hendry
alan.hendry@hmedia.co.uk

ACCESS to the 860-year-old Castle of Old Wick is being restricted while survey work takes place to assess the extent to which its stonework has deteriorated.

It is part of a new approach by the public heritage body Historic Environment Scotland (HES) to the inspection of historic properties in response to the effects of climate change.

Surveys on the Castle of Old Wick, located just to the south of the town, and another Highland property in the care of HES - Inverloch Castle, near Fort William - will look at deterioration of high-level masonry and ensure public safety against the risk of potentially unstable building fabric.

A national programme involves surveying more than 200 properties and sites across Scotland.

HES, which looks after 336 historic attractions, described the programme as "a proactive step towards transforming the way the nation's most precious places are protected, repaired and experienced in the face of accelerating decay from climate change".



Stormy weather at the Castle of Old Wick. Historic Environment Scotland says historic properties 'face a constant battle against time and the elements'.

Picture: Alan Hendry

The survey programme will gauge the impact of climate change and the scale of deterioration caused by a number of other factors, including the materials used in the building's construction, its age and its location.

HES says remedial works could require significant investment over

a period of years, "and, in some instances, require a different management approach to be taken than before".

A spokesperson said: "Access restrictions will start to be put in place from today, depending on the location and nature of the site. We will be creating a safe perimeter

around the property to mitigate the risks to people and this will vary from site to site.

"We are committed to enabling as much access as safely possible. Due to the nature of the work required at high level, this cannot be carried out during the winter months. However, we will be embarking on a programme of prioritised works in the spring."

Dr David Mitchell, director of conservation at HES, said: "The safety of staff, visitors and contractors is our top priority and access restrictions at two sites will unfortunately be necessary.

"Historic properties are inherently fragile by their nature, often ruinous and standing at exposed locations. We face a constant battle against time and the elements.

"It is inevitable our approach to protecting historic buildings will have to change. We need to reimagine how we manage these historic and much-loved places.

"A range of solutions is needed, including repairs, investment and new and innovative interventions. In some cases, reduced physical access and accepting the natural process of decay will need to be considered."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ward closed at Raigmore



WARD 7A at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness remained closed yesterday after an outbreak of

norovirus earlier this week.

The ward is closed to new admissions and visitors following the detection of a "small number" of norovirus cases, NHS Highland said.

Patients are being clinically assessed and monitored with normal in-patient care continuing, the health board stressed.

A spokeswoman said: "We know norovirus is in the community and would rather take this precaution while we assess the situation. If your visit is essential, please contact the hospital ward on 01463 704000."

Film festival

AN adventure film festival is coming to the Highlands this spring. The Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour will be at Eden Court in Inverness on March 6 and 7. Films include Exit the North Pole and Dream Mountain.



Cairnmore Hill Wind Farm Redesign

ONLINE EXHIBITION

RES is revising and optimising the design of its Cairnmore Hill Wind Farm proposal, located approximately 4.5km northwest of Thurso.

An online exhibition is being launched on Wednesday 2nd February 2022 to inform the community and local supply chain about the revised design and to gather comments.

The exhibition will be hosted on the project website at www.cairnmorehill-windfarm.co.uk and will provide a range of information, including opportunities for the local supply chain to get involved in the project. Hard copies of materials will also be available from the date of the event, upon request, by contacting RES.

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For more information please visit www.cairnmorehill-windfarm.co.uk or contact Euan Hogg, RES Development Project Manager, at euau.hogg@res-group.com.

Please note that comments to RES at this time are not representations to the determining authority (The Highland Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the determining authority should an application be submitted.

Fisherman given community order over domestic abuse

A FISHERMAN who abused his partner and threatened to smash her house up was spared a jail sentence.

Lebre Macpherson, whose address was given as Heatherbell Cottages, John O'Groats, appeared for sentence at Inverness Sheriff Court on Thursday after admitting a course of domestic abuse towards his partner in the home they shared at Millcroft, Dores.

Sheriff Margaret Neilson was told by defence solicitor David Patterson that the relationship was continuing as MacPherson was getting the benefit of social work involvement for another case through a community payback

order. The court heard of several incidents between January 23, 2021, and February 4, 2021.

Fiscal depute Hilary Michopoulou said: "There was a verbal altercation and he threw a mobile phone at her, hitting her on the face and causing bruising below her eye.

"On February 4, they agreed that he would be taken to Inverness city centre to arrange alternative accommodation."

Mrs Michopoulou added that she was crying on the journey, he shouted and swore at her and threatened to smash the house up.

"She later made a video call to a friend to tell her

she couldn't get him into a hotel and he wouldn't get out of the car. She was hysterical and he was shouting and swearing at the person on the other end of the phone."

Mr Patterson said: "These were not his finest moments. He is currently on a CPO and his compliance is satisfactory.

"The relationship can be quite volatile but there has been no further offending and the relationship has resumed."

Macpherson was ordered to carry out 160 hours of unpaid work, and placed under social work supervision for the next 18 months. Sheriff Neilson declined to impose a non-harassment order.

Call to round up for charities

SHOPPERS in Thurso and Wick are being encouraged to help support an in-store fundraising campaign for three of the UK's leading health charities.

Last year Tesco's "Helping you to live healthier" campaign raised more than £1 million after customers rounded up

their shop to the nearest £1 at self-service tills.

Money raised this year will help Cancer Research UK, the British Heart Foundation and Diabetes UK to continue their vital work to both improve and save lives.

Pioneering wind farm's £9.6m boost

By Alan Hendry
alan.hendry@hnmmedia.co.uk

THE first stage of a proposed world-leading wind farm off the north coast of Caithness has been awarded £9.6 million of UK government funding.

The money for the Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Demonstrator – known as Pentland Demo – will support the development of a range of innovative, UK-manufactured floating wind technologies.

It is the initial phase of the Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm which will consist of up to 10 floating turbines, with a maximum blade-tip height of 300 metres, located around six kilometres north-west of Dounreay. It is likely to be the largest floating offshore wind farm in the world when it is built in the mid-2020s.

The Floating Offshore Wind (FOW) Demonstration Programme funding has been provided through the Net Zero Innovation



Pentland Demo will support the development of innovative, UK-manufactured floating wind technologies.

Portfolio.

Project director Richard Copeland said: "The Pentland Demo project is a great opportunity to demonstrate new technologies which will accelerate the cost reduction and industrialisation of floating offshore wind in the UK.

"With this funding we will deploy several innovative technologies developed

here in the UK by local companies. This provides a fantastic opportunity for our supply chain partners to showcase their capabilities and scale up towards our 100 MW Pentland Array project and for large commercial-scale deployment through ScotWind projects and other floating wind opportunities in the UK and globally."

Reactors offer energy security

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and energy security, Mr Stone highlighted the contribution that reactors can make in producing hydrogen.

He was responding to a speech by Virginia Crosbie, the Conservative MP for Anglesey, who claimed that the UK's reliance on importing energy from other countries had led to poor energy security. Mr Stone suggested that wind power and nuclear could work together to address the problem.

Speaking during the debate in Westminster Hall, Mr Stone said: "Caithness is one of the most nuclear-sympathetic parts of the United Kingdom, because it is where the Dounreay nuclear reactor was constructed in the 1950s. Even today some 1500 jobs directly and 500 in the supply chain rest on the nuclear industry.

"The point I wish to make is that units of this nature can in fact, when the wind is blowing hard and renewables are working, create hydrogen, which will help us deal with precisely the problem that the Honourable Member is highlighting."

Mr Stone said later: "Achieving domestic energy security is of paramount importance. Mini-reactors could help us towards this goal.

"I recently had a positive initial conversation with Rolls-Royce about the potential of siting a small modular reactor in Caithness. It is clear that there is strong support from the local community, so I hope that my

few political representatives, and indeed the Scottish Government, will join me in embracing this opportunity."

Mr Stone's support for the SMR programme was challenged recently by the Scottish Forum of Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA), whose chairman, Glasgow SNP councillor Feargal Dalton, claimed there was "almost no public support for new nuclear in Scotland".

Councillor Dalton urged the far north MP to focus on proven renewable technology instead.

Councillor Struan Mackie, a Highland councillor for Thurso and Northwest Caithness and chairman of Dounreay Stakeholder Group, was scathing about NFLA. He called it a "tin-pot pressure group" and accused Councillor Dalton of pushing "a completely false narrative".

A poll by the Caithness Courier and John O'Groat Journal has generated hundreds of comments on Facebook, with 82 per cent of those casting a vote online saying they are in favour of a small modular reactor in the county.

Rolls-Royce SMR has secured £490 million through commercial equity and UK Research and Innovation grant funding.

The company hopes to complete its first reactor in the early 2030s. Rolls-Royce says each SMR power station would have the capacity to generate 470 megawatts of low-carbon energy, equivalent to more than 150 onshore wind turbines.

Todd gives fresh vaccine plea

CAITHNESS, Sutherland and Ross MSP Maree Todd has issued a vaccination plea to her constituents, reminding them that "it's not too late" to get a Covid-19 jab.

She is calling on unvaccinated people and those who are not yet fully vaccinated to roll up their sleeves to protect themselves and their community against the spread of the virus.

The SNP MSP, who volunteered at vaccination

clinics over the festive period, said: "Although we're moving towards more manageable rates of Covid-19, with a strain that is presenting milder symptoms, we must not underestimate the value of vaccination and its contribution to the positive data we're now seeing.

"The data is clear – you are significantly more likely to require hospital treatment if you are not fully vaccinated."

Mrs Todd pointed to data from Public Health Scotland for the period from December 10 to January 7 showing that age-standardised hospitalisation rates for Covid are lower for people who have received a booster compared with individuals who are unvaccinated or have received one or two doses.

Details on vaccine clinics in the north can be found on the NHS Highland website.

UK Government Scotland

NHS TEST & PROTECT

If you have any Covid-19 symptoms, however mild, book a PCR test.

Stay at home while you await your test result and continue to stay at home if your test is positive. So you don't breathe Covid-19 onto others.

nhsinform.scot/testandprotect

STOP COVID-19 HANGING AROUND

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 Euan Hogg Address. RES UK & Ireland Limited, Third Floor STV, Glasgow, G51 1PQ Phone 07500 045 754 E-mail euan.hogg@res-group.com	Agent Address Phone E-mail
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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

Please see the enclosed PAN Report – appendices.

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.

Please see the enclosed PAN Report – Section 1.

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 [See checklist of Statutory minimum consultation attached]

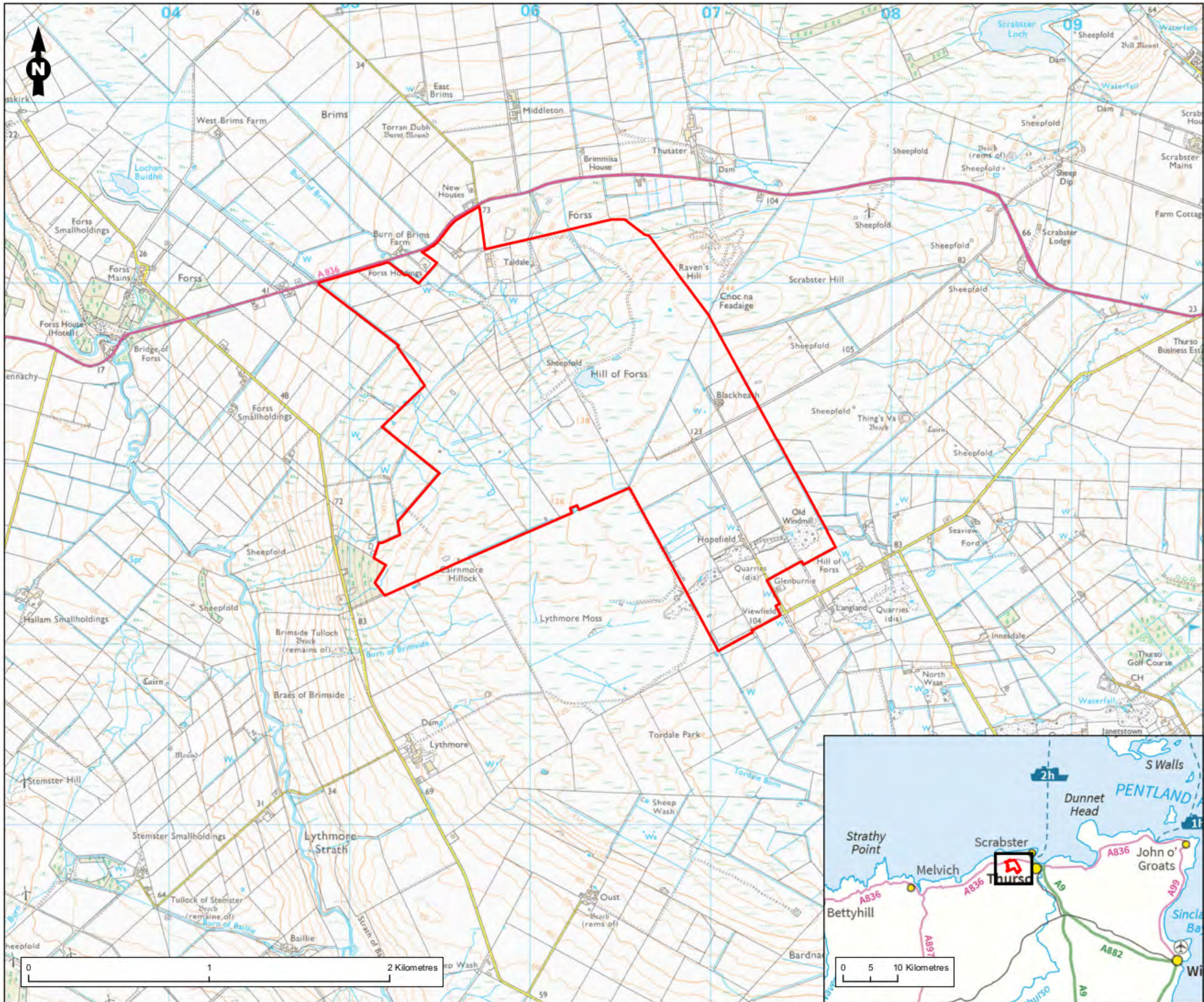
State which other parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice.

Please see the enclosed PAN report – Section 4.

Please give details of proposed consultation

Please see the enclosed PAN report – Section 4.

Signed ...  Date...07/01/2022.....



Legend

Site Boundary

Figure Title	
Figure 1.1: Site Location	
Project Name	
Cairmore Hill Wind Farm	
Project Number	Figure No.
UK12-24968	1.1
Date	Prepared By
July 2020	AC
Scale	Issue
1:20,000 @A3	2
Client	
