5mins

Good Morning.

I am representing my serious concerns and those of many others across two Community Council areas of my ward. As recognised in the report these two locations will see the greatest negative impact of the huge turbines the applicant is seeking to locate in an area that already has 33 in place.

These five huge wind turbines will have significant visual and landscape impact.

They are so big they need aircraft warning lights and interfere with radar.

These hills are already substantially contributing towards renewable energy and net zero targets.

Approval was also given last year for a 50,000-panel solar farm near Gargunnock– That generates 15Mw, with minimal visual impact, makes no noise and doesn’t need warning lights.

This week we have just heard the major announcement for 17 off shore wind developments in the Scot Wind project.

**Adding these giant Turbines to the landscape here is not appropriate or justifiable.**

All existing turbines are no taller than 125metres. The previous application that was refused by this planning authority in 2015 only sought that as a maximum turbine height.

That previous application was originally refused on the grounds of limited landscape capacity, visual effect and being contrary to the LDP. None of these factors have changed. With the increase in turbine size proposed they have become even more pertinent.

Given the significant increases in turbine size now being proposed the reporters comments supporting the approval on appeal of the previous application should not be a material consideration used to support recommending approval for this application.

The supplementary Guidance for wind energy developments states that there is no capacity for very large turbines (110m+) in the proposed area. This proposal is contrary to that Supplementary Guidance.

The proposed larger turbines will significantly disrupt the horizon and hill edges as seen from the north. This will be exacerbated by the movement of the turbines.

Being sited on high ground, the turbines will be visible over a wide area.

Both the National Park and NatureScot refer to this impact with Nature scot advising that there may be significant adverse effects and eye-catching lights especially from the North.

Both existing and draft National Planning Frameworks advise that if the impacts identified are unacceptable then proposals for windfarms should not be supported.

Supplementary Guidance states there remains very little capacity for further windfarm development of varying scales within the study area if the intrinsic qualities of the landscape are to be maintained.

Low capacity is defined as a landscape that is both highly sensitive to wind turbine development and has a high value, where only a slight level of change can be accommodated without significantly adversely affecting any of the key defining characteristics of the landscape.

The justification to support approval is based almost entirely on the approximated increase in generating capacity. The amount of energy being generated should not be used as a mitigating factor.

**Unacceptable is unacceptable**

The previous 2015 proposal was refused by the Council due to skyline, hill edge and landscape character. The Reporter considered that significant landscape or visual impacts would arise at a distance to the north. These are the areas around Port of Menteith and Thornhill.

The report clearly states that Thornhill and Port of Menteith will be the two areas most impacted.

It further states that the overall height and rotor diameters have now significantly increased from the previous application and there will be noticeable increases in the magnitude of landscape and visual impacts compared with the reporter consented scheme.

I believe it is significant that the applicant has decided that neither of these communities should be eligible for any community benefit funds for either this or the previous scheme despite the report clearly stating that they are the two areas most impacted. Had they done so they would have openly acknowledged there is a significant impact from their development.

Given the accepted negative visual impacts for these localities, then that surely would justify refusal under the raft of policies and guidance that would support such a decision.

Should the panel not feel able to refuse the application today I would urge you to postpone any decision and take an unaccompanied site visit to assess for yourselves the impact on the areas identified in the report from a number of agreed viewpoints. This would provide a far better assessment than the montages supplied.

Thank You.