

MINUTES of MEETING of ARGYLL AND BUTE LOCAL REVIEW BODY held in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD on FRIDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2013

Present: Councillor Sandy Taylor (Chair)
Councillor Gordon Blair Councillor Donald MacMillan

Attending: Charles Reppke, Head of Governance and Law (Adviser)
Fiona McCallum, Committee Services Officer (Minute Taker)

1. CONSIDER NOTICE OF REVIEW REQUEST: LAND SOUTH EAST OF CROISH HOUSE, CAOLES, ISLE OF TIREE, ARGYLL, PA77 6TS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that parties to the Review were not permitted to address the Local Review Body (LRB).

The Chair advised that his first task would be to establish whether or not the LRB felt they had enough information before them to reach a decision on the Review. The LRB agreed unanimously that they had enough information to make a decision on the application and agreed to proceed to determine the case.

Referring to the paperwork before the LRB, Councillor MacMillan advised that the reasons given by the Planners for refusing this Application appeared to him to be robust. He had reviewed the photographs and in his opinion this was an inappropriate site for such a development and would have an adverse visual appearance on the landscape.

Councillor Blair concurred with the decision of the Planners.

Decision

It was unanimously agreed to refuse planning permission for the following reasons:-

On the approach from Caolas the turbine will be seen in a prominent part of the landscape and will dominate views from the eastern side of the island whilst also being seen in conjunction with the larger community turbine. The degrees of scale and distance from some viewpoints may at times give the impression of more than one community turbine and confuse the viewer resulting in the turbine having a much larger impact on the landscape than would be the case of a single turbine in isolation. The siting will result in skylining from key locations along the main road travelling east and west, and potentially from long distance views from the ferry route and further afield at Gott Bay. It is considered that the views of the turbine would be significant when coupled with those of the community turbine. This has the effect of scaling the landscape and diminishing its scale, to its detriment.

According to the Wind Energy Capacity Study (WECS) the site falls within landscape character type (LCT) 16 'Marginal Farmland Mosaic'. This LCT has limited capacity for wind turbines. The landscape can be described as being of very low relief with occasional higher knolls. In this instance the turbine will sit on top of the landscape at a high point providing skylined views. This landscape character type has a high sensitivity rating for turbines with little capacity. It is considered that, in this area of the island, the community turbine absorbs the vast majority of the ability of the landscape to successfully absorb turbine development. With this in mind the proposal is not consistent with the findings of the WECS.

This proposal will add to clutter in the landscape. Proposals seen in conjunction with the community turbine should be of an appropriate scale so as to sit within the landscape and not create visual clutter. In this instance the turbine adds to clutter in the landscape, due to the cumulative impact of the turbine seen in conjunction with the existing community turbine.

The proposal is not consistent with the provisions of adopted Local Plan policy LP ENV 1 sub-section (c) in that the turbine does not protect, restore or enhance the established character and local distinctiveness of the landscape in terms of its location, scale, form and design. Additionally, the turbine is not consistent with adopted Local Plan policy LP REN 2 in that the turbine will have an adverse impact directly on the visual amenity of the area.

(Reference: Notice of Review and Supporting Documents, Comments from Interested Parties and Comments from Applicant's Agent, submitted)