



Representation from :-

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Local Review Body Reference: 12/0018/LRB

Planning Application Reference: 12/01265/PP

Ardyne Farm, Toward, Dunoon PA23 7UJ

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A SHORT HISTORY

On Friday 9th December 2011, “The Dunoon Observer” published a notice of a planning application (ref. 11/02335/PP) for the erection of a wind turbine at Ardyne Farm, Toward.

That was the first time we had learned about any wind turbine being proposed for Ardyne Farm.

We inspected the proposal and were pleased to note the Agent’s assurance “that a full site survey was carried out” (Environmental Appraisal, page 3 of 14, section 1, 3rd paragraph, 1st line). Consequently, we were very surprised to see that the Environmental Appraisal went on to state that “The closest residential property, Woodside Cottage, lies in the region of 435m north-west of the turbine..” (page 3 of 14, section 2, 1st paragraph, 6th & 7th lines).

Strathclyde Cottage is much nearer to the site than Woodside Cottage, being only approximately 170m from the site; and Strathclyde Cottage is clearly visible from the site. We were rather perplexed as to why our house had not been noticed during the survey. Nevertheless, we pointed out this error; and the planning application was subsequently withdrawn.

BACKGROUND TO CURRENT APPLICATION

We are in favour of considerate installations of renewable energy systems.

Last year, we installed a ground array of solar panels near our house (although a wind turbine would have provided us with more income, a wind turbine would have been visually dominant and we regarded that as a “bad neighbour” development).

The Applicant did visit us once after we formally objected to his second application for planning permission for a wind turbine. We explained to him some of our concerns and suggested alternatives: a different form of renewable energy system; a wind turbine somewhere else on his farm. He thought, however, that his greatest financial return would be from a wind turbine near our house. We agreed to disagree with his wind turbine proposal.

That one visit from the Applicant is the only contact we have had with either himself or his Agent.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

We contend that the proposed wind turbine would be visually dominant. As noted on our previous objections, the proposed wind turbine would be:-

- uphill from our house
- approximately only 170m from our house
- approximately 2 ½ times taller than the neighbouring dead tree (reference item)
- 4 times higher than the white gable wall of our 2 storey house.

Moreover, Strathclyde Cottage is approximately 50m closer to the proposed turbine site than any of the Ardyne Farm houses, which also have the advantage of being screened from the site by dense tree growth.

Furthermore, we own the 6 acres surrounding our house and frequently walk around our ground. At the north-west corner of our ground, the proposed wind turbine site would be only approximately 60m from our boundary fence.

The proposed wind turbine would dominate the public access footpath, which is approximately 40m north of the site. This track has been upgraded by Forest Enterprise, who have built a carpark nearby to encourage the public to use the forestry walks. Now both pedestrians and horse riders visit the area and use the tracks provided.

There is also a footpath through our land. It, too, leads to Forest Enterprise's tracks and is frequently used by the public. These tracks, which we often use ourselves, permit the public to enjoy the local panoramic views and places of interest e.g. the Chinese Lakes.

We would find a 27m high metal structure with moving blades not only dominant but also aesthetically unpleasing, particularly in this extremely rural setting. The small amount of shrubbery screen growing on our ground would have little effect, especially after it receives its overdue pruning. Any partial screening from individual trees in leaf lasts only as long as the leaves (usually less than half the year). Therefore, we consider that the visual amenity of our property and grounds would definitely be reduced by the installation of the proposed wind turbine.

The proposed wind turbine will be clearly visible from the C10 road also, in the area of Blairanboich, as shown in one of the Agent's photomontages [Visualisations Part 2 – Viewpoint H Photomontage (page 53 of 67 of Agent's Supporting Statement)].

The 3no. existing wind turbines on Bute (at Ardbeg Farm, Ardmory Road, Rothesay) are easily visible from our ground (these structures, being 20.9m tall, are approximately 6m smaller than the proposed one at Ardyne Farm). Therefore, a 27m tall wind turbine structure at Ardyne Farm would be correspondingly clearly visible from Bute.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

An additional concern we have involves Mrs Campbell. She has problems with her balance and can be disorientated by moving objects/people. When she was working, she was assessed by her employer's occupational health doctor, who confirmed her disability, and consequently alterations were made to her work routine to minimise the chance of her falling (doctor's letter available for inspection if required). So, the close proximity of the moving blades of a dominant wind turbine could be detrimental to her health and would restrict the area of our ground over which she could walk.

ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF FARM INCOME : FEED-IN TARIFFS

The proposed wind turbine would allow Ardyne Farm to benefit from the Feed-In Tariff scheme, which provides fixed payments for:-

- a) the electricity generated from eligible renewable and low-carbon sources
- b) any unused electricity that is exported to the grid.

A further benefit is that producers don't have to pay for the electricity that they generate themselves.

Therefore, the scheme allows for 3no. sources of financial gain.

There are, however, several other available sources of renewable or low-carbon energy, albeit wind power being probably the most lucrative one in this area of Scotland.

CUMULATIVE EFFECT

As far as we are aware, there are currently 12 no. wind turbines in the Toward / Rothesay Bay area at various stages in the planning process:-

- 3 no. already built at Ardbeg Farm, Ardmory Road, Rothesay (ref 11/00305/PP)
- 1 no. already built at Killellan Farm, Toward (ref 10/00173/PP)
- 1 no. approved for construction at Toward Sailing Club (ref 12/00663/PP)
- 3 no. going through the consultation process at Ascog Farm, Bute (ref 12/02202/PP)
- 1 no. currently withdrawn (for further consideration) at Toward Farm (ref 12/01415/PP)
- 2 no. currently withdrawn (for further consideration) at Toward Taynuilt Farm (ref 12/01536/PP)
- 1 no. subject of this Local Review Body process i.e. Ardyne Farm, Toward (ref 12/01265/PP)

If all 12 no. wind turbines were to be built, we suggest that the cumulative effect in the Toward/Rothesay Bay area would be most significant.

SUMMARY

We suggest that the currently proposed wind turbine at Ardyne Farm would contravene the “Argyll & Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study Main Report Section 7” entitled “Guidance on the micro-siting of smaller turbines”. Therein, the advice is given that “Care should be taken to site small (20-35m) turbines where they do not dominate individual buildings, trees or other features.”.

We believe that the proposed wind turbine would dominate Strathclyde Cottage, the trees immediately adjacent to the proposed wind turbine site and the adjoining public access forestry track resulting in an adverse impact on not only the amenity of Strathclyde Cottage but also the amenity of the surrounding landscape.

Ardyne Farm, however, could still receive additional income, reduce its energy bills and have “a clean energy solution” by installing, for example, ground-mounted solar panels instead of the “bad neighbour”, visually dominant wind turbine which is currently proposed.

PHOTOGRAPHS



PHOTOGRAPH NO.1 - FROM STRATHCLYDE COTTAGE

**Photograph taken on 21st December 2012
from bedroom looking north-west towards site of proposed wind turbine**

**[for comparison with photograph taken from same position on 3rd July 2012
see Appendix 1 (page 3 of 6 of Formal Objection submission)]**



PHOTOGRAPH NO.2 - SITE of PROPOSED WIND TURBINE

**Photograph taken on 18th December 2012
from north-west corner of Strathclyde Cottage land
looking north-west towards site of proposed wind turbine**

**[proposed wind turbine would be approximately 2.5 times higher than height of
dead tree (reference item) on righthandside of photograph]**

NOTE ABOUT APPENDICES

Please see separate e-mail attachments for **Appendices** :-

- a) **Appendix 1**.....Formal Objection (dated 5th July 2012) with 3no. photographs and 1no. location plan ;
- b) **Appendix 2**.....Additional Supporting Documents (dated 5th August 2012) with 1no. calculation sheet and 7no. photographs ;
- c) **Appendix 3**.....Photograph taken by Applicant with photomontage and annotation added by Agent.