

**MINUTES of MEETING of PLANNING, PROTECTIVE SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE  
held in the AN CRIDHE, ARINAGOUR, ISLE OF COLL  
on THURSDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2012**

**Present:** Councillor Sandy Taylor (Chair)

Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor Alistair MacDougall
Councillor Robin Currie	Councillor Donald MacMillan
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon	Councillor Alex McNaughton
Councillor George Freeman	Councillor James McQueen
Councillor David Kinniburgh	

**Attending:** Iain Jackson, Governance Officer  
Stephen Fair, Area Team Leader  
David Love, Senior Planner  
Neil Smith, Director, Gallanach Green Generation Ltd, Applicant  
Roger McMichael, Atmos Consulting, Applicant's Agent  
Angus Kennedy, Supporter  
Peter Wilson, Supporter  
Colin Scott, Objector  
Jo Scott, Objector  
Colin Kennedy, Objector

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were intimated from Councillors Gordon Blair, Fred Hall, Robert G MacIntyre and Richard Trail.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

**3. GALLANACH GREEN GENERATION LTD: CONSTRUCTION OF 1 X 750KW WIND TURBINE (77M TO BLADE TIP), CRANE HARDSTANDING, CONTROL BUILDING, TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION COMPOUND AND FORMATION OF VEHICULAR ACCESS: GALLANACH, ISLE OF COLL (REF: 11/01915/PP)**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited anyone who wished to speak at the meeting to identify themselves. The Committee then introduced themselves and outlined the hearing procedure. Once that process had been completed the Chair invited the Planning Department to set out their recommendations.

**PLANNING AUTHORITY**

Stephen Fair, Area Team Leader for Oban, Lorn and the Isles, spoke to the terms of his report advising that this proposal was for the erection of a single wind turbine on land at Gallanach Farm, Isle of Coll. He advised that the original application was for two turbines and that this was reduced to one turbine during the course of the application. The turbine measures 55 metres to hub height and 77 metres to blade tip with an output generating capacity of 750 kw. It will be a

commercial enterprise exporting electricity to the national grid and therefore subject to assessment through Local Plan policy LP REN 1. The proposal includes several different elements such as road improvements with 750 metres of a new access track, a small borrow pit, crane hardstanding, control building and temporary construction compound. He referred to a number of slides and highlighted the site in terms of the Local Plan and showed the location of the various elements of the proposal. He also highlighted the nearest neighbouring properties to the site. As per the adopted Argyll and Bute Local Plan 2009 the site is designated as 'sensitive countryside'. Policy LP REN 1 for commercial wind turbine proposals makes allowances for the erection of turbines on suitable sites so long as set criteria can be satisfactorily addressed. This criterion includes impacts on communities and their settings, nature conservation, landscape and townscape character, core paths, rights of ways, historic environment, telecommunications, tourism and peat deposits and each of these were assessed and explained in detail in the planning report. During the course of the application the Council adopted a Wind Energy Capacity Study (WECS) in 2012 and although it does not specifically provide guidance on Coll it does state that the smaller islands (Coll, Colonsay and Tiree) do not generally have the capacity to successfully absorb larger typology turbines ie those greater than 50 metres. As a strategic document, the WECS itself encourages site specific assessment on a case by case basis. The authors of the study were asked how this study should be applied specifically to Coll and they advised that as the landscape character types found on the Island were comparable to those found on Jura and Islay it would be considered appropriate to assess the turbine against three of those landscape character types – Marginal Farmland Mosaic, Coastal Parallel Ridges and Sand Dunes and Machair. The guidance set out for those landscape character types can be transposed to be applied wherever each type exists on the smaller islands. In this instance it is considered that the landscape in this part of Coll is one where there are few extensive views over the sand dunes and machair landscape character type to the coast and the rocky outcropping in the marginal farmland mosaic landscape creates a feeling of intimacy within what is actually a larger landscape in reality. The site lies in a transitional area between the different landscape character types. The relative height and level of the turbine set against the surrounding landscape features mean the scale is more readily accepted into this transitional area than may otherwise be the case if a turbine of this size were to be sited in only one of the main character types. Mr Fair referred to the contents of supplementary planning reports 1 and 2 which addressed further representations received from third parties. He advised that an updated petition with 95 signatures had been received and in terms of public participation there have been 29 direct objections, 1 petition with 95 signatures, 4 neutral responses and 21 representations of support. He advised that the Applicant was opposed to conditions 4 and 5 recommended by Planning and was opposed to the requirement for a Section 75 Agreement. A detailed assessment of these responses is contained in the original report of handling and supplementary planning reports 1 and 2. Mr Fair provided a summary of the issues raised by objectors, confirming that they related to: proximity to residential properties, noise, shadow flicker, visual impact, road impact, tourist impact, need for the proposal, wildlife impact, character of the island, ornithology, impact on seals, grid capacity, removal at end of lifeline, devaluation of property, skylining, call for a strategic approach and community benefit. He advised that some of these were not material planning considerations and others had been addressed by statutory consultees or were not supported by Officer assessment. He advised

that the main issues to consider were the visual impact of the proposal and the landscape impact of the proposal. He referred to a number of photographs which gave views of the site of the proposed turbine from various locations around the Island. He advised that visual impact was a key issue for determining the application and was somewhat subjective in terms of the degree of impact. The Planning assessment is that views of the site are progressive for the majority of the visitors and population travelling from Arinagour, whereby the turbine first appears over a long distance view. He advised that landscape impact was the subject of concern by SNH who were also the main funders behind the Council technical WECS document. Mr Fair recommended that subject to the conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement the planning application be granted for the reasons stated in the report and subject to 9 conditions also detailed in the report.

## **APPLICANT**

Roger McMichael of Atmos Consulting, Agents for the development, spoke in support of the application by Gallanach Green Generation Ltd for the erection of a single wind turbine up to 77m at Gallanach on Coll. He advised that Atmos Consulting designed the scheme and prepared the application and accompanying Environmental Appraisal. He advised that he would speak briefly on the planning issues, Mr Neil Smith one of the Directors of Gallanach Green Generation Ltd, would talk about the project in the local context and thereafter he would give a presentation on the key matter of the case which was the landscape and visual impact. Mr McMichael highlighted how the original feasibility study for Development Coll selected this location as the most suitable and that a project of this scale was considered feasible. The planning application that resulted from that earlier work was for two turbines up to 77m in height and advised that it was indicative of the Applicant's preparedness to positively engage in the planning process that the project was amended down to a single turbine. He advised that the scheme required numerous surveys and that the Applicant was fully responsive to requests for these surveys and following all that work the Planning Service is able to support this proposal which is welcomed. Mr McMichael highlighted the benefits of the project which will support 350 Scottish homes with green energy which will go some way to assisting the Scottish Government with their target of 500 MW of community and locally owned renewable energy projects by 2020. He also referred to the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Loan Scheme (CARES) announced in April. The project would generate commercial rates each year for the Council and £10,000 per annum for a community fund, at least matching the contributions expected of projects supported by the CARES loan scheme. He advised that this project does not benefit from CARES funding but as an alternative the Applicant is offering a similar turbine development on his land if the community wish to progress a scheme. He also advised of benefits which will accrue from the construction and operational phases and that once operational advised that the funding stream will directly support families on the island and in the region and the bulk of these funds are likely to be recirculated in the local and regional economies. He referred to surveys undertaken in respect of protected species, including the various bird species that are qualifying interests of the designated sites on Coll. He advised that whilst evidence was found of a number of species including otter and bats, as well as protected geese, the location of the proposal ensures that impacts will not be significant and can pass Appropriate Assessment without specific mitigation. He

referred to the suggested planning conditions including condition 5 and a related recommendation for a Section 75 Agreement in relation to geese and corncrake. He advised that given that SNH, as statutory advisor to the Council has not sought any goose related mitigation it is surprising that the RSPB requests have been adopted in the recommendations. This project is a modest wind project and the proposed monitoring is only appropriate for larger schemes. He advised that the linkage between monitoring and potential shut down will almost certainly kill this project. Banks are a key part of delivering renewable energy projects and the uncertainty that the condition brings to the planning permission means that it will be impossible to quantify the likely return of the project and therefore make it impossible to obtain project finance. He requested that Condition 5 and the associated Section 75 Agreement for goose management be removed from any planning permission. He also referred to condition 4 which posed more undue burden on this project. Mr McMichael then spoke on the impact on amenity of those living nearest to wind proposals. He advised that assessments were carried out in respect of noise and shadow flicker and the proposal was found to be satisfactory. He advised that the benefits of this project are very real and outweigh any perceived environmental impact which the turbine may have. The Applicant has worked very closely with the Council planning service and their consultees. Planning officials have undertaken detailed analysis of the capacity of the island to accommodate this proposal and are still able to justify that it will be acceptable. Mr McMichael advised that he believed the development is in accordance with the commitment set out in Scottish Planning Policy to increase the amount of electricity generated from renewable sources and will go some way to achieving the target of 100% of Scotland's electricity to be provided from renewable sources by 2020. He advised that it will contribute to the sustainability of the island community as two of the Applicant families live there and requested that the planning permission be granted.

Neil Smith, one of six Directors of Gallanach Green Generation Ltd, spoke to the contents of a presentation which he had prepared and circulated to Members. He advised that he has farmed Gallanach since 1990, has been secretary of the Community Council and formed the community fuel company. He advised that in 2008 the community company Development Coll commissioned Atmos Consulting to look into a commercial turbine for Coll and that he was very supportive of this especially when Gallanach was identified as the best location. He advised that this project fell through because at that time there was no electrical capacity and not because of any resistance from the community at large. He advised that capacity became available in 2010 but at that time the community was fully stretched financially and management wise on the new community hall project so there was no appetite for a wind turbine project even though a HIE survey that year showed a majority of islanders wanted a community turbine with only 29 against. He advised that Gallanach Green Generation secured capacity from SSE and applied for planning permission in early 2010 and following completion of a number of surveys and studies a formal planning application was submitted in September 2011. Since then the Planning Department, at increasing levels of seniority, have visited several times and conducted exhaustive studies of the visual impact involved. Such comprehensive visual assessments were not carried out for other turbines consented on Coll, which, although smaller are less graceful, spin faster and are more conspicuously sited. He advised it would take 50 turbines the size of Grishipol to produce the same output, and save the same carbon emission as our single one. Mr Smith referred to the objections submitted in respect of this

proposal and advised that he would like to put into perspective the number of objections because he knew that the impression has been given that a significant proportion of the island's population objects and he stated that this was not the case. Mr Smith referred in detail to the individual objections and to the petition which was submitted. Mr Smith then spoke about the benefits of the scheme and the community aspect advising that Gallanach Green Generation believe Coll should be able to achieve the same benefits Tiree has from wind power. He advised that the company were offering the land free and, from their own turbine's profits, the upfront costs of securing a community turbine the same as this one and Tiree's and that it will be difficult for Coll to achieve this otherwise. He advised that the community were still struggling to fund the new hall's upkeep so raising the considerable upfront costs to attain planning permission would be a daunting risk. He advised that a community wind turbine would still require planning permission and if this should be refused or for any other reason the project fails Gallanach Green Generation will instead make an annual contribution of £10,000 to the community for the 20 year life of the FITs scheme. He advised that Government guidelines for financial contribution to communities from commercial turbine schemes are less generous and as far as he was aware no other Coll turbine contributes to community funds. He advised that wind turbines were a fact of life in Scotland, a fact of life in Argyll and a fact of life in the islands. He stated that it was also a fact of life that they are placed in prominent positions to take advantage of the wind. He advised that this one, though, can achieve this in a comparatively low position, like Tiree but more discreet than Tiree which lies in a large flat area. With reference to the Tiree turbine he advised that this was consented on a motion proposed by Councillor Devon and which he believed had relevance in this case. He read out the contents of this motion and advised that Gallanach Green Generation believed that the contents of this motion applied to this project. He asked the Committee to consider how the petition signatories were gained and on what grounds, consider which of the 29 objections were relevant and consider the benefits for two or three families, for Coll itself and for Scotland's CO2 target.

Mr McMichael then went on to talk in some detail about the findings of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which was carried out upon the Gallanach proposal in order to determine the magnitude and potential extent of impact on the landscape and visual resource of the area. In accordance with best practice the assessment was completed in line with SNH guidance on natural heritage assessment. He referred to a number of slides prepared to support the findings of the Landscape and Visual Impact assessment and which set out the key points which have been raised through the consultation process with SNH and Argyll and Bute Council and which were felt to be most significant in relation to the proposal ie Height and Scale, Sensitivity, Landscape Character impact, Designations, Visual impact and Cumulative assessment.

As there were no statutory consultees present the Chair then invited Supporters to make their representations.

## **SUPPORTERS**

Angus Kennedy advised that he and his family have lived on Coll for generations and that he believed in renewables and that over the summer months he had installed solar panels and that it was incumbent on everyone to be sustainable. He advised that he had absolutely no fear for the value of his property or the

integrity of the site or the wildlife etc. He advised he had a great deal of regard for the Applicant, that he was someone with integrity and was transparent in dealing with the community of Coll and has tried his best in bringing the community along with him. He advised that he has spoken to visitors and tourists coming to the island and that he has found no evidence of fear that people will not come to the island anymore if we have a wind turbine. He advised that he lived at the north end of Coll and will pass the site everyday. He advised that he felt very uncomfortable when approached and asked to sign the petition. He advised that he felt strongly that an island like Coll depended on its own natural resources and that we should be using our natural resources like wind. He advised that he was interested in the current consultation document published by the Scottish Government which proposes reducing electricity bills for communities living close to wind turbines and that he would welcome this. He advised that anything that provides for the future economy of Coll should be welcomed and that the island needed inward investment and that this was an opportunity for our own endeavours to provide something for the island. He advised that we owed it to our future generations to invest in the island.

Peter Wilson advised that he has lived on Coll for five years and that he would like to talk about what the opportunities of erecting a wind turbine would bring to Coll. He advised that there has been an influx of young people to the island and that there was more demand for public services. He advised that young families were proactive in many community groups and were committed to sustainability and improvements to the island and that without this you get a less dynamic and less sustainable place to live and work. He advised that large employers struggle to recruit and retain well qualified and knowledgeable staff and that young families were likely to remain longer if living in a sustainable community. He advised that this development will support generations to come and bring benefits such as improvements to the roads and that construction work will boost the economy and benefit local traders. He advised if specialist traders needed to come onto the island during the construction phase local accommodation providers would benefit as they would need a place to eat and stay. He referred to the £10,000 per annum being offered to the community and advised that this would be hugely beneficial as it could mean being able to access more and improved services on the island with this funding. He advised that everyone on the island should be given the opportunity to remain on Coll and that this development will keep young people and families on Coll. He advised that he just hoped sense and not emotion prevails when determining this application.

The Chair then invited Objectors to make their representations.

## **OBJECTORS**

Colin Scott summarised the contents of a presentation which was circulated to the Committee and advised that for over forty years he has been a Rural Land Agent dealing with land and estate management including major environmental matters. His experience has been gained with Buccleuch Estates in Scotland and England, Blair Drummond Estate in Perthshire and Dunbeath Estate in Caithness. He advised that he has lived permanently on Coll for some 4 years, having visited the Island over eight or nine years previously and was here today as spokesman for The Protecting Coll Group, a Group which represents 102 of the house owners on Coll. The total on the Electoral Roll is 137. He advised that the Group are totally opposed to the Planning Application from Gallanach

Green Generation Ltd and believe that they have very compelling reasons why the Application must be refused. He advised he had several salient issues, which would be addressed during his presentation and that these were: the Application as it stands is unlawful as would be explained; vital Safety matters have been totally ignored in the Officer's Report although he has been advised of them; the Human Factor - vital to the Community - has been totally ignored; tourism, vital to the Island's economy has been discounted in the flawed report; and the proposed turbine would be of no benefit to the Community. It would be of benefit only to one entrepreneur and his family. He advised that the Group were very disturbed to see that the Planning Officer has recommended that the proposal be approved (subject to this discretionary hearing). Not only does the recommendation make little sense, in light of the policy framework and the purported analysis contained in the report, but the Planning Officer has failed to take into account or deal with large parts of the overriding objections on key grounds. He advised that the Group consider it is essential for Council Members to understand the hugely destructive nature of what is proposed for the small isle of Coll. He advised that time does not permit a comprehensive analysis of each of the failures in the analysis of the Officer's report nor of the overwhelming case for firmly rejecting this out-of-scale, disproportionate and significantly harmful proposal. The Group hope that Council Members will glean this for themselves from the objections that they have already submitted. He advised that the Group confine themselves to responding to some of the basic errors and flaws in the Officer's report and that the Group appeal to the Council Members' own inherent good sense and deep pride in preserving the intrinsic qualities of the Council's area. Council Members will rightly understand that the islands of the Inner Hebrides, of which Coll is a very special part, are woven into the fabric of what makes Argyll and Bute so special. The Isle of Coll is an essential part of that fabric. Its particular qualities have simply been ignored in the report or the landscape features misunderstood. It is difficult to reconcile the words of the report with the location of the proposal. He advised that whatever the reason, one of the overriding contradictions and illogicalities in the report and recommendation relates to the assessment of landscape and visual impact. He advised that Council Members may have already seen that the report includes a statement that this proposal conflicts with the principles expressed in the Council's own Wind Energy Capacity Study ("WECS"). He advised that this document does not actually address the special landscape of Coll, but the Officer suggests that the principles applicable to Islay and Jura are also applicable to Coll. Even on that assumption (which requires further analysis in any event), the proposal should be refused. The WECS is the Council's own newly approved document which seeks to assess where wind energy proposals can be accommodated. It identifies in clear terms that even landscapes which are larger in scale than Coll itself (eg those landscape characters identified in WECS in Islay and Jura), there is no capacity for turbines of the scale proposed. Therefore the Officer has to accept that the proposal "is not consistent with the provisions of the newly approved WECS which indicates a general presumption against higher turbines on Coll and Tiree ... ". Despite this stark position, which should result in a firm rejection of this proposal, bizarrely the Officer purports to distinguish the WECS principles. There is simply no basis for doing so and much of the analysis is simply flawed as we summarise below. We also deal with some other points made in the report, which are fundamentally flawed. Mr Scott then spoke about the Landscape and Visual Impact of the proposal. He referred the Council Members to the compelling reasons as to why a huge turbine of 77m on the Isle of Coll is completely at odds with the landscape

character and massively damaging in terms of visual impact. He advised that was little wonder that Scottish Natural Heritage has been assiduous enough to identify for the Council the significant harm that would arise if the proposal were permitted to go ahead. He advised that the Group strongly commend the Council Members to read the considered views of the SNH officer who visited the island before making that assessment and identifying the harm that would result. He also advised that the Group would also refer and commend to Council Members the importance of the moratorium that SNH suggests to enable proper work to be done on what further wind turbine development (if any) can be accommodated on Coll and at what scale. This proposal completely ignores this, as does the Planning Officer's report. Turning back to the Officer's analysis, firstly he advised that the Group have noted that the Officer applies the WECS, although recognising it does not assess Coll "in any detail". The first point to note is that the WECS is directed at the larger landscape characters of Islay and Jura. He advised that as Council Members will appreciate, the Isle of Coll is very much smaller than these islands and the ability to take large scale turbine development in the landscape correspondingly even lower than Islay and Jura. It is therefore perverse for the Officer to accept that the proposal conflicts with the WECS principles for Islay and Jura and then to purport to distinguish this conflict by reference to the "unique" nature of this proposal. The very opposite analysis is correct. The smaller scale nature of Coll should make the presumption against development of this type based on the WECS apply with even greater force. The Officer's analysis fails to deal with this. He advised secondly, that the WECS identifies that larger typology wind turbines will not generally be suitable for island locations. The proposal is undoubtedly for a larger typology wind turbine. It would be one of the highest now manufactured on one of the flattest and most low-lying islands in the Hebrides. It is difficult to conceive of an island which is less suitable for such a proposal. It is the very antithesis of good planning and entirely at odds with the WECS which the Council and its Members have worked so hard to produce. He advised that there is simply no point in producing policy document and expensive research of this kind for it then to be ignored so blatantly in the analysis by Officers. He advised thirdly, the officer then suggests that despite the WECS and its recommendations, it is appropriate to rely on a localised assessment of the landscape impact. This makes the WECS document completely without practical purpose. If, as the Officer appears to be suggesting, the WECS recommendations are to be ignored in preference to what is described as "localised assessment of the landscape impact", there is no point at all in the WECS document and its recommendation. This is simply setting the document on one side, despite the fact that the WECS is meant to provide a relevant and helpful assessment for planning purposes. He advised that the Officer's approach is illogical and unprincipled. It is unlawful in terms of setting aside policy which is meant to have one clear meaning: see eg *Tesco Stores v Dundee City Council* [2012] Supreme Court. He advised fourthly, that the Officer purports to assess the proposal against landscape character types 16, 22 and 25 applicable to Islay and Jura, on the basis that they are also found on Coll. There is no proper basis for this approach without considering the very different small scale of the landscape character of Coll, which is an island only a few miles wide at its widest point and predominantly flat. However, even in this regard the WECS identifies the Marginal Farmland Mosaic as a sensitive low relief landscape characterised by its small scale and intricate rocky knolls. The landscape has a high sensitivity to small-medium turbines (35m-50m) and therefore few opportunities for development for larger typologies. Sand Dunes



and Machair is described as low-lying and combines stretches of sandy beach, tidal flats and low rocky outcrops with dunes. This landscape character type has a high sensitivity to small-medium turbines and describes it as an open landscape that is sparsely settled and that visibility is likely to be extensive and sustained. To suggest that somehow this could permit a proposal for a 77m turbine is nothing short of irrational. He advised fifthly, that the Officer then purports to rely on the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) provided by the Applicant, but without conducting any sort of critical appraisal of that document or dealing with the objections that have been made and the contrary evidence about landscape and visual impact assessment. This is very concerning. It is asserted that the LVIA shows that the turbine will have "limited localised impact on key views" and it is asserted that this is shown "through the submission of photomontages". The very opposite is the case. In particular: (1) Even taking the photomontages of the LVIA provided at face value (which Council Members should not do), they show a hugely damaging effect on the landscape and character of this island. They show that this turbine will be widely visible from large parts of the island; this wide visibility is unsurprising given that the island is so low-lying and so small (both intrinsic features of its charm and sense of place). It is mystifying as to why the Officer has purported to characterise the effects as "limited" and "localised". The very opposite is the case. He advised that the Group can quickly demonstrate the illogicality of the Officer's report in this regard. We take as a very simple example the views from the ferry that serves the island and is the gateway to the island for almost all visitors. One of the captivating characteristics of the island itself is the experience of arrival. From the large majesty of the dominating vertical landscapes of the Sound of Mull, the ferry crosses the sea of the Inner Hebrides approaching the low horizon and flat landscape of the Isle of Coll that sits like a fish in the sea beyond. The essential character for all to see is that of a flat island, swept by wind, and marked by its horizontal nature. It has had that character for all of history. It is the very sense of contrast with the verticality of the mainland which makes it so different. As the ferry approaches the village of Arinagour and rounds the buoy that marks Chieftan Rock, the first time visitor, the regular returner and residents alike are confronted with the equally low-lying village of Arinagour. Even this, the most concentrated element of development on the entire island, is characterised by horizontality. From the ferry pier itself, to the most distinctive "village street" lined by single-storey white-washed cottages, to the part of the village itself set around the church on the hill, the prevailing characteristic is of low-lying development reflecting the low-lying nature of the island. He advised that into this landscape, the proposal would now insert the proposed turbine which even the Applicant's own LVIA demonstrates would be visible on the skyline above the village itself, thereby at a stroke removing the captivating first impressions of the island for the first time visitor and the person returning home alike. The turbine blades will appear above the village-scape, inserting jarring incongruity into the view. Moreover, although the turbine is some way away at this point, the fact that it will be seen from this vantage point as persons arrive is indicative of how often it will continue to be seen when they are on the island itself. The Officer's suggestion that the effect will be "negligible" defies commonsense. It will be hugely damaging and ruin the very essence of the island embodied in this entranceway. Such a proposal conflicts with all good landscape planning. As to the Officer's assessment from views closer to hand, again the contention that the proposal would not be damaging is impossible to understand. It is said that this is a "transition area" between Sand Dunes and Machair and Marginal Farmland Mosaic and has elements "akin to the Coastal

Parallel Ridges character type”, but this is clearly not right. This is not a "transition area" at all, but an intrinsic part of the character area of Coll as a whole, a landscape of only a few miles wide consisting of Gneissian Lewis-type rock fringed with dunes and the sea beyond on both sides. It is not a transition area at all, but the landscape of a small island. This is an artificial borrowed assessment from Islay and Jura which ignores Coll's characteristics. The assumption that this area can "accommodate turbine developments more easily" as the officer suggests, is inexplicable and unreasoned. He advised that more bizarrely, the officer then contends that "the site is unique in that it sits within an area of rocky outcropping without being high above the current highest point of the rock formation". For anyone who has been on Coll for any period of time, this is similarly nonsensical. There is nothing "unique" in this sort of rocky outcropping on Coll. Indeed, this sort of rocky outcropping is a feature of the Eastern end of the island. It is replicated everywhere. There is nothing "unique" about the site. Indeed, similar locations could be found all over the eastern end. Again, we refer you to the analysis of the SNH Officer who spent some time on the island making her own assessment. He advised that the Planning Officer suggests, then changes his tune later in the report in suggesting that the landscape in this part of Coll is "relatively unique" "by there not being extensive long views over the sand dunes and machair landscape character type and by the rocky outcropping in the marginal farmland mosaic having a feeling of intimacy and yet being quite large in reality." There is no such thing as "relatively unique", but that aside, it is absurd to suggest that the landscape is "large in reality", and there is no basis for suggesting that a 77m turbine would be accepted into the landscape here. (2) The LVIA photomontages need to be treated with a very considerable degree of caution in any event. On our analysis, they give a very misleading impression of the reality of Coll and its landscapes and the views that will be affected. He advised that the Group do not understand why they have not been analysed critically by the Officers. For example, there are no views taken from the beaches that will be affected. There are no views taken from the north-western seaward side where the ferry to/from Barra passes and all boats that use the East-end small harbour will experience. There are no views taken from the most directly affected properties or their curtilages. More disturbingly, the sky chosen for the photomontage pictures is of a particular grey. Again, any long term resident or recurrent visitor will know that Coll shares with Tiree the highest sunshine hours in the whole of Britain. Coll is blessed with views of sky and its landscape against a crystal blue for significant parts of the day. The turbine blades rotating up to 77m in the sky will be highly conspicuous, whether from the longer views from Arinagour harbour and those approaching, or for those closer views on the road from Arinagour to Amabost, or the road to or from the East end of the island or from the affected properties and beaches. On any reasonable view, the damage will be significant. It will be severe. It is precisely the sort of damage which the WECS has sought to avoid and which Argyll and Bute Council Members need to protect. He advised that the Group strongly urge Council Members to look at the photomontages commissioned by our Group, that we the Objectors have provided which have been produced by an expert photographer and properly scaled. These include just one photomontage taken from Cliad beach, one of Coll's great treasures. One look at the vast turbine dominating this previously unspoilt beach demonstrates how absurd the proposal is, how devastating it would be and how bizarre the officer's report is in not identifying the failures in the LVIA which do not give the viewer any of these photomontages for assessment. He advised sixthly, that the Officer refers to SNH's concerns, but suggests that these are

mitigated through "distance and isolation". In light of the analysis above, this is difficult to understand. These are not the comments of anyone familiar with the island or the proposed location of this turbine. He advised that in Appendix A, the Officer's attempts to justify this analysis are artificial and dislocated from the reality of the location. It is said "development is often scattered throughout this rocky landscape", but that does not apply to 77m turbines. It is suggested that this includes "tall structures such as telegraph poles". That is an absurd comparison. A telegraph pole is minute compared with the turbine and many efforts have already been made to remove telegraph poles from Coll. This proposal is directly at odds with those proposals. He advised that the proposal is contrary to the Development Plan policies for all the reasons previously given and summarised above. The Officer recognises that it is contrary to the WECS. His reasons for setting aside that framework do not make sense. The LVIA is flawed and his report is irreconcilable with the island and the location of the proposal. He advised that the Group strongly urge the Council Members to stop this proposal in its tracks and to apply the WECS principles in the firm and clear way they were intended.

Jo Scott advised that she would like to read out a statement prepared by Mr and Mrs Smalley, proprietors of Tigh Na Mara, Isle of Coll who had objected to this proposal but were unable to attend the hearing today. A copy of this statement was circulated to Members and stated the following:-

We speak to you not as members of any group, but as a family that has committed wholeheartedly to this wonderful island for the last 20 years in my case, 40 for my husband. After working hard for different people here, in many guises, we were delighted to be given the chance in April 2011 to run our own business, the Islands only MS. It's important to point out we are 1 of many families who absolutely rely on tourism for our livelihood, a livelihood that is fragile at anytime and not just now in times of economic hardship. Whilst there are many points contained within Mr Love's report we take exception to, regarding erecting a wind turbine of this scale, we'd like to focus on Tourism. We were totally flabbergasted to read the comment "There is no substantive evidence to suggest that a single wind turbine will adversely impact on tourism to the island". Where did the evidence for this statement come from? I'd like to point out that throughout this process there have been numerous opportunities for all concerned to canvass opinion on this subject. The Applicants have at no time consulted us and/or our guests regarding a wind turbine of this magnitude. Atmos Consulting have stayed with us for most, if not all of their visits, at no time have they consulted us and/or our guests. Indeed Mr Love himself stayed with us, again he at no time consulted us and/or our guests. We on the other hand have been busy gauging opinion from many sources on how turbines affect the tourism industry, these include Visit Scotland, The English Tourist Board, Visit Wales, the Cornish Tourist Board. We also contacted many other advertising companies that work within the tourism industry. All of those we spoke to stated that they do not use pictures that contain wind turbines within their campaigns, or indeed their general advertising within the tourism industry, more importantly they are aware, and accept, that a development such as the one proposed here on the Isle of Coll have an adverse impact on the tourism industry. This island is officially recognised as being "on the edge", surely this should place a heavy burden on our local authority to support, not hinder our main industry? So, we ask again, where does the evidence for Mr Love's statement come from? We put it to him that his conclusion regarding the effects on tourism is at best flawed,

maybe even neglectful, at the very least further research must be done before a conclusion is reached. Whilst not wishing to make this in anyway a personal issue and also accepting there may be an element of the Coll grapevine, I wonder if it is correct that the main applicant is actually relocating off the island before the end of the year? If so it's interesting he isn't going to be around to live with consequences of his actions.

Colin Kennedy advised that he was born and bred on the island and that he has a turbine which he cannot use as there is no grid capacity. He advised that it appeared to him that this proposal was for an ENERCON turbine and that he has visited a couple of sites on Orkney and Lewis where these turbines are located. He advised that ENERCON produce a pack for these types of turbines which specify the minimum requirements in respect of the infrastructure required to build these turbines, minimum specifications for crane technology and minimum requirements for access roads to the construction site. He advised what these minimum requirements were and advised that in his opinion this type of turbine was not suitable for Coll as the island would not be able to accommodate construction or transportation of the turbine to and on the site. He advised that he could not understand why this document prepared by ENERCON was not produced for this proposal. He also stated that consideration should be given to everyone who signed the petition and that they should be given full value.

The Chair then invited Members to ask questions.

## **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Councillor Devon sought clarification regarding Mr McMichael's reference to a community turbine at Arinagour as she was not aware of any having been approved.

Mr Fair confirmed there was consent for one turbine at Arinagour and that this was for Mr Kennedy and not the community. He referred to a community survey which had previously been carried out. He also advised that the Applicant had previously submitted during the course of his application, the offer of a site for a community wind turbine.

Councillor Devon referred to the WECS which highlighted specific issues covering Islay and Jura and which stated that smaller islands could not support turbines of more than 50 metres in height and asked Mr Fair to confirm if this was correct.

Mr Fair advised that this was correct but went on to explain about the detailed survey carried out for Coll and explained why Planning felt the proposal could be supported based on the landscape character types in evidence at the site, as well as the turbines relative height and because the site sat within an of rocky outcropping. He advised that the WECS document was a technical document to guide developments, alongside the Development Plan policies which were taken account of in the first instance.

Councillor Devon referred to the statement in the WECS document about small islands not able to support turbines over 50 metres.

Mr Fair advised that the Development Plan was looked at first and that the

WECS document was not part of the Development Plan and that it was just a technical document to assist decision making. The WECS advises that detailed assessment is necessary and that in this case, all things considered, the recommendation was for approval of the reduced scheme as a single turbine.

Councillor Colville referred to there being no planning history relating to the site and no anemometer erected to monitor wind speeds. He referred to policy LP REN 1 and asked on what technical basis was the site deemed efficient.

Mr Fair advised that a lack of anemometer on site did not necessarily mean the developer has not done his job. He referred to Coll and Tiree benefiting from prevailing winds. He advised that turbines were erected at other local properties on the island and it was fair to assume that there was plenty wind.

Councillor Colville asked the same question to the Applicant.

Mr Smith advised that he had initially submitted a planning application for an anemometer to ascertain wind speed and that this was withdrawn when it became apparent to him that he could extrapolate information from Benbecula and Tiree studies. He advised that this site would generate wind speeds of up to 9.94 metres per second.

Councillor Colville asked about the size of the borrow pit and asked why this was not being dealt with as a separate issue.

Mr Fair advised that the borrow pit location illustrated measuring 20 metres long by 10 metres wide alongside the temporary site compound. He advised there was no proposal to bring aggregate on to the site and that the aggregate required will be found on site, per the submissions of the applicant. He advised that the borrow pit was indicative, with no cross sections or details of the extent of excavations, and taking account of the size of project, he anticipated a further application coming forward with details of the borrow pit proposals.

Councillor Currie referred to Mr Scott advising that SNH had sought a moratorium and advised that he could see no mention of this in any of his documents and asked why Mr Scott had said this when SNH were not objecting to the proposal.

Mr Scott advised that SNH had written to Planners advising that the proposal should be refused and that within a week had stated they could only comment on an advisory capacity and withdrew their previous letter. He advised that he did not know why this had happened.

Councillor Currie asked if that meant what Mr Scott had said about the moratorium was not true.

Mr Scott advised that the SNH Officer in Oban had stated that she was prepared to work with the Council to look at the type of turbine that would be suitable and recommended a moratorium period.

Mr Fair advised that the only time he had heard the word moratorium being used was when other Councils had requested this from the Scottish Government in respect of wind farm applications and that this request had been rejected. He

advised that SNH suggested the Council adopt a strategic approach for determining wind turbine applications on Coll. He advised that the Council already have a robust framework for dealing with turbines in the form of the Development Plan and the WECS. He also confirmed that SNH had not objected to the application but had raised concerns about the landscape and visual impacts.

Councillor Currie commented on whether or not a Section 75 Agreement was necessary and what the detail of this would be, given that SNH and RSPB had not objected to the development. He asked if it was being considered on the basis of comments from the RSPB which was a voluntary charity and not a statutory consultee.

Mr Fair replied yes.

Councillor Freeman advised it was his understanding that this was a 750 kw proposal and advised that part of the information passed to Members included an email from SSE stating that applications for over 50kw would be subject to current Taynuilt Grid transmission constraints and asked if this would apply to this proposal.

Mr Fair advised that grid capacity was not a material planning consideration. He advised that he could not qualify SSE constraints and that this did not need to influence the Committee decision.

Councillor Freeman referred to the Coll Protecting Group and the electoral roll being 137. He asked if all the 137 individuals were opposed to the proposal.

Mr Scott advised that 102 of the home owners were opposed to the proposal.

Councillor Freeman asked how many home owners there were and was advised that it was 242.

Councillor Kinniburgh asked if Mr McMichael's reference to the wind turbine outstanding at Arinagour was that it would be of a similar size to the proposed turbine.

Mr McMichael advised that the Arinagour turbine was smaller but due to its location the tip height above sea level would not be dissimilar to this proposed.

Councillor Kinniburgh sought clarification on the height of the turbine in relation to it exceeding the 50m height and asked if any cognisance was given to views from the beach.

Mr Fair advised that SNH were the main funders of the WECS study and that the WECS had set a range of thresholds. The threshold of 50m was set to define turbine typologies and capacity for those higher turbines does generally not exist on Coll, Tiree or Colonsay. He advised that smaller turbines in a more prominent location could have similar impacts to well sited larger turbines. He advised that the proposed turbine was bigger but a considerable distance away from the main public vantage points and neighbouring residential property. He confirmed the site had been assessed from adjacent beaches and in these views there was very little to scale the turbine against which mitigated the height to a

degree.

Councillor MacMillan referred to the impact on the roads and referred to a turbine going off the road north of Tarbert and that turbines were not allowed to be transported on the by pass road at Tarbert which was a first class road and asked if Planners were satisfied that the Coll road would be suitable for transporting the turbine as nothing was specifically mentioned in the report.

Mr Fair advised that the Roads Engineer had originally asked for more detail from the Applicant which had been provided. He advised that the Roads colleagues now accepted the proposal subject to compliance with the information provided. He also referred to the Roads Act allowing the Council to have additional control on the impact the proposal would have on the public road.

Councillor McNaughton referred to the suggestion by the Applicant that condition 5 should be removed which referred to ornithology monitoring and asked was it not a fact that it was usual for these monitoring programmes to be undertaken before installation and that this was a matter of course.

Mr Fair advised that significant work has already been done on ornithological surveys and it was at the RSPB's request that monitoring be undertaken.

Councillor MacDougall advised that each application was looked at on its own merits and that all had different reasons for approval. He referred to the Motion in respect of the Tiree proposal which was quoted in Mr Scott's presentation and advised that proposal was completely different. He then went on to ask why there was an underground hydro cable at Gallanach.

Mr Smith advised that power cables were above ground and that the only part underground was the cable going into his house.

Councillor Devon referred to SNH concerns about landscape and visual impact and asked if these concerns had been taken on board.

Mr Fair advised that planning had taken account of both the competing views of SNH landscape architecture advisers stated in SNH consultation responses, versus the Agent's landscape architecture adviser, who despite looking at the same characteristics had drawn different conclusions. He advised that SNH had expressed concern about the landscape and visual impact but did not object to the proposal.

Councillor McQueen asked if the road would be plated.

Mr Fair advised that further technical details regarding the road would be dealt with under roads legalisation and not under planning, beyond the details already submitted.

Councillor Colville commented that only the recommendation from Roads regarding the Bellmouth appeared to be the subject of a condition and asked how the rest of the Roads recommendations were being covered.

Mr Fair confirmed that these were covered under condition 9.

Councillor Colville referred to the Appropriate Assessment at page 35 of the Agenda Pack and asked why Planners were recommending condition 8 when SNH had stated that the site is not designated for landscape, archaeological or nature conservation purposes.

Mr Fair advised that West of Scotland Archaeology Service had required this condition.

Councillor Colville asked why planning was accepting that advice.

Mr Fair replied that generally the planning service does accept West of Scotland Archaeology Service's advice.

Councillor Kinniburgh asked how often the Coll Protecting Group met.

Mr Scott advised that they met approximately three times per year.

Councillor Taylor asked if planning had been challenged by the visual presentation by the objectors.

Mr Fair advised that it was his understanding the visual presentations were done to industry standards using wireframe software and that these were accepted.

Councillor Colville referred to the noise from turbines and that no reference was made in the report to noise and the effect this could have on neighbouring properties.

Mr Fair advised that noise impact was taken account of by Environmental Health Officers who stated that there would be no adverse impact as summarised in the report. He advised that noise increased with more wind turbines and varied depending on the turbine type and distance from sensitive receptors. He advised that the nearest property to the turbine was one of the Applicant's Directors at 500m away and that it would be in his interest to ensure noise was not an issue. The nearest third party residence was 760m away.

At the end of the question and answer session the meeting adjourned for a 10 minute break.

The Committee reconvened at 4.10 pm.

The Chair invited everyone to sum up.

## **SUMMING UP**

### **Planning Authority**

Mr Fair advised that this proposal was for a single wind turbine 55 metres to hub height, 77 metres to blade tip with an output generating capacity of 750 KW. He advised that Members had heard from supporters and objectors and referred to some of the points raised. He advised that reference was made to a community application and a single application and stated that this was not a material planning consideration and should not sway the Committee decision. He



advised that community benefit was also not a material consideration. He advised that the key issues were landscape and visual impact and that even though concerns about this had been raised by SNH they had not objected to the proposal. He recommended that the Committee support the application subject to the conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement and 9 conditions.

## **Applicant**

Mr McMichael advised that lots of issues and questions had been raised. He advised that the WECS document was material but not part of the Development Plan and was intended as a strategic study. He referred to a lot of detailed surveys having been carried out and that a lot of consideration was given to locating the site in the right place. He advised that actual views of the turbine would be few and that actual views with the sea behind would be limited. He advised that he believed the site was acceptable and that Planning also thought it was acceptable. He advised that SNH had not objected to the proposal. He advised that the turbine was very similar to the Tiree one which was ultimately consented. In terms of visuals the turbine did not show a high degree of harm and was not a strong feature at the gateway to the island and that the Arinagour turbine would be more prominent in that gateway view. He advised that the turbine rotation speed would be slow and that smaller turbines rotated faster which could increase the visual effect. He agreed that the visual view points had been accepted by the Planning department as appropriate and that there was no suggestion from SNH that they were unacceptable. In respect of Tourism he advised there was no evidence to link turbines to impact on tourism and that the co-owners of the Coll hotel were supportive of the proposal. He advised that Mr and Mrs Smalley had not objected to the Arinagour proposal. In respect of the Grid he confirmed the Applicant had secured grid connection. In terms of the impact on roads he advised that the Roads Engineer's response to the further information provided stated that the Council position was fully secured and that the Roads Act will allow the Council to have full control of the impact on the road and doesn't impede the ability for consent today. He referred to planning gain and stated that planning gain was wholly inappropriate for this development and to seek planning gain based on the RSPB recommendation was burdensome on this modest project.

Mr Smith referred to the electrical capacity and advised that there was none in 2008 and that there was capacity from 2010 and that they had secured it for this proposal. He advised that units up to 50kw can be connected immediately and units above 50kw would wait until 2017. He referred to the petition. He referred to Planners being asked if they were challenged over the visual presentations and advised that these were all agreed with the Council and SNH. He advised that the turbine would not be visible from the village. Only 15% would be visible from the road between Arinagour and the site and it would be hardly visible from the ferry.

## **Supporters**

Mr Kennedy recognised concerns about "not in my backyard" and stated that concerns on a personal level were perfectly valid. He advised that this was a golden opportunity for Coll to contribute to the national and international aim of lowering carbon emissions for future generations.

Mr Wilson advised he had nothing further to add.

## **Objectors**

Mr Scott advised that the photomontages were available on the planning website for many months and were extremely accurate and a true picture of what you see. He advised that it was his opinion there was uncertainty about two things, the planning attitude to the WECS document which was important and set in stone and could not be set aside by a Planning Officer. He advised that it was a letter from Mrs Anne Blum of SNH which had been circulated to Members which stated she was prepared to work with the Council Planning Officers to see what type of turbine would be suitable for smaller islands.

The Chair asked all parties to confirm they had received a fair hearing and they all confirmed this to be the case.

## **DEBATE**

Councillor Currie advised that the Committee were not here to get the popular vote and had to look at the proposal as presented to them at the hearing and on paper. He advised that he supported the application for all the reasons stated in the planner's report. He referred to condition 4 and advised that he thought it could be altered with the final detail of the building being agreed by the Planning Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair rather than specific details being part of the condition. He also referred to condition 5 which was as a result of a recommendation by a voluntary charity and he felt that this was very burdensome for a single turbine application and he was minded to delete this condition as it was only a suggestion by the charity RSPB. He advised that he thought condition 5 could be removed but he would need to seek advice about the need for the Section 75 Agreement. Councillor Currie also suggested that an additional condition should be added to cover any possible problems with the roads and that it was not sufficient to say this would be covered by the Roads Act or in the details of a letter dated 21 January 2012 which he had not seen. He advised that a special condition should be added to cover the roads.

Councillor Devon advised that she disagreed. She referred to the motion in respect of the Tiree Turbine and that this was back in 2008 when there were no guidelines on turbines to take account of. She advised that Scottish Government guidance was not being adhered to and the Council's own WECs document was not being adhered to. She advised that SNH had genuine concerns about the landscape and visual impact and that she would be putting forward a Motion to refuse the Application.

Councillor MacDougall advised that he would support Councillor Devon.

Councillor Freeman advised that he was minded to go with Councillor Currie and that the proposal was fully compliant with all policies in the Local Plan and that there was no reference to it being approved as a minor departure. He referred to the site visit and that he'd had a good look from various points which did not raise any concerns. He referred to comments that the WECS study was set in stone and advised that nothing was set in stone not even the Development Plan where policies could be set aside if there was good enough reason. He advised that the condition specifically about roads could include a request that an

assessment of the road be carried out prior to construction so that the road could be brought back to the same condition at the end of construction. He advised that he had no issue with condition 5 being removed as long as the Council were not open to legal challenge. He advised that SNH had made comments but had certainly not objected to the proposal and that he would support Councillor Currie.

Councillor McNaughton advised that he also agreed with Councillor Currie. He agreed that condition 5 was not necessary as the site had been monitored enough and that he totally agreed that a condition should be added in respect of the roads as they needed protected.

Councillor Kinniburgh advised that it was always very difficult to come to a decision especially in a small community where opinion was divided and he agreed that nothing was set in stone. He advised that he was undecided and would like to hear Councillor Devon's Motion before making a decision and if the Motion goes along the lines of what he thought he might be minded to support Councillor Devon.

Councillor Colville indicated his support for the Planning recommendations and that Members have to have confidence in our Officers. He advised that he had previously had various concerns but that these had all been addressed. He advised that in terms of Condition 5 the applicant had offered a solution that could be accepted up to a point.

Councillor McQueen advised that he agreed about the roads and would support Councillor Currie.

Councillor MacMillan advised that he had huge concerns about the roads and that not enough emphasis had been put on this was in the report and that he would support Councillor Devon.

Councillor Taylor advised that he felt as Chair he should support the Planners and that he did not see any detrimental issues brought forward. He said it was vital that economic development needed to be sustainable and that his position would be to support the Planners.

Mr Fair when asked confirmed that the removal of condition 5 would not lead to legal challenge.

At this point the Chair ruled and the Committee agreed to adjourn at 4.55 pm to allow Members to formulate competent motions. The public were asked to leave the room.

At approximately 5.15 pm the public were invited back into the room and the meeting was reconvened.

The Chair thanked the public for their patience and advised that he was minded to support the recommendation contained in the report in full. From the discussion which had taken place he was of the view that none of the Members were supportive of that position. The other Members agreed that this was the case.

## **Motion**

In my opinion this development is contrary to local plan Policy LP ENV 1 regarding the Impact on the General Environment as it does not protect, restore or enhance the established character and local distinctiveness of the landscape in which it is to be located due to its uncharacteristic scale, which would not only give rise to an adverse environmental impact upon its immediate surroundings but on the landscape character of the whole island of Coll.

This proposal by virtue of its height, blade diameter and rotation will have significant adverse landscape and visual consequences beyond that suggested in the Applicant's landscape assessment, which underestimates the impact of a development of this nature and scale, in what must be regarded as a sensitive island location. The impact would be significant from numerous views, including the remoter upland and coastal areas, as well as transport routes to the east and centre of the island. The small scale of other built elements and other natural features in the landscape will result, in my opinion, in the turbine introducing a new and dominating reference point which would be incongruous in terms of the small scale of the receiving environment. The proposal would have an adverse effect on the sand dune and machair landscape character type, as well as the marginal farmland mosaic landscape character type, both of which are low lying coastal landscapes which are sensitive to change, particularly from inappropriately sited or uncharacteristically tall structures.

The height of the turbine relative to other structures in the landscape is a key consideration in terms of landscape "fit", as different sensitivities come into play once wind turbines exceed the height of other common built environment and landscape features. The existing pattern of turbine development on Coll is domesticated/small scale and primarily below 35 m. This proposal is 51% higher than the Scottish Government recommendation of 50 m and therefore well in excess of what is considered likely to be appropriate in an island context. Its scale also conflicts with the recommendations of the Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study which identifies that smaller islands will not normally have capacity in landscape terms for turbines in excess of 50 m.

I consider that the scale of the proposal is disproportionate to that of the surrounding landscape and that it will, by virtue of its size and movement, constitute an inappropriately large and dominant development, which would undermine the character of the landscape contrary to local plan Policies LP ENV 1 and LP REN 1.

I propose that this application is recommended for refusal.

Moved by Councillor Mary-Jean Devon, seconded by Councillor Alistair MacDougall.

## **Amendment**

That the application is granted for the reasons detailed in the report and also subject to the conditions detailed in the report with the exception of the following:-

Condition 5 should be deleted and the requirement for a Section 75 Agreement

should be removed.

The following extra condition should also be added:-

No development shall commence or is hereby authorised until a full Traffic Management Plan, including full details of the results of a detailed engineering survey of the public road network used to enable the development across its entire length between the point of arrival on the Isle of Coll and the entrance to the new private access road hereby approved, along with all mitigation measures to enable the delivery of the turbine rotors, mast, machinery, aggregate, plant equipment and materials, is submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be completed in strict accordance with such details as are approved.

Moved by Councillor Robin Currie, seconded by Councillor George Freeman.

A vote was then taken by a show of hands.

The Amendment was carried by 6 votes to 4 and the Committee resolved accordingly.

### **Decision**

Agreed to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions and reasons:-

1. If, by reason of any circumstances not foreseen by the applicant or operator, the wind turbine, fails to produce electricity supply to a local grid for a continuous period of 12 months then it will be deemed to have ceased to be required and, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority, the wind turbine and its ancillary equipment shall be dismantled and removed from the site and the area of the site impacted by development shall be restored in accordance with the agreed scheme of restoration as per the supporting Environmental Statement, all to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

Reason: In accordance with the Council's policy to ensure that full and satisfactory restoration of the wind turbine site takes place should it fall into disuse.

2. No development shall commence or is hereby authorised until details of the colour finish to be applied to the turbine, rotors and mast have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented using the approved colour scheme and shall be maintained as such thereafter for the duration of the installation.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

3. This planning permission shall be for a limited period, expiring 25 years from the commencement of the commercial operation of the development, the date of which shall first be notified in writing to the Planning Authority. Within 12 months of the end of that period, unless a further planning application is submitted and approved, the turbine and associated development shall be

dismantled and removed from the site and the land reinstated in accordance with the applicant's statement of intentions as per the supporting Environmental Statement and conditions listed below, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order that the Planning Authority has the opportunity to review the circumstances pertaining to the consent, which is of a temporary nature and in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

4. The control building shall be faced in natural stone/smooth cement or wet dash render painted a dark grey colour (or other natural/recessive finish as agreed in writing by the Planning Authority) with the roof finished in natural slate or a good quality slate substitute, samples or full details of which shall be submitted for the prior written approval of the Planning Authority prior to building works commencing.

Reason: In order to secure an appropriate appearance in the interests of amenity and to help assimilate the building into its landscape setting.

5. At all times during the lifespan of the installation, the wind turbine approved shall be fitted with a 25 candela omni-directional red lighting or infrared lighting with an optimised flash pattern of 60 flashes per minute of 200ms to 500ms at the highest practicable point.

Reason: In the interests of aviation safety.

6. No development shall commence or is hereby authorised until the proposed access is formed in accordance with the Council's Standard Roads Drawing SD 08/004a; including visibility splays of 42 metres by 2.4 metres from the centre line of the proposed access with the bellmouth area surfaced in dense bitumen macadam for a distance of 5 metres back from the existing carriageway edge. Prior to work starting on site the bellmouth shall be formed to at least base course standard and the visibility splays shall be cleared of all obstructions over 1.0 metre in height above the level of the adjoining carriageway. The final wearing surface on the bellmouth shall be completed prior to the development first being brought into use and the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of all obstructions over 1.0 metre in height thereafter in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of road safety

7. Prior to development commencing a method statement for an archaeological watching brief shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service. The method statement shall be prepared by a suitably qualified person and shall provide for the recording, recovery and reporting of items of interest or finds within the application site. Thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with the duly approved details with the suitably qualified person being afforded access at all reasonable times during ground disturbance works.

Reason: In order to protect archaeological resources.

8. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the details specified on the application form dated 27/09/11 and the approved drawing reference numbers:

Plan 1 of 5 (Location Plan at scale of 1:5000)

Plan 2 of 5 (Block Plan at scale of 1:1250)

Plan 3 of 5 (Road Junction Plan at scale of 1:1250)

Plan 4 of 5 (Wind Turbine Elevations at scale of 1:250)

Plan 5 of 5 (Kiosk, GRP and Crane Hardstanding at scale of 1:440, 1:100)

Supplementary Transportation Information submitted by letter dated 25th January 2012

All mitigation measures recommended in the submitted Environmental Statement in the interests of nature conservation, including those at table 6.7

unless the prior written approval of the planning authority is obtained for other materials/finishes/for an amendment to the approved details under Section 64 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).

Reason: For the purpose of clarity, to ensure that the development is implemented in accordance with the approved details.

9. No development shall commence or is hereby authorised until a full Traffic Management, including full details of the results of a detailed engineering survey of the public road network used to enable the development across its entire length between the point of arrival on the Isle of Coll and the entrance to the new private access road hereby approved, along with all mitigation measures to enable the delivery of the turbine rotors, mast, machinery, aggregate, plant equipment and materials, is submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be completed in strict accordance with such details as are approved.

Reason: In the interests of roads and pedestrian safety and to ensure that the development is undertaken in a manner that first secures adequate protection to and repair of the Island's road network.

(Reference: Report by Head of Planning and Regulatory Services dated 1 August 2012, supplementary planning report no 1 dated 12 September 2012 and supplementary planning report no 2 dated 16 October 2012, submitted)