



THE MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL OF SCOTLAND

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28/1/10

Dear Sir / Madam

Mountaineering Council of Scotland Response - Glenmorie Wind Farm Scoping Report

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS) is the representative body for hill walkers, climbers and ski-tourers. As the only national representative body of the sport of mountaineering in Scotland, we have 10,500 members, and are recognised by the Scottish Government as representing the interests of all mountaineers.

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland supports renewable energy developments that we consider to be appropriately located and designed and that do not threaten the natural environment. We recognise that renewables have an extremely important part to play in achieving some man-made climate change amelioration.

We wish to draw attention to our concerns after considering the proposals for the Glenmorie wind farm. This would be located in an area which we feel has Wild Land qualities. The final layout of the wind farm with its associated access tracks has not yet been determined [3.3.1.], but we do not support the construction of new upland tracks in fragile ecosystems, and will object to any significant length of permanent new track, even temporary tracks should be avoided as even these damage peat soils in the long term

This scoping opinion is at a very early stage, and much work remains to be done, particularly on flora and fauna assessment so it is difficult for us to express any opinion on any significant effects on these matters at the moment. It would have been better if the scoping opinion could have been more complete in these respects to allow us to comment more fully.

We note the points made in 5.2.13, 5.2.14 and 5.2.15 regarding the current status of The Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Guidelines. The MCofS responded at length to the consultation on HRES when it was first devised. We assume once this situation has been clarified, if amendments are to be made to these proposals, that a supplementary scoping will be issued for us to comment on at an early stage.

We have major concerns regarding the Landscape and Visual Assessment associated with this proposal. The landscape character will be affected adversely and we consider that the landscape quality in this location is high. Views from nearby prominent, iconic and popular summits will be negatively impacted on and these must be included in the selected principal visual receptors selected by OPEN, as indicated in 5.3.33. The main Munros and Corbetts (separate mountain tops >2500m within approximately 30km) of Carn Chuinneag (NH484833), Ben Wyvis (NH463684), Carn Ban (NH338875), Beinn a'Chaisteil (NH370801), Beinn Dearg ridge of 3 Munros (NH259812 to 258842), Cona'Mheall (NH275816), Am Faochagach (NH304794), and Seana Bhragh (NH281879) must be included in this exercise. The number required reflect the potential impact on many popular viewpoints in the area. The MCofS would be prepared to assist in identifying precise locations [summits, viewpoints and ridges] which would be appropriate for this exercise.

Our most serious concern, however, relates to the cumulative effects we are already experiencing in this area, where so many wind farms have been built, consented or proposed already, as listed in 5.3.20, as well as hydro schemes. We note the statements in 5.3.18 and express the view that the adverse impact on the landscape of this wind farm would be significant.

In considering socio-economic impacts, we feel that there will be considerable impact on the local tourism economy throughout the operational phase.

Figure 3 in the hard copy version is very difficult to scrutinise, perhaps an enlargement would have been more helpful.

Yours sincerely

Beryl Leatherland
Access & Conservation Volunteer