

Objecting To Beinn Mheadhonach Wind Farm - 23/05638/FUL

KEY ISSUE:

A proposal to build a new wind farm - 5 turbines of 150m height on a 300m hill near Struan.

Beinn Mheadhonach is over 300m high - so the tips of the turbine blades at the proposed wind farm may be 450m above sea level. Clearly visible from the Cuillin ridge, Portnalong, Carbost, the Western Isles etc. If consented, these would be the turbines with the greatest height above sea level on Skye.

Planning decisions need to be made with consideration to the cumulative impact of all the proposed wind farms, and not on a piecemeal or "salami sliced" basis.

What will be the cumulative noise levels? How many eagles will be killed by all of the wind farms if consented? How much peat will need to be excavated across Skye? How will Skye cope with the road traffic chaos caused by hundreds of slow moving abnormal load convoys blocking roads for the years that the construction will take...

As Beinn Mheadhonach will be less than 50MW capacity the planning application will be determined by the Highland Council.

The advertised cut off date for objections/representations is 9th March although we can object until the Committee meeting - which may be in April or may be delayed. .

The planning application can be viewed here:

<https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=S4W2ZPIHKRT00&activeTab=summary>

HOW TO OBJECT

Email epanning@highland.gov.uk or write to The Highland Council Eplanning, Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness. IV3 5NX.

Need to quote reference 23/05638/FUL and your name and address.

Start "I wish to object to Beinn Mheadhonach Wind Farm (23/05638/FUL), then give your reasons as briefly or in as much detail as you like.

Key Points (Suggest you concentrate on the issues of most concern to you)

- 1. The five turbines proposed at Bheinn Mheadhonach will have a tip height circa 450m above sea level.** This will have a massive landscape and visual impact and would be the nearest multi-turbine wind farm to the Cuillin Hills National Landscape Area and will be clearly and entirely from many parts of the ridge. Figure 4.09 in the EIA shows that these 5 turbines will be visible from as far away as the East Coast of the Western Isles, Rum and the hills near Applecross on the mainland. If the other proposed wind farms are built in North West Skye, these will be amongst the highest. The developers have failed to adequately assess the cumulative visual impact (a ZTV) of all the proposed wind farms together with prominent nature of the Beinn Mheadhonach proposal.
- 2. The project will bring no long term economic benefit to the local community.** Vacant posts for wind farm maintenance engineers on Skye have been unfilled for years. There is no published information available on any voluntary "community benefits" offered by the developer. These benefits are usually tiny compared to the profits made by wind farms and do nothing to address significant social problems faced by residents of Skye...lack of affordable

housing, low wage employment, fuel poverty etc. The Scottish Government's planning document NPF4 states that "**Development proposals will only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities**"

3. **There is no need for the electricity that Beinn Mheadhonach wind farm would produce.** Three of the existing turbines at Ben Aketil or Edinbane provide enough power for the whole of Skye. Skye already produces ten times the power it needs from its existing wind turbines. Moreover, Scotland will meet its renewable energy targets for onshore wind (20GW by 2030) without more wind farms on Skye. The target of 20GW is four times Scotland's total electricity consumption. The existing grid network does not have the capacity to export any more electricity to the rest of the UK.
4. **Although a small scale proposal, the Beinn Mheadhonach is located close to known nesting and roosting sites for both Golden and White Tailed Eagles.** The bird surveys in the EIA are out of date and do not recognise recent use of these sites. It is therefore expected that the impact on these species will be much higher than acknowledged in the developer's reports. There is no cumulative assessment of the impact on bird populations if all the proposed wind farms are consented and built. NPF4 states that developments "will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that (they) will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity"
5. **There is no assessment of the impact of the aviation lights...** although they state that they will use 25CD IR lighting this is both invisible infra red light and visible red light with 25 candelas of brightness and so visualisations should be included.
6. Massive visual impact for those who live near the proposed wind farm which will damage quality of life and devalue property.
7. **Will cause traffic chaos** as 70m long blades, towers, concrete etc transported across Skye on slow moving convoys. There is no traffic plan in the EIA or planning documents. The Beinn Mheadhonach developers do not quantify how many abnormal load convoys will be needed, or how and when they will be moved. There are no assessments of the road situation on Skye when all the new wind farms proposed are being constructed at the same time..
8. **More than 66,000m3 of peat will need to be excavated for Beinn Mheadhonach wind farm.** How can damaging or destroying our most valuable source of carbon storage be justified in pursuit of "net zero" goals?
9. **Community "Consultation" events are a box ticking exercise.** Poorly advertised and attended. People are unaware of the scale and number of proposals for wind farms on Skye and for this development in particular, where the exhibitions were badly timed and publicised and therefore poorly attended.
10. **There is urgent need for a planning inquiry commission** to take a strategic overview of all proposals for wind farms and the Skye Reinforcement Power Line based on need for electricity generation and the and impact on Skye's world renowned landscape, residents and businesses.

Then copy in our Councillors and maybe the planning officer: email addresses:

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