

Date:

Energy Consents Unit
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Bachan Burn Wind Farm §36 Application by Brookfield Renewables (ref. no. ECU00000240)

As a resident of the Dunoon area, I strongly object to this proposal for an industrial-scale wind farm of 17 gigantic turbines on the hill-tops above Dunoon. My objection is based on numerous reasons, including the following.

Unacceptable Visual Impact. The proposed wind farm would be hugely prominent, visible across vast areas of the Inner Clyde Estuary affecting not only the residents of Cowal and the Inverclyde Coast but also visitors to the area and those travelling by ferry or cruise ship or road. In rejecting a similar but smaller wind farm proposal on these hills in 2009 the Inquiry Reporter was clear: “Because of its conspicuous position on the spine of a peninsula the wind farm would have unacceptable adverse impacts on visual amenity”.

Inappropriate Location. The proposal is utterly inappropriate for the high scenic landscape value of this location. I believe the proposal is contrary to the Argyll & Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study and also incompatible with Argyll & Bute Local Development Plan policies. Scottish Natural Heritage, the Government’s official advisory body, do not consider the proposed site to be appropriate for this kind of development.

Adverse Effect on Dunoon’s Vital Tourism Industry. Dunoon is a designated National Park Gateway town, where visitors come to enjoy the high quality landscape which is the basis for the area’s crucial tourism industry. A wind farm’s adverse impacts on visual amenity would seriously threaten this tourism, as pointed out by the Inquiry Reporter in 2009 when he warned that a similar but smaller proposal would “...have an unacceptably high risk of causing significant deterrence to tourism, which is of exceptional economic importance.”

Adverse Impacts on Local Residents. The proposed project would be much too close to populated areas: nearly 500 homes would be within 2 kms of the site boundary and within 5 kms (a much more realistic exclusion distance) most of Dunoon and Innellan would be included. All of these homes could be seriously affected by well-documented wind farm problems of low-frequency and infrasound noise, light flicker, and loss of property value.

Effects on Wildlife. In addition to disturbance to wildlife during construction, the noise, wind turbulence, and light flicker from wind turbines can adversely affect or drive away wildlife and can kill bats and birds as well. The Cowal Hills are host to a variety of important species, many of which are protected, and these would be under grave threat from the proposed development.

I support the development of non-polluting sources of energy for Scotland, but the Bachan Burn wind farm proposal is manifestly ‘the wrong scheme in the wrong place’ and I urge the Scottish Ministers to refuse this application, as they did for two similar but smaller proposals in 2009.

Name:

Signature:

Address: