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Dear Sir/Madam

Planning Application for erection of meteorological mast (up to 121 metres) in height, with supporting guy wires at the site of the Proposed Appin Wind Farm (British National Grid: 271689, 597477)

Introduction

Appin Wind Farm Limited (the Applicant) is seeking planning consent for the erection of a temporary meteorological mast (hereafter referred to as 'the Proposed Development'), 121 metres (m) high on land within the boundary of the proposed Appin Wind Farm (LPA reference: 21/1333/SCO or ECU reference: ECU00003447) for a period of up to five years.

The Proposed Development is required to measure the wind speed and direction, pressure and temperature at this location to help inform detailed energy yield considerations and the turbine selection of the proposed Appin Wind Farm.

To assist with the application, information on the Proposed Development, the Site and the policy context for the application are outlined below.

Proposed Development

The planning application seeks permission to erect a meteorological mast, supported by guy wires at British National Grid (BNG) 271689, 597477. Figures 1a, 1b and 2 illustrate the location of the Proposed Development within the wider area. The total land take within the Site boundary has been calculated at 0.202 ha.

Access to the Proposed Development Site will be taken from the public road U400n and then by private forestry access tracks. No trees are required to be felled.

The Proposed Development, formed from steel lattice sections, will be 121 meters tall and stabilized by a triangular guyed construction, featuring a lightning rod at the top (see Figures 3 and 4). It will host various anemometer instruments and temperature gauges to measure air velocity, atmospheric pressure, and temperature. The triangular lattice structure will have guy wires extending up to 60 meters from the base, anchored by buried metal plates on a removable 1.5 m square foundation installed on compacted ground. To enhance visibility for birds, bird deflectors will be fitted to the guy wires, with diverters placed at 5 m intervals on the outer wires and up to 20 m on the inner wires. These diverters will be installed prior to the mast's erection and maintained throughout the Proposed Development's lifetime.

A micro-siting allowance of 10 m is requested for the meteorological mast and guy wires. The micro-siting would be used to optimise the location of the mast structure during construction to take account of local ground conditions.

The Proposed Development does not require any permanent foundations as it will be dismantled and removed from the Site once the temporary consent has expired or sufficient data has been collected, whichever is sooner.

Planning Permission is sought for a limited time of 5 years, after which, the mast will be removed from the Site.

Environmental Considerations

Careful attention has been given to the location of the proposed met mast to minimise potential environmental effects. An onsite survey has been undertaken by the proposed met mast installer and the location of the proposed met mast base and anchor points has been chosen to avoid forestry and small streams and gullies that cross the Site. The Site location is relatively flat and located a suitable distance away from the trees.

Habitat surveys undertaken on the Site have identified the location of the Proposed Development and guy wires to be on Phase 1 Habitat B1.1 (unimproved acid grassland), NVC survey U5a (*Nardus stricta-Galium saxatile* grassland (species poor)). The surrounding Phase 1 habitats within 500 m of the Site consist of A1.2.2 (Coniferous Woodland plantation) and A4 (recently felled woodland).

Based on initial peat surveys undertaken on the Site, peat depths at the Site are less than 0.5 m. The Proposed Development location is 205 m to the south-east of Dun Cleuch, a tributary of Appin Burn.

Protected species surveys undertaken at the Site have not identified any signs of activity of protected species within 500 m of the Site and there are no archaeological sites located within 500 meters of the Site.

Planning Context

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was adopted by the Scottish Parliament on 13th February 2023. The framework sets out the long-term vision for development and investment across Scotland for 2050. NPF4 has three key focus areas which aim to create Sustainable Places, Liveable Places and Productive Places. The key NPF4 policy in relation to the Proposed Development is Policy 11: Energy which is the key policy relating to renewable energy production. The policy aims to encourage and promote renewable energy developments both, onshore and offshore.

The Proposed Development is a temporary development required to monitor the conditions for the proposed Appin Wind Farm and would provide details to inform the design and turbine selection of the wind farm. The Proposed Development design has been considered to ensure there are minimal impacts on the surrounding landscape and environment, and access to the site will be via existing forestry tracks.

Conclusion

In summary, it is considered that the erection of the Proposed Development at the location shown on Figure 1a, 1b and 2 is acceptable. The design and temporary nature of the Proposed Development means that it will not give rise to significant or unacceptable impacts on the surrounding environment.

To accompany the application the documents listed below have been submitted via the e-planning portal:

- This Supporting Letter;
- Figure 1a: Site Location Plan;
- Figure 1b: Aerial Site Location Plan;
- Figure 2: Site Layout Plan;
- Figure 3: Met Mast Design; and
- Figure 4: Met Mast General Arrangement and elevation

A total payment of £1500.00 is submitted to Dumfries and Galloway Council which includes for the planning fee. We will await confirmation of the relevant advertisement fees. We entrust the enclosed is sufficient for the purposes of registration of this application, please do not hesitate to get in touch should you have any queries.

Yours sincerely


Principal Project Manager