

Craig Watch Wind Farm

During the March 2021 consultation, some questions and comments were frequently raised. Below is our response to these.

(June 2021)

There are too many wind farms in this area

Moray Council's Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (2020) indicates that the location of the proposed Craig Watch Wind Farm may be appropriate, with some scope to accommodate large scale turbine developments. As part of our work towards the planning application for the project, we have undertaken substantial analysis into the landscape and visual considerations in the vicinity of the development. We continue to develop the project with the aim to find the right balance between maximising the electricity output and carefully siting and designing the proposal to relate to the existing landscape, including other wind developments.

Our analysis shows that less than 10% of land in Scotland is suitable for onshore wind farms. To find out more about what makes a site suitable for onshore wind, you are invited to join a webinar hosted by [Future Net Zero](#) on 29 June where our Head of Development will go through the steps in new site searching. Check [our website](#) for details.

Wind turbines should be offshore

We need a mix of all types of renewable energy generation. New-build onshore wind is presently the most cost-effective way to generate new electricity, out of all forms of electricity.

I don't like the look of onshore wind farms

We appreciate not all people like the look of wind turbines, but they are very much part of the answer to increasing our carbon-free electricity generation and decreasing the need for fossil fuels. The UK Government has surveyed attitudes towards different types of electricity generation since 2012 and the results consistently show around 75% support for onshore wind ([BEIS Attitudes Tracker](#)).

If there is concern about a specific view please let us know and we'll try to provide suitable illustrations at our next consultation event later this year.

Wind turbines are bad for the environment [construction, peat disturbance, use more carbon than they save]

All wind farm applications are required to report their "carbon payback period" in the Environmental Impact Assessment. This is determined using a Scottish Government calculator which takes into account all emissions from the manufacture of the turbines, including any peat disturbance, as well as the construction and decommissioning phases. This figure is usually in the range of 1-2 years, and part of the work we do during the development phase is to get that number as low as possible.

We were finalists in two prestigious industry awards for our efforts at Berry Burn Extension in Moray in maximising habitat improvements to deliver a biodiversity gain. For example, rewetting peat and reducing the impact of future wild fires.

What is the benefit to locals?

There are several ways our projects can bring local benefits, and we are always open to discussing how this can be tailored to each area. The construction phase provides a significant opportunity for local businesses to get involved - we had over 80 businesses complete our local suppliers register for the construction of our Keith Greener Grid project.

The operation of a wind farm brings significant local investment. Statkraft commit to delivering a community benefit fund with all new wind farms at £5,000 per MW installed per year, as per Scottish Government guidance. The exact amount will depend on the number and type of turbines installed, but as a guide, this is around £25,000 per turbine per year over the operating period of the wind farm.

What is the transport route for the turbines? Are the roads suitable for this construction and ongoing access?

We are confident a suitable access route can be proposed and this is part of our detailed planning work. A Traffic Management Plan will be agreed with Moray and Aberdeenshire councils prior to construction commencing.

For more FAQs go to www.craigwatch.co.uk