

Objection to Knockodhar Wind Power Station (ECU00002153) a development consisting of 16 wind turbines up to 200m in height

Dear Sirs/Madam,

To put my objections into context, we bought Mark Farm in December 2016, and were not put off by the sight of Mark Hill Wind Farm which overlooks the property. I am not adverse to windfarms but feel that a balanced view needs to be taken with the number of wind farms already built and consented in the area. Knockodhar wind power generating plant, with 16 turbines, at 180 to 200m height, packed onto an area of no more than 300 ha and overlooking the Stinchar valley will result in wind power station domination with no open landscape vista, wild land, wildlife habitat or quiet space in it.

Wind power stations are classed as industrial Use of Land. Knockodhar will convert a total of 1,190 ha wild land to industrial land and should not be consented as this Land Change Use is irreversible.

1) There is no Need for the Knockodhar Wind Power Station.

For planning to be granted there has to be a need for the product being produced. While the Scottish Ministers are setting an ambition of 20GW of onshore wind capacity by 2030, it is clear that this can be met by the recently consented developments, extensions to current consented sites, including the recent, local Kilgallioch and Arecleoch (11.3) and so there is no need for the Knockodhar turbines to be built on virgin land.

The NPF4 Energy Policy is now facilitating a much broader range of low carbon technologies to address climate change. There is a shift in policy in respect of wind energy with the future emphasis on repowering, site and life extensions of existing sites, rather than consenting development on new sites.

Concerns are raised that wind farm operators in Scotland are currently liable to derive more income from constraint payments than from income received for the electricity that they generate. It is advised that neighbouring operational schemes are receiving excessively large constraint payments and opined that this is because the electricity generated is regularly exceeding the capacity of the national grid connector from the Borders to the rest of the UK. This situation raises concerns with respect to the justification for a new wind power station at the planning application stage.

Knockodhar falls into this category of being a new, unsuitable for the chosen site, unneeded industrial development and the Application should be refused.

2) Landscape and Visual

Natural Places of NPF4 sets out that development proposals which by virtue of type, location or scale will have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment will not be supported. The policy is also clear that development proposals that affect a site designated as a landscape area in the LDP will only be supported where it will not have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the area or the qualities for which it has been identified. The policy further

states that LDPs will identify and protect landscape areas at the local, regional, national and international level.

Knockodhar wind turbine development sites 16 turbines, many at 200m, at a close proximity to the Stinchar Valley, local residents and the village of Barr. The site is within the South Ayrshire Local Landscape Areas for the Stinchar Valley showing complete disregard for the preservation of natural open space designations. The current South Ayrshire Wind Capacity Study shows that most of the area this development will occupy is category 18c Plateau Moorland, Forestry and Wind Farms. The analysis of that category indicates that capacity for additional turbines in this area is limited and states in terms. Furthermore a significant part of the proposed development will affect the landscape area 13 Intimate Pastoral Valley which is considered unsuitable for turbine development.

Although the total area is 1,190ha the Applicant has chosen to squash 16 turbines on only 300ha of it. This shows that the area is not large enough to accommodate the number and size of turbines that the Applicant wants to put there. This has not been taken into account in the landscape and visual as photos and diagrams are not moving objects and therefore we cannot imagine how 16 x 3 turbine blades over a length of 3km will look and feel. There is no mitigation possible to take away the effect of these 200m turbines, sited at 250m ground level making them 450m moving, industrial structures rising from a smooth horizon overlooking valleys on both sides.

The site is within the transitional zone for the Galloway Forest Park and the Galloway Dark Sky Park in addition to being within the UNESCO Biosphere. The effect to the landscape and visual aspect in this area is stated as being significant and adverse.

The EIAR concludes no significant effects for the Merrick Wild Land Area which is 11.62 km to the east. However, all the turbines are theoretically visible from here and they add to the clutter of tall artificial structures with lights that can be seen from the Merrick. It is highly likely the proposed development will impact the Merrick and further reduce its wild land qualities.

Coming into South West Scotland there is a sea of Wind turbines that greet you and for all of the above highly significant Landscape and Visual effects this application is not sited in the right location and needs to be refused.

3) Residential Amenity Assessment.

NFP4 Spatial Principles sets out that national spatial strategy will support the planning and delivery of liveable places, where we can all live better, healthier lives.

The Applicant says that the “nearest property is Mark Farm. Located approximately 500m to the south”. In truth Mark Farm is 380m to the south while Lamdoughty is 380m to the north therefore the Applicant is incorrect. The nearest turbine to Mark is 0.98km (225050 587929 to T12) and the nearest turbine to Lamdoughty is 1km however the Applicant makes numerous references to “no turbines are located within 1km of a property” within the application and then states the “Post consent locations will be subject to micro siting of up to +/- 75m as in Fig 7.3.1”.

When Scottish Government guidelines recommend that the minimum distance between any single turbine to a residential property should be 2km, the Applicant cannot boast about “not siting turbines within 1km of a property” when firstly they have located two turbines at 1km from Mark Farm and Lamdoughty and secondly they have located nine turbines within 2km of both properties, with further properties being subject to turbines within 2km along the Stinchar Valley. The Applicant has blatantly ignored the government recommendation and has set their own distance rules with no regard for the people living in the local communities health, safety and wellbeing.

The WSP Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Ltd RAA report in the Knockodhar application was undertaken in 2021. We bought Mark in 2016 and moved in over the course of four years, being delayed by covid for two years. Since we have been living here permanently since spring 2022 the visual aspect has changed considerably as we have removed all the dead trees from around the property and opened up the surrounding vista.

The photos taken in the Volume 4 - Appendix 7.3 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment report are not from the south and the north as you can clearly see by looking at an OS map hence the Aerial photo showing the indicative viewshed is also incorrect.

It is extremely concerning that the Applicant can ascertain that “Although seven receptors (*receptors being people’s homes*) have the potential to experience a significant visual effect, subject to forestry management, none of these would be affected to such a degree that they would be widely regarded as an unattractive place in which to live” when WSP have only recorded Mark Farm windows as having “two small north face windows viewed from the roadside” and they looked at “an aerial view”. We actually have a lot of windows through which we will view the turbines plus three upstairs velux windows, at head height, all of which face north east towards the turbine development. If the assessor had taken the time to stand on the hillside, in line with T12 and our property, they would have been able to see all the upstairs velux windows.

The Applicant has submitted landscape and visual representations from the gateway in front of our property yet, despite our request the montages of our approach to Mark from Pinwherry and along the forest track have not been produced. Neither have any been produced showing the view from our front windows leading North west and of course the upstairs windows (unknown about or purposely ignored) have been scoped out altogether.

What factors has the Applicant then used to determine their conclusion that we will not be adversely significantly affected?

Since this development will result in the felling of 356 ha of trees with the line of sight to the dwellings being part of this (Volume 2, Chapter 12) and since much of the remaining area has been recently replanted, there will be no “screening” as the Applicant suggests there will in their comments on NPF4 Policy 11, Part e.

The disregard for correct assessment on our property extends throughout the other properties in an attempt by the Applicant to downplay the effects on all seven properties and the outdated Residential Amenity Assessment needs to be completely recommissioned, before planning can be accurately considered.

4) Private Water supplies

The Applicant consulted South Ayrshire Council in 2021 and did Private Water assessments during that time resulting in the removal of several turbines to the north of Mark Farm. When we bought the property we did not know that we would have to fight for the existence of our Private Water Supply yet that is what it was like when we were fervently arguing with the “experts” from Wood Plc that a stream does not just originate from its source but from a huge extraction area around that source. The Applicant would like everyone to think that they “have responded to the views of the community” when removing these turbines yet it was only because of our continued fight for our stream fed PWS No 1 that they removed any of the turbines originally planned north of our property.

The Applicant has failed to research the PWS No 2 Bore Hole extraction area comprehensively and it was zoned out of the PWS assessment Volume 4 - Appendix 11.4 Private Water Supply Risk Assessment. However with the recent droughts of 2022 and 2023, when the Muck Water is currently reduced to a mere trickle, drought concern is now a much bigger threat to us than flood which the Applicant researched in detail.

There is one licensed abstraction and 19 private water supplies (PWSs) within the study area. Many rural homes have no access to mains water. PWSs are vitally important to families and living in rural properties as well as vital for the livestock and business that they run from home. I bought Mark with the intention of converting the barn to tourist accommodation and running outdoor courses from here.

It is essential that guidance should be followed from “Protecting private water supplies during forestry activities” (www.forestrywaterscotland.com) not only for tree felling but also for construction purposes as all this would take place less than 0.50km away from our water source.

The Applicant says “the estimated amount of concrete required for the construction of each turbine foundation is 975m³ (a total of 15,600m³) with a further requirement of 375m³ for construction of the substation and ESS compounds and other foundations, an overall total of approximately 16,000m³. (That’s a total of about 37,000 tonnes) Onsite concrete batching is required and is proposed to take place in one of the borrow pits. The water will either come from onsite sources (an abstraction licence is required) or be hauled in by road”.

South Ayrshire is on a moderate alert risk (as at 15 June 2023) regarding water scarcity. Southwest and central Scotland are continuing to experience very low river levels and a further drying of ground conditions. If rivers remain at very low flows for more than 30 consecutive days there is a heightened risk of severe, long-lasting ecological impact.

On 30th June 2023 SEPA have issued a warning update message on Water Scarcity – PWS - to Local Authorities. Peter Finnie, Public affairs, Scottish Environment Agency writes :

There has been no improvement in the Loch Maree area of the Highlands, which remains in Significant for a fourth week, although the Esk in Dumfries and Galloway has improved from Significant to Moderate Water Scarcity.

Abstractors in other areas that have reached Significant this week have also been contacted by SEPA. Some already have conditions on their licence to protect the environment from low flows. For others, permitted volumes will be reduced where necessary.

In a press release today, Head of Water and Planning at SEPA, Nathan Critchlow-Watton said:

“The water environment in parts of Scotland is clearly under stress and protecting it remains our top priority. We recognise the challenges businesses face as a result of these conditions, and we want to support those who are efficient and using the least water to continue operating. We will be avoiding full suspensions on water abstractions where possible and instead requiring a significant reduction in the volume of water taken from rivers and lochs.

Without a period of consistent rain, it’s possible six areas could be escalated to Significant Water Scarcity in early July. SEPA is liaising with licensed abstractors in all affected industries, including agriculture, food and drink and leisure. Advice is also being provided to abstractors in Alert or Moderate Scarcity areas.

Abstractors and irrigators are asked to manage water wisely, check SEPA’s water scarcity reports regularly and be aware of the situation in their area.

They should regularly check abstraction equipment to make sure it’s in good condition and fix any leaks straight away. During dry periods, the volume and rate of abstractions should be reduced where possible. It is also crucial for businesses to have a contingency plan for if restrictions are put in place by SEPA on abstractions. This can include using an alternative source if available within current authorisations.

SEPA continues to monitor and report weekly on river and groundwater levels.

The Ground Sure report submitted with the Applicants planning application is dated 6th May 2020 and assessing all the watercourses “Narrower than 5m” within the search buffer of 500m outside the development area determined that each “Watercourse contains water year round in normal circumstances” which has clearly not been the case in 2022 and 2023.

The PWS assessments need to be thoroughly reviewed with the emphasis on drought and the effects that it has on the Private Water supplies of residents.

Furthermore granting of an abstraction license to Knockodhar should only be permitted making sure that all PWS supplies are protected under the....

- 1) The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 section 86 F1 (d) has an adequate piped supply of wholesome water available within the house.
- 2) The Water Intended for Human Consumption (Private Supplies) (Scotland) Regulations 2017

5. Transport and Access roads

The public access roads to Pinwherry are not suitable for this scale of operation. There will be 356 escorted Abnormal Loads and an estimated 10,440 lorries carrying stone to the development site all coming along the A714 and accessing through the new access points. There is a hump backed bridge in Barrhill and three right angled bridges on route to Pinwherry which already have continued damage by HGV’s to them and they will not withstand this considerable extra loading.

The Knockodhar wind power station will then create 11km of new roads (1.56 being A11 standard) and “upgrading 7.3km of existing tracks” in order to build and service only 16 turbines. This is hugely disproportionate length of road to be built and upgraded in comparison to other already consented and built wind power stations in the area. The new access roads themselves will be extremely visible running along the crest of the hilltop with over 100 HGV’s plus 60 other vehicles, per day, for 12 months, driving back and forth along it.

To date all of the traffic concerned with the Knockodhar development has been accessing the development site either along the Muck Road from the A714 at the school in Pinwherry or using the forest accesses from the B734 road to Barr since there is no other way to access the area. This has already caused damage to the small minor roads and should not be allowed to continue.

The Applicant was granted permission to install and maintain the met mast using an access shown on the planning documents [20/00915/APP | Erection of temporary wind monitoring meteorological mast \(site 2\) | Proposed Met Mast, Knockodhar Site 2 B734 From A714 Junction At Pinmore Bridge To Barr Pinmore South Ayrshire \(south-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](#)

- 1) Figure 1 Knockodhar Site Overview Plan and
- 2) In detail on Figure 6 Site Location Plan Site 2

Permission was granted by South Ayrshire Council (20/00915/APP with the accesses shown on the above plans, which shows the route through Pinclanty, alongside a fence line, through a second fence (a deer fence) and into the met mast site. This access was not used for the construction in 2020, nor has it been used to access the met mast in the two and a half years since.

This brings into question the Applicants compliance with the planning conditions and their ability to do what they have said they will do. Since it will be much easier to use the Muck Water and the access from the B734, I fully expect that these accesses will continue to be used for the Knockodhar wind application traffic for many months to come which is unacceptable and further shows how unsuitable this location is for the development that is being planned for it.

6. Noise

The ETSU-97 is now over 25 years out of date and was formulated when turbines were around 50m to 80m and certainly nothing like the 200m proposed at Knockodhar. Relying on this outdated guidance is not protecting the health and wellbeing of residents nor of their amenity, both inside and outside their homes.

No allowance is made for the quiet rural location nor the fact that people living in rural areas spend much of their time outdoors like myself and my husband, being former farmers and current fell runners. One reason we bought Mark was for the large three acre garden.

Review of ETSU-R-97 noise regulations - WSP Parsons Brinkerhof have produced a report on updating the ETSU-R-97 noise regulations. In summary the study suggests:

Noise limits: The ‘noise limits’ defined in the ETSU-R-97 guidance are based on information that reflected the state of knowledge and turbine technology at the time. The research indicates that these should be revisited in view of advancements in onshore wind turbine technology, knowledge and scientific evidence of the potential impact of wind turbine noise, and the evolution of government noise policies in each of the devolved administrations of the UK. These developments could be reflected in a new framework for assessment and control of noise impact, in terms of addressing health outcomes and expected behavioural responses associated with wind turbine noise.

The research also indicates that the current ETSU-R-97 guidance does not fully address the potential impact of Amplitude Modulation (AM) in wind turbine sound. The evidence identified in the study, including indicative information from the field measurements, suggests that the assumptions about AM adopted in ETSU-R-97 do not fully represent the nature of AM as experienced and measured. Existing evidence could be used to help develop suitable guidance on controlling AM, and stakeholder views suggest this would be welcomed.

The Applicant’s used Arcus Consulting to do the Noise Assessments in April 2021. Volume 4 - Appendix 14.2 Noise Survey Record Sheets (redacted) shows the equipment placed at Mark Farm for a duration of three weeks in May 2021. It was located in the garden at the front of the house. We have asked for the raw noise data and assessment report, as initially offered by Arcus Consulting, to be sent to us on three occasions from October 2022 to June 2023 and to date we have not received it. The lack of transparency and co-operation from REG Power is extremely worrying and we question how the results can be analysed and presented to planning for approval, without the property owners, to whom the decision will affect, being allowed to access to the data that is legally theirs.

The Knockodhar planning application should not be consented until the residents of the properties, that were noise monitored, receive copies of the noise assessment data.

The Applicant has evaluated that “cumulative noise” is a good thing and once we are hearing noise from one wind power station that a lot more noise, coming from a different direction, size of turbine and number of turbines would not be any more detrimental to our wellbeing. I find this astounding and completely the opposite is the case. Living with noise coming from Mark Hill turbines at Mark Farm it is a relief when the wind blows the other way and we do not get the noise for a few days.

In the Planning and Energy Policy Statement Table 2 on NPF4 Policy 11(e)(i) the Applicant says that “the EIA Report Chapter 14 “Noise” has been prepared in accordance with ETSU-R-97 and the Institute of Acoustics (IoA) Good Practice Guide. And that subject to appropriate mitigation, operational noise due to the proposed development, in conjunction with the surrounding developments , would comply with the requirements of ETSU-R-97. “

The Applicant goes on to further say that “running specific wind turbines in reduced noise modes ensures that the proposed development is able to operate in compliance with ETSU-R-97 during daytime periods at the two assessed properties (Lamdoughty Cottage and Mark Farm). And at night the turbines can run without mitigation as none is required under ETSU.

However in the Written Statement Chapter 14 Noise 14.2.15 The Applicant states that

“ETSU-R-97 recommends that the fixed lower noise limit for daytime should be set within the range 35 to 40dB,LA90,10min. Different standards apply at night, where potential sleep disturbance is the primary concern rather than the requirement to protect outdoor amenity. ‘Night-time’ is considered to be all periods between 23:00 and 07:00. A limit of 43dB(A) is recommended at night at wind speeds or locations where the prevailing wind speed related night-time background noise level is lower than 38dB(A). At other times, the limit of 5dB above the prevailing wind speed related background noise level applies. The value of the night-time fixed lower limit was selected in order to ensure that internal noise levels remained below those considered to have the potential to cause sleep disturbance, taking account of the attenuation of noise when passing from outdoors to indoors, and making allowance for the presence of open windows.”

The noise monitoring equipment was not placed inside the house in the upstairs bedrooms where the three velux windows face NE towards the wind power station development. We already have disturbed sleep on occasions from the turbines at Mark Hill and this is an extreme worry for us with the much nearer and larger Knockodhar turbine development. It was also only placed for three weeks in spring when it is well known that local residents hear the wind turbines much more throughout the winter months. Noise assessment cannot be pinpointed to one three week period and must be evaluated throughout the year before an accurate assessment is made.

Therefore the Noise Assessment is incorrect and must be reassessed before this Application can be considered by Planning.

7. Turbine and Other Lighting

Appendix 7.4 (pg 11) claims that no aviation warning lights are proposed as part of the Clauchrie application which is simply not true. Clauchrie has turbines of 200 m high to blade tip and they are to be lit.

Aviation visible lighting will be placed on T2, T3, T10, T12, T15 and T16 (200m turbines) and the applicant has determined in the Policy and Energy Statement Table 2 Commentary on NFP4 Policy 11 Part (e)) “There would be no significant night-time effects on landscape character or designations and no significant night-time effects on views from settlements and transport routes, places where people are more likely to be present at night.”

When the met mast aviation light was working in 2021, we could see it clearly from both the transport routes to our property and when walking 50m away from our property. I was able to take a clear photo of the light from 2.30 km away at dusk. This is a Met Mast that is 90m high therefore the Applicant is incorrect in stating that “These effects would however be limited to periods (2% of the time) when the lights are operating at maximum intensity in poor visibility.”

The Applicant has glossed over the lighting to be placed at the Sub station that will clearly be seen from our property and other properties and this needs to be thoroughly addresses.

Furthermore the Applicant has said “places where people are more likely to be present at night”. From mid September to mid March this area of Scotland has less than 12 daylight hours within a 24 hour period, with the 21st December having only 7 hours of daylight. So

for six months of the year all the people living within sight of the Knockodhar development will be present, within the area, at many times (3.30pm to 8.30am) that the Applicant has not determined to be “night”.

The Applicants Lighting Strategy (Annex 2, EIA Report Appendix 7.4) is therefore grossly underestimated and has no regard for the true effects of the aviation (and other lighting) on the local residents and the Dark Skies Park.

8. Ecology

The UN’s Sustainable Developments Goals Point 15 – life on land which states that forests cover 30.7% of the earth’s surfaces and they are key to combatting climate change and protecting biodiversity. 13.9 million trees from Forestry and Land Scotland have been felled to make way for turbines. As part of the Knockodhar Wind power station development 121.6 hectares of trees will be felled and not replanted. The argument for windfarms combating climate change, especially in Southern Scotland where there are so many windfarms already, is completely negated by the felling and not replanting of all these trees, let alone the destruction of deep peatlands and wetland habitats.

Red Squirrels - The Applicant has concluded that "no significant adverse residual effects upon ecological features would occur as a result of the construction, operation or decommissioning of the proposed development." (10.6.1) however the Applicant says that in

10.2.24 The following key sources were consulted:

- Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels ³⁹;

And under Red Squirrel – “64 desk study records between 2010-2017. The nearest record 0.5km north- east of the site (see Figure 10.4). No evidence of red squirrel recorded. Forested areas are considered potentially suitable for foraging and drey construction. No incidental evidence of the presence of red squirrels was established during field surveys.”

In the Appendix - Volume 4 - Appendix 10.2 'Terrestrial Mammals' the Applicant lists Desk Surveys from 2012 to 2018 and Field Surveys done in 2018 and 2019. If the Applicant had taken the time to consult the Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels record for 2022 and 2023 they would have seen 4 records showing Red Squirrels on the north and the south of the proposed development which to me suggests that they are extending their range into the Stinchar and Muck Water Valleys. A fact that the Applicant would not want to admit.

I have seen Red Squirrels on the woodland above Mark Farm and we currently have two Red Squirrel feeders installed which have been visited by Red Squirrels this year so I believe the Applicants Field Study to be outdated and incorrect.

Bats - the Site has been assessed as a Low Risk Site for bats, however at Mark Farm we have huge colonies of Pipistrelle bats in the farm buildings at Mark and this siter is only 0.5km from the Development area yet has not been assessed in the Ecology Study.

We must also remember as the BCT's Good Practice Guidelines (2016) state: "It is important to note that the absence of bat records does not confirm the actual absence of bats because records are not always collected in a systematic and thorough way." *More importantly, even*

if it were the case that there were low numbers of bats in the area, the onus now, and as per NPF4, is to protect them and encourage them, rather than put a local population under further stress.

Red Squirrels and Bats are only part of the Ecology Study and this example shows the Applicants complete lack of regard for the complete up to date assessment of the wildlife in the area and therefore the Applicants Ecology Study needs to be fully reassessed especially as the development will effectively create a barrier wall of Industrial Land bisecting the wildlife corridor ridge plateau between the Stinchar Valley and the Muck Water.

If Knockodhar is consented the combined cumulative effect of the high fenced Mark Hill wind power station, along with the planned Clauchrie Development, will totally encircle and kill off the mammals currently living in the Muck Water valley.

9. Peat

In the Applicants 9. Draft Outline Habitat Management Plan (OHMP) they say under Peat the Applicant determines that "The proposed development infrastructure layout has been designed to minimise potentially significant effects on sensitive ecological and ornithological features and peat reserves." (4.1.1). This is clearly not true as the Applicant proposes a network of new (10.7 km) and upgraded (up to 7.3 km) access tracks throughout the site totalling up to 18 km, **nearly 6 km of these are over deep peat (> 1 m in depth)**. And goes onto say that "Access over peat could necessitate a floating road track, but the use of heavy construction machinery over time causes the peat to be compressed and degraded losing its inherent properties."

Since I'm sure a floating road track is more costly than bulldozing the peat out of the way I am also convinced that is why the Applicant has carefully inserted the word could into their mitigation sentence whereas in reality a bulldozer will be employed.

Environment Minister Mairi McAllan said "Restoring Scotland's peatlands can help us fight climate change, support biodiversity and provide good, green jobs – often in rural communities. This is why we have invested £250 million to restore 250,000 hectares of peatlands over a 10 year period to 2030."

The proposed development is against NPF4's Policy 3(c) which states: "Proposals for local development will include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. Measures should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development." No firm proposals are contained within in the OHMP and furthermore no proposal could mitigate the damage done to the peat contained on the development land. The application needs to be refused as No disturbance of Peat whatsoever should be entertained.

10. Socio Economics - Tourism

The Applicant has stated in 18.7.12 that "The tourism baseline assessment focuses on the local tourism industry pre-pandemic as this is information is considered more relevant to

forecasting the future”. That statement is not quantified and it is well known that since the pandemic that “holidaying at home” has increased significantly.

Personally I am a fell runner and a self employed running coach. www.runbg.co.uk I am employed by organisations to lead running and S&C workshops and I also organise my own Ultra running courses. My intention was to convert the barn at Mark Farm into residential accommodation and hold courses from there. I am also a race organiser and contacted Barr Community Council in 2021 about starting up a fell race from Barr in conjunction with their annual June Gala. The route uses the Barr Trails to access Fell hill, Haggis Hill and Cairn Hill. I am also organising a Ultra fell race in the Galloway Forest Park which circumnavigates the park over Lamarchan Hill, Rhinns of Kells, Range of the Awful Hand and Merrick.

In Yorkshire I organise the Trigger (www.MarsdentoEdale.co.uk) and the Hoppits (<http://www.hoppits.co.uk/>). The Hoppits races are Junior races and have courses for all age categories. I am an active campaigner for promoting active lifestyle and encouraging everyone to take part. Both races raise money for charity and are non profiteering. The races I plan to organise in South Ayrshire would be the same with the money going to the local communities and Galloway Mountain Rescue.

This development would have a serious detrimental effect on the success of these races and so negatively impact the tourism in this area, contrary to the Applicants assessment.

This development would also affect my running business as, contrary to Savills Economics Team assessment, fell runners do not want to look at, listen to and be subjected to the devastation of wild lands that happens when a wind power station is built, when they go running in the countryside. There is no way I could invest money in the barn conversion and run courses from Mark Farm if this application is granted permission. It would also affect my ability to maintain my own personal health and wellbeing as currently this is the area I run and train in.

Since buying Mark Farm I have had numerous fell runners from Yorkshire say “I knew that area before any of the wind farms were built”. We notice these things as do any tourist that visits an area to experience the open vista, quiet surroundings, flora and fauna and challenge themselves in enjoying physical exercise.

Barr has actively promoted itself as an area from which to cycle, walk and run producing leaflets with walks that go up passed Mid and Fell Hill and onto the hills beyond. The Knockodhar wind farm would put an end to that tourism that Barr has been cultivating over the years.

In addition to the drop in tourism, the positive economic benefits that the planning application mentions, are only temporary and as large outside contractors would be used this benefit would not be felt by the local communities.

11. Other Issues

The United Nation’s Sustainable Developments Goals: UN goal 7 is that of providing affordable and clean energy. This is not happening. Electricity prices are not coming down, in

fact every household in Scotland contributes approximately £330 per year to renewable subsidies, predominantly wind. Subsidies on onshore wind in the UK are approximately £600 million a year with Scottish wind farms receiving half of that, yet more consent is still being given. This may have something to do with the country being intensely urbanised, with most voters in the cities and rural objectors (as in this case) are too few in numbers to have much influence. (www.capx.co/the-scottish-wind-power-racket)

12. Integrity of REG Power Management and ESB Asset Development UK Ltd (ESB)

South Ayrshire granted planning for the met mast [20/00915/APP | Erection of temporary wind monitoring meteorological mast \(site 2\) | Proposed Met Mast, Knockodhar Site 2 B734 From A714 Junction At Pinmore Bridge To Barr Pinmore South Ayrshire \(south-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](#)

with the route and conditions as below:

- 1) The Applicant was granted permission to install and maintain the met mast using an access route shown on site plan through Pinclanty, alongside a fence and through a deer fence to the met mast site. This access was not used for the construction in 2020 nor has it been used for access to the met mast in the two years since.
- 2) Planning was granted with Condition “(3) That the meteorological mast shall be fitted with 25 candela omni-directional flashing red light or equivalent infrared aviation light at the highest practicable point of the structure.” This light was installed and visible until September 2021 on the met mast and it has not been lit up since.
- 3) Planning was granted with Condition “(5) That bird deflector line markers shall be installed on all of the guy wires, and that these line markers shall thereafter be maintained for the lifetime of the mast.” Bird deflectors were installed on four guy wires and not on all of the guy lines in 2020. These have remained the only bird deflectors installed on the guy lines to June 2023.

The Applicant has clearly demonstrated a lack of integrity along with an inability to comply with planning rules and conditions which were determined by South Ayrshire council for a single 90m met mast. There is no doubt that the same Applicant should be refused planning permission for the 1,190ha Knockodhar wind power station, with sixteen turbines of 200m height since they have shown a complete disregard for planning process and compliance to the rules.

Conclusion

The Scottish Governments Strategy states that onshore wind developments should be compatible with Scotland’s magnificent landscapes including our areas of wild land. South West Scotland is already overcrowded with wind power stations.

Enough is enough - there are 420 wind turbines within 20km of Knockodhar This area has now got enough wind turbines and is saturated with the onslaught of further wind power

station applications. Many people are worn out by ploughing through lengthy Application documents to present objections, while trying to work and raise families in an area they once loved.

Arriving in South Ayrshire now feels like you are entering one huge wind power station and soon there will be no quiet untouched hills left. Ten years on everyone in the local communities will be looking at the view below and listening to the racket the turbines make, while suffering the consequences of the politicians allowing the profits of energy companies to overrule those of the local communities and people's wishes.

As farmer, fell runner and running coach I know and care about land. Wind Power Stations are not farms. It is not financially beneficial to the energy companies to spend money on the condition of the land they are using. Wind turbines are industrial developments and hence all wind power stations are a complete change of land use from wild productive land to Industrial land. And this can never be reversed.

Knockodhar Wind Power Station is an application for an Industrial Unit of a huge scale on wild land which is presently untouched by a wind power station and should be Refused

I strongly OBJECT to this planning application.

Nicky Spinks, Mark Farm, Pinwherry, Girvan, South Ayrshire, KA26 0SP



Mark Hill wind power station. 110m high turbines. Ten years after it was built.