

By email to: simon.watt@gov.scot

Mr Simon Watt
Case Manager
Energy Consents Unit
The Scottish Government
5 Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow G2 8LU

26 September 2024

Dear Mr Watt

Creachan Wind Farm, Alness, Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report

ECU reference: ECU00005211

Background and Context

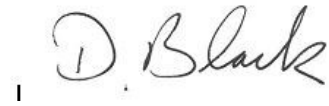
1. RWE has submitted a Scoping Report for a wind farm of 21 turbines of 220m BTH. The site is northeast of Alness but well inland, with the turbine area reaching to within 1500m metres of the Corbett Carn Chuinneag.
2. Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with 16,000 members and is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains. We represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering, and provide training and information to mountain users for safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.
3. The proposed development occupies the northern part of the site of the previously proposed Glenmorie wind farm (34 turbines of 125m BTH), refused in 2014 after a PLI because of landscape, visual and Wild Land impacts. There are operational wind farms to the east, to the southeast, and to the north the extensive Lairg cluster, surrounding Wild Land Area 29 Rhidorroch-Ben Dearg-Ben Wyvis. No map of these sites is included in the Scoping Report.

Assessment

4. Mountaineering Scotland's concern at this stage is ensuring that the proposed viewpoints will allow a comprehensive assessment of the proposed development from a mountaineering/hillwalking perspective should an application be made. The proposed development would be a significant advance into the turbine-free Wild Land Area.
5. We endorse the proposed 'hill walker' viewpoints: 6 Beinn a' Chaisteal and 10 Ben Wyvis, but it is our opinion that they are quite inadequate by themselves to properly represent upland recreational receptors.

6. Notably missing are the nearby Corbett of Carn Chuinneag (c.1.5km), and Fionas of Carn Salachaidh (c.4km) and Beinn Tharsuinn (c 6km) [A Fiona is a hill in Scotland between 600 and 762 metres high that has a drop (relative height) of 150 metres or more on all sides]. We therefore propose the inclusion of viewpoints at the summits of these three popular hills to cover the lack of hillwalkers' viewpoints.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Black". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D".

Davie Black
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