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generations



VALE OF LEVEN WIND FARM PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT

October/November 2022

ABOUT VALE OF LEVEN WIND FARM

Vale of Leven Wind Farm is a proposal for a wind farm and battery storage renewable energy project, currently comprising 10 turbines up to 250m to tip and battery storage for approximately 20MW.

The site is located on rough grazing moorland to the east of the Vale of Leven area, largely within an 'Area with Potential for Wind Energy Development' as mapped by West Dunbartonshire Council.

The project is being taken forward in partnership by Coriolis Energy and ESB. Coriolis Energy is an independent, UK-based renewables developer and has been developing renewable energy projects since 2007. ESB is Ireland's premier energy company and a leading independent power generator in the UK. Both companies have offices in Glasgow.

This report provides a summary of our public consultation events held in October 2022 and aims to highlight the key themes and issues raised during the consultation events.

More information on the project can be found at our dedicated project website at: www.valeoflevenwindfarm.com

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION

We held three in-person consultation events in October 2022. The events took place as follows:

- Kilmarnock Millennium Hall, Gartocharn: Tuesday 11 October 2022, 2pm – 7pm
- Balloch House Hotel, Balloch: Wednesday 12 October 2022, 2pm – 7pm
- Dalmonach Community Centre, Bonhill: Thursday 13 October 2022, 2pm – 7pm

Exhibition materials were also made available on the project website on 11 October 2022 for those unable to attend the exhibitions.

The events were publicised in various ways, including:

- Half page adverts in the Dumbarton Reporter on 4 October and 11 October 2022 - giving advance notice of the physical events and to outline that all information will be made available on the website;
- Invitation sent out by Royal Mail to over 24,000 homes and businesses within approximately 5km of the site;
- Email summary and invitation to the host and neighbouring Community Councils to highlight the consultation events - sent to: Bonhill and Dalmonach CC, Kilmarnock CC, Balloch and Haldane CC, Silverton and Overtoun CC, Milton and Bowling CC (we understand Renton CC and Dumbarton North CC are not active at the moment);
- Email summary and invitation to councillors for Lomond Ward and Dumbarton Ward, local MSP and local

- MP to highlight the consultation events; and
- Posters/web posters.

CONSULTATION MATERIAL

The Vale of Leven exhibition included a number of information banners that outlined the project location, the development process, the Environmental Impact Assessment studies being undertaken, the community ownership and benefits for the project, a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), several key viewpoints and the next steps for the development process. The exhibition had 18 information boards in total and these are still available on the project website for reference.

The exhibition included a fly through video of the proposed site and a number of A1 print outs of the photomontages. Attendees to the events could leave comments directly with the exhibition team or via a feedback form, which was also made available online.

A deadline of 1 November 2022 was set to provide feedback and comments on the consultations, allowing residents and organisations time to respond following the exhibition events.

ATTENDANCE & FEEDBACK

For the physical exhibitions, 263 people attended over the three days and a number of issues and questions were raised with the exhibition team - both direct to the exhibitors and via the feedback forms. The project team received positive, neutral and negative comments and feedback on the plans.

400 separate users visited the project website from 11th October - 1 November 2022 to view the exhibition material.

We received 75 feedback forms, 32 initial emails and several direct requests. We appreciate that the feedback forms may not

reflect the wider area but provide a reflection of the comments/feedback at the exhibitions.

Of the 75 feedback forms, when asked 'Do you support the proposed Vale of Leven Wind Farm?', more than two-thirds outlined support:

- Yes - 52 people (69%)
- No - 12 people (16%)
- Neutral - 11 people (15%)

We have responded to all email/feedback queries to the consultation (in line with GDPR) and all of the comments made will be taken into account as we progress the Vale of Leven application.

We expect to hold another event by Spring 2023, which will include a summary of the feedback and how we have taken this into account for the project. We would like to put on record our thanks to everyone who has responded to our consultation events and we appreciate the comments on the project, which will help us with the evolution of the design.

KEY QUESTIONS/ISSUES FROM THE CONSULTATION

We have summarised the main issues raised with us during the consultation and have provided a summary of our answers.

TRANSPORT ROUTE - DISRUPTION TO THE ROAD NETWORK/WHAT IS THE ROUTE TO SITE?

Several residents, especially at the Bonhill exhibition, asked about the transport route and whether the turbine parts would be delivered via Murroch Crescent or through the Beechwood area. This is not the route we propose for the Vale of Leven Wind Farm and no abnormal loads would go via Murroch Crescent.

A new access route is proposed to be constructed via Murroch Farm, with access roughly opposite the Aggreko building.

If consented, there would be a Traffic Management Plan put in place and we would liaise with the community to receive their input, such as abnormal load deliveries only at night time to avoid using the road network during busy periods.

We would also organise a construction liaison committee between the construction contractor and the local community to communicate forthcoming activities and ensure information is readily available, such as website updates, email updates to community groups and provide a text message update service so individuals and organisations are aware of the timings of the transport loads.

VISUAL IMPACT/SCALE & LOCATION OF THE TURBINES

Several attendees questioned the height of the proposed turbines compared to other projects in Scotland and why considering turbines at this scale.

Firstly, the scale of the turbines proposed here is what will be available on the market come construction.

This scale allows much greater efficiency and output allowing a more meaningful contribution to renewable energy generation targets and greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

We understand the largest consented wind farm in Scotland is Rothes III Wind Farm in Moray (turbines at 225m to tip), with projects such as Mill Rig Wind Farm in South Lanarkshire (turbines at 250m to tip) already supported by the local authority (decision still pending as a Section 36 application to the Scottish Government). A number of other projects are in planning or pre-planning at 250m or 260m.

The Scottish Government has set a new target of 8GW - 12GW of new onshore wind and therefore a number of new projects, such as Vale of Leven, need to come forward if Scotland is to meet these targets for renewable energy.

Landscape and Visual impacts will be a key consideration for Vale of Leven and we have already reduced the number of turbines from 19 turbines to 10 turbines to reduce the visual impact of the project.

NOISE

The potential impact of noise from the wind turbines was raised by some attendees.

A full noise assessment is undertaken as part of the application process and we will install noise monitoring of nearby households (with their permission). Several attendees asked about noise monitoring equipment to be installed at their residence and we have followed up with interested attendees.

Our initial modelling results suggest that operational noise levels from the turbines will be well within acceptable threshold values as set out in ETSU-R-97 *The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms* and therefore unlikely to be a nuisance to any surrounding properties.

All the data and conclusions will be included in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, which will be made available on our website.

RECREATIONAL ACCESS

A number of attendees asked about access to the site during and after construction.

We will provide more information on this and, if interest in the community, look at how the site can be made more accessible. It is important to note however that some residents also did not want to see the area be made more accessible.

LOCAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS

It was made clear that local businesses should benefit from the Vale of Leven project should it be consented and questions about job creation/economic benefits of the wind farm proposal.

We have joined the Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce and we are committed to Meet the Developer events to outline opportunities for local businesses and organisations. We are also keen to hear from local businesses and encourage them to contact us via the project website in order to build up a database of local businesses.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report will contain a chapter on the Socio-economic impact of the wind farm which we will share with interested community organisations to highlight the economic impact the project can have in the local area. We want to ensure as many local businesses are involved in the project as possible.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT & SHARED OWNERSHIP

There was interest in the community benefit and shared ownership elements of the wind farm.

We are committed to £5,000 per MW of installed capacity - on the current layout of 10 turbines, this would equate to £350,000 per year (index linked) for 35 years. This would equate to over £12 million of community benefit funding over the lifetime of the proposed development,

The communities that will be impacted by the construction and operation of the proposed development will be invited to help shape a community benefit package that best meets local needs.

We are also committed to offering shared ownership of the wind farm and there was interest at the exhibitions on the community

shared ownership element to the proposed development. This would allow the community the opportunity to invest in and have a share of the wind farm. This would be separate and in addition to community benefit.

We want to take the lead from the community on how to take forward both elements, in line with the Scottish Government guidance on community funds/community shared ownership. If of interest to the community representatives, we will look to organise a series of meetings with Local Energy Scotland, an independent organisation that provides advice to communities on community benefit and community shared ownership.

COST OF LIVING CRISIS/ENERGY COST REDUCTIONS

The cost of living, the cost of gas and electricity and energy security were raised by residents over the three days. A number of residents raised the idea that a community energy discount scheme should be put in place for those that live nearest to the proposals.

It is our view that the use of community benefit and/or community shared ownership is for the community to decide, including the setting up of a local electricity discount scheme. Local electricity discount schemes are in place for several operational wind farms in Scotland.

We will progress ideas around this element of the scheme and provide more information to the community representatives as we progress the project.

NEXT STEPS

We will take into account feedback from the exhibitions as we progress the development of our proposals. We plan to hold another event by Spring 2023 and expect the application to be submitted in Spring/Summer 2023.

Following the October 2022 Exhibitions, we will undertake to:

- Respond to all individual questions and comments from the exhibition events;
- Provide a summary of project-specific feedback to the relevant technical teams to help inform their work on the project, such as on transport, noise and visual impact;
- Provide an update via this report to the community councils and interested residents on the exhibition;
- Continue to engage with elected representatives, community councils and local residents in order to keep them updated on progress; and
- Continue to make all information available on our dedicated website www.valeoflevenwindfarm.co.uk

Thank you to everyone for their input during the consultation round and those who have been in touch with us on the proposals to date.

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