

University of St Andrews

Kenly Wind Project Board

Minute of the Kenly Wind Project Board held on Monday 31st January 2011 at 2pm in the Master's Room in the Hebdomadar's Block.

Present: Derek Watson (Chair) (DW), Charles Warren (CW), Graeme Scott (GS), Roddy Yarr (RY), John Maguire (JM), John Kilgour (JK), Janice Furness (JF), Rob Moodie (RM), Kit McMahon (KM). Bobbie Simpson (BS)

Keith Horner (KH) of horner + maclennan was in attendance for the early part of the meeting to deliver a presentation to the Board.

(i). Landscape and Visual Impact Presentation

The meeting began with a presentation by Keith Horner of horner + maclennan. He described the methodology used to understand the various constraints that need to be taken into account and how these mean that the development is sited at Upper Kenly. Keith explained how he had assessed that the preferred option should be 6 x 2MW turbines rather than 4 x 3MW machines. Keith demonstrated how the preferred option relates to the landscape, taking into account the various landscape designations. He went through the review of the various layouts including ruling out the larger turbines. Keith displayed some of the viewpoints that had been requested by Scottish National Heritage (SNH) and by Historic Scotland and how the preferred turbine layout would appear on the landscape. He described the various Zones of Theoretical Visibility and concluded with a summary of the current status of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Keith then took questions from the members of the Project Board.

Questions:

- a) GS asked from what height the photomontages were taken. KH noted that they were from ground level apart from the one from St Rules Tower which was from the top of the tower.
- b) JM asked if we would ultimately have photomontages for all previous and new sites. KH explained that the photomontages had been agreed with Fife Council, SNH and Historic Scotland. Additional viewpoints had been requested by SNH and Historic Scotland and these had been created. There was a discussion about a viewpoint from Dunino/Beley bridge area. It was agreed that an extra photomontage from here would be created.
- c) JF asked if the turbines would be visible from the Cathedral. KH explained that they would not be visible from the Cathedral but that they may be seen to a small degree from the top of St Rules Tower.
- d) JF asked if the turbines would be visible from the Old Course. KH explained that the blade tips may be visible in part from the beach at the West Sands.
- e) RM asked if the presence of trees can act as a screen. KH explained the difference between a 'wireline' image that has contours but no trees, building etc on it and a photomontage which does have trees, buildings, electricity poles etc on it. KH explained that there are tree belts that do provide localised screening. Trees can be planted to provide screening
- f) JF asked if planting of extra tree cover is part of the proposal. RY said that it is not part of the proposal but that trees can be planted.

- g) GS asked about the view from Boarhills and Kingsbarns. KH showed the viewpoints. The turbines would be visible.
- h) JF asked if the University could consider smaller machines. RY and JM explained that this had been looked at. The Open meetings in June 2010 showed the range of options that had been considered taking into account the range of factors including the financial and landscape viability of lots of smaller machines compared to fewer larger machines. There was also a discussion about the number of turbines that were being developed in Fife and was the University taking account of this. RY noted that Fife Council had advised which turbine developments in the area they had indicated that the University should consider as part of any cumulative impact assessment. KH confirmed that cumulative impact had to be based on knowledge of the turbine proposals that are in the planning system.
- i) KM asked about the view from Kilduncan House and noted that the house had been for sale for quite some time. KH explained that there was no photomontage from Kilduncan House, that it is relatively close to the site and that there is some local screening. KM wondered if the house was not being sold because of the wind turbine development.
- j) JF asked about Shadow Flicker and noted that some of the roads had been described as 'Unclassified'. RY explained the principle of shadow flicker and that it was not considered to be a significant risk to those using the local road network.
- k) JK noted that a number of the properties at Upper Kenly had been allowed to fall into disrepair. What will we do with these in the longer term? DW noted that there were no plans but that they will continue to be appraised as part of the University's ongoing Estate management.
- l) JF asked if there was evidence that house prices would drop if the development were to go ahead. CW explained that there was no evidence of a direct link between windfarms and house prices and that there are a number of factors that influence the housing market and not just the presence or otherwise of a winfarm in the area. JM added that even in St Andrews certain larger properties were not selling and that large price reductions on the asking price had been implemented.
- m) JF asked how the electricity generated would be distributed away from Kenly. RY explained that if it is possible to use the existing 'electricity poles' then this option would be explored. However, it is possible that the power cables would be more likely to be sought to be buried under the ground assuming that a suitable set of wayleaves could be obtained to achieve that objective.

1. Apologies: Kate Holy, Stephen Magee, Niall Scott

2. Previous Minutes

- a) JF noted that there was a grammatical error at Section 4 (Action – "...might generate...") of the August 2010 minutes. RY noted this and agreed to correct this mistake and reissue.
- b) JF noted that the August minutes contained reference to the results of the June 2010 Open Meeting questionnaire feedback results. JF asked if the results had been presented in full for each of the categories so that it is possible to view the percentages of those completing the questionnaire for 'supportive', 'strongly supportive' and so on. RY noted that the questionnaire results had been presented in full in Summer 2010 and made available on the University website.

<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/about/Sustainability/Windfarm/>

- c) There was a discussion about how feasible it would be to issue a community questionnaire to further gauge opinion on the windfarm proposals. JM explained that the University would be issuing another update leaflet now that there was more information to communicate since the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work was nearing completion. It is likely that this leaflet would be issued once all the EIA work had been completed and a planning application to Fife Council had been made. The target date for this is mid-February to early March. There was further discussion about the benefits of conducting a questionnaire that was sent out to members of the community or a questionnaire that is carried out at an Open meeting similar to the surveys at the Open meetings of June 2010. RY noted that the University could work with the two Community Councils to develop a questionnaire.
- d) JF noted that the payment for the manufacture and installation of the new Boarhills and Dunino CC bespoke noticeboard located in Boarhills had now been received.
- e) JF noted that there had been a request from the community to view the two letters from SNH and from Historic Scotland that were mentioned in Fife Council's Environmental Scoping Opinion letter. RY said that he had brought along a hard copy of each for the two Community Councils and that electronic copies would be placed on the University website in PDF format. RY handed the hard copies to each Community Council.

3. Update on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

RY summarised the twelve different workstreams that are helping to inform the EIA. RY explained that each workstream includes significant amounts of work and this work is still ongoing. It will ultimately form an Environmental Statement that accompanies a full planning application. Work on the EIA was expected to be completed by mid-February 2011.

- Landscape and Visual Impact Presentation
 - Presentation by Keith Horner explained the current status of this work.
- Health and wellbeing (noise)
 - Statutory noise assessments had been completed. This work is being analysed and written up. Neighbour noise assessment had started week commencing 31st January 2011.
- Radar and Aviation
 - University is in discussion with MOD and a set of mitigation measures has been presented to MOD. CAA and NATS and BAA Edinburgh Airport have all confirmed that there are no significant issues to be addressed. Meteorological radar issues have also been addressed. The closure of RAF Leuchars was discussed. There is no decision on this yet.
- Economy and Tourism
 - A study is well underway. This study is assessing the impacts on tourism, jobs, economic benefit and so on. There was further discussion about the effect of windfarms on house prices. CW described the evidence on public perception of windfarms from other wind turbine developments. CW noted that such studies demonstrated a 'U' shaped curve pattern to public perceptions. CW explained this and noted that before a windfarm development, people are in favour of wind energy i.e. they are positive about its worth. Once a development is proposed in the area, there is doubt about whether this is a good idea so public perceptions become less favourable

about it. However, once the development is constructed, public perception rises to a positive level again. RY noted that after the Open meetings in June 2010 and the August meeting of the Project Board, the University had presented information on house prices and windfarms from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors on its website along with other views on this issue.

- Ecology
 - All surveys completed and methodologies agreed with SNH. There was a discussion about how bees might be affected by electro-magnetic waves. RY noted that this aspect did not form a specific part of the SNH agreed methodology.
 - There was a query about how the bird assessment work had taken account of the winter weather this year compared to last year. RY noted that the methodologies for the ecology work had all been agreed in detail with SNH and this included additional migratory bird observations from SNH-agreed 'vantage points' using a suitable observation frequency and additional analysis in October 2010. Fortnightly goose walkover surveys were also conducted as part of the observation works. These included dusk and dawn visits to establish flightlines to/from roosts. Last year also had a very cold spell between December 2009 and January 2010.
- Cultural Heritage
 - Discussions ongoing with Historic Scotland. Historic monuments had been assessed according to Historic Scotland's methodologies. Meeting to discuss results is due week commencing 7th February 2011.
- Geology
 - A site investigation has been carried out using trial pits to collate data and samples for the geological assessment. There was a discussion about the potential for buried wartime equipment. RY noted that the trial pits investigations had not revealed any visual contamination or buried equipment. In any event, any construction works would require that there are procedures in place to deal with unexpected discoveries including buried equipment and the like. RY noted that GeoPhysical surveys had been carried out and revealed nothing surprising. This includes method statements and risk assessments for all contract works to take account of this aspect and for health and safety reasons.
- Hydrogeology
 - Study nearing completion.
- Hydrology
 - Study nearing completion.
- Archaeology
 - This work was carried out as part of the cultural heritage study. As for geological investigations, any construction works would require that there are procedures in place to deal with unexpected discoveries including buried equipment and the like. This includes method statements and risk assessments for all contract works to take account of this aspect and for health and safety reasons. There has been liaison with the Fife Council Archaeologist as part of this assessment.
- Telecoms
 - A lot of work has been carried out to assess the impact of the proposed development on telecoms and other fixed links. Turbines have had to be moved to accommodate some of these. There is an ongoing issue with a Scottish Water radio link and this is being dealt with.
- Site Access, Transport and Construction Assessment

- Work ongoing on this aspect. Several routes into the site are being addressed and the routes from the port of entry for the equipment to the site are also being assessed.
- There was discussion about creating cycle routes and reinstating old footways and routes through the site. RY noted that this aspect would be included in the Site access works but that the University and the community would have to work together in dealing with access issues on land that is outwith University ownership.

Action: RY to complete the various work packages and draft the Environmental Statement.

4. Community Fund: Ideas and Way Forward

There was a discussion about the various options for community benefit and in particular what monies might be available and what sorts of things might be fundable e.g. apprenticeships, social housing. The EIA assessment works are ongoing. The outcome of these works will help to generate an idea of the fixed costs and these costs together with other aspect such as grid connection will help to clarify the development costs.

DW explained that the University needs to be able to have some way of providing community funding. Similarly, it was explained that in order to receive funds from this proposed development, the community needs to have some way of receiving monies such as a Community Trust regardless of what level of funds that are ultimately generated. The Community Trust Fund model was discussed further and it was clarified that funds would be managed by the Community Trust Fund. It was also clarified that what the funds are spent on rests with the community not the University. The University simply wants to see the community benefit and for a properly managed community fund to be created to achieve this. RY confirmed that he had sent out details of how VONEF can help to set up such a Trust Fund for free but that it is for the community(ies) to organise this not the University. RY had distributed the name of the Rural Development Officer for VONEF. In addition Fife Council was discussing this issue of Community Trusts with those communities in the East Neuk.

Action: RM and JK agreed to have a joint meeting between Kingsbarns CC and Boarhills and Dunino CC to discuss this aspect.

5. AOCB

JK discussed an alternative option that a major local landowner had been discussing with the communities in the area, namely, the local Balcaskie Estate also owns land in Caithness in Northern Scotland. There are a number of windfarms in the Caithness area and the owner of the Estate is discussing the possibility of the East Neuk communities developing more wind turbines there on Balcaskie Estate land. JK noted that the landowner is willing to extend this option to the University. DW explained that the University energy bills are going up by around £1M every year. The University already owns the land at Kenly and the assessment work done to date seems to show that the development can be accommodated in the landscape and that from an economic point of view, it can generate renewable electrical energy to directly offset University consumption. Developing land that is outwith University ownership and that is in Caithness is a different matter but one that the University would consider.

Action: JK agreed to forward details of the Caithness windfarm idea to DW.

6. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be in 4 weeks time. RY to advise on the date.

Derek A Watson
Quaestor & Factor

10th Feb 2011