



Scottish Council for National Parks

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Scottish Charity no. SC 31008

Mr. Paul Smith
Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department
Scottish Executive
6th Floor
Meridian Court
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30 June 2005

Dear Mr. Smith

EISGEIN WINDFARM PROPOSAL, LEWIS.

The Scottish Council for National Parks (SCNP) was formed originally in 1943 and operated until 1967, when it was stood down as a result of the setting up of the Countryside Commission for Scotland. It was reconstituted in 1990 following the publication of the CCS's report on the 'Mountain Areas of Scotland' for Government, which recommended the creation of National Parks in Scotland. The SCNP's primary aim is to promote the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of nationally outstanding areas that are National Parks, or are appropriate to be designated as such, or are of sufficient merit to warrant special protection. This is manifest in our support for good stewardship of the country's best environmental assets and encouragement of sustainable methods of development, particularly within areas of national park potential. SCNP is a recognised Scottish Charity.

The Executive Committee of SCNP has discussed the application for a proposed windfarm on Lewis and has decided that an objection to the scheme should be lodged. The objection is based on our concern at the impact of such a scheme on an area that is of sufficient merit to warrant special protection. Our objection is based on three main points:

1. **Impact on the landscape.** The application is for 133 wind turbines of the larger types currently available (125m), which will dominate and effectively industrialise the landscape of this important wild land. There will be a severe visual impact upon high quality landscape, including the NSA. and its setting. The adverse visual impact upon the views seen from the A859, the main south tourist route on the island would be high. Should the Scottish Executive be so unwise as to approve the even larger site on the Lewis peatlands, there is likely to be a very adverse cumulative impact as well.
2. **Impact on habitats.** The site impacts on an Important Bird Area. There will be an adverse impact on protected bird species and there will be irreversible damage to an internationally valued type of habitat. The sites Golden Eagle population is of international importance. In common with the rest of the island, the Park IBA also serves an important biological function in the northeast Atlantic migratory flyway for wintering and staging migrant water birds.
3. **The development is not needed.** It is the absence of any locational strategy and proper guidance from the Executive that is causing the market to generate many applications in very sensitive areas. All the



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indications are that the targets for renewable energy generation can be met without going into protected sites such as this or National or potential National Parks, NSAs etc.

Renewable energy is needed for a sustainable future but so are nationally important landscapes and habitats. There needs to be an integrated approach across the full spectrum of our activities if we are to succeed in this essential aim, not the piecemeal market led approach currently before us. The market has an essential role to play but within a strategy designed in the wider public interest. We wish therefore to object to this proposal and urge the Executive to reject it and develop a locational strategy so that the development industry can concentrate its efforts where it will be most likely to succeed.

Yours sincerely

Robert Maund