



Buccleuch House, 4 south Hermitage Street, Newcastleton, Scottish Borders, TD9 0RA
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secretary@newcastletoncommunitytrust.co.uk

NEWCASTLETON & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL RESPONSE ECU00003249

TEVIOT WIND FARM SCOPING – V3 May 2021

Introduction

Thank you for inviting NDCC to provide local insight at an early stage.

Environmental Impact Assessment NDCC propose that schemes already in scoping; Wauchope East; Wauchope West; Newcastleton and Cliffhope be included at this stage. The scale of this site is significantly larger than others within the locality. The community needs to understand the combined impact of these proposed developments in our immediate and wider environments.

Newcastleton suffered serious flooding in 2005, 2020 and 2021 resulting from the combined impact of surface water runoff and rising river levels. Flood events have caused significant damage to infrastructure (communications, bridges, and roads) as well as residential and business premises. This proposal indicates large areas of forestation will be felled to accommodate the site. NDCC seek detailed assessment of how this development will impact in this regard and what measures are being included to off-set this imbalance environmentally so felling does not increase water flow resulting in significant worsening levels.

Whilst the sites impact is on the other side of the valley, we are keen to understand the model used to calculate the water dispersion based on the cubic capacity of concrete pads required to host each turbine.

Length of project Given heights and density proposed this is in danger of becoming a turbine graveyard if sufficient funding is not ringfenced throughout its life to maintain, dismantle and return the landscape to previous conditions. The scale of this investment requires longer payback, NDCC seek to understand what measures will the developer provide to reassure the community the technology does not become redundant? NDCC would also seek to understand how developer contributions will be accrued to mitigate long term usage/maintenance and dismantling of this equipment.

Visual impact views from **Whitegate on Holm Hill** are requested to be included. This is a planned community development site designed to appeal to off the beaten track outdoor enthusiasts' market who travel to get away from it all; this development has the potential to impact on this planned community asset which is the plank of the community inclusive growth strategy.



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We need to understand more fully the impact on the visual landscape as seen from recognised tourism sites in and around our catchment area. **Shankend Viaduct** is a popular and iconic feature in our landscape and will play its part in the extension of the Borders Railway from Tweedbank to Hawick onwards to Carlisle. Views from the travelling heights across the viaduct should also be incorporated in the image bank.

Dark Skies Ourselves and neighbouring communities are seeking dark sky status in order to formally promote this benefit to our visiting marketplace, which is a significant source of income. NDCC request that the impact assessment fully explains how turbine lighting will not affect the environmental benefits of dark skies which will damage the positive economic benefits that this sector provides, particularly significant during the off-peak seasonal tourism market.

Transport

Tourism/economy: Proposed access to the site is north/south via the A7 but further access roads will be needed to reach the extremities of the site. Newcastleton's micro-economy is reliant on tourism; our southern visitor market currently reaches us via the A7, we are keen to ensure that this is not disrupted. NDCC ask that measures be considered and discussed within the economic impact study to provide data in the event this becomes an inevitability. NDCC, via the local Business Forum, can provide further detail on tourism venues and their locations in order that the study can embrace the full catchment that might be impacted.

Community: Newcastleton is hugely impacted when ANY diversions caused through climate events, repairs or accidents mean roads are closed making it difficult to reach us and for us to travel without incurring long diversions. This severely impacts residents in terms of travelling time, but significantly is an additional expense hitting household incomes. Newcastleton is cited as poor based on the SMID measures for access which places it 58 in Scotland (1=poor, 6977 = excellent) in the rank of measures.

Both Windy Edge and Pines Burn Wind farms (approved) transport plans will cause enormous challenges for our school children travelling to Hawick (B6399), already a 40-minute journey in morning/evening creating extremely long days. The combined impact of development over the planned periods for all consented and approved sites for all vehicles using our rural road network would be welcomed as part of the development proposal. NDCC are keen to understand what additional costs households might be required to undertake if diversions occur and seek reassurance that the fragile road network will not be further damaged, creating closures for repair/ maintenance resulting in increasing community hardship and damaging local businesses.



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Noise Detail, with evidence of calculations, about the likely level of noise disturbance this will generate would be welcomed. The scale and heights of this proposal are untested and untried in this combination.

Forestry Scoping outline proposes clear felling to accommodate the site given the likely impact of wind disturbance if growth remains, but it provides no indication of where this compensatory planting will be. The proposal should indicate locations and volumes of where this is to be sited including access routes for planting and felling as part of the overall transport program.

Other development The developer is proposing inclusion of other renewable sources (solar and hydrogen) but is scant on detail. NDCC would like further information on these aspects and their integration into the project.

Grid Connections and access disruption – whilst subject of a separate application NDCC seeks to understand more fully how the developer is intending to connect to the grid – presuming connections only increase the time to complete the development and add to the implications already stated. NDCC would like to see outline grid connections proposals included in the proposals.

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NDCC May 2021