

## GARVE AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18th February 2003  
(postponed from 4th February due to heavy snow)

Present: Doug Winship, Pat Campbell, Eimir Hughes Winship, Ian Dickinson, Sheree Grant, Alec Mackenzie, Marianne Mackenzie, Uisdean Menzies, Dena Ross, Councillor Ewen Mackinnon, and 11 members of the public.

Apologies: Lady Eliza Leslie Melville, Nel Macdonald-Rolfe.

Adoption of the minutes of the last meeting was proposed by Pat Campbell and seconded by Uisdean Menzies.

Chairman Doug Winship introduced Fiona Macgregor and John Alexander from Scottish Power to talk about the proposed windfarm at Corriemoillie Forest.

John Alexander explained that construction of windfarms is driven out of climate change, carbon dioxide emissions reduction and other gases, energy efficiency. 28% of energy used is electricity, and a renewable source is essential. Suppliers have an obligation of 3% now, 10% by 2010, energy has to be produced by new means and the best option is wind energy. Hydro schemes have a limited potential. There are 7 windfarms now in the planning system.

At Corriemoillie wind speeds are being measured, and an environmental survey is being undertaken. A planning application will be made, possibly this summer, but the present ideas will probably be changed by the time the planning application is put in.

A number of questions were asked. Doug queried if Corriemoillie Forest would be cut down, in that it was planted in 1986 under grants. Will the owner be required to pay back? John Alexander said he would find out.

Ian asked how long to get it up and running and recoup money. John replied this calculation had not been done. A windfarm has a 25-year life, cost of £700,000 per megawatt to build.

Julia - what restricts sites? Fiona replied, ground topography, must be outwith SSSIs, SACs, National Parks, MOD etc. There must be reasonable access by road.

Several people queried whether Corriemoillie is outwith MOD low flying area.

Uisdean - what benefits to the local community? John - short term employment opportunities. Growth of core contracting suppliers. Ongoing construction capability. Scottish Power supports paying money to community funds.

Eddie - once built, how many full time jobs would there be? John - 2 or 3 mechanical and electrical. Major works would require contractors.

Doug - the loch supplies Aultguish Inn, what provision is made to safeguard the supply? John - hydrology will look very closely at private water supplies, and they will be protected.

Uisdean - is there likely to be distortion to TV signals? (Hollow laughter, as reception of terrestrial in Garve is very poor, and further west non existent). Fiona replied they will have vehicles drive round testing signals. In the worst case scenario an alternative feed would be necessary.

Sue - would the windfarm be visible from houses or roads? John - largely invisible except from the A835 Ullapool road and from the Aultguish Inn.

Doug - if somebody else wanted to build a windfarm would there be capacity to take output into the grid? John - limited due to constraints due to the way the system is designed and managed. Balance in the system is needed so supplies are not interrupted. Scottish Power would look at grid, it could become overloaded. An analysis will be done, say for 2 hours per year it is overloaded, then there would be a shutdown for that period. Under new arrangements there would be some opportunity for other windfarms to be built. It would be necessary to talk to the transmission operator.

Sue - would the windfarm be connected to the grid by underground cables? John - it depends, but it wouldn't be pylons, wooden poles with 3 lines. Underground is more expensive, but relative depending on the ground. No definite conclusion.

Doug - how much extra traffic would there be through Garve? Fiona - this will have to be looked at. There would be a legal agreement between Scottish Power and contractors regarding the times of day for construction traffic, speeds etc.

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There being no further questions, Doug thanked Fiona and John for their presentation. John added that they would come and hold public presentations in the area during the environmental study, prior to applying for planning permission.

Any Other Business:

Pat Campbell reported that water pressure in Matheson Road has become low.

Councillor Ewen Mackinnon advised there is a proposal to designate part of the Fannichs as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and added that Europe is forcing this on the Scottish Executive. He suggested a local officer of SNH should be invited to the next Community Council meeting to explain.

Uisdean mentioned the possibility of getting broadband internet access. Ewen said to encourage delivery, everyone should register an interest.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 8th April at 8pm at Achnasheen.