
Report To:	The Planning Board	Date:	7 March 2012
Report By:	Head of Regeneration and Planning	Report No:	10/0340/IC Plan 03/12
Contact Officer:	Guy Phillips	Contact No:	01475 712422
Subject:	Notification of Planning Appeal Decision: Erection of a wind turbine at High Mathernock Farm, Auchentiber Road, Kilmacolm		

INTRODUCTION

In September 2011 planning permission was refused for the erection of a wind turbine at High Mathernock Farm. Planning permission was refused for the following reason:

A combination of height and scale, proximity to public roads (including Auchentiber Road, designated as a Core Footpath to encourage the public into the countryside), proximity to residential properties and visual prominence from Kilmacolm, combine to create a dominant and excessively prominent feature in this part of Inverclyde's countryside, contrary to:-

- a. the Council's interim policy on Small Wind Turbine Development UT6B, criteria (a) and (f).
- b. the Council's interim policy on Wind Farms UT6A criterion (c); and
- c. Policy UT6 of the Inverclyde Local Plan, criteria (a), (b) and (c).

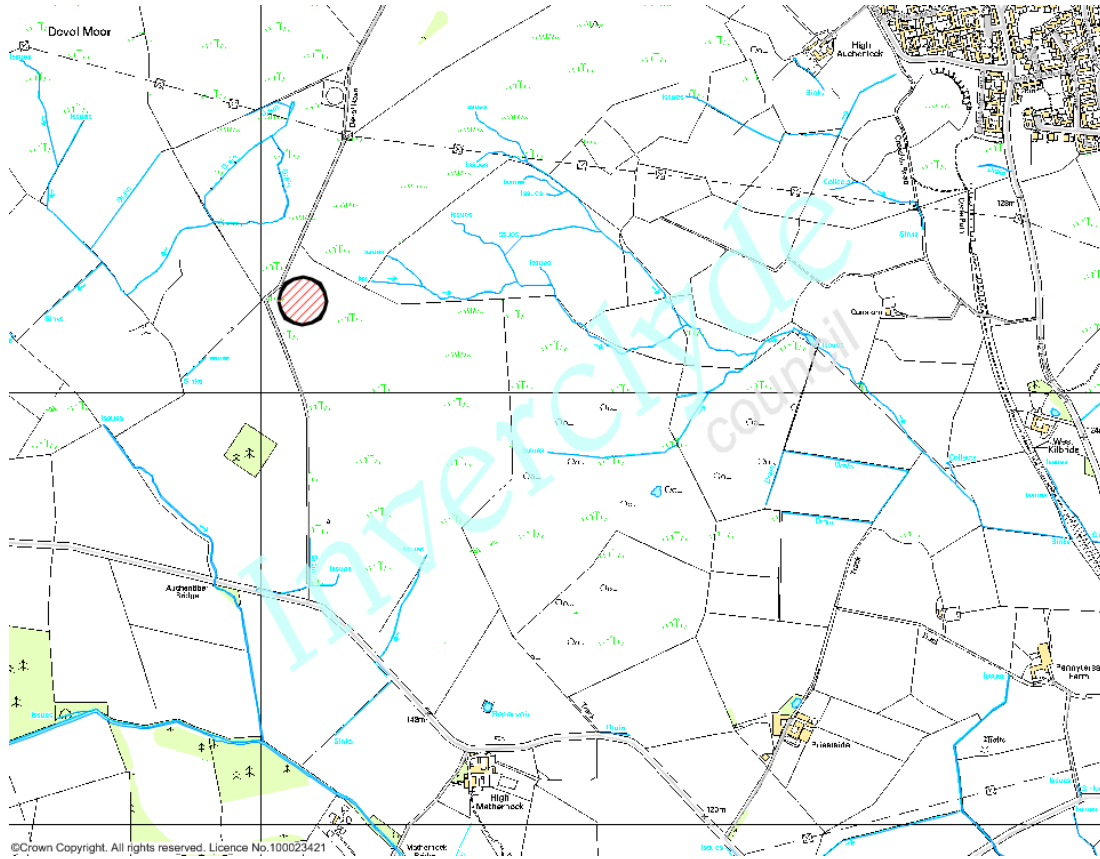
An appeal against the refusal of planning permission was lodged with the Scottish Government. The appeal was considered by written submissions.

NOTIFICATION OF APPEAL DECISION

The Reporter considered the determining issues to be impact on the landscape, residential properties and nearby settlements taking into account the Inverclyde local Plan and any other material considerations.

He considered that the site has little nature conservation value and that the turbine is of medium scale. The height contributes to the potential impact on Port Glasgow and Kilmacolm as being insignificant. This combination of scale and distance convinced the Reporter that the impact on the nearest residences at Auchentiber, Cunston and High Mathernock and on the core path network is acceptable.

Kilmacolm Community Council suggested that the small scale of the turbine will generate so little energy that it would 200 such turbines to supply Inverclyde. The consequential disastrous impact should lead to a clear policy of refusing wind turbines. This position was rejected as being contrary to Government guidance; cumulative impact, the requirement to consider the merits of each application and the potential amount of energy being produced not being a reason for refusal were all cited by the Reporter as counter arguments.



Balancing the objectors' and Council's views opposing the application with the general Government policy of support for wind energy, the Reporter concluded that while not exactly according with the letter of the Inverclyde Local Plan, the adverse impacts were not significant enough to justify refusal.

The appeal was sustained, granting permission for 25 years; requiring removal of the turbine should it fail to produce electricity for the national grid over a continuous 12 month period; and requiring the turbine to have a non reflective semi-matt finish.



RECOMMENDATION

The Board notes the position.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Regeneration and Planning

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Planning application 10/0340/IC
Appeal decision letter dated 20 February 2012.



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