

The Scottish Government
Energy Consents Unit
2nd Floor
Meridian Court
5 Cadogan Street
Glasgow. G2 6AT

Your Full Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Your Full Address

.....

..... Postcode

Application: Viking Energy Partnership Windfarm

I object to this planning application because: (You must fill in this blank section with your own reasons for objecting. Use your own words, this makes your objection unique and ensures it is properly recognised and counted. Remember to sign and date this letter.)

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Additional points to support my objection: (tick all those you think are relevant to your objection)

LANDSCAPE. The area of the proposed development consists of heather clad hills with a significant area of active blanket bog, i.e. peat forming. This habitat is an important carbon sink and is protected under European legislation. The size and scale of the proposed wind farm and its associated infrastructure will irrevocably change the character of this fragile landscape.

ECOLOGY. Vast quantities of peat will be moved in order to construct 150 turbine bases, 14 quarries, 8 construction compounds, 3 substations and 73 miles of new roads. Blanket bog also serves to regulate water flow and this is very important during periods of high rainfall. If the bog surface is damaged then this capacity to regulate water flow is lost.

There is a risk of serious landslips and severe erosion, changes in run-off are likely to damage burns and lochs where native brown trout are found. Possible changes in down-slope hydrology are highly likely to impact on important blanket bog habitat. Sediment run-off could also effect the substantial aquaculture industry in the surrounding voes (sea-lochs).

Blanket bog is a carbon sink and takes thousands of years to form, it actively absorbs and stores CO2. The release of this CO2 into the atmosphere will negate much or all of the perceived environmental benefits of the wind farm. Viking Energy's own submission says that the CO2 payback period could be as long as 48½ years. This project could irreparably damage globally important peat habitat that is scientifically recognised as vital in mitigating climate change.

PROXIMITY TO SETTLEMENTS. This development is contrary to SPP6 regulation, which states that villages must be more than 2km away from large turbines. Wind turbines generate noise, and settlements close to the site will experience noise pollution particularly in certain weather conditions. Some houses are only 0.9km from turbines. The phenomenon of infrasound vibration is also becoming noted in many instances relating to existing wind farms.

BIRDS. The wind farm will impact on breeding birds directly through death from collision and indirectly through displacement of breeding birds through disturbance or habitat change. Viking Energy studies show that 3.8 % of the UK breeding population of Red-Throated Divers and up to 15.7 % of the UK breeding population of Whimbrel breed within the site.

Viking Energy's own estimates suggest that in total a minimum of 5,700 birds will be killed through collision during the 25-year life cycle of the wind farm. This includes e.g. 152 Red-throated Divers, 1,562 Golden Plovers, 1,460 Curlew, 262 Whimbrel and 252 Arctic Skuas. Losses in breeding numbers due to indirect impacts are much more difficult to predict.

ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE. Construction of this wind farm will require vast loads of industrial plant and materials moved over local roads for many years. Many roads are single track. Construction traffic could be damaging and dangerous.

TOURISM AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT. The Shetland Visitor Survey 2006 states that tourists' "main inspiration to visit were birds, wildlife, nature and flora, followed by peace and quiet, remoteness and the scenery". This project will seriously harm this. It is also contrary to the Shetland Cultural Strategy plan that states we must "Safeguard the wildlife, sea life and high quality natural environment (including landscapes) of Shetland" and "Promote the sustainable wildlife, sea life and high quality natural environment of Shetland".

Within the Shetland Structure Plan the Shetland Islands Council also states "The preservation of Shetland's built heritage and the maintenance of a clean, productive natural environment, with its associated landscapes and wildlife, is critical to the future development of the tourism industry".

VISUAL IMPACT. The turbines will be clearly visible in the panoramic views across Shetland. Views in Shetland are characterised by unspoilt openness across the isles and the dominance of the sky in the landscape, creating a sense of wilderness, remoteness, space and tranquillity. This development presents a loss of visual amenity for large areas of Shetland.

Sign here **Date**