



## November '24 Newsletter

Though it has been some time since we issued the last newsletter, much has happened and our small team of volunteers have been busy attending events, gathering new information and advocating on behalf of people in our community who are opposed to this development of onshore wind generation.

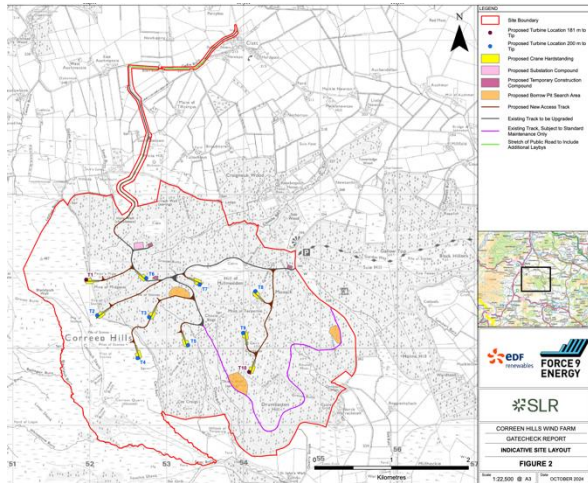
### In summary

EDF/Force 9 have:	CaSHWIG has:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reduced</b> the number of turbines from 14 down to 10</li> <li>• <b>Reduced</b> the height of their proposed towers from up to 220m to up to 180m</li> <li>• <b>Removed</b> the battery farm from their plan</li> <li>• Submitted a 'gate-check report' to the Scottish Governments Energy Consents Unit in response to their scoping report and Ministers opinion</li> <li>• Held two "consultation" sessions in October where they offered new perspectives on the development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published and distributed a revised leaflet to over 3,500 local homes, including new information as it became publicly available</li> <li>• Worked with our local Community Councils to develop and distribute a community <a href="#">attitude survey</a>, achieving over 350 responses so far, please click the link above to respond by 25<sup>th</sup> November.</li> <li>• Continued in our efforts to raise funds and to keep you informed of emerging information via our <a href="#">Facebook page</a> and on the <a href="http://www.cashwig.org">www.cashwig.org</a> website</li> <li>• Noted that Aberdeenshire Council has lodged an objection to the Hill of Fare windfarm and investigated the implications of that decision on the CaSH development</li> <li>• Noted that the Westminster Government has indicated their support and encouragement for onshore windfarm development in England</li> <li>• Started working up our response to The Scottish &amp; Westminster Governments launch of a consultation on streamlining the planning application processes and encouraging individuals and community councils to respond too.</li> </ul>

## Consultation or Obfuscation?

The 'consultation' sessions were held in Clatt village hall and at the Howe Trinity church hall in Alford. In attendance for the developers were Andrew Smith (Force 9), Jamie Hunter (EDF) and Steven Park (Cavendish Consulting), plus staff. Apparently 131 people attended, which is 40 less than the sessions held last October / November.

We learned that the formal planning application will be made in March 2025.



We were told that the route for transporting the turbines has not been finalised, but that the site has been extended down a narrow corridor from the north down to the Clatt / Rhynie road, round the north of Clatt running around the back of the Old Manse and School House and then ending at the Clatt / Kennethmont road opposite to the village hall. We understand that the final route will be determined after consultation with Police Scotland.

It was verbally reported that turbine bases will each require approximately 100 cement lorries with a not much fewer number of lorries of steel reinforcement. This means that there will be 1,500 – 2,000 additional heavy loads travelling through Alford, Rhynie, Clatt, Kennethmonth, and Inch regardless of the final route chosen. Each of the turbines will be transported in 6 or 7 separate loads. You may have noticed a lot of traffic monitoring equipment has been installed around the area, some of it already removed.

People from this group and others that they met at the events would describe it as less a 'consultation' and more of a 'telling you what we think you need to know' session.

Examples of the developer team attitude to questions at the events include, when asked about the need for the windfarm in this location with the associated pylons as opposed to siting offshore, the EDF representative replied to the effect that it was the "highlands" turn for pylons, and we should not complain!

They were also asked why all the 'before' landscape photographs had a blue-sky background and those showing the 'after' image with the turbines had a light grey background. The representative responded by claiming that they should show 'normal' conditions and that we more often had a grey sky!

There are many other examples of questions asked at the meetings for example on the depth of the bases and how deep the piles would be that suggested that the team at best didn't understand the development or at worst were trying to avoid answering accurately.

Despite the attitude of representative and EDF, we should take the reduced size and scale of the development as a success. Had we decided to lie down to the development, we have no doubt that the scale of the development would have remained unchanged.

## Revised Leaflets

Prior to the notification of the consultation sessions CaSHWIG printed and started distributing 3,500 revised leaflets, but with the “old” turbine locations (with a note to say they were the old location” because Force 9 / EDF would not release the new locations until the day of the first consultation). CaSHWIG have been criticised by EDF/Force 9 for having the 14 turbine montages in the leaflet, however until EDF/Force 9 publish and submit the new locations we can only deal with the facts as they publish them.

We are investing in preparing new montages and will make these public when they are available.

## Community Council Survey

The local community Councils (Bennachie, Donside and Tap O’Noth) have developed and issued a survey to gauge local feeling about the windfarm. Now the “consultation” sessions have been completed I hope that interested parties will let their elected representative know of their feelings. The results will be informative. A similar survey was carried out by the community councils affected by the Hill of Fare proposal, the results of which were very powerful and formed an important part of the Hill of Fare objection document.



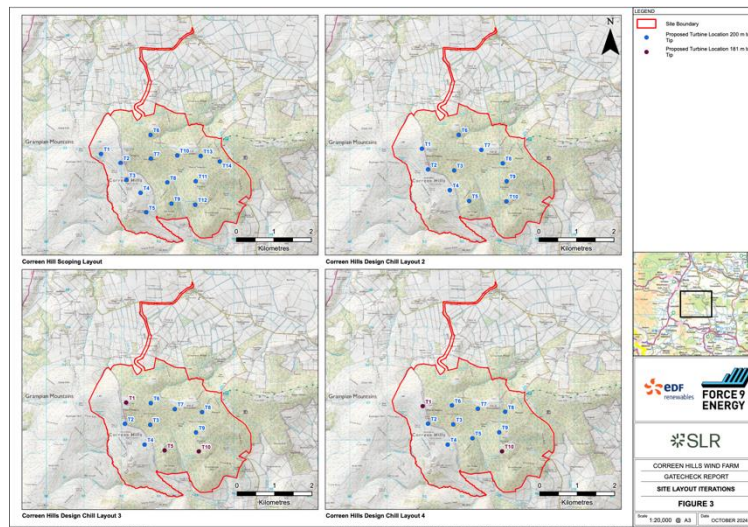
## Objection to the Hill of Fare

After a lot of to-and-fro all three Area Planning Committees and the Infrastructure Planning Committees of Aberdeenshire Council recommending objecting to the proposal for a windfarm on the Hill of Fare. In summary the objection was based upon negative visual impact, negative impact on places of cultural significance and ancient monuments, with additional concerns raised by other consultees, e.g. NATS. Well-done to HoFWIG!

It is likely that a very expensive public enquiry will now be required to progress the proposal and that the HoFWIG group will now need to dig deep to fund KC level representation at the enquiry

## Gate-Check report

Force 9 have lodged a gate-check report on the [ECU website](#). This is intended to articulate how Force 9 and EDF intend to address the matters raised in the Scoping report and subsequent Ministers Opinion. This report can be found on the ECU portal. It comprises more than 200 pages, which mainly comment that the matters will “be addressed in the EIAR (Environmental Impact



Assessment Report)”. There are five areas of concern which do not seem to have been properly addressed.

1. There is no intention to start **water monitoring** until after planning consent is given - **this means there is no pre-application baseline from which to measure the impact of the works**
2. “The detail of the **Outline Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan** will be developed and agreed with relevant consultees should the development be consented” - **This results in local representatives having zero leverage to influence this plan as approval will have been given without any commitment from the developer**
3. No list of the **viewpoints to be assessed** was provided, even though it was stated that they were
4. The **noise assessment will be carried out using ETSU-R97** despite a government report stating that this is unsuitable for these types of turbines and that a new standard will be issued in early 2025
5. None of the community feedback from the October 2023 or October 2024 “consultation” sessions was included in the ‘check list’ report – **suggesting that they see the ‘consultation’ meetings as part of the process but that views expressed are irrelevant to their application.**

It has been reported that when Force 9 were asked about the gate-check report at a recent Donside Community Council meeting they replied that they will not read comments on this report.

Enough for now, we will keep you updated as things progress.

