



# HOW TO OBJECT TO A PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL WIND TURBINE APPLICATION IN SCOTLAND

A Step-by-Step Guide.

# HOW TO OBJECT TO A PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL WIND TURBINE APPLICATION IN SCOTLAND: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

In Scotland, you have the right to submit an objection to a proposed industrial wind turbine development. To support you in this process, Hands Off Our Hills (HOOH) has created this comprehensive guide, designed to help you navigate the objection procedure effectively.

If you have any questions or need further assistance at any stage, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us through our website or Facebook Group Page. ***We are more than happy to offer our support and guidance.***

## STEP 1: UNDERSTAND THE PROPOSAL

The most important aspect to your objection is understanding the proposal, and everything the developer is stating within their application. Take some time reading their application and take notes where you believe it will have a negative impact.

### 1. LOCATE THE APPLICATION:

Search the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) website in relation to the proposed development you wish to object to. The website address is: [www.energyconsents.org](http://www.energyconsents.org)

The easiest way to search is by using the developments name, and the authority which the proposed development is within, in the example below we are using Glenvernoch which is with Dumfries and Galloway Councils authority.



The screenshot shows the Energy Consents Unit website interface. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the Scottish Government logo and the text 'The Scottish Government Riaghaltas na h-Alba Energy Consents Unit'. Below the header is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Search', 'Contact us', and 'Help Page'. A breadcrumb trail indicates 'You are here: Home - Simple Search'. The main content area has three tabs: 'Recent Cases', 'Simple Search' (which is active), and 'Advanced Search'. Under the 'Simple Search' tab, there is a search form with two input fields: 'Search by Project Name:' with the text 'Glenvernoch' entered, and 'And/or by Authority:' with a dropdown menu showing 'Dumfries and Galloway Col'. A 'Go' button is located at the bottom left of the search form.

If you are unsure of the applications name or details, then you can use Hands Off Our Hills website to find this information out, including a direct link (if available) to the proposed development on the ECU website.

### 2. REVIEW DOCUMENTS:

Once you have found the proposed development, the next step is to download and obtain the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), site plans, and other supporting materials. Pay attention to details about the location, turbine height, infrastructure, and access routes.

### 3. CHECK DEADLINES:

Lastly, take note of the deadline for all objections to be submit. It's vital you get your objection submitted prior to this deadline or else you risk it being ignored.

## STEP 2: IDENTIFY KEY ISSUES

Your objection should focus on valid planning considerations and where you believe the developer has failed to take into account the following:

### 1. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT:

- The turbines' effect on scenic beauty, particularly in areas of natural beauty or cultural heritage, such as the Galloway Hills or National Scenic Areas.
- The cumulative impacts if the area already has existing industrial wind turbine sites.
- The added cumulative impacts if all current industrial wind turbine sites in scoping are approved, this will encircle the Cree Valley in a ring of steel.

### 2. IMPACT ON WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENT

- Threats to protected species like birds of prey, bats, or other local wildlife.
- Damage to habitats, such as peatlands, which are significant carbon stores.
- Contamination of rivers and streams, including private water supplies.

### 3. IMPACT ON RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES

- Noise pollution, shadow flicker, and visual intrusion affecting quality of life.
- Disruption from construction traffic, particularly on rural roads or the A75.
- Aviation Lighting and impact on Dark Sky Status and star glazing.

### 4. ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- Negative effects on tourism due to an industrialised landscape.
- Inadequate evidence of community economic benefits.

### 5. PLANNING POLICY VIOLATIONS

- Non-compliance with local development plans, regional spatial strategies, or national planning frameworks.
- Does the proposed site abide with the Electricity Act 1989

### 6. CULTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONCERNS

- Potential harm to sites of historical or archaeological importance.

### 7. OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACTS

- Risks to aviation safety
- Telecommunications interference.

## STEP 3: DRAFT YOUR OBJECTION

Write your initial draft objection, using your notes from reading the developers application you should have enough points to start constructing your objection. Take your time to cover all the key issues you'd like to bring to the attention of the Council and the ECU.

**Below is an overlay on how to structure your objection:**

### 1. ADDRESS THE LETTER:

Make sure that you include all the relevant information about the development you are objecting to, include the development reference number which you will find either on the ECU website, or within the application documents you downloaded in Step 1.

THE REFERENCE NUMBER STARTS WITH:

**ECU000.....**

Make sure that you include your contact information, so that the ECU and Council knows that you have objected.

### 2. STATE YOUR INTEREST:

In your objection, clearly state why you are objecting and how the proposal affects you personally or professionally. This establishes your position and adds weight to your submission.

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EXAMPLES:

I. **Local Resident**

- a. "As a resident of [village name], located just [distance] from the proposed site, I am deeply concerned about the impact on my quality of life due to noise pollution and visual intrusion."

II. **Frequent Visitor or Tourist**

- a. "I regularly visit the Galloway Hills for hiking and photography. The introduction of industrial turbines would severely diminish the area's natural beauty and deter future visits."

III. **Business Owner**

- a. "I run a small guesthouse in [village name], which relies on tourists seeking an unspoiled rural experience. This development threatens the very landscape my business depends on."

IV. **Conservationist or Environmentalist**

- a. "As a member of [organisation name], I am concerned about the potential destruction of vital peatlands and the threat to local biodiversity."

### 3. LIST YOUR OBJECTIONS CLEARLY:

- Use headings for each issue (e.g., "Impact on Landscape and Visual Amenity").
- Provide specific examples, referencing sections of the application or EIA where possible.

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EXAMPLE:

"The turbines, at 200m high, would dominate the skyline of [specific area], contrary to Policy X of the Local Development Plan."

.....  
EXAMPLE:

"The turbines, at 200m high, would require aviation lights that would destroy the dark sky status our region benefits from."

#### 4. KEEP IT FACTUAL AND PROFESSIONAL:

Ensure that your objection remains composed and objective. Submissions that include inappropriate language are likely to be disregarded or rejected. **You must include:** Your Full Name, Address inc Postcode, an Email Address where possible and any other contact information you wish to use.

##### Do:

- Present factual information to support your case.
- Use professional and measured language, such as “I am deeply concerned...” or “I am worried about...”.
- Seek assistance if you are finding it difficult to draft your objection. Hands Off Our Hills is happy to help by providing “draft” objection letters to guide you in formatting your submission effectively.

##### Do Not:

- Use offensive or inappropriate language, including swearing or insults.
- Include fabricated figures or make unsupported claims.
- Provide false information—always ensure your objection is truthful.

If you are unable to draft an objection independently, Hands Off Our Hills will offer an online tool on our website to assist those in need. This resource will become available shortly after the application is submitted to the ECU, ensuring that all included information is accurate and relevant to the development in question.

#### 5. INCLUDE EVIDENCE:

Where possible, include maps, photographs, or supporting data to strengthen your objection.

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##### FOR EXAMPLE:

- **Health Impacts:** If you have a medical condition that may be exacerbated by the development’s proximity to your home, include this information in your objection. While you are not required to provide medical evidence, it is important to clearly state how the development could significantly impact your quality of life, potentially forcing you to relocate. Always ensure your statements are factual and professional—avoid exaggeration or falsehoods.
- **Wildlife Observations:** If you have observed wildlife within or near the proposed development site, provide details of your sightings, including dates and approximate locations. Multiple sightings can add weight to your objection.
- **Impact on Property:** Include images showing your property’s location relative to the proposed development. If you believe the project will result in noise or light pollution affecting your home, ensure these concerns are clearly documented within your submission.

**Keeping objections factual, clear, and supported by evidence enhances their effectiveness.**

## STEP 4: SUBMIT YOUR OBJECTION

Once you have finalised your objection and are satisfied with its content, you will need to submit it to both:

##### ENERGY CONSENTS UNIT:

**Email:** [representations@gov.scot](mailto:representations@gov.scot)

**Or Write:** Scottish Government, Energy Consents Unit, 4th Floor, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU

##### DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL:

**Email:** [planning@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:planning@dumgal.gov.uk)

**Or Write:** Community Planning and Engagement Manager, Militia House, English Street, Dumfries, DG1 2HR

## STEP 5: RAISE AWARENESS

Encourage others to submit objections and share the Hands Off Our Hills website and Facebook details with your friends and family. If possible, assist others in drafting their objections and help them with the submission process to both the Council and the ECU.

The more we raise awareness and mobilise collective action, the stronger our message will be. It is vital to ensure that both the ECU and the Council clearly understand our opposition to these industrial turbines.

Additionally, engage with your local MSPs and Community Councillors by sending them a copy of your objection. Clearly explain how the proposed development will impact you both mentally and physically, and ask them to support your case. **Remember, their role is to represent and serve the local community.**

## STEP 6: FOLLOW UP

After submitting your objection to a proposed industrial wind turbine site development, it's important to monitor the progress of the application and to engage with the consultation process actively. This helps ensure that your concerns are considered, and allows you to take further action if needed. Here are some detailed steps to follow up:

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### 1. MONITOR THE APPLICATION AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- **Check for updates regularly:** Visit the local council's planning portal or the Scottish Government's ECU website to track the application's status. Look out for any amendments to the proposal, new submissions, or changes to the planning schedule.
  - *Example:* "Set up alerts or notifications through the council's planning portal to receive updates on any changes to the application documentation."
- **Attend public meetings or hearings:** If a public meeting or hearing is scheduled, make plans to attend. These events provide an opportunity to voice your concerns directly.
  - *Example:* "Note the date and location of any public meetings and plan to attend, either to speak or to observe and gain a better understanding of the proceedings."

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### 2. PARTICIPATE IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- **Respond to requests for further information:** If the planning authority or ECU requests additional information regarding your objection, respond promptly and provide any requested evidence or clarification.
  - *Example:* "If the planning authority contacts you with questions about your objection, provide detailed responses that reinforce your initial points, using any additional evidence you may have gathered."
- **Submit further evidence or arguments:** If new information becomes available or if the application changes significantly, consider submitting a supplementary objection or an updated response.
  - *Example:* "Should new research on the environmental impact or changes to the turbine design arise after your initial objection, submit an updated response to reflect these changes."

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### 3. ENGAGE WITH THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

- **Stay informed about the decision timeline:** Typically, planning decisions are made within a set period. Be aware of this timeline to anticipate when the decision might be made.
  - *Example:* "Note the expected decision date for the application, which is often indicated on the planning portal. This will help you plan when to expect the outcome and whether further action might be required."

- **Prepare for the decision:** Once the decision is announced, review it carefully to understand the reasons behind it and assess whether it aligns with your objections.
  - *Example:* “If the decision is not favourable, consider whether there are grounds for appealing the decision. Familiarise yourself with the appeals process and be ready to submit a formal appeal if necessary.”

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#### 4. ATTEND APPEALS AND HEARINGS

- **Prepare to participate in appeals or public inquiries:** If the planning application is appealed or referred to a public inquiry, attend these events and consider presenting your objections in person.
  - *Example:* “If the application is appealed to the ECU, plan to attend the inquiry, prepare your statements, and consider submitting expert testimonies to support your arguments.”

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#### 6. FOLLOW UP WITH COUNCILLORS AND MSPS

- **Engage with elected representatives:** Contact your local councillors and Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to express your concerns and request their support.
  - *Example:* “Write letters or emails to your local councillors and MSPs outlining your objections and asking for their help in opposing the development. Follow up with phone calls or meetings to discuss your concerns in more detail.”

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#### 7. STAY INFORMED ABOUT RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

- **Keep track of other related applications:** If additional industrial wind turbine site applications are submitted in the area, monitor them and consider these within your objection if they are close in location and similar in impact.
  - *Example:* “In addition to the proposed industrial wind turbine site, there is another proposal for **[name site here]**, located approximately **[enter distance in KM from site objecting to]**. This is a further concern for me, as the issues raised in this objection are largely applicable to this second proposal as well. I am apprehensive that, should one application be approved, it may set a precedent for the approval of other proposed industrial wind turbine sites in the area. Such a scenario would have severe consequences for both the local environment and wildlife.”

By staying engaged and proactive throughout the decision-making process, you increase the likelihood that your concerns will be heard and considered.

**Following these steps will help ensure that your objection is effective and that you remain informed and prepared to respond to any developments.**

#### QUICK REMINDERS:

**It’s easy to forget the important aspects, so to recap:**

- Remember to include your contact information
- Remember to make reference to the development you are objecting to, using the ECU reference number
- Use factual information and data
- Keep your objection professional and refrain from swearing or being insulting
- Where possible back up your claims with photos, maps, references etc.
- Ask for help if you are struggling or require assistance
- Remind your friends and family to object and let them know the deadline for objections being accepted
- Don’t panic or worry, this process can seem daunting but sticking to the facts will make writing your objection easier



## EXAMPLES OF AN OBJECTION SECTION

To assist you with your objection, Hands Off Our Hills has provided several examples of points you may wish to include. However, please ensure that you do not simply copy and paste these examples.

**It is important to use your own terminology and phrasing, as the ECU will treat all submissions that appear to be "copy and pasted" as a single, combined objection.**

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### EXAMPLE 1: IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY

#### **Objection: Visual and Landscape Impact on Scenic Value**

"I object to the proposed industrial wind turbine site on the grounds that it will significantly degrade the visual amenity of the surrounding area, particularly the Galloway Hills. This area is highly valued for its scenic beauty and is an important part of the regional landscape. The wind turbines, which stand at a height of up to **[enter height of tallest turbine in METERS]** metres, will dominate the skyline and create an industrial feature where none currently exists.

The site is located within close proximity to the Southern Uplands Way, a well-known long-distance trail, and the turbines will be visible to walkers from a range of viewpoints. This area has a distinct rural and natural character that draws tourists and outdoor enthusiasts, and the visual intrusion from large wind turbines will deter future visitors.

The cumulative effect of this proposal, combined with the existing industrial wind turbine sites in the area, will lead to an over-concentration of turbines in this relatively unspoiled part of the country, ultimately compromising the scenic integrity of the region."

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### EXAMPLE 2: IMPACT ON WILDLIFE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

#### **Objection: Risk to Protected Species and Habitat Damage**

"I am deeply concerned about the environmental impact of this proposed industrial wind turbine site, specifically on local wildlife and habitats. The area in question is home to a variety of protected species, including hen harriers and golden eagles, both of which are listed under European and UK conservation laws.

The applicant's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) fails to adequately address the risks posed by the wind turbines to these birds of prey, particularly in terms of potential collisions. As this site lies within a key migratory path for these species, the impact could be devastating to their populations.

Moreover, the proposed development is located on peatland, which plays a crucial role in carbon sequestration. Disturbing the peat during construction could release significant amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere, undermining Scotland's commitment to combat climate change. I believe this project contradicts national and local efforts to protect sensitive ecosystems and reduce carbon emissions."

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### EXAMPLE 3: IMPACT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND QUALITY OF LIFE

#### **Objection: Noise Pollution and Disturbance to Residents**

"I strongly object to the proposed industrial wind turbine site due to the detrimental effects it will have on the local community, particularly in terms of noise pollution and disruption to daily life.

The nearest residential properties are located just **[enter distance in KM]** from the proposed turbines, and the noise generated by the turbines, especially during periods of high wind, will significantly impact the quality of life of residents. The applicant's noise assessment, while acknowledging the potential for noise, does not fully consider the cumulative effect of nearby turbines, nor does it address concerns about low-frequency noise that can cause sleep disruption and stress.

In addition, the construction phase will result in significant disruption to local roads, particularly the A75, which is already heavily used. The influx of construction traffic will pose risks to road safety, create congestion, and contribute to the deterioration of already fragile infrastructure."



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#### EXAMPLE 4: ECONOMIC AND TOURISM IMPACTS

##### **Objection: Adverse Impact on Local Tourism Economy**

“As a local business owner who operates a bed and breakfast in the village of *[village name]*, I am concerned that the proposed industrial wind turbine site will severely impact the local tourism economy. Our village attracts tourists seeking access to the unspoiled beauty of the Galloway Hills and surrounding countryside.

The presence of large, industrial wind turbines will create an eyesore in an area that relies on tourism for its economic well-being. The aesthetic appeal of the region will be significantly diminished, leading to fewer visitors and, as a result, fewer bookings at local accommodations, restaurants, and shops.

The applicant has failed to provide sufficient evidence to show that the industrial wind turbine site will generate any meaningful benefits to the local economy. I believe the long-term harm to tourism will outweigh any short-term economic gains from the development.”

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#### EXAMPLE 5: CULTURAL AND HERITAGE CONCERNS

##### **Objection: Impact on Cultural Heritage Sites**

“The proposed industrial wind turbine site is situated within *[enter distance in KM]* of several important cultural and historical sites, including *[specific landmark or archaeological site]*. These sites are vital to the local community’s heritage and contribute to the cultural fabric of the region.

The development will significantly affect the setting of these heritage sites, compromising their historical value. The visual intrusion of large industrial turbines will detract from the historic character of the landscape, diminishing the cultural experience for visitors and local residents alike.

The applicant has not provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the potential impact on heritage sites has been fully considered in the planning application. As such, I believe the industrial wind turbine site is incompatible with the preservation of the area’s cultural and historical significance.”

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#### EXAMPLE 6: IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING

##### **Objection: Potential Health Impacts from Shadow Flicker**

“I am concerned about the potential health impacts of the proposed industrial wind turbine site, particularly in terms of shadow flicker. The turbines are positioned in such a way that they will cause prolonged periods of shadow flicker for residents of *[village name]*, especially in the winter months when the sun is low.

Research has shown that exposure to shadow flicker can cause headaches, stress, and sleep disruption for residents living within the affected area. The applicant’s assessment does not adequately address this issue, nor does it propose sufficient mitigation measures to reduce the effects of shadow flicker on nearby homes.

Given that there are a number of properties located within the shadow flicker zone, I urge that the planning application be reconsidered in light of these serious potential health risks.”

## FINAL NOTES

Objecting to an industrial wind turbine site requires a structured and methodical approach. By concentrating on factual, planning-related issues and providing solid evidence, you can build a compelling case against the proposed development. It is important to remember that the number and quality of objections can have a significant impact on the decision-making process, so we encourage others to submit their objections as well.

Hands Off Our Hills will be submitting our own formal objection to the proposed development, which will be made publicly available for review once submitted. If you are finding it difficult to draft your objection, please do not hesitate to contact us – we are here to assist. Additionally, we will have resources available on our website to support you, which will be accessible shortly after the application is submitted.

By working together, we can prevent these developments and stand united in saying to the developers:

**“Keep Your Hands Off Our Hills.”**