

Integrated Land Use in South West Scotland – RRG Pilot Regulation Project
Wednesday 16 April 2014

Venue: Scottish Government, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow G2 8LU
Time: 10 am - 12 noon

NOTE OF MEETING

Present: Prof Russel Griggs OBE, Chair RRG
Lin Bunton, SEPA
John Glen, Buccleuch Estates
Gordon Cameron, South Lanarkshire Council
Bob McIntosh, Forestry Commission
Chris Miles, Scottish Natural Heritage
Graham Marchbank, Scottish Government
Sandra Reid, Scottish Government
Wendy McCutcheon, Scottish Government

Apologies: Michael McGlynn, South Lanarkshire Council
Alex Haswell, Dumfries and Galloway Council
David McDowall, East Ayrshire Council

Agenda Item 1 - Welcome & Introductions

1. Prof Griggs welcomed everyone stating that the purpose of this meeting is to allow John Glen to outline his proposed project to public sector stakeholders and discuss to ensure that all are willing to participate.
2. RRG is facilitating this as this is a novel project which fits RRG's interests in the benefits of pre-development multi-lateral engagement which can bring about better solutions.

Agenda Item 2 – Presentation and overview of proposed project

3. John Glen explained proposals for an integrated land use project involving renewable energy over 40,000 acres of land in South West Scotland. This land is owned by a variety of owners (5). The land involved is a mix of peat, grouse and farming and includes a Special Protection Area (SPA).
4. John Glen stated that the issues which have to be discussed and resolved are landowner issues, community issues, local and national environmental issues.
5. Financially, landowners would receive an economic return from land asset. The community benefits to this project include the jobs that could be created in the local communities and the restoration of open-cast coal mines. Environmental issues were discussed such as the peat emitting rather than absorbing carbon and the inclusion of a SPA in the project plan. The group was advised that this SPA did not currently appear to be fully delivering what it should do – although this needed to be investigated further - and that other plots of land could be better placed to deliver the

bird species protection. Nationally, this project could make a substantial impact in achieving renewable energy targets for Scotland.

6. The project could be phased into three steps – all subject to the necessary approvals:

- Move part of the SPA.
- Develop an integrated renewable energy proposal.
- Structure the project and investment case.

7. This large scale project has advantages over a promulgation of small schemes and would be the equivalent of 20 small schemes with Grid availability.

8. Where the proposed windfarms would be sited is largely uninhabited upland territory and, as a whole, is not visible from many readily accessible places.

9. To date John Glen stated that:

- Five landowners have agreed in principle to the project.
- He is setting up a scoping and project management team.
- He would work with SNH and Scottish Government to build a case regarding the SPA.
- He is establishing a peatland restoration project.
- He has an ambitious timeline of 2018.

10. In summary this project could potentially deliver:

- 300 to 500 MW of wind energy – potential for 160 turbines.
- 80 to 130 MW of pump-storage hydro.
- Local jobs; appropriate skills.
- Approximately 1,000 acres of peatland restored.
- Successful promulgation of bird species.
- Options to restore Powharnal.
- Income from investment for local authorities.

11. Informal discussion has been held with SEPA officials regarding the pump storage. Once the feasibility study has been completed then more formalised discussions will be organised.

Agenda Item 3 – Discussion on proposed project

12. The attendees agreed that, in principle, they were supportive of this project, especially as nothing has been done on this scale before in Scotland. However, because of this the project should progress on an all or nothing basis. The implications for other small wind farm applications within the area need to be considered.

13. There was a lengthy discussion on how this could be taken forward. Ideas discussed included its significance as a project of national priority, a single consent,

and links to Powharnal mitigation work. How this project was packaged would be instrumental and the benefits to the community and regeneration of the local area, as well as potential investment opportunities, need to be further developed and emphasised.

14. The SPA covers three areas and so its performance is measured over more than one part of it. Also its performance is about more than one species and currently is a mixed picture with some unfavourable and some favourable features. Figures for that need to be considered further before this conclusion can be drawn. The proposal to move the SPA has no precedent and is a significant challenge.

15. It was noted that SG Energy officials would also have an interest in this project.

Agenda Item 4 – Future Steps

16. Prof Griggs agreed to take the above comments back to John Glen and further meetings would be organised as required.

RRG Secretariat
May 2014