

Our Ref: GT – RE/S/765/PM
Your Ref:

20 October 2011

Gartmore Community Council,
Chris Sheldon,
Pine Tree Cottage,
Gartmore,
Stirling,
FK8 3RL

Dear Chris, Ian, Janey and the Gartmore Community Council

BANKS RENEWABLES PROPOSALS FOR ARD GHAOTH

You will no doubt be aware Banks Renewables has been carrying out consultation and engagement regarding the company's proposals for up to 20 wind turbines on the site named Ard Ghaoth to the North East of Drymen.

As part of this on going engagement we have always been open when dealing with members of the community and made a promise that local views and opinions will be taken into consideration in the design of the windfarm in line with the company's 'Development with Care' approach across all our business areas.

We have now completed the preliminary investigatory stage of the planning and environmental process and are entering the detailed design stage. Therefore the time has come for us to begin taking all aspects of the development into consideration. This process will take account of all aspects of the development from Ecology and Ornithology to the feedback from the local communities.

This would generally be a fairly straight forward process however the company has been analysing the feedback from the community exhibitions, various community council meetings held and the recent community survey which we had independently undertaken on our behalf (a copy of which is enclosed with this letter). Although we are encouraged by the positive response to the survey and other feedback from the engagement process the responses do clearly highlight concerns that have not been fully addressed within the current proposal.

The independent survey carried out on behalf of Banks Renewables details that in the wider Stirlingshire area a total of 72% of people either support the proposals or don't care in contrast to 23% who object to the proposals with the remaining 5% yet to make up their mind. The survey of the local communities surrounding the wind farm which represent approximately 5% of the total Stirlingshire population revealed that a total of 60% either support the proposal or don't care with 35% in objection and 5% yet to make up their mind.

The main area of concern highlighted from the overall feedback is in specific regard to the Landscape and Visual aspects of the proposed development. To reiterate we are fully committed to considering these concerns, ensuring that the actual and perceived impact of the scheme is brought down to an acceptable level and that the very substantial benefits of the scheme are understood within the context of the proposal.

On this basis we have chosen to push back the programme for the submission of a planning application and environmental statement to allow a full re consultation and engagement process to be undertaken. Therefore the November 2011 date previously advised for the submission of the planning application will move to the spring of 2012.

In addition and to make you aware Banks Renewables has now received the full scoping responses to the Scoping report which was submitted in July 2011. Alongside the continued engagement and design process proposed the project team will be fully considering all matters raised in the consultee responses. The assessment of the environmental positions and points raised will be fully displayed at the pre application exhibitions as well as within the planning application and environmental statement which as stated is now expected to be submitted in the spring of 2012.

Before embarking on the re consultation process within the areas surrounding the windfarm it would be very much appreciated if you could confirm receipt of this letter by return at which point myself or Siobhan Samson will be in touch to discuss the next stages. If you have any queries what so ever regarding the content of this letter please feel free to call me on the numbers detailed below.

I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

Yours sincerely



Gordon Thomson
Project Manager

DD: 0844 264 4602
E: gordon.thomson@banksgroup.co.uk

Enc. Community Survey Report