

Scawd Law Wind Farm

Report from Walkerburn and District Community Council

Email: WDCCScawdLaw@gmail.com

Fred Olsen Renewables Limited (FORL) have submitted a planning application to build a wind farm 3 kilometres north of Walkerburn village on the ridges of Windlestraw and Scawd Law. Please see the map and notes which give details of the locations of the 8 proposed 180 metre-high turbines.

The Community Council has placed paper copies of the developers' application in the Bowling Club, the HB Club and in the Public Hall. Please contact Lesley Thornton (870251) or Patricia Purves (870447) if you have any problems obtaining access. All the documents are online at www.energyconsents.scot. Go to 'simple search' and put in 'Scawd Law Wind Farm' and the link will show.

We are putting together notes from the documents available and are seeking expert opinion on some of the applicants' claims, which we believe may be misleading. We are happy to share all the information which we gather. Please let me know if you would like to see our notes by emailing Mike Wilcox at WDCCScawdLaw@gmail.com or by contacting Lesley or Patricia.

There are strong arguments for supporting further development of Wind Farms but there are also strong arguments for taking care not to allow the drive towards renewables to cause unnecessary environmental and economic damage to Scotland's natural resources.

The Scawd Law application is for a very small wind farm, only 8 turbines, though at 180 metres set on high ridgelines they will look huge, but it will be the first one ever to be built inside an exclusion zone which was determined by Scottish Borders Council on both landscape and environmental grounds. The professional SBC Planning Officers have already made their objections clear.

It will be a very expensive project, and not particularly productive in terms of power actually generated. It probably only makes sense to the developers if it can be used as a foothold for further expansion in this area.

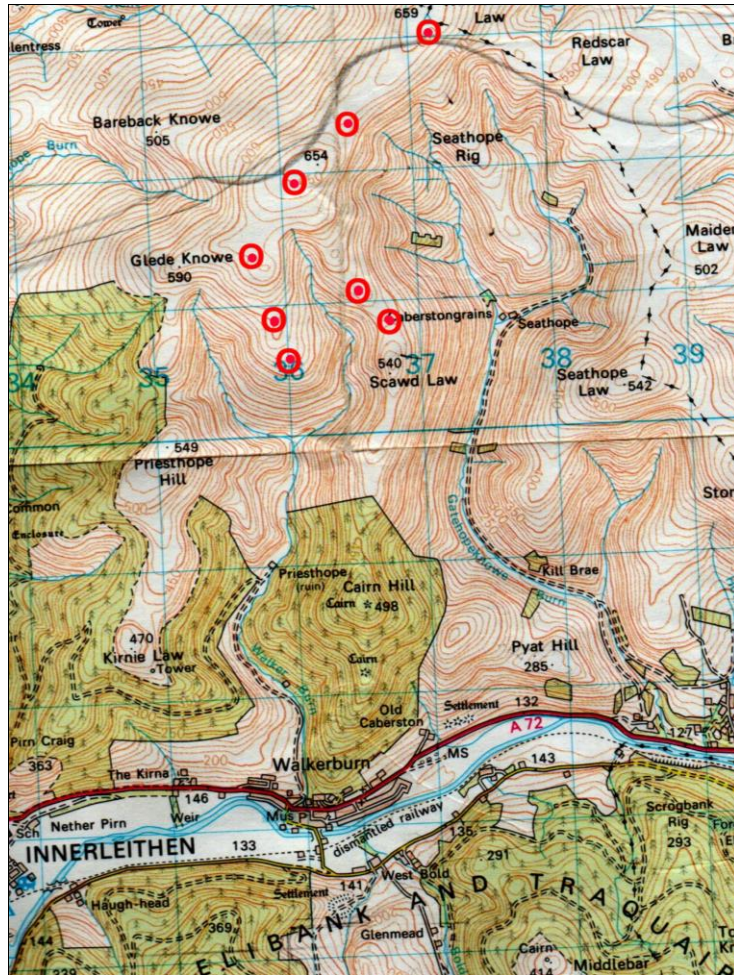
The cost/gains analysis for the environment and for the Tweed Valley communities seems to be against the Scawd Law development. The site is very steep, very hard to access, not perhaps conventionally scenic in landscape terms, but left untouched it is rich in biodiversity. The access tracks and changes to the B709 (The Granites road up Leithen Water) will be hugely damaging, especially to peat soils while the concrete bases for the 180 metre-high turbines will cause long-term damage, and ongoing wind farm maintenance will cause continuing damage (and expense to the Council) in terms of the increased maintenance requirement for the B709. It is difficult to see why our communities should support this development.

If you wish to lodge an objection, you can do this online by registering at www.energyconsents.scot. Go to the "Help" section and then to "ECU Submitting a representation" for very clear guidance. Alternatively, write to: Kirstin Keyes, Case Manager, Energy Consents Unit, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow G2 8LU or send an email to Econsents_Admin@gov.scot. Please make sure that you head your objection with the Project Name which is 'Scawd Law Wind Farm' and the Reference which is ECU00002111. (Even if you can't manage the deadline of 13th February, you still may submit an objection.)

If you want more information, or to discuss any aspect of the application, please just ask.

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SCAWD LAW WINDFARM SUBMITTED TURBINE LOCATIONS



Map Notes

Each turbine is 180 metres or 590 feet in height – that's 3 times the height of the Scott Monument.

Immediately to the north of Walkerburn is Cairn Hill at 498 metres high. To the west of the village, towards Innerleithen, Kirnie Law is 470 metres high. To the east, Pyat Hill is 285 metres. Immediately to the south, across the Tweed, the green hill is Shiel Craig at 285 metres. Beyond that is the Minch Moor ridgeline, with the Southern Upland Way, at 512 metres. Plora Craig, covered in trees, lies towards Innerleithen and is 428 metres. The highest local hill is Windlestraw Law at 659 metres.

Turbine 1 (Middle Hill)	530 metres + 180 metres = 710 metres (2329 feet) above sea level
Turbine 2 (Middle Hill)	550 metres + 180 metres = 730 metres (2395 feet) above sea level
Turbine 3 (Glede Knowe)	610 metres + 180 metres = 790 metres (2592 feet) above sea level
Turbine 4 (Scawd Law)	530 metres + 180 metres = 710 metres (2329 feet) above sea level
Turbine 5 (Scawd Law)	510 metres + 180 metres = 690 metres (2264 feet) above sea level
Turbine 6 (Between Glede Knowe	650 metres + 180 metres = 830 metres (2723 feet) above sea level
Turbine 7 and Windlestraw Law)	620 metres + 180 metres = 800 metres (2625 feet) above sea level
Turbine 8 (Windlestraw Law)	650 metres + 180 metres = 830 metres (2723 feet) above sea level

These will be the highest objects between the Southern Highlands and the Cheviots: they will be clearly visible from Fife and from all the surrounding hills. They are not visible from many homes in Walkerburn Village or Glenbenna but they will be very visible from homes in Innerleithen, Cardrona and Peebles, from the A72 in both directions, the B709 in both directions, and from those houses on the back road that are not surrounded by trees. They will dwarf the valley and the surrounding hills.

Does it matter if it helps save the planet? No, but this development is to make money for the Norwegian company. Scotland already has more efficient wind farms than this in operation and development. We do not NEED Scawd Law.