

MYNYDD Y GWYNT WIND FARM

Ref: EN010020

WRITTEN SUMMARY OF ORAL CASE ON BEHALF OF POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL – ISSUE SPECIFIC HEARING ON LANDSCAPE – WEDNESDAY 18TH MARCH 2015

26th March 2015

Introduction

1. MyG lies outside the boundaries of an SSA. TAN 8 2.13 states ‘Most areas outside SSAs should remain free of large wind power schemes’. 8.4 ‘In the rest of Wales outside the SSAs, the implicit objective is to maintain the landscape character i.e. no significant change in landscape character from wind turbine development.’ This is the test.
2. In PCCs assessment the following VSAs would experience significant landscape character effects. All three are of Outstanding overall evaluation, i.e. of national or international importance, are of high sensitivity to change by virtue of their openness, remoteness, exposure, wildness and attractive and dramatic views. Adverse landscape effects would extend to 7km. The three are:
 - Plynlimon Moorlands (the host) VSAA 910
 - Plinlimon VSAA 151
 - Cambrian Mountains (north) VSAA 508
 - There is also an accepted significant effect on the Ceredigion SLA.
3. Significant adverse visual effects to Wye Valley Walk and Cambrian Way to their overall detriment, and some significant effects to lengths of Glyndwrs Way (national) and Severn Way, as well as arrange of other PRowS and OAL up to 7.5km.
4. Significant in-combination landscape and visual effects with Cefn Croes, Bryn Titli and Bryn Blaen (and potentially too with Nant y Moch).
5. The Applicant also argues that such effects are mitigated by the character of the site and presence of Hafren Forest and Cefn Croes in the landscape. The site has aspects of degraded character but within the wider context such features are a very minor contributor to character and are barely registered at even a modest distance from the site. Hafren Forest does have some mitigating effects from some aspects in as much as its presence reduces the sense of wildness and remoteness. However, these effects too diminish with distance and are not of such an affect that they alter the conclusions of LANDMAP or PCCs assessment of character. The nearest Cefn Croes turbines lie further away than the furthest MyG turbines from most of

the critical receptors, are 90/100m high only and lie perceptibly on another plateau and beyond forestry (they do not feel part of the immediate context of Plynlimon etc).

6. The Applicant argues that although there are accepted significant landscape and visual effects, these are relatively contained by the presence of Plynlimon and other landforms. There is an aspect of containment but the area affected includes Outstanding landscapes and Plynlimon. This is a special landscape and the fact that wider effects are not experienced does not reduce the significance of these impacts and these effects amount to significant landscape change that TAN 8 seeks to avoid.

7. The Council has set out its position in respect of the value to be attributed to Plynlimon in its Deadline V submissions and orally at the hearing. The Council considers that it is not appropriate to only equate numbers of visitors with the value of such natural features, although recognise that it can be an indicator in some instances. Value and appreciation runs to include many other less tangible factors, including the perception of the public for such mountains and landscapes. However, in respect of numbers the Council gave oral evidence at the hearing that the counter at the stile at the footpath leading from Hafren Forest to the Plynlimon complex recorded the second highest numbers of such records within the county.