

Mr K Grant
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Forest Enterprise
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8.12.09

Our ref SEC/09/106

Dear Mr Grant

Thank you for your letter of 30 November to Dr Hugh Insley. Dr Insley has just retired and I have been appointed as his replacement.

You are right to note that Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) did not undertake a high level of direct public engagement on this proposal. However it is normal practice with potential development opportunities on the National Forest Estate that FCS expects the developer to lead on community engagement and consultation, in tandem with the preparation of documents for submission to the local Planning Authority.

We have actively encouraged the developer, NEDL, to have dialogue with interested parties, and it is their responsibility to carry this out. I understand a Community Council meeting was held on 1 December 2008, a further meeting with local residents in March 2009, and that there was open discussion at a subsequent Community Council meeting attended by NEDL. The level of engagement will be considered by the Planners when they are assessing the application.

FCS is charged with encouraging the development of renewable energy generation towards the Scottish Government's ambitious renewable energy targets. However, I do understand the concerns you raise in your letter but I am sure you will agree that it is appropriate to look to the Highland Council's development control process, to determine the balance of local and wider issues, in making it's decision.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hodge
Chief Executive,
Forest Enterprise Scotland