

Tarbert and Skipness – Community Wind Study

The community trust, TSCT, has been operating since 2002 with its key objective being to secure a sustainable future for the area while conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the local environment. To this end, TSCT commissioned RD Energy Solutions in January 2009 to examine the potential for a community owned wind energy development. The remit was to examine the environmental, technical and financial feasibility of this project, and provide sufficient information to allow the community to make an informed decision on the future potential.

The selected area for examination was the Forestry Commission owned land of Corranbuie to the south east of Tarbert. Two options were proposed, one involving 2 medium scale turbines on the main forestry road that joins with the walking trails from Tarbert ('Site A'), the other involving up to 3 large scale turbines on the higher open land to the south of the forested area ('Site B'). An overview of the findings for the two sites has been provided below:

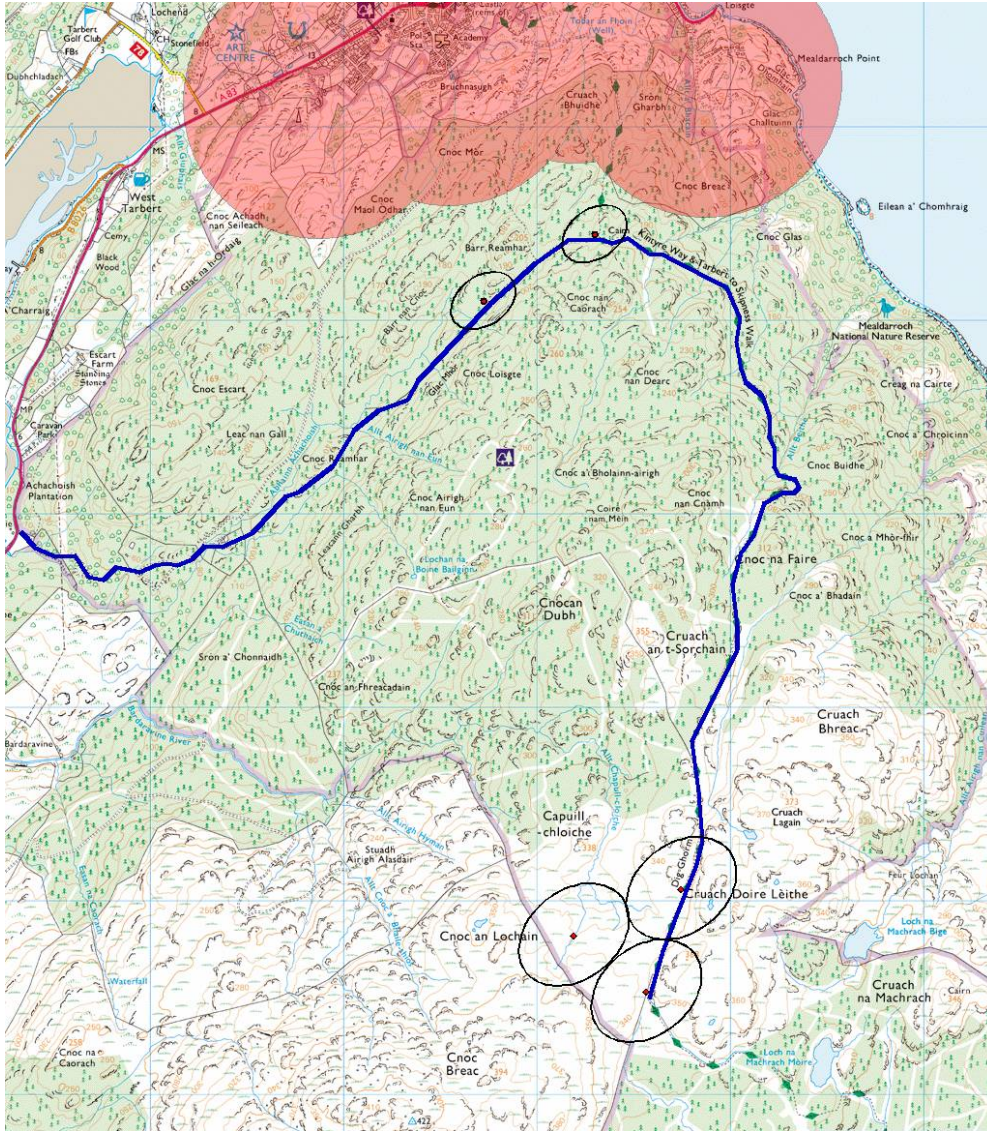
Consideration	Site A	Site B
Size of turbines	- Up to 26m blade length - Up to 65m tower height - 2 turbines in all	- Up to 45m blade length - Up to 80m tower height - 3 turbines in all
Likely environmental concerns	Visible from northern parts of Tarbert Some potential problems with black grouse	Not visible from Tarbert or Skipness Concerns with birds (golden eagles, divers, Black grouse)
Annual CO ₂ saving	3,000 tonnes	13,000 tonnes
Percentage of area's CO ₂ emissions met	Equivalent to the annual carbon emissions of ½ of TSCT's 800 homes. (17% of total area's carbon footprint)	Equivalent to 2.5 times the annual carbon emissions of TSCT's 800 homes. (72% of total area's carbon footprint)
Likely cost to develop	£85,000 (planning and wind monitoring)	£130,000 (planning and wind monitoring)
Likely cost to install turbines	£2.4 million	£12.6 million
Estimated annual fund to community once interest on loans repaid	>£70,000 in year 1 >£350,000 in year 11 (when debt repaid) 20-25 year life	>£400,000 in year 1 >£2 million in year 11 (when debt repaid) 20-25 year life

TSCT would look to use grant funding to pay for the cost to take the project through planning and to access these funds there is a requirement for strong community support. This planning work will ensure that the project has an acceptable visual and ecological impact and no project would be able to go ahead without this. It is expected to take 12-18 months to be in a position to submit a full planning application.

At this time TSCT would like to hear the views of the local community and to this end a presentation will be taking place in the Autumn when both options can be discussed in detail and people can make up their minds which of the projects, if any, is right for the area. There is the option that medium scale turbines could be built on the higher ground and this would reduce visibility from Tarbert as well as reduce the potential impact on ecology. The financial attractiveness of this alternative is being assessed.

If there was sufficient support to proceed with either of the developments then the next stages would be:

1. **Undertake Grid connection study** - This is required to accurately assess how much energy the grid can accept in this area
2. **Formal agreement with Forestry Commission** - Under the land reform act local communities have the opportunity to buy or lease National Forest Land where they can provide increased community benefit. This needs to be discussed and strong community support is required
3. **Gain funding and undertake planning works**



Tarbert & Skipness Community Trust would like to hear your views on the potential for a Community-owned Wind Energy Development and on the information provided in this document.

Please contact:

info@tsct.org.uk

or write to:

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Tarbert & Skipness Community Trust is a company limited by guarantee (Co. No. 233786) and is a registered Scottish Charity (Charity No. SC033379)
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