

From: Dayne Hart  
Sent: 23 January 2023 16:53  
To: localreview  
Subject: Planning appeal 23/00001/RREF

CAUTION: External Email

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in reference to the appeal (23/00001/RREF) lodged against the refusal of planning application 22/00933/FUL, for the erection of a timber storage and processing facility in the land south west of West Loch Farmhouse.

I am astounded Pentland Biomass have appealed what appears a comprehensive and very conclusive refusal. The key issues are as follows:

1. Amenity.

The Environmental Health Officer objected outright to the application, stating his concerns on the impact of noise on existing dwellings adjacent to the site, as well as approved planning permission for new residential dwellings. In their appeal documents, Pentland Biomass have not once discussed how they intend to counter this key point. They have played down the scale of the operation; however, their application is for timber storage and processing. Their own site search document (appendix 4. "Site Search Letter", document: "Supported Planning Statement") states "due to noise from machinery, the site should be located at least 1000 metres from any existing or planned residential properties". The site in question lies approximately 173 metres from Westloch Farmhouse, 350 metres from Westloch Farm Cottage no. 1, 393 metres from Westloch Farm Cottage no. 2, and 950 metres from Eastloch Cottage. All of these residences will be impacted from the noise generated by the land use. Also, the aforementioned planning permission for new cottages is 285 metres from the site, and will be affected. By their own standards, the site is unsuitable.

2. Policy ED7.

Pentland Biomass have focused their appeal around Policy ED7, paragraph a, which suggests applications will be approved for forestry operations in the countryside. However, the very

same policy states that "the development must respect the amenity and character of the surrounding area" and "the development must have no significant adverse impact on nearby uses, particularly housing." It is baffling that the applicant would draw attention to this document, which, even beyond the two chosen quotes, outlines many reasons the development should be rejected. They have provided absolutely no evidence as to why the proposed operation must be located in this quiet countryside location, other than it being windy, which will help their wood dry.

### 3. Transportation.

The road from the A703 to the proposed site is steep, narrow, and has large drop-offs. Meeting increased flow of HGVs on this section of road would be a genuine risk to life. The applicant claims it is the ideal location because there is already planting in the area and the road is an approved route for timber transportation. It is absolutely not an approved route, it is a consultation route, which is defined as a route "recognised as key to specific timber extraction, but which is not up to agreed route standards." The applicant mentions that timber will be extracted in this location in the next 35 years. Everyone who lives here understood that when we purchased homes in this area. However, there is a distinct difference between the constant delivery and removal of timber proposed by the applicant, and a temporary measure in which timber is harvested, removed, and the land replanted once in a 35-year period. The two are incomparable. One affects our lives for several months, the other (the applicant's proposal) affects it forever more.

There is a plethora of other factors I could mention: wildlife, including owls and nesting birds of prey such as golden eagles, water availability, pollution, character of the landscape, mental health. However, the key issue here is noise, and the applicant's own imposed restriction of 1000 metres from any residential dwelling. This application cannot possibly be granted, or the government is putting one timber business before the well-being of 4 current residences, as well as a proposed 2-4 more.

I trust the Local Review Body will do the right thing and reject the application.

Yours faithfully,

Dayne Hart.