



Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles & District

8 May 2025

To: Energy Consents Unit, representations@gov.scot

To: Planning and Regulatory Services, Scottish Borders Council, DC Consultees

ECU00002111 & 23/00013/S36 **Objection** **Scawd Law Wind Farm – Additional Information February 2025**

The Royal Burgh of Peebles & District Community Council (PCC) believes that our community accepts and is generally supportive of the Scottish Government's position on windfarms as set out in National Planning Framework (NPF4) Policy 11 Energy:

- Intent) Renewable energy should be encouraged, facilitated and promoted
- c) Development proposals will only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits
- e) Impacts on communities, landscape, access, roads, historic environment, water, biodiversity and forests are to be expected, but design teams must show regulators how these impacts will be addressed.

It is important to note that our community remains broadly supportive of wind farms locally – evident in our recent letters of support for two nearby wind farms: [Leithenwater](#) (ECU00004619 & 24/00512/S36, Nov 2024) and [Bowbeat](#) (24/00571/FUL, Sep 2024). That support came with two qualifications, echoing NPF4 Policy 11:

- Community support is **contingent upon a community benefit / ownership package** being put in place.
- Energy projects being highly technical, community support is **contingent upon appropriate mitigation measures, fully addressing concerns raised by experts.**

However, after carefully weighing the impacts of the proposed Scawd Law Wind Farm on local communities, landscape, access, roads, historic environment, water, biodiversity and forests, we find that the balance tips the other way. Decisive factors for us include:

1. The unique location of this proposal, on the highest peaks and most inaccessible terrain of the Moorfoot Hills.
2. South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project (SSGEP) regard this as the most important golden eagle territory in the south of Scotland and recommend refusal.
3. We support our neighbouring communities closer to Scawd Law of Clovenford, Heriot, [Stow](#) and Walkerburn who have objected on grounds including: lack of need; harm to Eagles; damage to peat; visual impact; roads; and landscape.

We therefore **object to this application for Scawd Law wind farm.**

We support and endorse the detailed reasoning contained in the following objections:

- South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project, Restoring Upland Nature, [2 May 2025](#)
- Clovenfords & District Community Council, [20 Feb 2023](#)
- Heriot Community Council [April 2025 comments](#) and [February 2023 objection](#)

- Walkerburn and District Community Council, [25 Feb 2023](#)

To which we add the following brief comments:

1. **Golden Eagles:** Eagles are an iconic bird of prey, important to the Borders economy for tourism. We cite the [expert evidence introduced by SSGEP/RUN](#) that the evidence relied upon by the applicant is outdated, superseded and misleading. We further reference the [SBC ecology expert's observations](#) of 23 Feb 2023 that even the old data show a real mortality of 2 eagles per season "wiping out any breeding success each season and therefore conflicting with the Nature Crisis part of NPF4 policy 1."
2. **Landscape capacity:** While the 2016 Ironside Farrar report included in SBC's [Supplementary Planning Guidance](#) is generally supportive of wind farms in nearby hills (as are we), the report makes it clear that turbines must be sited appropriately within the hills – not on the highest peaks as proposed here. While our community is prepared to accept localised visual impact in other cases, the proposed impact across the wider Tweed Valley would unacceptably impact tourism, our economy and communities. Independent experts Ironside Farrar gave us guiding principles on where to draw this line, these have been adopted as SPG. We ask the ECU to respect this expert view.
3. **Access:** As noted by SSGEP, opening up the highest and most remote of the Moorfoot Hills to footfall and cyclists invites an outsized, negative impact on protected SAC & SSSI (NPF4 policy 4) protected species interests.
4. **Need / cumulative impact:** We reference the [expert objection by Ian Kelly MRTPI](#) showing that Scottish Government targets for renewable energy can be comfortably met without this specific wind farm. Properly considering the cumulative impact to the Moorfoot Hills, we believe ECU should reject this unnecessary proposal.
5. **Community benefit:** A benefit / ownership package is not in place for Scawd Law.

In our view, this proposal's conflicts with NPF4 policies 1 (Nature Crisis), 3 (Biodiversity), 4 (Natural Places) and 30 (Tourism) outweigh the considerations of policy 11 (Energy). The decisive factor in this case – and the reason we oppose this wind farm while supporting others nearby – being the unique location proposed for this wind farm.

Yours faithfully
Peebles & District Community Council

Michael Marshall, PhD
Planning Convener