

Note of Public Meeting: Viking Energy Planning Application
Aith Hall
Tuesday 29 September 2009 at 6.30pm

Chairperson: Hazel Sutherland, Depute Chief Executive

In Attendance:

G Greenhill, Executive Director - Infrastructure

J R Riise, Head of Legal and Administration

Chairperson

.....(*tape starts*) if you want to speak, we will give the microphone to you and you can speak freely from the floor. The session tonight is going to be recorded, and that's really just for the record so that we can transcribe that to a paper that will go before Councillors. There will also be a minute taker – that's what Lynne is doing in the corner – to back that up, so it will all be recorded and presented further. If you could say your name before you speak, that would be helpful, if you feel able to do that. And again, that is just for record keeping. If you just put your hand up when you want to speak, I will try and take you one-by-one, and the way I like to run it is for people who have not spoken, I will try and get to you first. Then if folk feel they want to speak again, I will try and come around you. That's really just to make sure that everybody gets their say as we go around the night.

The only other thing I was going to say is that last night when we were in Brae, then we ended up - the feeling of that folk was - that we had a show of hands for what folk were feeling like on the night. I'd be happy to do that again if you feel that would be appropriate. Maybe at sometime through the night when folk are finished speaking and saying their views, then I will come back to you and see how you feel about that. But we would be happy to do this again, if that feels okay.

So, as I say, an open microphone session, freedom to express your views. The whole point is to give you an opportunity to express how you feel about the project. It will be recorded and we will try and take you one-by-one. But beyond that, we will just open it up to whoever wants to speak.

Dave Hammond

Good evening, thank you. My name is Dave Hammond from Reawick, and I would like to take this opportunity to express my objection to this particular application on any number of grounds. I know it is not a debate, so I will be very clear about it. I'm very worried about the detrimental effect this massive windfarm is going to have on our environment. I'm also very sceptical about the carbon payback time. I think that with the windfarm, and the disturbance of many, many thousands of tonnes of peat, it's going to release more carbon and some, even by Viking Energy's own submission, could take between 24 and 48 years to pay back. There is also the fact that apart from the landscape issues, which are very valid, and we have a landscape here that people come from all over the world to enjoy, but it is also the fact that it will - people do not want to - live in a windfarm. It is going to kick off a depopulation. Certainly,

from a lot of people I have heard from around here, who are going to be living in a windfarm, a cut-price offshore windfarm for Scottish and Southern Energy basically, that Shetland Islands Council or certain people within Shetland Islands Council have jumped on the back off, it is going to trigger - my fear is that it is going to trigger - a depopulation. Certain people I have spoken to would not be able to live within a windfarm, which is what they are going to be doing. I'm sure there are other people who will want to speak so these form some of my objections.

Malcolm Ferguson

My name is Malcolm Ferguson. I will speak very briefly. I want to say that I wholly support the Viking Energy windfarm application. I do not agree with the other speaker that building it will lead to the depopulation, rather the other way around I would have thought. My view is that Shetland cannot be without this windfarm. My children were born and raised here. I want them to want to stay here. Change always brings about differences of opinion. But in my opinion it is now time for Shetland, with its limited resources, to embrace this new technology because, Madam Chairman, I really believe that without it, Shetland will not be sustainable. Thank you.

Jim Nicolson

Jim Nicolson, I stay in Aith here. I actually have a small financial interest in the windfarm going ahead, as I have a small interest in the scattald here. I'm strongly opposed to the windfarm. I have been very pleased to be associated with a windfarm coming here to Aith at the lifeboat pier - you may have noticed it. We were a bit concerned when we saw it going up because it seemed quite big. The pillar is 15m high – one-sixth of the 90m that Viking Energy proposes, almost one-eighth when you go to the peak of the blades. My concerns, I will reiterate a peerie bit of what Dave has said. Viking Energy partnership have made quite a lot about carbon payback time. But certainly in a recent article in the Guardian, that seemed not to have been based on hard data but based on estimates and, clearly at an early stage within their environmental assessment, they came up with 48 years as a worst-case scenario. They very quickly changed that, but certainly in no way could it have been three years. There is a lot of very good peat out there, and peat is extremely important for our environment and the loss of carbon through peat, I believe, would probably nullify the advantages for climate change which could come about from these windmills. My major concern, however, is the environment. I came back to Shetland at the end of the 1960s. I came back to a Shetland where there was no oil. I came back because it had the environment I wanted to live in with strong communities I want to live in. All this made about what we pass on - our legacy - to our grandbairns. I have grandbairns here. I want them to bide here. I want them to be happy but I want them to be able to enjoy the type of environment, the type of strong community that has been my good fortune to live in for a number of years. I think that the other points made, and there is a lot of scaremongering going on, there is scaremongering from Viking Energy that is saying we will be going back to the 1950s. The 1950s was not all that bad, I was a peerie boy. But at the same time there is no way that other communities have not moved on. The Western Isles is going to be spending over £100million on new schools

and they don't have oil. But it does not mean that we will not have opportunities in the future. We will have plenty of alternative sources. I think wind energy will have a place but on a small scale. This project is much, much too big, much too divisive, and I think will damage Shetland. I will not go on to the financial side of it, but I think financially ill-advised as well.

Chrissie Sinclair

My name is Chrissie Sinclair. I was born and brought up in this area, and I strongly object to the building of the windfarm. I feel the young ones are being deceived by comparing this to Sullom Voe as by the time Viking Energy Limited, the landowners, the Hydro, the directors and their managers, with the most likely inflated salaries, I honestly don't think there will be anything left for the Shetland folk but a few crumbs fallen from the table. If they had given any thought to the young ones and their families, Scottish and Southern Energy would not be putting cables through Cott and the Kergord valley where so many young folk have settled and built houses. There is no guarantee of its safety. We wrote to them but we got no reply.

Frances Moffat

My name is Frances Moffat from Aith. I'm married with three young bairns. I have a quote from the SIC website. In the general website it says "In Shetland we take pride in maintaining our clean and natural environment". And under the Heritage Service section it says that they aim to "look after our very rich heritage of buildings, landscapes, plants and animals". I feel that the Viking Energy proposal would contradict this.

Joyce (surname indistinguishable):

I object to the windfarm first of all on the landscape because I think it is an exquisite place, where we came to initially for a couple of weeks, and we've been here for six years now because we love the landscape so much. And I do think that this kind of scale of windfarm would absolutely industrialise what is an absolutely beautiful remote and natural environment. But, more than that, it seems to be that a good friend of mine from down in London is an entrepreneur who firmly believes, as do I, in sustainable energy and renewable energy resources. He was very interested initially in funding part of the Viking Energy windfarm. He took a great interest in it, researched it and decided not to fund it because of the idea of selling power back to the national grid. He said that there is actually an excess of power on the national grid at the moment. There are a lot of windfarms down on the mainland – some offshore and some onshore. The cost of actually buying energy from the national grid's perspective via a subsea cable would be more expensive than buying it from all the other windfarms, the offshore and onshore windfarms, which are maybe just 10 miles off the coast of wherever they are, Sussex or Essex. Not the distance that there is to cover between Shetland and the mainland. So he pulled out, he didn't give - to be frank - a stuff about the landscape. He's never been to Shetland - he doesn't care about that. He was interested in sustainable energy and in making a profit for his company and he said that there would be no profit – that the companies would not buy electricity or power from a subsea cable that was that long because every yard of cable costs money, so he pulled out of the project from a purely

financial point of view. I object from a landscape point of view because I think it would ruin an exquisite place. The tourists would no longer come too. We wouldn't have stayed here if it wasn't so beautiful and, to be honest, if it goes ahead, we probably won't stay here, we'll move back south. He pulled out of it from a financial point of view because he didn't believe it was viable, and he is a very canny entrepreneur. He is interested in sustainable energy and he is looking for other projects to fund, which makes him think there is another way of funding sustainable energy in Shetland, in a small community way so that, for example, the windmills could be put back on the schools. Each school could have its windmill, each village hall could have its windmill, each village/little settlement could have its own form of sustainable energy which could fit in with the landscape, be suitable for the landscape, be suitable for small communities and this kind of environment without having something that is suitable for a much bigger scale. That would be suitable for a big desert environment, not a small island like Shetland. So I am in favour of sustainable energy but in an appropriate scale for where it is set, and I don't think this windfarm is appropriate to the Shetland setting.

John Barclay

My name is John Barclay. This Viking Energy folk are always telling us about global warming. Well I don't think we need them to tell us about it - we're not stupid - and I don't want to see the guts taken out of the place over this scheme. Another thing is Councillors - I don't think they're the fit and proper folk to be associated with it.

Cliff Sutherland

Cliff Sutherland, Gruting. Just to state my objection. My main concern is the environment. The thought of 70 mile of road through the hills, the quantity of peat that has to be removed. Without going into carbon footprints and things like that, the logistics involved is immense. I think it has been proven just over, well instances here over the last 20 years, of landslides caused by heavy rain. If you go along the crown of a hill and disturb the original peat, especially above settlements, the chances are you could end up with another Aberfan or something like that. That's just to state my objection to it.

James McKenzie

James McKenzie from Tresta. I'd like to state my objections to the windfarm and I would like my Councillors to take account of that objection please. One point of order Madam Chairman. Could I ask if folk were at the meeting last night and voted that they don't vote again tonight, otherwise the whole process will be skewed - if we do have a vote, which I hope we will. Can I just give three examples of why I wish to object to the windfarm? First - visual impact. Iain Marchant, I think that is his name, from Scottish and Southern Energy said that the windfarms would be tucked away, but I can assure you none of them will be tucked away from Aith, especially the eight on top of Scallafield and a bloody great quarry there, excuse my language. These turbines, I remind you, if they go ahead are going to be twice as high as the ones at Burradale. They haven't even been tested anywhere on the UK mainland yet. There are houses that are within 2km of the projected turbine location - this goes against Government guidelines. There is evidence now

that there is infrasound from wind turbines that can adversely affect human health. One prime example of Viking Energy's insensitivity is the occupied house at Sandwater. They have placed three turbines within just one km of that house – to me that is gross insensitivity. Carbon payback – the environmental statement Viking Energy assumed that in a worst case scenario the habitat would be restored. To me that is just plain dishonest. A worst-case scenario would involve the habitat not being restored. Especially if the roads and drains remain in place after the life of the windfarm, which is also suggested in the environmental statement. The minimum for carbon payback, if the habitat is not restored, is 48 years and that is just about twice as long as the life of the windfarm. Therefore it is not carbon positive. It will contribute to global warming, it will not negate it. The economics – there is a lot of talk about employment being created by the windfarm. Can I just quote from the planning statement which was drawn up by Jones Lang Masalle and submitted to the Planning Department and the Economic Consents Unit. “In the operational phase, some 49 jobs would be created associated with the windfarm, with around 40% of these estimated to be likely to come from the island population”. 40% of 49 is 19.6. That doesn't seem to me to be like an awful lot of jobs for the amount of investment that is proposed. Lastly, I'd just like our Councillors to consider two philosophical points. One is adopted by some other local authorities in the UK who have far less resources than we do in this country – “Think globally, act locally”. The other one is from a famous Chinese philosopher; it was Confucius' birthday yesterday, the famous Chinese philosopher. He had a contemporary called Lao-tzu, who said “ He who knows that enough is enough will always have enough”.

Rosemary Macklin

My name is Rosemary Macklin. I live in Tingwall Valley and if you look out my sitting room window, you can see the windfarm at Burradale. Now our house was built there before Burradale was put up and I think we are maybe less than 1km away from it. I was out digging in the back yard today and as I listened to the whine of the turbines, I thought ‘Well what am I going to say to you here tonight’. They claim that they make no noise – well, they most certainly do. The first time I got wakened up in the middle of the night with them, I thought it was the air ambulance coming into the Tingwall Airstrip. The noise got no louder and no fainter and I thought ‘Well it cannot be the air ambulance’, but the last time that something like this happened there was a bad accident and somebody got killed. You all know that Alan Young got killed there at Tingwall when the air ambulance came down. I got up and went through to the front of the house and I went to the window. I opened the window and thought ‘it's not the air ambulance, it's those blasted things on the top of the hill’. Of course, once I knew what it was, I couldn't get back to sleep again. It doesn't really set you up for your work the next day. But putting that aside, I put an objection in against the actual windfarm application. I also put an objection in to that massive thing they want to build in the Upper Kergord valley. I would like my Councillors to take note of this, that my husband and I both put in objections to this proposal, mainly on environmental grounds but there is also the monetary side of things. One Councillor was quoted as saying “Forget global warming, think money” and that's what it all boils down to is money. They seem to think that this is going to be the gravy train of all

gravy trains - that this is going to pay for every iconic white elephant that they want to build. Well over my dead body is what I say.

Chris Bunyan

Hello, my name is Chris Bunyan. I stay in Gruting and I believe the Council should support the Viking Energy windfarm, with safeguards built in by the planners and the regulators. I think the biggest threat to our wildlife and our environment comes from global warming, and it is the biggest threat to our islands. But while climate change and global warming has already caused drought, famine, death and people losing their homes, which we see on the TV every night, we have lived very nicely, thank you, on the back of the oil industry for four decades. As the front page of the Shetland Times showed on Friday, we have just about the highest carbon emissions per head of population in the whole of the UK. But we also have the best wind energy resources in Europe, and the Viking Energy project proposal, I think, gives us the chance to play our part in fighting climate change and, at the same time produce an income for the islands, money for the Charitable Trust, community councils, the landowners and crafting tenants. Money which will hopefully allow our children and grandchildren to enjoy similar prosperity which we have all benefited from thanks to oil. And, on top of all that, we will all get our electricity from a sustainable source of renewable energy.

Evelyn Morrison

Hello, I'm Evelyn Morrison, Setter, Weisdale. I am against the windfarm and I would just like to say that I feel, at this time, there still hasn't been enough said about the physiological and neurological effects on human beings. We will be 1.6km from the nearest turbine. I asked Aaron Priest, Viking Energy, about this and he told me, well he more or less laughed in my face, and told me that the professor I was quoting from was some kind of a quack doctor. I asked him if he could show me his research on neurological effects and I'm still waiting to hear from him, and that's about two years ago. I object because there still hasn't been enough research back from any questions about the effects this is going to have on some folk close to the windfarms. I'd just like to hear something about it.

Laughton Johnson

My name is Laughton Johnson. I think perhaps the windfarm is too large as it stands, and perhaps there are some of the turbines too near to houses. I don't think we should dismiss it out of hand. As somebody said earlier, what's happening in the world through global climate change is devastating - it's going to affect Shetland just as much. I think there has been a huge exaggeration of the peat issue. There is more peat eroding on Shetland's hills now than will be caused by this development. There is probably more peat that was eroded by the Sullom development than this. And I think we shouldn't listen to all these opinions and believe in them all. We have something to do - we have to make a sacrifice here as well. We are going to need the finance here as well to combat climate change, like it or not. Where are we going to find that finance? Or find the finance to improve our energy production here to cut our carbon footprint? Where are we going to find the finance to keep up our terrific quality of social care, education and health in

Shetland? This is turning down another Sullom development for the next lifetime of our children. I am in support of the Viking Energy plan if it's modified. We should not throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Gordon Walterson

Hello, my name is Gordon Walterson. I come from Sandness and I remember very well the 1960s. It was in 1961 that Shetland had something like only 17,000 people in it. By 1981, Shetland had 23,000 people thanks to oil, and oil money. A lot of you will remember the debate that went on about Sullom Voe. There were a few people then that said they should go for everything they could get – as many jetties as possible, storage tanks, gas, LPG gas – everything. And they have been proved right. Everyone is very glad that Sullom Voe was the size it has been to earn the money we have had. And I also here that the young people would like this Viking Energy to go ahead, it gives them work in the future which, in our young time here was very little - very, very little. Depopulation took care of excess like that and I would support Viking Energy.

Ingrid Smith

My name is Ingrid Smith. I strongly feel this is not in Shetland's best interests. It is important to remember there are certainly no guarantees. This is a high-risk venture which could have severe consequences financially, as well as being devastating to the environment. However my main concern is health. I live here in Aith at the moment, and at present there is an ideal, unspoilt rural location in which I am happy and privileged to be bringing up my young family. I am extremely concerned regarding the scientific research and evidence from the World Health Organisation, among other bodies, which confirms damage to health and well-being due to noise, low frequency vibrations and shadow flicker. I strongly object to bringing up my bairns on a giant industrial windfarm, in fact Europe's largest windfarm. In fact, this project is too big.

Mark Smith

Hi, I'm Mark Smith and I live in Effirth. I agree with the previous speaker. I also have two young bairns and I also have no desire to see them brought up in Europe's largest onshore windfarm. I object to the windfarm in terms of its size - it's not going to be sited in a landscape that can in any way absorb the sheer enormity of the windfarm. It's not in a big open plain that's going to be absorbed. Secondly, I would like to object to the arguments that this is being built on any kind of environmental grounds (*tape ends at this point – the following inserted from minute*). To claim you are helping the environment by destroying it is nonsensical. (*tape resumes*) It is no sense to generate massive amounts of power at considerable distance from the centre that is going to need the power the most.

Adam Priest

Hello, my name is Adam Priest and I'm an Unst man. I suppose I'm one of the generation that has grown up with Sullom Voe and I actually work there. One thing I would say about the longevity of Sullom Voe, probably the only thing I can say working there, the current site they are speaking Clair oil will be coming in until 2040 – that's the timeframe. Total are also looking to build

a new citric gas plant which up to 6% of the UK's gas could be coming through by 2014. That's worth, at current market value, about £4billion every year. I think the Council have a right to investigate going into some sort of agreement because it is a new build with Total. Setting up an agreement something like the original Sullom Voe agreement to go into partnership with Total to ensure that some of that throughput percentage is harnessed for the benefit for Shetland. As another point, I'm a mechanical engineer - I'm a member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. I'm a Chartered Engineer. I'm rather worried that the Viking Energy project so far hasn't had much engineering involvement. In fact I think apart from a bit of consultancy, it's not had much at all. When you look at the practicalities of it, the men that work on it, I mean Aaron Priest is a cousin of mine and David Thomson is married to my cousin. I don't want to cause offence to them but these guys are not technical guys and they are coming up with timeframes for erecting this thing which I don't think are practical. You are looking to put up an amazing amount of wind turbines in a couple of years, which I don't think is really feasible. I think we could end up being in a case of bridging loan hell. If anyone has ever taken a long time to build a house, they will know how the debts can add up before the thing gets finished. Another problem is that we are living, at the minute, with really low interest rates but where will those interest rates go by the time this project is finished? I don't think there will be much change out of £1billion, so it has to be taken into account and transmission charging also. I have rambled on a bit, but that is really my main concerns and objections to the project.

(tape ends at this point – the following inserted from the minute)

Ian Sinclair

Ian Sinclair. I object to this. I have lived here since 1960 and grown to love the islands. I have met thousands through my work with the NHS. In the recent poll of this ward, 19% of those in Whiteness, Weisdale, Wadbister and Girlsta were in favour and 72% against. Skeld, Clousta, Gruting and Twatt had 27% in favour and 63% against. Walls, Sandness, West Burrafirth and Papa had 9% in favour and 61% against. Aith, Bixter, Tresta and East Burrafirth had 17% in favour and 77% against. Not long ago, the Local Government Ombudsman pointed out the first responsibility of Councillors was to the electorate. These figures show the feelings of people and Councillors must listen to the feelings of the people.

(tape resumes at this point)

Jon Moncrieff

Hello, my name is Jon Moncrieff from Aith. I'm not just that used to speaking in public so I will try not to get to tongue-tied. *(tape ends at this point – the following inserted from the minute)* I would like to register my objection. There are a number of reasons why I object. *(tape resumes at this point)* I think overall the development is going to be too big for Shetland. I think something a third of what is being proposed is more or less what would be reasonable for us here in Shetland. 150 turbines is going to involve a massive construction phase and it's going to have a huge environmental

impact. I think we could probably sit around here all night arguing about the pros and cons, but there was a good point made earlier that the carbon payback period could be as much as 48 years. As far as I can see it, the whole project rests on whether or not it is viable environmentally, and at the moment there seems to be an awful grey area over whether or not the carbon payback is 2 years, 13 years, 48 years. Basically, if it is not doing anything for global warming, we shouldn't be doing it. Basically my opinion is that the project is too big, and it looks as if it is in the wrong location.

Hugh Hammond

I'm Hugh Hammond. I'm not a Shetlander, as you can probably tell. I'm just living with my auntie and uncle at the moment and I've heard people that are against this project and the arguments I've heard for it so far are fundamentally about climate change and global warming, and how we are going to have to adapt otherwise we are heading into oblivion. I certainly agree with that. My background is a politics degree and I am certainly up on the issues and will probably dedicate my life towards it, but I am very much cynical in this case about those being the motives behind the project. As far as I can tell, it is about quarter of the size of the island which seems pretty ridiculous when the arguments for it are about providing sustainable energy for the islands. You could have one a fraction of this size and it would do just the same job. It seems to be a financial thing because for the pipeline to be built all the way from the mainland, they have to have this massive industrial project in order to make it worthwhile. So having heard the islander's objections about the landscape, the health etc etc, I would also like to put in my objection to the project.

Wolfgang Weis

I live in Walls and I want to strongly support the windfarm. I think the windfarm for Shetland is absolutely vital. The way we live, the way our children enjoy the benefits of the money which was brought in by the oil. I myself have two kids and if I now see them going through school I am really fearful that in ten years, fifteen years time, when they might be entering secondary school, that there won't actually be any money to support the teaching or the schools or anything else. There will be a lot of cuts in social care. There will be a lot of cuts in the Recreational Trust. At the moment the community purse is actually supporting a lot of jobs, a lot of services which are provided by the Council via the Charitable Trust. Money will not be remunerated one way or the other, and that is actually quite a huge amount of money that has actually been really gathered in the oil years will be drained, and it is already being drained by the services which are subsidised heavily. And it is not only having comfortable care homes, and it is not only having great schools - it is jobs as well. If we talk about the windfarm will only provide 20 jobs for Shetland, that is true for the windfarm, but with the income projected there will be a massive amount of jobs supported by that. There will be prosperity for a lot of people and there will be prospects for our children to live in Shetland. That's only the economic reasons. Obviously there are a lot of people who think money is a dirty word, but we need money to support our prosperity and give our children really good prospects for the future. On the environmental reasons, I will probably split the environmental reasons into the

carbon aspect, and into the landscape visual aspect. On the carbon aspect I firmly believe that the projections given by Viking itself are varying between two and 48 years. We heard about that, about the carbon payback. There is a best-case scenario, there is a worst-case scenario. I do actually not share the belief of a lot of people here thinking that the worst-case scenario is the one that will come true, that more the middle or better case scenario might be the case. Therefore I firmly believe that creating a windfarm of that size and maybe even bigger, I wouldn't mind, would really help to combat climate change worldwide. If you look what's going on in the world, a lot of droughts in Africa, floods in the Indian sub-continent, people at the moment are losing their homes because their islands are vanishing, and if you think that might happen to you, that you are living all your life on an island, in an island community, you will be displaced by the impact of global warming. Then I think we do actually have the duty to help with whatever we can, to help with those people not being displaced and harmed by the global impact of global warming which we have caused. On the visual impacts, I really would just like then to ask you – yes it will be a visual impact. Those turbines are big, those turbines will be there and the good and really beautiful landscape of Shetland will be affected. There are people who think we will be affected more, and people who think we will be affected less. But I personally would ask myself, given that I believe that global warming is happening and the windfarm can combat this, is that view actually worth dying for?

Ian Tait

My name is Ian Tait. My family has lived in Delting and Easting for generations, and both that parishes will obviously be very heavily affected by the windfarm. But I would like to congratulate Viking Energy for trying to hoodwink us into thinking this is a great stunt because what they have really successfully managed to do, or tried to do, is to make us think it is all to do with the environment, global warming, the ecology, things like that. However, as we all know, it is all to do with money – money, money, money, money, the big chase for money because it is completely wrong to imply that folk like – I'm going to come out on a limb here and say us majority folk who oppose the windfarm - it's wrong to say that we are against alternative energy because we all think that it's disgusting to see huge industrialisation of China and big coal powered power stations and lots of waste foodstuffs being landfilled, but what on earth way can building 50 or 100 or 150 or 1,000 windmills in Shetland make one bit of a difference? Think of the size of Shetland – it's a dot in the ocean and it's interesting that the Scottish Parliament, even their current regime, they advocate a balanced energy policy. Do you think that building the biggest windfarm in Europe, not just Scotland or Britain, in Europe in Shetland is balanced? I think it is the very opposite of sustainable – it's completely unsustainable. In reference to how Viking is trying to convince us that it is a good idea, I think that perhaps the worst aspect is how they are trying to bend over backwards to convince us that we like it and they are putting out all this double think in the press - things like that Shetland hills are in "bad condition". Why is it when a "moorie brug" blowing around the face of the earth is that bad condition? It has happened for thousands of years. And then they have the bare faced cheek to say putting 70 miles of roads and pouring how many hundred thousands of tonnes of steel reinforced concrete

turbine bases, that's going to help the ecology. And they are going to try and entice tourists and us local people to walk over the hills to look at the wildlife. It is arrogant and it is deceptive.

Pia Duernberger

My name is Pia Duernberger and I was at the Brae meeting last night so I won't repeat my objections. I would like to put something on the record. The turnout of these meetings show that it is high time that the public actually gets a platform to express their views, and I would like to point out that this is the first time for six years that this idea has been around of a commercial windfarm. After six years that the Council actually provides a platform for public sounding, I think that is absolutely appalling. The Council has failed in their duty – I mean it is like getting a job in through the back door. That's all I can say is try and make good of something that's been very bad already, and far too far progressed for a public consultation.

Pete Macklin

My name is Pete Macklin and I live in the Tingwall Valley and, as my wife has stated, we live less than a kilometre from the windmills at Burradale. Health reasons – they say about the flutter. It can be - especially this time of year when the sun is low in the sky - then the flutter of the light is very annoying. The sound of the turbines – we used to be able to hear the klondykers in Lerwick, that's how quiet it was out in the Tingwall Valley. Now all we hear is windmills. We used to wake up in the mornings to the sound of the birds on the island on the Tingwall Loch. Now we wake up listening to the windmills and the whooshing sounds that they make. It is not pleasant, it's not enjoyable. I am against a windfarm in Shetland because of the fact for the size of it - it is not appropriate for Shetland. In the Inverness area they are building windfarms where the energy is needed. We have all the sustainable energy that Shetland needs right now provided by the windmills. It's not economically viable. Originally it was, what was it, 192 windmills that they were going to put up here. They said no, we'll cut back because that's too many. So they said okay we'll put 150, but they're going to be bigger, but that's the minimum that we can have to have it being economically viable. That's when the windfarm was going to cost £500 million. The cost of it has now gone up to £800 million and it's still going up. They won't even put a price tag on the cable that connects from the Shetland Islands to the mainland. It says when the people gave the roadshow, and we're talking about the cable coming into Shetland, they ask about the price of the cable, they basically said we don't care what the cost is going to be because the people who use the energy are going to pay for it. Well that's fine and dandy as long as it is the people down south. But as soon as they tie into the grid here in Shetland, we become the end users because we can then get energy from the mainland, therefore the cable costs will fall on to Shetland. They are saying that this is going to be the economic saviour for Shetland in the foreseeable future. Well, the life expectancy of these windfarms is not that long. They are saying 20 years. Well, the man who works at Sullom Voe says that Sullom is going to go for another 40. Take the natural gas from the west of Shetland and pump it over to the east of Shetland. They are talking about a quarter of a billion pound extension to Sullom Voe. It says why isn't

the Council utilising the planning of the extension and use the natural gas, which is a lot more environmentally friendly than what is being used in Lerwick to provide energy for Shetland, and then use the sustainable energy that we already have. For the environmental impact, the roads that they are going to put. As an engineer myself, to try to get these turbines up to the top of these hills - the roads that they are going to have to build are going to be phenomenal. It's going to have to be completely different to anything else you have ever seen here in Shetland. Look at when they brought that new engine into the power station, the heavy load truck from south to move it from the ferry - the trouble that they had with that. You are looking at having that same type of trouble getting these turbines up to the top of these hills at 150 locations. These trucks are so big that they cannot turn around on these roads, therefore these roads are going to have to be built so that they have to go all the way up to the top of the hills, then all the way across the hills, then down the other side. Plus the fact that the grades have to be less than 10% - that's going to be quite a bit of earth moving in order to have a road that's got a grade of less than 10%. Ask Viking Energy on how they are planning to do that, and they say it will be an engineering challenge. And I don't think that they are capable of the challenge personally myself. For economic grounds, for environmental grounds and I don't think that the windfarm is a viable idea and I'm against it. And for health reasons, I don't know about the energy waves put off, but I know that the flickering and the whine, from personal experience, are annoying so I'll get out.

Nick Brett

My name is Nick Brett and I live in Walls. If you take the line that it's not what you do, it's the way that you do it, then the way they are doing it, I think, is pretty terrible and I think it's very cynical. I was kind of interested in it. I looked at the environmental reports in the library - I went there in my dinner hours and looked at them, and very easily I came up with a 13-point objection. I went in really quite optimistic. One point is that the area that is designated as windmill sites in terms of the planning application is way bigger than the areas that are occupied by the turbines. I believe there is gross cynicism and the intention is actually you get it designated as a windmill site, then you just keep expanding within the site that is designated as a windmill site already which would be far more easier than having an application for more windmill sites. (*tape ends - the following inserted from minute*). I suspect the intention is to have big windmill sites and (*tape resumes*) more windmills in the long run than are identified now and I think people should be straight about that. (*tape ends - the following inserted from minute*) Lets call them quarries - they are vast. I think if you actually transfer that into - actually the chances are that you won't have good concrete from one site - you will probably on all sites be transferring rock from site to site to site and you are going to have enormous amounts of lorry movements in doing that, and I don't think that's really been dealt with. I just feel when I looked at it, the research done was actually quite good and the people appointed to do the research were very good. And then they seem to have ignored much of the research that they had actually undertaken just in their own sweet way. I kind of looked at that in the Nesting area with the bird movements and yeah, okay, the divers are going to be flying through a sort of 50m corridor between the windmills - we've pulled that

one off, haven't we? And I really think if they want to be taken seriously, they should be doing this a lot better with a lot more integrity. I think it clearly is just about money and the environment argument is now being pushed by Allan Wishart and I kind of find it interesting that we see that Shetland suddenly has a heavy footprint this week or last week. And I'm sorry but I'm kind of cynical about the way this is being done and I think it should be approached with far more integrity if you're going to go this way. And I think likewise with the converter station - if you are going to go this way, why not run your converter station at Sullom Voe near where you have actually got water tide running through? They're not really thinking out of the box if that's the way they're going. I just think it hasn't been thought through very carefully and I think it's kind of a cynical way of going forward and they should really think much more carefully about doing this and have more integrity in doing it.

Chairperson

Councillor Duncan would like to speak. Can I just explain the reason that I hesitated is that the Councillors were asked to come here to listen, so if you are okay, I will invite Councillor Duncan to speak to you, is that okay?

Councillor Allison Duncan

I have my views the same as everyone else on this issue. The first thing I would like to say is that I think I'm the one Councillor that is different the other 21 yet again. As you can see here tonight, it is a very emotive issue – some for, some against. I think it is too big an issue for the 22 Councillors to decide. I believe that it should go out to the people of Shetland from the children aged about 12, who are our future, and let's have an election and then let's go down the road of what the people have spoken. That's democracy and that's the way I would like to see it. From an environmental impact, the one question I would like to have answered is where is all this peat moor going to go to? Where are you going to dump it – I don't know? How many Scords are we going to open for quarrying – I don't know? I think there are more questions to be asked and answers given in that field. Coming on to the financial impact which I am concerned about (*tape ends at this point – the following inserted from minute*) I think the penultimate person who spoke said that Scottish and Southern Energy had not given financial figures. I can tell you that I was at a seminar last week (*tape resumes*) and one of their head people was up speaking to Councillors, and he told us that day that the cost of the interconnector and cable to the mainland was going to cost £525million. As an elected Councillor and a Trustee, it also means at the moment there is going to be money coming out of the Charitable Trust. I can tell you that figure here tonight because I asked questions on it. The cost, at the moment, when I joined the Council as a Councillor and Trustee first of all, was about £46million. Then at my penultimate meeting, about 4-6 weeks ago, it was £72million, and then last week we were told £81million. And this is how they are going to proceed - it is going to be over three phases. Phase 1 they are going to withdraw £28million with no returns. The second year is Phase 2 – sorry, £27million, I beg your pardon. Phase 2 they are going to withdraw a further £27million with no returns. And in year 3, Phase 3, they are again going to withdraw a further £27million again to give you a total of £81million. And their guesstimate on returns in the third year was to be £6million. So I'm

very sceptical of what's going to happen if it doesn't turn out to be correct and profitable. That's £81million, to me, down the tubes.

Jack Young

I initially, at the first meeting of Sustainable Shetland, spoke quite strongly against the whole concept of this windfarm because it will be a terrible blot on the landscape. And I'm still of the same mind, but I have come to think of some other ideas about it. What's intriguing at the moment with the criticism that is being made of the Viking plan is that it sounds so awful that I can't possibly imagine it being given a pass before the Scottish Parliament, or people who look at this and say well it's all right or it's a load of rubbish. Now if they pass it, does that imply that they've passed a piece of rubbish or does it imply that there's a lot of misunderstanding with the critics who have been criticising it here? Another thing I'd like to suggest is that if it is given the thumbs up, and the go ahead, and the Scottish Parliament, I feel that they will give it the nod and pass it. If they do that, it will then be the Shetland Islands Council, I presume, I may be wrong, but they have to vote on it as well. Because the knowledge is, there's a lot of big businesses zooming around who'd love to get in and have a bit of this cake because, as I said, it's big money. So you wonder if the Council supposedly took this criticism and the majority of the Shetland population were against the whole project, so the Council would say right we can't go for it. That means then, and this is a big worry, that some outside company could come in along with Scottish Southern and develop it, then there would be little comeback to Shetland - we might get a few crumbs. Shetland would lose any control that might be gained by the fact that the Charitable Trust is involved with it at the moment. There are a lot of things to think about and it also makes me wonder whether this is a splendid idea to allow people to express their opinions, but I wonder if it will have any effect? Has it got any real meaning? Will it give us a chance if everyone says we are against it, then is that going to be heeded? These are questions that require to be looked at and talked about.

Debbie Hammond

My name is Debbie Hammond, Reawick. My objection to this windfarm is for various reasons. But one of the things I found very difficult to deal with was being categorically told by one of the Councillors that there would be no planning application submitted until the Shetland public had dialogue about it and were behind it. We were told several times that, and that was not the case. You can see now how the Shetland public is starting to stand up and see what's going on, and are attending these meetings and would have attended sooner had they realised that this was going to happen. And that's the one thing that scares me, is that it's been totally undemocratic. We are only given a chance to voice our opinions now and a lot of people are very worried that it's too late. That the planning application has gone forward, that we can voice our opinions now but if we don't go forward it's like having a gun to our head as Iain Marchant said it will go ahead whether you want it or not and if you don't want it, we will get somebody else in and you will get no benefit from it. So Shetland people are saying if we don't go for it, then we are going to lose any benefit we might get, if we do go for it it's far too large a project visually. It's completely out of proportion for a place the size of

Shetland, and we really are confused as to what's the best way to go ahead with stating that we object to this and how. I mean most people in Shetland are not opposed to alternative energy. We want to help on a global scale, we don't want to isolate ourselves and think we're okay thank you very much - the rest of the world can just go do what they want. We want to be part of it, but not when it's at the expense that Viking Energy is laying at us and basically saying it will happen whether you want it or not, you take the choice. You want the money, you stand by us - you don't, we'll get somebody else and that's the way it will go. I oppose.

Jenny Hunter

I'm Jenny Hunter and I live and work in Aith here. I agree with everything that the last speaker said and everyone else who has objected to the Viking Energy project, and I just want to register here that I object. I don't have an awful lot more to add to that. I could go on all night but I'm not going to. So I'm just going to make it really clear. I object and it's far too big and basically every other point that everyone else has objected on.

Jim Tait

I'm Jim Tait from Walls. I'm against the windfarm on a number of reasons. I think a lot of the environmental reasons have already been studied. I'm really grateful to see Councillor Duncan coming up with some actual figures because, on the financial side, I just think this is an absolutely crazy risk that the Council is taking with the reserves that we've attained here. And if we look after them, we can keep ourselves in a good standard of living for years to come. I don't think it's a very good argument to say that if we don't go ahead with Viking Energy, we are going to be going around in 'rivlins' and wearing sheepskins on our back again. That's not going to happen. It's being presented as if this is the only show in town. This is the one chance for our community to take it and if we don't do it it's going to be a disaster for us and lose everything we have gained. That is not the case. There is endless opportunities coming along – almost certainly renewable energy is going to be a big thing for Shetland, but this is not the project. We need almost certainly to be looking at marine renewables, wave and tidal, that's where the future is. Shetland has a very good wind resource. It also has a fantastic marine resource in so much as the other advantage is that we have all the marine background there – we have piers, we have infrastructure, we have Sullom tugs – everything you could nearly want to do it. It's maybe a peerie bit down the line before it's going to be finalised and able to perform, but we must not lose sight of that. The other argument that sometimes comes out is to say that this project is going to be a 550MW windfarm and the cable is going to allow us to get into other renewable energies like marine renewables afterwards. Well the cable is going to take 600KW – 50 left, that's not going to start any other new industry. That's just a fallacy that that's ever going to happen. And I really think that we should be very careful – the numbers just do not stack up. When we came here to the first consultancy meeting a couple of years ago, it was £25million. We had some questions on that and we were actually in and seen them in Lerwick and it came down to £18million. Now we are up to £31million. The cost of the project is going to be anything from £500million to £1billion. The figures are all over the place. There is no

economic return and if the Council or the Charitable Trust or Viking Energy borrows all this money and we are backing it up and it doesn't work, folk that's giving money to us, big financial institutions etc, they will come back and want us to pay it back. And finally I'd like to say I think out on the west side of Shetland especially, there's been a big frustration that we are not seeing very good political representation to our views and a lot of the Councillors, our local Councillors, seem to be sitting on the fence for so long that they must be getting a fair good 'mett' in their backsides by now. But I really hope that they will take on board what's being said and at the end of the day, the ballot box will decide whatever way they go but it will certainly be the main influence on who I am voting for the next time around in the Council elections to how our Councillors behaved with this whole thing. I hope that they have the sense to oppose this whole silly idea.

Ian Davidge

Ian Davidge from Clousta. I object to it mainly because of the size of the windmills as well. We were told years ago that the Burradale wind generators were the most efficient wind generators in Europe so how come we suddenly need something twice the size? I don't understand that at all. And the other reason is that we have the most expensive petrol and diesel in Britain, and we have Sullom Voe on our doorstep, and we are told that there will be no cheap electricity for us from this, that we would get rolls of insulation to help insulate our houses, that they would help us with that. I think that's fantastic. I just see the price of electricity going to zoom up here, we're going to be paying through our noses for that, so we will end up with the most expensive fuel for our cars and for our houses, and I object to this.

Vic Drosso

Good evening, I'm Vic Drosso and I live in Weisdale. I'd like to register my objection wholeheartedly to this proposal. I'll say no more except that my Councillors and the Planning Department have received an 11-page objection. I'd like to think that they have read it. I've heard very little from my Councillors representation-wise, I'm pretty disappointed in that. I'd like to thank Mr Duncan for coming along and at least giving us some snippets of information. Perhaps he could, while he's feeling generous in that department, enlighten us on the partnership agreement with Scottish & Southern – one of life's big secrets.

(the following response inserted from minute as taped response indistinguishable)

Councillor Allison Duncan

I don't have that information available, but I have told you what I know.

Pete Macklin

I just have a statement that I'd like to make real quick. This is the opportunity where the Councillors get to hear what the people are saying. But with the number of closed-door sessions and stuff like that from the Councillors, once all this, at the end of the week, when everybody has made their say, what would be the possibility of finding out what the Councillors feel about this? I

mean, there is going to be a vote, how about getting this vote put into the Shetland Times and name who is for and who is against?

Chairperson

Can I invite Gordon Greenhill to explain a bit about the process that we will go through from here?

Gordon Greenhill (Executive Director – Infrastructure)

Thanks very much. The intention is that it's your evening and we are here to take in these views and pass them on to the planners who work with myself – my colleagues who will produce the report on all the evidence that has been established. What I would say to you is the Councillors are in a very difficult situation and you have to have a degree of understanding that they can't speak because they have to determine the application. If they actually speak publicly, then they are not allowed to take part in this determination, so until such time as they actually have the hearing, they cannot profess a view. So it's not because they don't have a view, it's not because they don't want to keep the public informed, it's because if they did actually state a view, then they wouldn't be allowed to take part in the debate in the Chamber. So I would be grateful if you would bear that in mind and have some sympathy because it is the process that actually stops them professing a view at this moment in time.

Colin Black

My name is Colin Black, Lerwick, actually with a bit of an interest in Weisdale, so this is the nearest place I could get. I'm not going to reiterate what's been said already in terms of objecting to it because I've already objected to it through the Consents Unit. What I would say, picking up on some of the points about what's best for our children, grandchildren etc, I'd rather if my children left the house so that I could get the place back to myself again. I think it's rather selfish to say that we are doing this for the benefit for our children or grandchildren, they are going to be big enough and bold enough like the rest of us when they go out and see a bit of the world. I think it's better if they get the chance to do that, than us being a bit insular and hope that they will still be here looking after us when I need to get my food liquidised and whatever else I need to get done. There's been a lot said about the environment but there hasn't been much said about the fact that Shetland has just achieved geopark status - the effect on the mammals, the wildlife. I have been fishing up in the Maa Lochs for the first time in years this year with my cousin, and it was a great day. That's going to go if you have a look at a windfarm on this scale. What I do think is guaranteed is if the development goes ahead, you're going to get a divided community here in Shetland. The grandbairns that you are speaking about are going to grow up in a divided community and we don't want that. I don't think anybody in here wants that. I'd ask Sustainable Shetland and Viking Energy to stop nitpicking, scoring Brownie points, and get together and get something that will be developed for the benefit of this community in Shetland so that we can live together instead of arguing.

Norman Moncrieff

Hello, it's Norman Moncrieff. I don't want to say a great deal because I'm pretty crap at this. It's the wrong project, in the wrong place, at the wrong time. We don't need it because, as the gentleman said, we have 40 years of oil and gas coming in. I could go on all night – there's the birds and the wildlife and the lochs and the view. I was brought up in England most of my life, born in Shetland and brought up in England. As I drove here tonight, it was absolutely beautiful looking out over the hills with the sun just kissing the tops of them. I don't want to lose that. Thank you.

Robert Anderson

My name is Robert Anderson. I'm completely against the project - I have been since it started. I would like to remind you, especially on the stage, that there are a heck of a lot of folk in here that's just as reluctant to take a hold of the mike as I am. I agree with everything that has been said against the project and hopefully Councillors will take notice of what we are saying tonight. Thank you.

Neil Sinclair

Hello, my name is Neil Sinclair and I stay in the Kergord valley. I would like to say that I wish to remain in a country area and not in the middle of an industrial windfarm. I also have grave concerns about safety of the high voltage cables. This may affect our health and wellbeing. That's really all I want to say.

Kevin Tulloch

My name is Kevin Tulloch. I'm from Clousta and I would just like to register my objection to the windfarm. I think that there is maybe not enough young folk speaking up against it. Everybody thinks it's kind of the older generation that's speaking against it and they think all the young folk is for it. I've spoken to a lot of ones my age and around my age that's against it. The size of the quarries they are going to have to dig out, the lengths of the roads, the widths of the roads – it's just far too big. In their plans showing all the lochs, they show the fishing lochs in the area. They do not have the Maa Water loch, the Lamba Water or Scalla Field lochs marked on the map. But I found information on the Scottish Government website. It was actually an economic impact of angling in Scotland and all that three lochs was listed on that report and saying that they stocked brown trout. If this goes ahead, well that lochs will just be finished, it'll be the end of them. That's about all I'm going to say, I'm against it.

Peter Farquhar

Peter Farquhar, Aith. I'd like to state my objection to the proposed windfarm. I don't think it'll be the next Sullom Voe. I think it's too large a scale for Shetland, both the size of the turbines and the numbers that are proposed.

Donnie Morrison

My name is Donnie Morrison. I live at the top end of the Weisdale Valley. I'd like to register my objection to the windfarm. I have no desire to spend my declining years living in the middle of a large industrial site. At the moment

you are not even allowed to build a new house in the Weisdale Valley, and yet they can propose to take it over and make an industrial site that stretches for miles. Now that is not acceptable and I wish to register my objection. Thank you.

Stuart Johnston

Hi, I'm Stuart Johnson from Holmaleas. I'd like to object to the windfarm. The scale of it is far too big for Shetland. It's going to be major disruption to the hills. Even the existing roads that's being used at the moment is going to be absolutely destroyed by all the heavy plant and material they are taking to the jobs. The actual costing of it – I have no idea about figures and money - but it's going to be a colossal risk. I think they don't know how much it's going to cost yet. To me it's just a bad idea to go into something when you don't know what you're going to be doing. Especially when we can't even get an Anderson High School built in a sensible place, how are you going to manage to build a windfarm?

Charlotte Robertson

Hello, my name is Charlotte Robertson. I live at Selivoe. I'm really rather for the windfarm because I think the alternative would be, in the end, seeing that water cannot be used yet for I don't know how long, that we will end up having nuclear power. And I would be really worried about that and that's what I wanted to say.

Claire Leggate

My name is Claire Leggate. I am 23 years old and I just want to make my feelings known that I am completely against the windfarm. I think it's on far too big a scale to begin with. I think it's a huge financial risk - it could be a complete disaster. I also just want to mention, without going just too much off the point, that I've heard a few folk lately saying that they want the best of the best for their bairns, their grandbairns and great-grandbairns and by the best of the best, they seem to be speaking about money. They want big fancy leisure centres, they want things like Mareel. In my opinion, those things are not necessary. I spent my childhood growing up playing in the hills, 'hocking' in burns, building dams. That's the kind of things that I want my bairns to grow up doing, enjoying our landscape as it is.

Alfred (surname indistinguishable)

I'm Alfred ? from Sandness. There is so much talk about global warming, about the impact that this wind turbine project would make. I don't think one of the power plants will be cut off when we get this power plant. I hope we don't get it but there will be no alternative to sustainable energy, but I don't think the plant that is looked for in Shetland to be built will have no impact on global warming. There will be no power plant, be it nuclear or coal. The electricity will just be wasted instead of starting to save it and trying to do the best.

Chris Johnson

Hello, my name is Chris Johnson. I'm from the town. I want to register my objection to this. It's too big. I've wandered over some of the hills over the

past few years where these things are going to go. I think it's only when you are up there you can appreciate what they mean by 'blanket bog' and appreciate all the wildlife that's going to be disturbed by this. One of the points I'd like to return to is that I've been going to the Viking Energy meetings from the very beginning and it was always my understanding that the people of Shetland, within Shetland, would be given an opportunity to voice opinions whether they wanted this to go ahead or not. By going down the route of putting in a planning application, they have now removed a lot of that from us. We are now subject to the vagaries of politicians in Edinburgh and Scotland, and lobbying and all the rest of it, which I think is a huge mistake. We should have been given the opportunity to decide before that was taken away from us. I object.

Robert Nicolson

I'm Robert Nicolson from Twatt, just over the hill. I would like to register my support for the windfarm. Shetlanders over generations, hundreds of years, have exposed peat with the aid of a 'tushker'. I never heard my father or grandfather saying "I'm going to cut one less bank just because of carbon release".

Bill Anderson

I'm Bill Anderson and I think I'm wasting my breath. I'm in favour of the windfarm for a different reason. 150-250 million years ago, there was a period known as the carboniferous when the earth was very warm and very wet. There was great growth and most of the coal and oil reserves we have now were laid down then. We are busily digging up the coal and oil and burning it, and it seems to me that global warming is simply returning the earth to what it was 150million years ago when it would not have supported life – human or any other. The windfarm, if it's built, is going to have a huge effect (*tape ends – the following inserted from minute*) We have seen lots of windfarms all over the world. (*tape resumes*) People believe that windfarms have a place fighting this global warming, and global warming is going to affect us all. Barack Obama said at the weekend that he had six major points that he wanted to deal with soon – the third one was global warming. I think although our contribution to keeping global warming in check would be a very tiny one, a lot of tinys build up, and at least I think we should be trying to do something about it and I support the windfarm.

Margaret Jacobsen

Hello, my name is Margaret Jacobsen and I object to the windfarm just for the sheer scale of it. There was a few years ago we were watching a television programme and they were trying to put up a huge windfarm in America. It was flat ground and they could not get it built because of the wind speed. We have wind - will they be able to get these things up in the years that they say they are going to be able to get them up? I don't think so, so I object.

Robbie Morrison

Hi, I'm Robbie Morrison and I bide in Tingwall. I'd like to register my objection to the Viking Wind Energy proposal. I think on a lot of bases. I am a young person myself and I think there's not enough people talking out to say if they

are either for it or against it, and I think there an awful lot of young people that are maybe miseducated about what's actually going to happen through Shetland, so I'd just like to say that I object to the Viking Wind Energy proposal. Thank you.

Catriona Anderson

My name is Catriona Anderson and I bide in Aith. Can I first of all ask if someone can switch off the heating somewhere here and let's see if we can do our own peerie bit for global warming! Other as that, I am in favour of the Viking Energy project. I work with tourists on a regular basis and I have been conducting my own peerie survey on them, and so far very few have told me that if they had known there was going to be a huge windfarm in Shetland, that they would not have come here. But a lot more have told me that they think it's a good idea – maybe because it's not in their back yard, I don't know. But they seem to be in favour and so am I. Thank you.

Chairperson

I am going to go for my 'seconds' then feel free after that to say. Adam, Dave, James and then Jim, I think, you all would like to speak again so go for it.

Adam Priest

Yes, sorry, I'll not take long. I've spoken as Adam the engineer. Now I'll speak as Adam, the Shetland constituent. It's really good to see Councillor Duncan here tonight. It's good to see a Councillor performing their role, their job, to the highest degree of scrutiny. I feel, as a Nesting resident, that I don't really get much chance, or should even say short shrift, from my own Councillors when I asked them to scrutinise it on my behalf. I thank the Panel for turning up tonight, the team. It's a shame that you have had to come as employees of the Council out of hours to do this. Really this kind of forum should be headed up by our elected representatives that would put this to the greatest degree of scrutiny on our behalf.

Dave Hammond

Dave Hammond again. Sorry I don't mean to hog anything. Just a couple more heads of objection. One that Mr Priest here raised earlier on, and Councillor Duncan. We are going to have to fund a gap of, now it seems, £81million during the three years of the construction. Now according to someone who knows what he's talking about - I certainly don't - it could be a lot longer than three years. Now in these three years that funding gap will – we are going to have to pay for that. We won't have that money. That £81 million has got to go, and if it goes over the three years and really the people that I am speaking to that actually do know what is going on, think it could be up to 5-6 years, the construction phase, it is going to impact on our ability to pay for our social services and everything else in the long term. That's number one. Number two I'd like to bring to your attention and object. I'd like to use it as one of my objections. As well as the very recent discovery by the RSPB that windfarms do in fact impinge on birdlife, especially rare birdlife, which we have up here. That is now a fact and a fact that has to be taken into account. I wish to object on that grounds as well, in accordance with the RSPB.

James McKenzie

Thank you, James McKenzie again, I'm sorry. Just in answer to Councillor Duncan's questions about what's going to happen to the peat and the number of quarries. If I remember rightly, having studied the Environmental Statement, there are 14 quarries proposed – a total of 1.5million m³ to be extracted. This wonderful document calls them 'borrow pits', and tries to say that they fit within the Shetland Local Plan. But according to the Shetland Local Plan, a borrow pit, correct me if I'm wrong Mr Greenhill, the definition of a borrow pit is nothing more than 10,000m³ or 10,000 metric tonnes. So they are not borrow pits and they do not fit within the Local Plan. As to what's going to happen to the peat - according to the Environmental Statement there are two considered disposals, none of which are absolutely chosen. One is to fill the borrow pits with peat – I think there are examples of what happened at (*name indistinguishable*) – they had to fence them all off because they became a slurry. It also proposes them for habitat restoration but there is a big question mark as to what happens in the interim – where do you store this peat, how do you keep it vegetated? One other point I'd like to raise which the gentleman behind me mentioned. He stated that Shetland peatland is a net carbon emitter of peat. This has also been repeated by Allan Wishart, both to a friend of mine and in public. And he said if you went on to the Viking Energy website you would find evidence of this. Well, I'm sorry, but I have looked and looked in vain to find any published scientific evidence to say that Shetland peatland is a net carbon emitter. And related to that, if you look very closely at the maps that are provided in the Viking Energy Environmental Statement, you will see that the turbine locations and tracks, the majority of them are on active blanket bog which captures carbon rather than emit it.

Ian Tait

Ian Tait again. I would just like to draw to attention the fact that Viking Energy, right from the outset, has tried to paint this project as a so-called "community windfarm". I don't know how many of the audience here feel that they, as members of the community, have been asked? We are being told what we think and what we want. It's quite interesting that one of the biggest plaudits for Viking Energy's scheme has been the so called biggest windfarm in Europe or Britain, I can't remember what it was, came from somebody called Sir Robert Smith. Who do you think he might be? He's the Chairman of Scottish and Southern Energy, and the other plaudit that they got was from a person called I think Jason Ormiston of something called Scottish Renewables. I was interested to know what they were, so I had a look at their website and they are, in fact, a trade organisation for the windfarm industry so what I would like to object to is the fact that Viking Energy - using £2 million of our money, our Council Tax - have gotten so far into bed with big business that the bedclothes is right over their heads. I don't like that. And the final point I would like to make is to do with the Environmental Statement that James just spoke about just now. I have trawled through that formidable document and, in the section to do with cultural impact, Viking Energy try to deal with how they are going to disguise the wind turbines and what they are going to do is to adopt traditional colours and materials. So we are all going

to see stone-clad windmills with 'taekit' roofs on them. It's absolutely laughable if it wasn't so disgusting. I would like to reaffirm my objection.

Jim Nicolson

Just a couple of quick points. I mentioned the financial thing and thanks to Councillor Duncan for providing us with the information. My expectation would be that the cost would be £1billion – we'd be looking at more like £90 million to come from the Council's reserves. There is £240 million in the Charitable Trust and you want the interest every year to keep the care homes, to keep the leisure centres going. This would be a massive gamble to take on. A huge difference between this and Sullom Voe – the Council didn't have to put any money into Sullom Voe. Here we have to face this, if that's what's going to go ahead. My second point is that when we had the initial meetings, Viking Energy directors, they consistently said if the folk in Shetland doesn't want this, this will not go ahead. Now there has been the Shetland Times, a very good one - will congratulate them on that, and there this meetings, and I think we should be very shortly moving to a vote to see what that would be. But if they do not take countenance of what is being said at this meetings, of the Shetland Times poll, the many objections that have gone into this, how can the Councillors feel that they are representing the folk of Shetland. I would feel very strongly that they should reject this and that they, probably, if that does not get the thing turfed out, there would need to be a public enquiry. I think that that's something that should be considered as well. I would like to congratulate Hazel on her chairmanship of the meeting and suggest that we very soon move on to a vote on whether the Councillors should support the Viking Energy partnership project or reject it.

Chairperson

Thank you, Jim. Really my intention from the beginning is to make sure that everyone who wanted to speak had a chance to speak, so can I just give you one last chance before we move to a vote. Would you like to speak again Chris?

Chris Johnson

I worked at Sullom Voe for 15 years. I went to one of these Viking Energy roadshows where they had these montages of the windmills superimposed on the landscape. I remember looking at a picture that must have been taking somewhere about the shop in Voe looking south, and the first thing that popped into my mind was standing in the middle of the process plant at Sullom Voe. It's one thing to go to work in that environment and then go home, but it's another thing to live in that. And if this goes ahead, the communities around here have my every sympathy.

Chairperson

Are you okay with that? What we did last night was just a fairly simple vote where we put it to the floor in terms of whether or not you were for, against or undecided in terms of this planning application. We were not saying anything about support for renewables or anything like that – just purely in terms of the planning application that is before you now. Are you comfortable with that? We were thinking for, against and undecided. And to respect the views that

James said before, I would appreciate if the folk who voted last night did not vote again tonight, and you know who you are. Are you okay with that? We have Anne and Rachel who will count for us and that will just go in as part of the package of views with the planning application as a representation of the views here tonight. So are you okay with that? Yes, will we just go with it. So just in terms if you could indicate and put your hands up if you are for the planning application for the Viking Energy proposal. 11 and 4 – that's 15. If you could indicate now if you are against the planning application for Viking Energy. 50 and 60 – 110. And if anyone would like to indicate if they are undecided at the moment. I think that's three.

That was 15 for, 110 against and three undecided. We will make that part of the information that we put back to Councillors. Anybody else have anything they would like to say before you go, or are you okay that you have had a ...

Councillor Duncan

On everybody's behalf, I would like to thank Mr Greenhill, Jan and yourself and the ladies for their busy work tonight and giving up your time. It is much appreciated.

Chairperson

Thank you all very much for coming. Thank you all for your reasoned arguments and your well thought-out points that you have made and we look forward to putting your views in on your behalf.

(Meeting concluded at 2030)