

Councillor «First»«Middle» «Surname»
«Name__Address»

19 December 2005

Dear Councillor «Surname»

Maerdy Windfarm Proposal – Update for Councillors

Further to my letter at the end of November I am writing to keep you informed of developments that may be of interest.

Public Consultation Notices

A public notice was placed in the Rhondda Leader and the Cynon Valley Leader newspapers to give notice of the current public consultation and refer people to the consultation website:

www.maerdywindfarm.co.uk

The circulation of the Rhondda Leader is 13,000 and the Cynon Valley Leader 11,000 and distribution covers the areas surrounding the windfarm.

Additional to this, in excess of ten thousand leaflets were delivered to residents door to door to give notice of the consultation. The leaflets were delivered separately from any other mail to try and ensure they were noticed.

The leaflets were targeted on areas that it was anticipated were most likely to have a strong interest in the windfarm proposal. The plan attached shows the areas leafleted. The criteria used were nearby areas that were within the potential zone of visual influence or ZVI. (The ZVI is the zone that could see some part of the windfarm). Adjoining parts of villages outside the ZVI were also included to ensure a discrete community were all notified and neighbours did not find out second hand about the proposals.

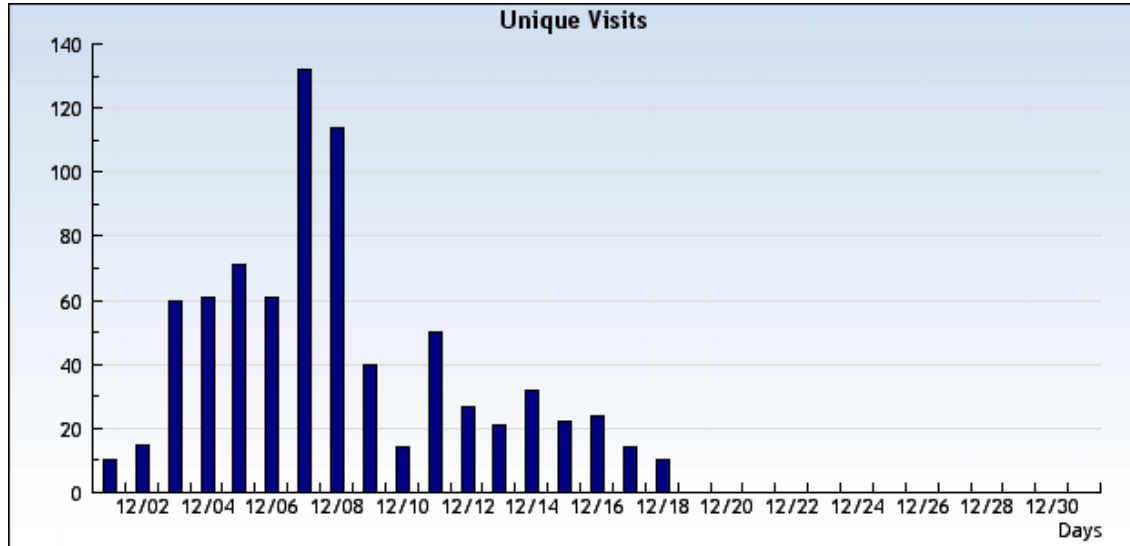
The area of leafleting was extended further to southerly parts of Ferndale because of their existing interest with the Ferndale windfarm proposal. Llwydcoed was added later on with a later consultation deadline.

Our hope is that every practical effort has been made to make interested parties aware of the proposals.

Responses to Public Consultation

1. Review of the Public Consultation

Up to the week ending 18th December, 778 unique visits were made to the Public Consultation website. Please see graph below:



Only two people so far have requested paper copies of the public consultation, which have been provided.

2. Comments Received

12 people have submitted comments (10 by email and 2 by letter). All respondents have been replied to personally with further information provided where possible to answer any queries. All responses are being held on file. If you would like to review responses at any time please let us know and we will be pleased to copy them to you.

We will report back with the final results at the end of the consultation in January.

Public Consultation Extended

The period for receiving comments on the layout of the windfarm to feed into its design was extended from 30th December to 22nd January. We hope this will allow sufficient time for everyone to review and submit their comments.

Public Meetings

We intend to hold public meetings in the New Year to further communicate the proposals and provide people with the opportunity to comment and query the plans. Overhead projectors will be used to show visualisations of the layouts, questions answered and comments taken.

Three meetings are being held:

Area	Meeting Location	Date
Rhondda Farw	Cwmparc Community Association Parc Hall, Parc Road, Cwmparc, Treorchy, CF426LD	Thursday 12 th January 7–9:30pm
Rhondda Fach	Maerdy Community Centre	Friday 13 th January

	Park Road, Maerdy, CF43 4DD	7-9:30pm
Cynon Valley	Llwydcoed Community Hall Llwydcoed, Aberdare, CF440UT	Sunday 15 th January 2:30-5:30pm

Please could we invite you to attend any meeting as you may wish.

Support to Councillors

Please can we offer our support to Councillors dealing with any enquiries from residents regarding the proposals. We can supply hard copies of the Consultation, attend any meetings or surgeries to make presentations, show visualisations or simply answer questions.

Regeneration Objectives and Community Action

We recognise that in the focus on the technical and environmental aspects of a windfarm proposal the wider impact on the local economy and community is sometimes neglected until much later. We do not want to make this mistake and for this reason part of the public consultation focuses on local benefits requesting direction on how these should be steered.

We have received a diverse range of ideas in response so far and will summarise these at the end of the consultation. We have also made contact with the local regeneration officers at the Council and hope that this relationship will enable the windfarm proposals to sit well with other objectives for the area. We understand that there are already proposals for encouragement of outdoor pursuits activities in the Maerdy area and have requested information on proposals. Similarly, we have approached the Maerdy Communities First Board.

With so many different organisations to potentially work with the risk of oversight or inappropriate focus exists. Please could we invite any direction you may wish to give on who we should be consulting with and how the process should be managed so that proposals are properly and fairly worked up.

Planning Process

We applied for a scoping opinion from the Council in February to direct the environmental studies. The Council scoping opinion was approved at a Rhondda Planning Committee meeting on 8th December. We can now proceed with the environmental studies with clear direction.

Windfarm Proposal Name

We have had an enquiry regarding the adopted name of the proposal. Maerdy was used as the nearest place name from which the windfarm could be seen. Treherbert and Tynwydd are very slightly closer, but cannot see the proposal. Please do let us know if you have any concerns about this.

Children & Education

The consultation website contains a section for children. This has some fun online resources for explaining how windpower works, a geography project allowing children to locate a windfarm site for themselves and also a competition to name wind turbines.

The website also includes educational resources for teachers interested in using wind energy to teach curriculum subjects. Wind power is a great resource for many subjects with site selection covering geography and meteorology; and wind turbines and electricity covering maths, physics and technology. We have written to local schools to offer our support through talks or information should they wish to incorporate the subject into their teaching programme.

Availability

Please can I offer our continued availability to receive any comments or answer any questions on the proposals or their development.

With kind regards and best wishes for Christmas

Yours sincerely

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reference: RCT, All Councillors, Maerdy Windfarm Update, 161205.doc