

Dear Mrs. McRae

Red John Pumped Storage Hydro Scheme

We have submitted our technical responses to The Highland Council and I know you have copies of these. We appreciate they are lengthy and technical documents which do not make for easy reading. I thought it might be useful to write with a summary of some of the key points from these reports which address the issues DECC have raised in their letter commenting on the plan.

Flood risk

- We appreciate these concerns.
- This project will be governed by the Reservoirs (Scotland) Act. Strict laws covering reservoirs have been in place since 1925 and no structure covered by them has ever failed.
- The Scottish Environment Protection Agency who have responsibility for enforcing this Act have said – “The owner/operator/applicant has a legal responsibility to comply with the Reservoirs (Scotland) Act. Our assessment indicates that the probability of failure of a reservoir structure managed under the 2011 Act is considered to be so low that it is beyond the scope of likely probabilities.....”
- The fault lines and seismic activity in the area are not unusual for projects like this and can be safely managed.
- We will carry out detailed ground investigations and borehole drilling to ensure the exact geology of the area is fully understood to allow the embankment to be properly designed.
- We will have public indemnity insurance written into our agreements (we are happy that a legally binding section 75 agreement is used to ensure this is enforced).

Traffic Management

- We agree with the community council this is a key issue and needs to be properly addressed.
- The Highland Council have the final say on the Construction Traffic Management Plan.
- That plan can only be approved once they are happy with it. They will liaise with the local community when this plan is being developed and we believe DECC should be fully involved in these discussions. But it is the Council’s process so you need to ensure they know you want to be involved.
- If consent is granted we will form a Community Liaison Group that will meet before, during and after construction to deal with local issues or concerns, keep people informed of progress and ensure local people have access to managers who will be controlling works. We will give the Community Council direct access to both our and the contractor’s senior team so they can be confident they will be able to contact them should they have any questions, concerns or need to report any issues.
- We are committed to making improvements to the roads and are actively discussing these with the Council. These discussions will continue as the project develops and as new ideas and opportunities arise. We would urge you to continue to make suggestions for improvements both to us and the council. We can discuss your ideas and priorities at the liaison group as work progresses.
- We are willing to make further improvements to the roads as identified in the South Ness Strategy. These can continue to be developed once a contractor has been appointed and will be the subject of full discussion and approval with the council, in conjunction with the liaison

group and affected communities. We can do these as a form of community benefit and could extend to roads not directly affected by the construction.

Noise and vibration

- A large part of the works will be deep underground and will cause no noise or vibration.
- In relation to other works we will agree detailed control measures with the Highland Council's Environmental Health Department and we will be bound by them.
- Any concerns can be discussed at liaison group meetings.

Visual Impact

- We want to develop a scheme that has the least possible impact on this beautiful part of the Highlands.
- Our forestry management plan will replace commercial forestry with natural, managed woodlands which will improve the visual amenity over time.
- In consultation with Highland Council we have already been able to reduce by half the height of one of the buildings (the inlet/outlet structure on the embankment). We are continuing to look for every opportunity for this sort of reduction in visual impact.
- The plan we have submitted shows the maximum (or worst-case) requirement to allow the contractor flexibility to build the best and most efficient plant. During the construction period we hope (and expect) to reduce the visual impact from that shown in our application.
- We will employ both ecological and landscape clerks of works during construction to ensure the full implementation of the ecology and landscape design.
- The Highland Council will have to approve the final design, appearance and contouring before any of these works start. They will also ensure we implement them to the full. We would encourage the full engagement of DECC in discussing these plans and we are happy to ensure they remain on the agenda of the liaison group as work progresses.

Community Benefit

- We will finalise arrangements for community benefit immediately after the planning process has been settled.
- We have already signed agreements with DECC committing to ongoing community benefit and are committed to putting in place a scheme for community ownership.

Please do come back to me if you would like further clarification on any of these issues.

Yours Sincerely,



Mark Wilson
ILI Group CEO