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From: Robert Anders
Sent: Saturday, June 11, 2011 7:18 AM
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Subject: stopped windfarm

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Scotland

Exasperated planners shut wind farm down

by Caroline McMorran reporter, The Northern Times, www.northern-times.co.uk 9 June 2011

The local authority has forced Scottish and Southern Electricity to shut down a Sutherland wind farm after the company breached planning controls by failing to deal with excessive noise from the development.

People living close to the Achany wind farm near Rosehall are claiming their lives are being made a misery by the constant noise, and are angry that their complaints are being ignored.

In an unprecedented move, Highland Council issued a temporary stop notice on the 23-turbine wind farm at 3pm on Monday.

The turbine blades at the £55 million, 40MW windfarm, which came on stream in July last year, stopped turning that night.

The stop notice will remain in place for a month, until July 4, with the shut down representing a huge financial loss to the power company.

Highland Council's principal planner Gordon Moonie confirmed yesterday (Thursday) that it was the first time the authority had issued a notice of this type.

He said he was unaware of any other council taking similar action.

"This temporary stop notice was introduced under a 2006 Act and it hasn't been used very often, but it is quite an effective way of dealing with a breach of planning control. In a sense it affects the company where it hurts – in their pocket," he said.

Mr Moonie revealed that the problems with Achany had been ongoing for about a year, with constant complaints to planners about noise.

"We were getting complaints from the local people and the community and we weren't getting any action from SSE, so we decided that the best way forward was to serve this temporary stop notice," he said.

"It means that the windfarm has to cease operating and we can then get round the table and agree a way forward that is in everyone's interest."

According to the stop notice, SSE breached planning controls by failing to provide a scheme for mitigating noise levels prior to the development coming on stream.