

Dear Mr Lang,

I have been asked by Kim Terry, of CATS, if I could send you some information regarding our situation here at High Tralorg. Unfortunately, our problems are very much topographically driven and without you having visited and seen the situation at first hand, it is difficult to give a true indication of the situation merely by words. I will do my best however.

The effects of the windfarms upon our life here can be divided into two parts, the effects of Hadyard Hill, working since Spring 2006, and the fears for the future as two more windfarms are planned, Assel Valley and Tralorg Hill. Hadyard Hill is situated in front of the house, has 52 turbines of which we see around 20-25 depending whereabouts on the land we are standing. (We have 10 acres of rough grazing land as well as our steading house). The nearest group of 12 is within 680 to 900 m away. We live on the side of the westerly slope of the Assel valley in a four hundred year old steading, (the name in gaelic actually means "House on the slope of the hill" Tigh Lorg, since corrupted to Tralorg.) Between us and the turbines is the small valley of the Assel and the turbines stretch along the top of the easterly crest opposite. Thus our house is positioned at the height of the bottom of the rotating blades opposite and we consequently receive the sound of the turbines full frontal, so to speak The other two proposed windfarms would be positioned along the westerly crest of the valley, and we would thus be situated in a horse shoe shape of turbines, the closest of which would be around 900m away if built as shown.

The effects upon us are manifold, physical, mental and financial. Dealing with the health problems first, it is of course very difficult in my case, to establish that any health effect has been caused solely by the turbines. I have never enjoyed very good health, I have suffered chronic endocrine problems since puberty and had my thyroid gland removed when only 24. One of the reasons I moved to this house was to enjoy the peace and tranquillity, to cultivate my little patch of hill and glen, undisturbed by fumes and noise of passing traffic and to be able to relax unencumbered by surrounding developments. I am claustrophobic and the openness of the surrounding moorland, together with the wonderful views meant that the property was ideally suited to my needs. Since the arrival of the turbines everything changed. The turbines make two different noises depending on the wind speed, firstly a dull rumble like a plane coming into land that never quite makes the end of the runway, and then as the windspeed picks up, the noise becomes a thumping, whooshing beat which seems to permeate throughout the house, in spite of two foot thick stone walls and secondary glazing. It is difficult to explain to people, who have not suffered this on a continuous basis, what the effects are. It is not like an allergy where one suddenly erupts in purple lesions or starts to choke and of course everyone will experience the noise differently. Although I am not woken up frequently by the noise lately, (the winds have not been so consistently strong over the last few years, especially in the winter and for a variety of reasons I have not spent much time in the house over the last 12 months), the thump of the blades is ever present, even if not at a very high level. We keep the TV and radio on continuously to try and counteract this. As I type this, I am aware of the steady beat of the blades outwith the house. I suspect that this constant thumping does affect my quality of sleep, if only because sometimes when I wake up in the morning I feel really bright and with a light feeling about me. On checking outside I then find that the turbines are stopped and were probably static most of the night. The two cold winters of 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 were a case in point. Yes, the freezing temperatures made life very difficult for us. At one point it was -19C outside and every pipe was frozen, but the turbines barely worked for the entire length of cold spells and I did feel much better, in terms of concentration, increased energy and less depression. Unfortunately these are not the only health problems that we encounter. The great majority of the windows in the house face east, to take advantage of the erstwhile views. In common with many steadings, the house is mainly only one room wide, we have no back parlour to which we may retreat. The rooms themselves are not large and do not allow of a variety of furniture placements. Therefore our views through the windows consist of a

variety of turbines, large and small, in a variety of planes, churning round. It is like living in a kaleidoscope which never stops. As a result I live with my curtains closed, in a murky world of a badly cleaned aquarium or have the lights on all the time. I find this aspect even more infuriating than the noise. It means that I can have no enjoyment from the garden. Ear plugs and I-pods can mitigate some of the noise but the turbines' visual pollution is ever present. I now have great difficulty going out with the house and I require vitamin D tablets to make up for a lack of daylight.

The third effect is that of the flicker we experience during the winter months, when the sun is very low in the sky. As it rises in the East it shines through the moving blades, causing a pulsation of light within the house, making the rooms appear to expand and contract. If the weather is set fair I have to take the car and leave the property, if I reckon that the effects will only be intermittent, I go to a bathroom and stay there with a heavy towel round my head until the flicker has stopped. The nearest equivalent that is generally experienced is that of car drivers, moving along a tree-lined road with a low sun in their eyes. The sun flicker that they experience is something akin to what we endure.

All these problems cause stress, which taken together with the problems of a greatly reduced selling price and advancing years (I am now 67), have taken a severe toll upon me. Since we knew of the arrival of the windfarm, I have developed rheumatoid arthritis, including cranial arthritis, several events of a shingles related phenomenon, whereby the right side of my face freezes, my right eye closes up, and I have difficulty chewing and swallowing and finally breast cancer. None of these can be directly related to the effects of the turbines, but it is widely accepted that stress and an impaired auto immune system are vital factors in the development of these diseases.

We have complained from the start to the local environmental health inspectors, who were initially grudging in their response. They said we should ring them when the noise was bad so that they could come down and check the noise levels, but of course, they work in Ayr, some 25 miles away. They also wanted me to identify which turbine made the most noise. This is an entirely impossible task. Logic would dictate that the nearest would be the loudest, but not so in practice. Any one or indeed several of the turbines, some a long distance away can be louder than those located close by, depending on windspeed and air pressure. At this point I became too depressed to care but my nearest neighbours who live some half mile away down in the valley are affected mostly by one particular turbine and their efforts in geeing up the Council has paid off in so much that SSE agreed to undertake a noise survey from the two properties. It ran for three weeks last June. This is one of our quieter months as far as wind is concerned, and mysteriously the data from the period when the noise was the most troublesome was not recorded. In addition we objected to the siting of the recorders as we considered they were screened by the byre and hayloft from the nearest turbine. None the less the data still showed that Hadyard Hill was not compliant with even the nonsensical ESTU 97 noise levels. What the levels would have been if the high noise levels I experienced over several nights had been included, I would love to know. SSE maintained that the non-compliance was only marginal, but have agreed to come back again and do a three month trial. We wanted this to take place in either October/November or March /April, times when the winds are at their strongest, but they rang us yesterday to say that they would be starting around the 16th April. Thus the trial will again be conducted in the late spring/summer months when the winds are on the whole lighter. Again in spite of our protestations, they appear to want to site the recorders in exactly the same place as that to which we objected last time around.

I am sorry that I have to burden you with so much verbiage but it is necessary to give you a flavour of the problem. We have been engaged in this saga for over a decade now and our records on the subject are voluminous. May I suggest that to avoid overload I keep the additional information to a minimum initially. If there is anything more specific that you require we can then see what we have to offer. For instance we commissioned 3 reports, from an noise consultant, a landscape consultant and a planning consultant, as part of our objection to the Hadyard Hill proposal. We can also send you the SSE report from 2011 on their noise recordings. We have a DVD made by an

anti windfarm group in Galloway, showing me in the house answering lots of questions about the problems that we face and this also shows the offending turbines. I am more physically more suited to a radio presentation, but vanity aside, it might be useful to you. We can also direct you to a video clip of the flicker effect that our neighbours experience in their home, which they have downloaded onto You Tube.

I hope that the information will be of use to you for the forthcoming committee, many thanks for your kindness in involving yourself with this issue. For the greater part of the last decade all our efforts to get politicians to understand the problem have been met by a shrug of the shoulders, handing off the letter to some other department, and the general impression that we are just exaggerating the situation. What I find most hurtful is the implication that I am involved in the protest against windfarms for personal aggrandizement or to seek the limelight. Quite the reverse, but I do feel that I must do what I can to ensure that other people do not have to suffer as we have done and unfortunately will suffer more in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Kay Siddell.

High Tralorg, Friday 6th April 2012.