VISITSCOTLAND

In response to the Scottish Parliament's Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee's inquiry into the achievability of the Scottish Government's renewable energy targets, I am pleased to address the report recommendation directly relevant to the work of VisitScotland.

Paragraph 42: Whilst care always needs to be taken in terms of the planning process and decisions on the siting of individual projects in areas popular with tourists and in our more rural and remote rural areas, no witness has provided the Committee with robust, empirical evidence, as opposed to anecdotal comment and opinion, that tourism is being negatively affected by the development of renewable projects. However, given the importance of this issue, the Committee recommends that VisitScotland and the Scottish Government continue to gather, and take account of, evidence from visitors to Scotland.

As the Committee's report states, there is no evidence that tourism is being adversely impacted by the siting of wind farms and this was the key finding of the VisitScotland survey conducted amongst visitors in 2011.

VisitScotland will continue to monitor views on this through the work of our Insights team in order to be fully sighted on the experience of visitors to Scotland.