

NPF4 - Call for Ideas

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McMillan Consultancy

McMillan Consultancy is a Scottish based public affairs company and works with a number of businesses in the renewable energy sector, housing building sector and construction suppliers.

Please find a short summary of some comments and reflections to feed into the NPF4 Call for Ideas through working with a number of businesses in Scotland.

Thank you for the opportunity to do so.

- The role of renewable energy is central to address climate change and this needs to be clear in NPF4. NPF4 should make clear that renewable energy developments are in the public interest and constitute sustainable development.
- NPF4 should outline the climate emergency and direct impacts it is having on Scotland's nature (increased flooding, impact on Scottish flora and fauna - visual/actual). This information should be outlined as part of the planning process to help feed-in into the requirement of decarbonising the country.
- NPF4 should focus on the circular economy and highlight the role of the Scottish supply chain where possible. For example currently 90% of stone is imported into Scotland. There is a stone processing sector in Scotland that can deliver natural stone - creating skilled manufacturing jobs in Scotland and reducing the need for heavy stone to be imported (reducing carbon miles). NPF4 should focus on supporting the local supply chain.
- A grading of material in development should be considered - grading on its impact on the environment.
- NPF4 should make clear that achieving net zero targets requires increased local materials.
- Electric vehicle infrastructure should be central in NPF4 to reduce/stop the use of fossil fuel vehicles.
- Grid infrastructure is required to be a key issue for NPF4. The national grid is not fit for purpose - grid costs and waiting times for connections are one of the biggest challenges for renewable energy developments.
- NPF4 needs to remove the stigma of turbine size - larger turbines can look better depending on the environment as well as increasing the yield of renewable energy. In terms of onshore and offshore wind, there should not be a maximum height for turbines and each site is examined on its merit.
- Urban areas need a renewed focus on walking/cycling and city centres move towards car free zones.

- Lifeline aviation routes to be protected but NPF4 should outline that short haul flights are not part of Scotland's transport infrastructure to help reach the net zero targets.
- District heating systems - it is welcome to see Historic Environment Scotland review its estate and it would be welcome for the private and public sector to see its progress and be used as a case study.
- Covid-19 is a health emergency - it has underlined that the country can quickly change working patterns in the face of the pandemic. A review on home-working where possible for businesses and the public sector to reduce demand on the country's infrastructure and help reduce the carbon footprint.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide some comments towards the Call for Ideas for NPF4.