



Say NO to dirty coal at Hunterston

Ayrshire Power are proposing to build a 1852 MW coal fired power station at Hunterston in North Ayrshire. This is hugely unpopular – around 16,000 people from Scotland and around the world have already written to the Scottish Government to oppose the development – one of the largest responses of its kind to a development like this. A majority of MSPs have also voted against the proposal¹.

We are a coalition of environment and development groups including Friends of the Earth Scotland, RSPB Scotland, WWF Scotland, Christian Aid, the Church of Scotland, Oxfam, Planning Democracy, the Scottish Wildlife Trust, the World Development Movement Scotland, and the local community group CONCH (Communities Opposed to New Coal at Hunterston), which have come together to campaign against the proposal because we all believe that it would result in **unacceptable impacts**. Here's a summary of why we think this power station is potentially so damaging, and the wrong development for this location.

Southannan Sands is one of the best areas for wildlife in the whole of the Clyde Estuary and should be protected from damaging developments such as this one.

If built, this massively polluting power station would destroy a large part (around 30 hectares) of what is supposed to be a protected area at Southannan Sands. This area is one the best remaining examples of inter-tidal habitat left on the Outer Clyde, and is an important feeding ground for wading and wintering birds. The layout proposed for the power station would involve infilling and destroying this valuable habitat. Furthermore, coal fired power stations also produce large quantities of ash and the developer has assumed that a use will be found for all of the ash produced by the plant. However, if this is not the case, it is likely that ash lagoons would be needed, and more habitat would be destroyed.

As well as potential air and noise pollution, the development would be highly visible and may impact on local tourism, which in turn may impact on local jobs.

No proper assessment of the health impacts of Ayrshire Power's plans has been carried out, but the power station would be likely to have an adverse impact on public health, due to waste products, emissions, noise and air pollution. The local infrastructure cannot cope with a plant of this size being built or for the need to transport 860,000 tonnes of ash/gypsum off site each year. Ayrshire Power's claims that no upgrades will be required for either road or rail are not plausible.

In an area relying on tourism, the Hunterston proposals are not likely to significantly benefit local jobs creation. Research shows that renewables and energy conservation already offer better employment opportunities than coal. Local communities also have concerns about the visual impact of this power station. The proposed development at the Hunterston site would extend across 95 hectares, equating to an area roughly the size of 148 football pitches. The buildings themselves would be significant in size with the highest building approximately 115m tall and the air emission stack approximately 155m. Compare that to the Scott Monument at 61 metres, the Forth Bridge at 104 metres, or the London Eye at 135 metres.

¹ <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-10/sor0318-02.htm#Col24826>

The development will cause an increase in carbon emissions in Scotland. This will undermine Scotland's world leadership in setting the most ambitious targets to tackle climate change, which is affecting millions of people around the world right now.

The proposed coal fired power station at Hunterston would cause a huge increase in carbon emissions. The developer is proposing that the emissions from the plant will be captured and stored, but the power station as proposed would only capture less than one quarter of its emissions, leaving well over three quarters to be released into the atmosphere. The Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technology involved has not yet been proven at a commercial scale and there is no guarantee that it will work, or that the developer will fit the technology to cover the rest of the power station's emissions in the future. CCS should be tried on an existing power station first, as this would achieve a true reduction in Scotland's carbon emissions.

The Scottish Government has set an ambitious target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 42% by 2020, leading the world in showing that we are prepared to take action on climate change. Coal is the most dirty of all fossil fuels, making it a leading contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change is one of the most challenging issues facing vulnerable communities around the world. Excessive greenhouse gas emissions violate the rights of millions of the world's poorest people to life, security, food, health and shelter. Developing countries have contributed the least to the problem, are the least able to finance adaptation measures, yet are disproportionately suffering its effects now. In contrast, industrialised nations like Scotland, which bear the historical responsibility for climate change, have the greatest capacity to deliver an equitable global solution to the problem. Also of great concern is the sourcing of the coal for this power station, much of which may be imported from countries such as Colombia where miners and local people suffer exploitation and human rights abuses. Approving a development like Hunterston would therefore be irresponsible.

Scotland can easily meet its future electricity needs without this polluting development

There is a misconception that we need to build this power station to "keep the lights on". But this is not true. Research² has shown that Scotland can meet or exceed its electricity needs without additional fossil fuel power stations. In fact, by 2030 renewable energy and improved energy efficiency mean we could meet well over Scotland's projected annual electricity demand.

Another objection to Hunterston lies in the way the strategic planning process has been carried out. A **legal challenge** (judicial review) is being taken by a resident of Fairlie, seeking the removal of the Hunterston development in the National Planning Framework. If the legal challenge is successful it will fundamentally weaken the case for the development. The court case takes place in November.

More information

For more information visit any of the following websites:

www.rspb.org.uk/hunterston

<http://www.foe-scotland.org.uk>

www.wfscotland.org.uk/hunterston

<http://www.planningdemocracy.org.uk/archives/378>

<http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/councils/churchsociety/csclimate.htm#hunterston>

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/scotland/>

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/>

<http://www.wdm.org.uk/news/wdm-objects-new-coal-hunterston>

<http://www.swt.org.uk/campaigns/hunterston-development/>

www.conchcampaign.org

² A summary of the research can be read at http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/PowerofScotlandRenewed_tcm9-222405.pdf