

**Proposed Beauly to Denny 400kv Steel Tower Double
Circuit
Overhead Transmission Line**

Public Inquiry – Stirling Session

Precognition of John Logan

Tourism and Economic Impact

**On Behalf of Blairmains Farm Shop & Coffee Bothy and Stirling
Before Pylons**

I am making representations at the Stirling session of the Public Inquiry in my capacity as joint owner and operator of the award winning Blairmains Farm Shop and Coffee Bothy, which is situated down the Manor Loan Road, with stunning views of the National Wallace Monument, the Ochils and the surrounding countryside. I am also a member and supporter of the Stirling Before Pylons Group.

I wish to make it clear that my family strongly object to the proposals to erect such a large-scale pylon line in such close proximity to our business which is heavily reliant on its countryside setting and the quality of the views across to the National Wallace Monument and the Ochils for success.

My family has been farming in the Blairlogie area for over 100 years and we are fifth generation dairy farmers who have successfully diversified into retail, catering and tourism activities, taking advantage of our superb countryside setting in close proximity to major population centres, the busy A91 tourist route and the National Wallace Monument.

Through no fault of our own we became victims of the BSE crisis which found us struggling to survive, with the final 'nail in the coffin' being the foot and mouth outbreak which devastated our farming business.

To allow us to continue living on the farm, and with pressure from the bank, we were forced to sell 70 acres of land and look at ways of diversifying to make a living.

After much soul searching we decided to take, what was for us, a massive gamble and start up a new business venture on the farm. Thankfully the gamble paid off and we now have a thriving and Tourist Board award winning, family run farm shop and catering outlet. Over the past seven years the business has gone from strength to strength and we now employ 32 people and have a weekly throughput of over 2,000 customers on a year round basis.

We consistently receive high awards in the VisitScotland quality assurance inspection scheme and are past winners of the Argyll, the Isles, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Tourist Board 'Best Place to Eat Award' which is based on nominations from visitors. We also receive positive feedback on a regular basis from our customers who comment on the quality of our fayre, the product range in our shop and the magnificent views of the Ochils, the Monument and the surrounding countryside.

We believe our main asset is the rolling beauty of the surrounding countryside taking in the Ochil Hills and the well renowned and popular Wallace Monument, which can be viewed through our ten large windows. The Monument stands proudly over us and is visited throughout the year by many thousands of visitors from throughout the UK and overseas.

The quality of our views and their contribution to the appeal and success of our business cannot be emphasised enough and we earnestly hope, as part of the Stirling Public Inquiry session, the Reporters will take the

opportunity to visit our business and see at first hand the quality of the views and the potential impact of the proposed pylon line which will dominate the foreground and greatly detract from what we consider is one of the finest views in Scotland.

The proposed plans show that the proposed pylons and associated cables will be approximately 700-800 yards from our premises. They will also be around two times the height and width of the existing pylons and therefore will have a much larger impact on the skyline and the views from our business and the Wallace Monument. Sitting in our popular Coffee Shop, the proposed transmission line will tower above views of the Monument and will, in reality, become the new dominant feature on the skyline from the Ochils in the north to Bannockburn in the south.

As mentioned earlier our business is patronised by over 2,000 customers every week, which equates to over 100,000 over a year. We are very concerned that the views for this large number of people are going to be spoilt if the current proposals are given the go ahead and, importantly, we have serious concerns that a significant proportion of our customers will not return due to the despoilation of the views. Clearly this would have major consequences for the future of our business in terms of loss of turnover and profitability, and could lead to the loss of a large number of jobs.

I believe we have strong grounds for objection in terms of the detrimental impact the proposals would have on the views from our business and the consequent knock on effects on our very successful venture, which is heavily reliant on the quality of the countryside setting and the stunning outlook to the Monument and the Ochil Hills. I also believe the long term impact of the proposals on the quality of Stirling's setting would be significant and therefore the current application for approval should be rejected.

