



## Yorkshire Dales Country News - 2006

### New twist in windfarm wars

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New twist in windfarm war

THE long-running battle between country folk and government over windfarms took a new twist today as a war broke out between the Scottish Executive and a conservation body which has called for more "green" electricity generation.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and its Scottish branch have in the past angered many rural communities for being outspoken supporters of wind farms - which mainly serve towns and cities but are always located in the countryside.

But the Scottish RSPB today issued an outspoken protest about re-designed plans to build the UK's largest windfarm on the Isle of Lewis, in the Western Isles, which it says is "one of Scotland's most sensitive and important sites for wildlife."

In this case, "wildlife" means huge colonies of nesting seabirds and the Scottish RSPB has already attracted large-scale criticism from other wildlife bodies for culling thousands of hedgehogs in the Western Isles because they eat birds' eggs.

By going against their accepted policy of welcoming windfarms, the society is leaving itself open to complaints of "Nimbysm" - the "not in my back yard" syndrome - and allegations that to them, birds are more important than people.

However, on this occasion they are siding with local people who have protested in their thousands since the plan was first mooted. As a result, the new proposals from the Scottish Executive has reduced the number of giant wind turbines from 234 to 181.

#### Your views:

If the proposed wind farm on Lewis goes ahead it will be nothing short of a national disgrace. Wind power is unreliable and will not replace existing coal-fired plants or nuclear power. All wind turbines will do is destroy habitat, kill birds, spoil the view and drive tourists away, oh yes and make money for the people who support wind power - that's why they are being built afterall.

**Calum Galbraith** - Glasgow, Scotland