



Ackron Wind Farm

Pre-Application Consultation Report

December 2020



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Arcus Consultancy Services Ltd ('Arcus') and Kane Partnership have prepared this Pre-Application Consultation ('PAC') Report on behalf of Ackron Wind Farm Limited ('the Applicant'). The PAC Report accompanies a planning application ('the Application') for the proposed Ackron Wind Farm ('the Development'). The report includes consultation measures undertaken by the Applicant and the feedback received and any resultant modifications to the Development.

The Applicant recognises that it is very important to ensure that communities in the vicinity of a development are afforded appropriate and meaningful opportunities to comment on the proposals before they are finalised in accordance with regulations and good practice guidance. A timeline of all consultation undertaken is provided in Appendix 1.

1.2 The Development

The Ackron Wind Farm is located approximately 18 kilometres (km) west of Thurso and 2 km south-east of Melvich in Sutherland, and is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 291200, 96215 as shown in Figure 1 below.

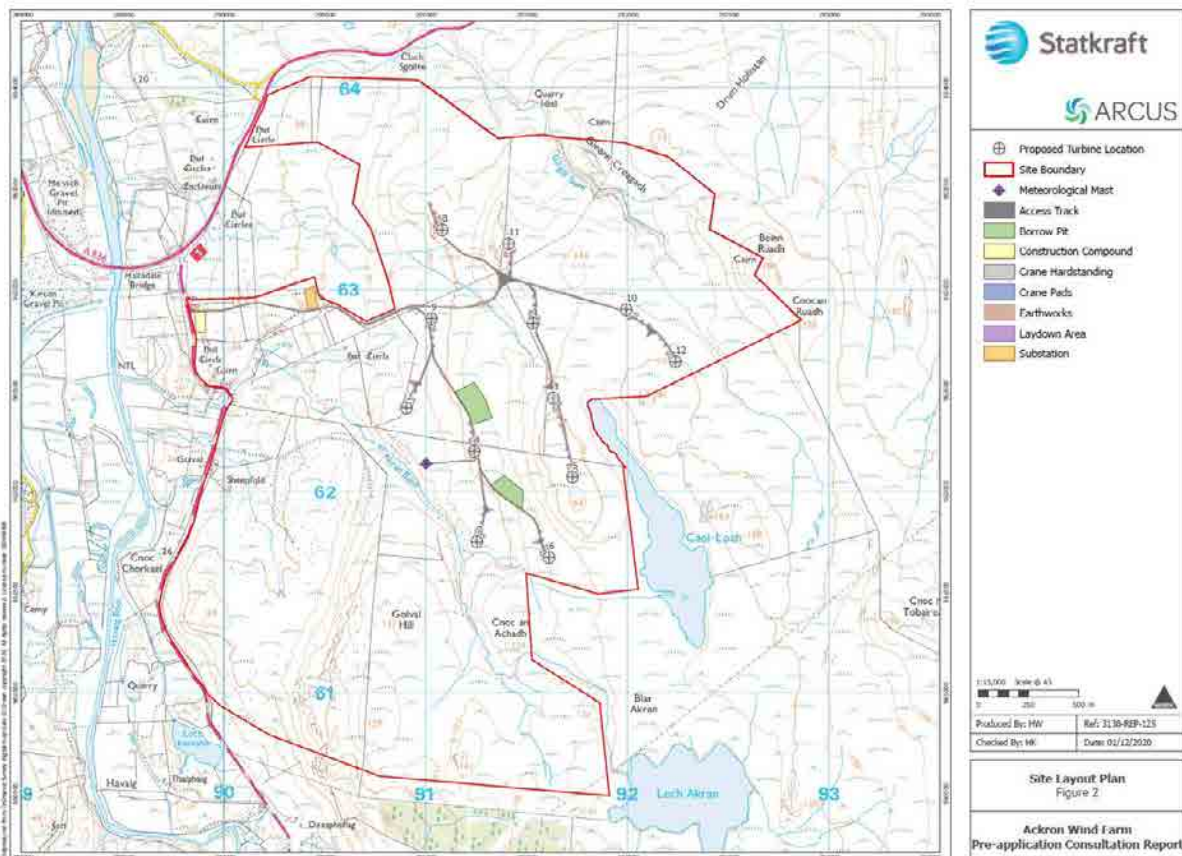


The Development comprises of up to 12, three-bladed, horizontal axis turbines with a maximum tip height of 149.9 metres (m) with a total generating capacity of up to, but not exceeding 49.9 MW. The main components of the Development are as follows:

- Up to 12 three-bladed turbines with a maximum tip height of 149.9 m including external transformers (if required);
- Associated foundations, blade laydown areas and crane hardstandings at each wind turbine location;

- Access tracks linking the turbine locations;
- Substation compound incorporating electrical switchgear and wind farm control elements;
- Temporary construction compound;
- Network of underground cabling running adjacent to the access tracks where possible;
- A permanent anemometry mast (up to 92 m);
- Up to two borrow pits; and
- New site access off the A897.

The Development is shown in Figure 2 below.



1.3 The Applicant

The Development is being proposed by Ackron Wind Farm Ltd, a subsidiary of Statkraft Ltd. Statkraft are a global company in energy market operations. Statkraft are Europe's largest generator of renewable energy with 4,000 employees in 17 countries. The teams combined experience have seen over 2 Gigawatts of onshore wind projects delivered across the UK.

Statkraft is well experienced in the Scottish Highlands and currently operates Baillie Wind Farm located to the west of Thurso which has been operational since 2013 with a total of 21 turbines. The Applicant is committed to setting up a Community Benefit Fund in each of their project locations and over £500,000 is distributed annually to projects and initiatives located near its operating wind farms. Example initiatives include education, energy efficiency, facilities for community halls, and playground equipment.

The Development will contribute £5,000 per MW installed capacity to a Community Fund. As detailed in Section 14.5.2.2, based on a 4 MW candidate turbine, this could result in an annual value of £240,000 per annum. With a 30 year operational consent, this could provide

£7.2 million in community benefit. Any increase in capacity (up to 49.9 MW) will be reflected in a higher Community Benefit Fund.

Statkraft recognises the importance of the economic benefits to Scotland and the rest of the UK from investing in onshore wind generation. It is expected that the Development would further economic opportunities within the region and would contribute significant income to support local services through business rates.

It is estimated that, during the construction phase, the Development will be worth approximately £29.6 million to the UK economy. Of that approximately £22.7 million is expected to be spent within Scotland (national) and approximately £7.6 million is expected to be spent within the Highlands (regional).

1.4 Consultation Guidance and Legislation

The statutory requirement for a PAC is under The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008¹, which entails that the PAC report is to be submitted along with the planning application that is classed as a **'major' development under The Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Development)** (Scotland) Regulations 2009². **Due to the megawatt ('MW') capacity of the Development being over 20 MW, the Development is classed as "major", therefore, the PAC is required to be undertaken.**

This PAC Report outlines that the statutory requirements under The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997³ (As Amended) have been complied with during the PAC process. The report sets out the background and details of the pre-application public exhibition process carried out by the Applicant in the preparation of the planning application. Where possible, issues that were raised during the course of the consultation by residents or stakeholders have been incorporated in the amended final plans as the project has progressed.

It is the intention of this report to demonstrate that in respect of the Development, the Applicant has complied fully with the provisions of Circular 3/2013 Development Management Procedures and the **Council's** approach to community involvement. This enables the local community and all those with an interest in the proposal a clear opportunity to provide comment and feedback prior to submitting a planning application.

In response to COVID-19 pandemic the Scottish Government⁴ has provided development planning and engagement advice in May 2020 which is in force until 31st March 2021⁵. The document provides advice on consultation and engagement, whilst there is a ban on public gatherings and there is need for public distancing. It is stated, that stakeholders should be engaged digitally and the consultation engagement should involve information in user friendly format on a free, publicly accessible web site. Also, the engagement should be enhanced in a non-digital communication, which may include placing articles in newspapers circulated locally expanding contact with community councils or letters to households in areas where there are significant proposals for change. It should be made clear if there are mechanisms for people to obtain copies of the engagement materials offline, as well as the ability for them to submit comments by post.

¹ Town and Country Planning (2008) The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 [Online]. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2008/432/contents/made> [Accessed 30/11/2020].

² Town and Country Planning (2009). The Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2009/9780111001714/contents> [Accessed 30/11/2020].

³ Town and Country Planning (2019). The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/8/contents> [Accessed 30/11/2020].

⁴ Scottish Government (2020). Coronavirus (COVID-19): development planning consultation and engagement advice - May 2020 [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-development-planning-consultation-and-engagement-advice---may-2020/> (Accessed 30/11/2020)

⁵ Scottish Government (2020) The Town and Country Planning (Emergency Period and Extended Period) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020. Available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2020/254/made> (Accessed 30/11/2020)

The consultation has been carried out in accordance with Scottish Government advice issued in May 2020 in response to the COVID-19 Emergency.

1.5 Report Structure

Following the introductory section, the remainder of this report comprises the following Sections:

- Section 1.0: Introduction
- Section 2.0: Consultation Measures
- Describes the various types of consultation undertaken for the proposed Development;
- Section 3.0: Public Exhibition June 2019
- Describes the consultation process undertaken for the Public Exhibition in June 2019;
- Section 4.0: Public Exhibition October-November 2020
- Describes the consultation process undertaken for the Virtual Exhibition in October 2020;
- Section 5.0: Responding to Feedback
- Section 6.0: Conclusions
- Describes how the consultation process has influenced the design of the proposed Development.

2 CONSULTATION MEASURES

Table 2.1 provides an overview of the stages of consultation undertaken for the Development.

Table 2.1 Pre-Application Consultation Procedures

Consultation Activity	Details	Steps Undertaken by Ackron Wind Farm Ltd
Pre-application consultation (Regulation 7)	Regulation 7 (2.17) states that: "The prospective applicant must consult every community council any part of whose area is within or adjoins the land on which the proposed development is situated."	In accordance with Regulation 7 the following Community Councils were consulted during the pre-application stages of the Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caithness West Community Council • Melvich Community Council • Strathy & Armadale Community Council
Public Event (Regulation 7)	Regulation 7 (2.19) states: "The prospective applicant is required to hold at least one event for members of the public where they can make comments to the prospective applicant on the proposals."	During the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process Statkraft held two rounds of Public Exhibitions in June 2019 and October-November 2020 to allow the public to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View a draft design layout and make any comments or provide information in relation to the layout and the EIA; and • View the turbine layout as informed by the environmental survey works and provide further comments.
Newspaper Advertisement – Public Event (Regulation 7)	Regulation 7 (2.19) states: "Notice of this 'public event' must be published at least 7 days in advance in a newspaper circulating in the locality of the proposed development."	The Public Exhibitions were advertised in the following newspapers: Public Exhibition 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Times • John O'Groat Journal • Advertised 14 and 21 June 2019 Public Exhibition 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Times • John O'Groat Journal • Advertised 16 and 23 October 2020

2.1 Pre-Application Meeting with the Highland Council

A pre-application meeting was held at the Highland Council offices in Inverness on 9 January 2019 to discuss the Development with consultees and the strategy for wind development in the Highland Council. Key issues discussed at the meeting included:

- The main concerns of NatureScot⁶ and the council consultees present was the landscape and visual impacts on designated areas. NatureScot also mentioned the impact of birds in the Special Protection Area and Wild Land Area;
- Scoping Report and baseline information to submit for the end of March 2019;
- The commencement of peat surveys to follow standard peat guidelines was recommended to aid scoping advise;
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) recommended limited infrastructure nearby water crossings to see minimal water course crossings as possible;
- SEPA also states that all Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE)⁷ must be avoided and that standard watercourse buffers (50 m from the top of a bank) must be adhered to;
- The Landscape Officer highlighted the potential impact on the popular tourist route (NC500) and the A836 at Ackron where development may affect the diverse characters of the area. It was stated that the determination of Drum Hollistan (subsequently refused and a new layout submitted) would be important for the future of Ackron;
- The Transport Planner emphasised the importance of an extensive transport assessment to be undertaken including a detailed Swept Path Analysis. Lastly, all construction routes were advised to be considered due to the blade lengths;
- It was recommended to complete a Processing Agreement which identifies key milestones in the planning application process and to set timescales for what needs to be provided for the application and why;
- The Council stated the Drum Hollistan proposal will have a significant effect on how the Development proceeds and because of the larger turbines being used, they will need to be set back further from the road as the current plans go against previous advice during the 2015 Scoping exercise;
- From the meeting the Highland Council requested the Viewpoints (VPs) wirelines, National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and Phase 1 habitat survey data;
- SEPA requested NVC and Phase 1 data; and
- NatureScot requested VPs.

Feedback received was noted and taken into consideration during the progression of the Development.

2.2 Pre-Application Written Response from the Highland Council

The Highland Council shared a report on 5 February 2019 following the pre-application meeting. The report highlighted which policies, supplementary guidance and other programmes it would expect Ackron Wind Farm to comply with.

The Council stated they are supportive of renewable energy development; however, the Council must be satisfied that the Development will not result in significant impacts on the considerations set out in the Development Plan.

Given the close proximity of the proposed turbines on the A836, the Council considered that they may have a significant adverse visual and landscape impact. Both the Council and NatureScot have concerns relating to the close proximity to the East Halladale Flows Wild Land Area. The Site also contains areas of blanket bog listed as Class 1 and 2 peatland.

⁶ Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) rebranded in August 2020 as NatureScot. Where relevant reference is still made to SNH within this chapter in respect of guidance which remains valid and is yet to be republished etc.

⁷ GWDTE are wetlands which critically depend on groundwater flows or chemistries.

These are nationally important carbon-rich soils, deep peat, and priority peatland habitat that are expected to be avoided.

The Site is within close proximity to two wind proposals both awaiting a decision from the Scottish Ministers (i.e. referring to the subsequently refused Drum Hollistan and consented Limekilns). Should both get approved then the Council would not be favourable to further development in this area.

The Council states that unless issues regarding the natural heritage of the area and the visual impact on the north coast are addressed, it is unlikely the Planning Authority would be able to support this proposal. However, further information will be required to determine the full impact of the proposal.

It is expected that the Development will engage with the local community and ensure the community benefit directly from the use of local resources and are compensated for the disruption and inconvenience associated with large scale development work.

Other impacts from the Development in their response include impacts on existing woodland areas, where four turbines are proposed within younger woodland plantations to the east. In addition, because of a potential noise impact, the Applicant will be required to submit a noise assessment in accordance with ETSU-R-97 The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms and the associated Good Practise Guide published by the Institute of Acoustics.

2.3 Scoping

A Scoping Report (19/01709/SCOP) was submitted to the Highland Council (THC) in April 2019 (hereafter referred to as the April 2019 Scoping Report) for the construction and operation of Ackron Wind Farm. A Scoping Opinion was requested under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 and issued on 6th June 2019.

On 1 May 2019, letters were sent to Caithness West, Melvich and Strathy & Armadale Community Councils informing them of the recent scoping submission to THC and Statkraft's commitment to early community engagement. This letter can be found in APPENDIX 2.

Letters were sent the following day to residents also informing them of the recent scoping submission to THC and Statkraft's commitment to early community engagement. This letter can be found in APPENDIX 3.

In October 2019, an Updated EIA Scoping Report (19/04756/SCOP) was prepared and submitted to the Highland Council to accompany a formal request for a scoping opinion for an Updated Site Boundary which extended further to the south. This should be used in conjunction with the April 2019 Scoping Report. A copy of the EIA Scoping Reports were issued to the following consultees:

- The Highland Council
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
- NatureScot
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Melvich Community Council
- Atkins
- Caithness West Community Council
- Civil Aviation Authority – Airspace
- Crown Estate Scotland
- BT
- Defence Infrastructure Organisations
- Fisheries Management Scotland

- Scottish Forestry
- Highlands and Islands Airports
- John Muir Trust
- Marine Scotland
- Mountaineering Scotland
- Northern District Salmon Fisheries Board
- NATS Safeguarding
- Ofcom
- RSPB Scotland
- Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society
- Scottish Water
- Scottish Wild Land Group
- Scottish Wildlife Trust
- Transport Scotland
- Visit Scotland

Consultation responses received as part of the Scoping process have been considered in the EIA. The issues raised and how these responses have been dealt with are reported in the relevant EIA Report chapters.

2.4 Proposal of Application Notice

A Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) was submitted to the Council and was accepted on 13 March 2020 (Planning Reference: 20/01286/PAN). The PAN was in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013⁸ and S35B of the Planning Act. The PAN response provided that a period of at least 12 weeks must elapse between giving the notice and submitting a planning application. On that basis, a planning application cannot be made until 5 June 2020 at the earliest subject to compliance with PAC procedures, as laid out in the aforementioned legislation.

2.5 Public Exhibitions

In June 2019, a Public Exhibition was held in Melvich on the 26 June 2019 to establish a dialogue with the local community regarding the Development.

A second Public Exhibition was scheduled to take place in April 2020; however, it was cancelled due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. A Virtual Exhibition was conducted between 20 October – 10 November 2020 **which included 'live Q&A' sessions.**

Further information on both Exhibitions is presented in Section 3 and Section 4 of this report.

2.6 Website

Statkraft established a project website for the presentation of information and as a mechanism whereby all interested parties can be kept up to date with developments.

Visitors are able to view details about the Development and contact the project team for further information via the website. There is also a feedback form which can be completed that allows comments on the proposal.

The website is available at: www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk.

Results of Website activity from 12 June 2019 – 30 November 2020 (Appendix 4) include:

- Over 1,400 visits recorded;

⁸ Town and Country Planning (2013) Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013 [Online]. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/155/contents/made> [Accessed 30/11/2020].

- 48% of visitors viewed multiple pages;
- 286 documents downloaded;
- 143 views of photo gallery; and
- 93 views of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

3 PUBLIC EXHIBITION JUNE 2019

3.1 Background

The first Exhibition was held at Melvich Community Hall, on 26 June 2019 as detailed in Table 3.1. This location was chosen because of the proximity of the hall to the Development site and as an accessible and central location relative to the communities being consulted. The event was open from the afternoon to the evening to maximise opportunities for people to attend.

Table 3.1: June 2019 Public Exhibition

Venue	Day	Date	Time
Melvich Community Hall, Melvich, KW14 7YL	Wednesday	26 June 2019	2pm – 8pm

3.2 Notification Letter

In keeping with the spirit of regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008, the Public Exhibition was advertised in several ways to ensure as many local residents as possible were made aware of the Development event.

A letter was issued to the Melvich, Caithness West, Strathy & Armadale Community Councils, local Councillors, MPs and MSPs on 11 June 2019 inviting them to visit the Public Exhibition on 26 June 2019. A Copy of this letter is presented in APPENDIX 5.

3.3 Introduction Letter from Richard Mardon (CEO of Airvolution, now called Statkraft)

Letters were sent on 13 June 2019 to Fergus Ewing MSP, Gail Ross MSP and Jamie Stone MP requesting a meeting to discuss the development, broadband, community ownership and Community Benefit Fund. Copies of the letters can be found in APPENDIX 6.

3.4 News Release on Public Exhibition

A news release was sent to local media to further promote the public exhibition. A copy of the news release and coverage can be found in APPENDIX 7.

3.5 Newspaper Adverts

Public notices were placed in the Northern Times and the John O’Groat Journal. The public notices set out the purpose of the public events and provided details of the event.

The notices were provided more than 7 days prior to the event with the notice public in **both the Northern Times and John O’Groat on Friday 14th and 21st June 2019. Copies of these notices are contained in the document as APPENDIX 8.**

3.6 Leaflets

In advance of the Exhibition, leaflets were distributed to approximately 650 dwellings within a 13 km radius of the Site which covered the settlements of Portskerra, Melvich and Reay. The leaflets set out the purpose of the public events, provided details of the event, and gave contact details for further information. A freepost reply card was also provided for comments to be returned to the Applicant. The aim of the reply cards was to provide an

opportunity to better understand the views of local residents with regards to climate change, wind energy and the Development proposal. An email address was provided where Statkraft can be contacted about the Development by emailing info@airvolutionenergy.com (which was subsequently updated to ukprojects@statkraft.com). A copy of the leaflet and reply card are provided in APPENDIX 9.

3.7 Posters

Posters advertising the PE were delivered to 15 commercial properties within a 13 km radius which contained details of the Public Exhibition. A copy of the poster can be seen in APPENDIX 10.

3.8 Exhibition

The exhibition boards on display at the Public Exhibition are provided as APPENDIX 11. The information presented included plans for the Development, an outline of the planning process including details about an environmental impact assessment, and information about community and local economic benefits. Interactive mapping software provided visitors with an opportunity to see how the Development would look from a variety of locations.

3.9 Exhibition Brochures

Brochures were available at the Public Exhibition and are provided within APPENDIX 12. The information included plans for the Development, details regarding the landscape, and local benefits such as access to a reliable and fast broadband connection.

3.10 Consultation Feedback

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) paragraph 6 states that opportunities should exist for everyone to engage in the development decisions that may affect them. Engagement should be early, meaningful, and proportionate. All expressions of support or concern should be taken into account in development proposals.

More than 40 residents and other interested parties attended the Public Exhibition at Melvich Community Hall.

Most attendees were able to find out the information they required through attendance at the event, however all those who had asked for more information at the events or via post or email received a response, within the limits of data protection principles.

All topics and questions raised through the consultation have been addressed in the EIA Report for the Development. For example, many of the viewpoint comments were addressed at the time using an interactive map which provided the public with a computer-generated graphic depicting how the Development would look from various viewpoints.

A follow up letter, addressed to Melvich Community Council, updated the Chair, Tina Wrighton, on Exhibition attendance, issues raised and enclosed copies of the Exhibition brochure. See APPENDIX 13 for a copy of the letter.

3.11 Post Exhibition News Release

A further news release issued to local media, expressed encouragement at the positive local response to the project. See APPENDIX 14 for a copy of the news release and media coverage.

3.12 Wireless Broadband Feasibility Study

Exploring the potential to use any Ackron Wind Farm technology to provide local residents and businesses with a superfast broadband hub, a Highland supplier was commissioned to

provide a wireless broadband feasibility study. This was then shared with the community and other key stakeholders, and a Community Broadband Liaison Group established. Statkraft hosted a special presentation on 18th March 2020 to present the details to further stakeholders in the community. Further details are provided in APPENDIX 15.

4 PUBLIC EXHIBITION 20 OCTOBER – 10 NOVEMBER 2020

4.1 Background

Due to unprecedented restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a revised consultation approach was put in place, guided by the Chief Planner’s letter dated 3 April 2020, The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 (which came into force on 07 April 2020) and Wrightson Town & Country Planning (Miscellaneous Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 and their specific provisions on pre-application engagement.

The Public Exhibition scheduled for 22 April 2020 could not go ahead as planned. However, a Public Virtual Exhibition⁹ was hosted between 20 October – 10 November 2020 in order to allow people the opportunity to comment on a revised project layout.

Statkraft used the same methods to advertise the Virtual Exhibition as the previous event held in June 2019, but also increased digital advertising to reflect the increase in online activity.

Table 3.2: Virtual Exhibition 20 October – 10 November 2020

www.ackron-windfarm.com	20 October – 10 November 2020 Q&A Dates	Q&A Times
Live Q&A session:	4 November 2020	11am – 1pm 5pm – 7pm
Live Q&A session:	10 November 2020	11am – 1pm 5pm – 7pm

4.2 Notification Letter

A letter was first issued to the Melvich, Caithness West and Strathy & Armadale Community Councils and Ward Councillors of The Highland Council on 20 October 2020 advising them of the Virtual Exhibition.

Letters were also sent to elected representatives notifying them of the virtual exhibition – see APPENDIX 16.

Letters were also sent to Community Councils notifying them of the virtual exhibition – see APPENDIX 17.

4.3 Newspaper and Social Media Adverts

Public notices were placed in **the Northern Times and the John O’Groat Journal on 16 October 2020 and 23 October 2020** to advise of the Virtual Exhibition.

To increase awareness of the event, a Facebook ad was also used to promote the Virtual Exhibition, between 28 October to 10 November 2020. The advertisement was targeted at users within 18 km of the site, and received 28,422 impressions, resulting in 245 clicks on the link, with 11 shares across Facebook.

Copies of the newspaper adverts can be found in APPENDIX 18.

⁹ The Scottish Government (2020) Online Public Exhibition established in accordance with COVID-19 Scottish Government advice and regulations [Online] Available online at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-planning-guidance-on-pre-application-consultations-for-public-events/> (Accessed 30/11/2020)

Screenshots of the Facebook advertising are provided in APPENDIX 19.

4.4 Leaflets

In advance of the Virtual Exhibition, leaflets were distributed to 600 households and 28 business addresses closest to the Site which covered all residences within the Melvich Community Council area such as Portskerra, Melvich and Forsinain, as well as further afield to areas such as Reay. The leaflets set out the purpose of the public events, provided details of how to visit the Virtual Exhibition, and gave contact details for further information.

A freepost reply card was also provided for comments to be returned to the Applicant. The **aim of the reply cards was to provide an opportunity for local residents who weren't able** to engage online to ask questions and make comment. A copy of the leaflet is provided in APPENDIX 20.

4.5 News release

A news release was sent to local media to further promote the virtual exhibition. A copy of the news release and coverage can be found in APPENDIX 21.

4.6 Verbal Communication

A project hotline continues to be available for residents to speak to a member of the project team: 0800 772 0668 (Monday to Fridays, 9am to 5pm).

For any online meetings held to discuss the project, an option is always provided for those to dial-in via a mobile or landline.

4.7 Digital First Approach

A separate website was set up to host the Virtual Exhibition, which could be accessed any time over a three week period, via a link from the Ackron project website. The Virtual Exhibition included (see APPENDIX 22):

- Exhibition boards: This is the project information usually presented at village hall exhibitions;
- Pre-recorded videos: To introduce the project team and addressing key aspects of the project;
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's): To help address the key questions visitors may have when visiting the consultation website for the first time.** This section was frequently updated to include responses to new queries raised by attendees;
- **Predicted Viewpoints: A 'slider tool' allowed visitors to easily compare and contrast** the current landscape with a photomontage of the predicted view from four key viewpoints within Melvich, Portskerra, Reay and Strath Halladale.
- Live Q&A sessions: Residents were provided with four separate opportunities to join a live, online Q&A with the project team throughout the exhibition period;
- **Request an appointment: A 'call-back' function on the website provided the** opportunity to request a one-to-one conversation with the Project Manager; and
- Online feedback forms: To leave feedback and comments or to ask the Project Team questions.

Over the duration of the Virtual Exhibition period, 383 visits were recorded. 174 of those visited multiple pages, with 69 visitors downloading 106 documents (APPENDIX 23).

Topics and questions raised through the consultation have been addressed in the EIA Report for the proposed Development.

The information displayed on the Virtual Exhibition remains available to view on the project website, which is continually being updated with the latest project information.

5 RESPONDING TO FEEDBACK

5.1 Key Issues Raised during Consultation

The public consultation and engagement programme for this project has been ongoing for nearly two years. It has coped with the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and used online solutions to ensure the community has been kept informed. People in the community have also been provided with several opportunities to give feedback in a variety of ways.

Local residents and elected representatives have provided feedback on a variety of project related issues, as well as providing their suggestions for the community benefit fund associated with the project, as well as feedback on suggestions for the project to deliver shared ownership and broadband benefits. The range of ideas and feedback provided has been recorded and will be taken into account at the appropriate time.

We do need to generate more electricity from renewable sources but we need to use it instead of just wasting energy or turbines turned off.

Caithness already generates more power via wind farms than the population here requires. If our landscape is to be blighted by further wind farms then we should see substantial cuts in our electricity bills.

Would be nice to see a footpath for the public to use, maybe a bike trail. I'm not too keen on community funds that benefit the few, but would welcome help with house insulation or home heating if that was available to all.

This site is in a beautiful part of Scotland, right on the NC500. The appearance of these turbines would be most detrimental to the scenery as their presence would be very much in the face of tourists and locals.

Local businesses to be included in tendering for some parts of the construction - not just huge companies from urban areas.

Very much in favour of shared ownership.

5.2 Responding to Issues Raised

The Development has evolved with the number of turbines, placement and distance from the coast all changing. In particular, Melvich Community Council has engaged with Statkraft towards the later stages of the development to outline their primary concern of construction transport. Statkraft operates with the ethos of being a good neighbour and has been able to respond positively to the concerns of the Community Council wishes. The design of the wind farm, the number of turbines, the siting of the turbines, and the transport route have all been altered as part of this consultation process.

The key design changes in response to the feedback received were as follows:

Issue: Project too close to coastline, causing visual impact

Response: The design has sought to increase the separation of the Development from the coastal landscapes and main coastal route (A836) with the closest turbine located approximately 2.4 km from the coast and 1 km from the A836. Two access options from the A836 and A897 were examined, with the A897 option selected as it did not require an access junction off the A836 and minimised visibility of the access track along the A836. Additionally, the design has sought to create a balanced, cohesive layout from nearby coastal communities of Melvich, Portskerra, and Reay.

Issue: Number of turbines and visual impact

Response: Through the design process, the turbines were reduced from up to 15 to up to 12 turbines in order to create a balanced, cohesive layout where turbines would be visible.

Issue: Impact on the A897 during construction phase

Response: Working with Melvich Community Council, Statkraft made a unique commitment in response to this issue. The company discussed the transport route in a presentation meeting on the 15th October 2020 (APPENDIX 24) and stipulate in its planning application that HGVs, cars and vans (connected to construction of the Ackron Wind Farm, if consented) would not be permitted to travel on the A897. Further, Statkraft committed to this stipulation being captured in its contracts with contractors, giving Melvich Community Council satisfaction that the company had listened to its concerns and acted on a verifiable solution. Statkraft also delivered a commitment letter to Melvich Community Council, confirming these details – **in the process, providing the community with a 'triple lock' on the transport solution: letter of commitment; inclusion in planning application;** and stipulation included in relevant construction contracts. See letter of commitment in APPENDIX 25.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The key design objectives for the Development were as follows:

- Siting of turbines away from the coast and from the A836;
- Limit proximity and visibility from sensitive receptors, including nearby properties and landscape designations;
- Limit impacts on priority peatland and carbon area;
- Respect other environment constraints; and
- Create a scheme which maximises the potential of the Site to generate renewable energy.

Initial capacity of the Site was estimated to be up to 15 turbines; however, as part of the design process which considers extensive environmental surveys, consultation, and feedback received at the Public Exhibitions, a final Development layout of up to 12 turbines is proposed.

Concerns and questions raised by members of the public at the Public Exhibitions and throughout the development process have been addressed through the assessments presented in the EIA Report.

6.1 Publication of the EIA Report

It is the intention of the Applicant to submit an EIA Report along with the application for consent. The Development will constitute a Schedule 2 Development as per the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017¹⁰ (The EIA Regulations).

In addition to the formal notification of the planning application there has been:

- A maintained and dedicated website (www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk) to receive comments relating to the proposed Development; and
- Ongoing contact through email, telephone conversation and meetings, with local residents.

¹⁰ Town and Country Planning (2017) Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 [Online] Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/102/pdfs/ssi_20170102_en.pdf (Accessed 26/06/2020)

APPENDICES

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Appendix 1: Consultation Timeline

1.5.19	Introduction letter to elected representatives explaining submission of scoping to Highland Council, seeking early engagement with Community Councils
1.5.19	Meeting with Drew Hendry MP, SNP Shadow Spokesperson for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy
2.5.19	Introduction letter to residents explaining submission of scoping doc to Highland Council and early engagement with Community Councils
11.6.19	Letters (and email copy) sent to Highland Council elected representatives advising them of the notice going to residents about the Exhibition, and offering a preview
13.6.19	Letters to Gail Ross MSP, Fergus Ewing MSP and Jamie Stone MP to request introductory meeting
14.6.19	News release DEVELOPER TO HOST ACKRON WIND FARM PUBLIC EXHIBITION and media coverage
14.6.19	Public notices in John O’Groat Journal and Northern Times advertising exhibition
11.6.19	Residents invite, including reply-paid postcards sent to 650 households
11.6.19	Posters sent out to 15 businesses advertising Public Exhibition
11.6.19	Letters to Melvich, Caithness West, and Strathy & Armadale Community Councils
12.6.19	Launch of project website www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk
21.6.19	Public notices in John O’Groat Journal and Northern Times advertising exhibition
21.6.19	Follow up calls to Highland Council elected representatives to invite to Public Exhibition
21.6.19	Follow up calls to local MSP’s to request meeting
26.6.19	Public Exhibition at Melvich Village Hall. Materials included: 8 Exhibition banners Printed exhibition brochure to take home High-res visuals and viewpoints on interactive screens Information brochures on shared ownership Feedback forms
27.6.19	Project team visited Forsinard Visitor Centre to provide exhibition information and offer further information
5.7.19	News release POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM WIND FARM PUBLIC EXHIBITION
8.7.19	Ackron Wireless Broadband Feasibility Study Produced
10.7.19	Letter to Melvich CC chair with exhibition follow up
3.9.19	Meetings with residents who had expressed interest in receiving further information
1.11.19	Melvich Community Council invited to Broadband presentation and other elected representatives and interested parties
18.11.19	Project team met several residents to provide an update on the project and hear feedback
10.12.19	Email to Melvich Community Council responding to queries on proposed transport route for construction traffic, and community funding
17.1.20	Email to Melvich Community Council – seeking feedback on further information and requesting a meeting with the new elected members
14.2.20	Email to Melvich Community Council – update for members at the February meeting, requesting presence at next meeting
5.3.20	Email to Melvich Community Council - confirming attendance at 18 March meeting (postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions)

10.3.20	Email to Melvich Community Council – invitation for members to attend presentation on potential from broadband from wind farms
18.3.20	Presentation to Community Leaders – “Potential of Broadband from Wind Farms”
18.3.20	Email to Melvich Community Council – providing copy of presentation on broadband
3.4.20	Email to Melvich Community Council – requesting a virtual meeting with the Committee to provide an update and meet new elected members
15.5.20	Meeting with sitting Chairperson of Melvich Community Council
6.7.20	Meeting with Melvich Community Council and new Chairperson
15.10.20	Meeting with Melvich Community Council with a focus on construction transport
16.10.20	Public notices in John O’Groat Journal and Northern Times advertising exhibition
20.10.20	Direct mail to over 600 households and businesses. Includes a freepost envelope and freephone number as an alternative to going online
20.10.20	Letter notifying elected representatives of online exhibition
20.10.20	News release on virtual exhibition and media coverage
20.10.20	Ackron Virtual Exhibition goes live and runs till 10th November. Materials on display include: Live Q&A chats on 4th and 10th November, 4 hours each day Interactive images showing proposal from various viewpoints Video presentations from project team Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Submit feedback or ask a question Project brochure
23.10.20	Public notices in John O’Groat Journal and Northern Times advertising exhibition
23.10.20	Letter notifying Community Councils of online exhibition
28.10.20	Sponsored Facebook post to target those living within 18km of the site
18.11.20	Transport update discussion with Melvich Community Council Chairperson
19.11.20	Meeting with Highland Council Transport Planners
30.11.20	Letter of Transport Commitment to Melvich Community Council

Appendix 2: 1 May 2019 Letter re. scoping submission to THC and early community engagement sent to Caithness West, Melvich, and Strathy & Armadale Community Councils

1st May 2019

George Carson
Caithness West Community Council – Chair
14 The Crescent
Glengolly
Thurso
KW14 7XL
By email chair@caithnesswestcc.co.uk

Ackron Wind Farm proposal

Dear Mr Carson,

I am writing to inform you that Airvolution Clean Energy Ltd is in the early stages of evaluating the possibility of developing a wind farm of up to 14 turbines on land located to the northeast of Ackron Farm, approximately 2 km southeast of Melvich. A small area of the proposal lies on the far western edge of Caithness West Community Council's boundary.

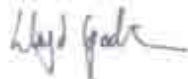
We are a leading independent wind farm developer with a proven track record in the UK. Over the past seven years our team has developed and built 11 onshore wind projects and in 2017 we entered a joint development partnership with Statkraft UK to identify, acquire, develop and construct over 300 MW of wind projects in the UK.

We have recently submitted a Scoping Report to Highland Council, requesting an opinion on the proposed scope of works for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

We will be starting some early engagement with the community before the summer holidays to talk more about our proposal and to hear the thoughts of all those interested. We are also writing to Melvich Community Council (within whose boundary the majority of the proposed site lies) and neighbouring Strathy and Armadale Community Council to the west, to inform them of the proposal and we will ensure that there are opportunities for local residents, community groups and other stakeholders to have their say throughout the development of the project.

If you would like to receive any additional information at this early stage, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Lloyd Godwin
Senior Development Manager

1st May 2019

Tina Wrighton
Melvich Community Council – Chair
Berrigoe
113 Portskerra
Melvich
KW14 7YL
By Email: melvichcommunitycouncil@gmail.com

ACKRON WIND FARM PROPOSAL

Dear Ms Wrighton,

I am writing to inform you that Airvolution Clean Energy Ltd is in the early stages of evaluating the possibility of developing a wind farm of up to 14 turbines on land located to the northeast of Ackron Farm, approximately 2 km southeast of Melvich. The majority of the proposed site lies to the eastern edge of Melvich Community Council's boundary.

We are a leading independent wind farm developer with a proven track record in the UK. Over the past seven years our team has developed and built 11 onshore wind projects and in 2017 we entered a joint development partnership with Statkraft UK to identify, acquire, develop and construct over 300 MW of wind projects in the UK.

We have recently submitted a Scoping Report to Highland Council, requesting an opinion on the proposed scope of works for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

We will be starting some early engagement with the community before the summer holidays to talk more about our proposal and to hear the thoughts of all those interested. We are also writing to Caithness West Community Council (on whose western boundary a small area of the proposal lies) and neighbouring Strathy and Armadale Community Council to the west, to inform them of the proposal and we will ensure that there are opportunities for local residents, community groups and other stakeholders to have their say throughout the development of the project.

If you would like to receive any additional information at this early stage, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Lloyd Godwin
Senior Development Manager

1st May 2019

Callum Macleod
Strathy and Armadale Community Council – Chair
93 Strathy Point
Strathy
Thurso
KW14 7RY
By Email : strathyarmadale.cc@gmail.com

Ackron Wind Farm proposal

Dear Mr Macleod,

I am writing to inform you that Airvolution Clean Energy Ltd is in the early stages of evaluating the possibility of developing a wind farm of up to 14 turbines on land located to the northeast of Ackron Farm, approximately 2 km southeast of Melrich. The majority of the proposed site lies to the eastern edge of Melrich Community Council's boundary, but we are writing to you as a neighbouring Community Council as a courtesy.

We are a leading independent wind farm developer with a proven track record in the UK. Over the past seven years our team has developed and built 11 onshore wind projects and in 2017 we entered a joint development partnership with Statkraft UK to identify, acquire, develop and construct over 300 MW of wind projects in the UK.

We have recently submitted a Scoping Report to Highland Council, requesting an opinion on the proposed scope of works for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

We will be starting some early engagement with the community before the summer holidays to talk more about our proposal and to hear the thoughts of all those interested. We are also writing to Melrich Community Council and Caithness West Community Council (on whose western boundary a small area of the proposal lies) to inform them of the proposal and we will ensure that there are opportunities for local residents, community groups and other stakeholders to have their say throughout the development of the project.

If you would like to receive any additional information at this early stage, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Lloyd Godwin
Senior Development Manager

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Appendix 3: First Letter to Residents Re Scoping Submission to THC And Early Community Engagement Sent On 2 May 2019

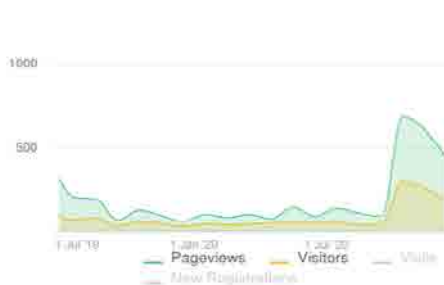


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Appendix 4: Website Analytics June 2019 – November 2020



Visitors Summary



Highlights

TOTAL VISITS	MAX VISITORS PER DAY	
1.4 k	57	
NEW REGISTRATIONS		
8		
ENGAGED VISITORS	INFORMED VISITORS	AWARE VISITORS
5	445	938

Aware Participants	938
Aware Actions Performed	Participants
Visited a Project or Tool Page	938
Informed Participants	445
Informed Actions Performed	Participants
Viewed a video	10
Viewed a photo	122
Downloaded a document	168
Visited the Key Dates page	4
Visited an FAQ list Page	78
Visited Instagram Page	0
Visited Multiple Project Pages	294
Contributed to a tool (engaged)	5

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Appendix 5: Letters Sent to The Following Elected Representatives Inviting Them to Public Exhibition and Copy of Residents Invite:

1. George Carson, Caithness West Community Council – Chair
2. Tina Wrighton, Melvich Community Council – Chair
3. Callum Macleod, Strathy and Armadale Community Council – Chair
4. Councillor Kirsteen Currie
5. Councillor Donnie Mackay
6. Councillor Struan Mackie
7. Councillor Hugh Morrison
8. Councillor Linda Munro
9. Councillor Matthew Reiss
10. Councillor Karl Rosie
11. Gail Ross MSP
12. Jamie Stone MP

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Appendix 6: Letters of Introduction from Richard Mardon (CEO Of Airvolution, Now Called Statkraft) To Fergus Ewing MSP, Gail Ross MSP And Jamie Stone MP, Requesting Meeting to Discuss Further Details of The Development

13th June 2019

Fergus Ewing MSP
112 Church Street
Inverness Highland
IV1 1EP

By email: Fergus.Ewing.msp@parliament.scot



Dear Mr Ewing

I am writing to you in my capacity of CEO of Airvolution Clean Energy. We develop wind farm projects on behalf of Statkraft, the biggest renewable energy company in Europe. Together we have made a commitment to growing our business in Scotland.

We are currently looking to develop wind farm projects in the Highlands and have recently met with Paul Wheelhouse MSP and Drew Hendry MP. We have a number of what we hope are interesting ideas on broadband, shared ownership and community benefit fund legacy which we would like to share with you.

To that end, we would very much welcome an opportunity to meet with you in the constituency or at Holyrood and provide you with further details of our plans.

I thank you for your time and hope that we can meet at your earliest possible convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Mardon
Chief Executive



13th June 2019

Gail Ross MSP
106 High Street
Invergordon
IV18 0DR
By email: Gail.Ross.msp@parliament.scot

Dear Ms Ross,

I am writing to you in my capacity of CEO of Airvolution Clean Energy. We develop wind farm projects on behalf of Statkraft, the biggest renewable energy company in Europe. Together we have made a commitment to growing our business in Scotland.

We are currently looking to develop wind farm projects in the Highlands and one in particular is in your constituency, 2km south east of Melvich. We have recently met with Paul Wheelhouse MSP and Drew Hendry MP as part of our wider plan to invest more in Scotland. We have a number of what we hope are interesting ideas on broadband, shared ownership and community benefit fund legacy which we would like to share with you.

To that end, we would very much welcome an opportunity to meet with you in the constituency or at Holyrood and provide you with further details of our plans.

I thank you for your time and hope that we can meet at your earliest possible convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Mardon
Chief Executive



13th June 2019

Jamie Stone MP
Hillview
Market Street
Tain
Ross Shire, IV19 1AR
By email: jamie.stone.mp@parliament.uk

Dear Mr Stone,

I am writing to you in my capacity of CEO of Airvolution Clean Energy. We develop wind farm projects on behalf of Statkraft, the biggest renewable energy company in Europe. Together we have made a commitment to growing our business in Scotland.

We are currently looking to develop wind farm projects in the Highlands and one in particular is in your constituency, 2km south east of Melvich. We have recently met with Paul Wheelhouse MSP and Drew Hendry MP as part of our wider plan to invest more in Scotland. We have a number of what we hope are interesting ideas on broadband, shared ownership and community benefit fund legacy which we would like to share with you.

To that end, we would very much welcome an opportunity to meet with you in the constituency or at Holyrood and provide you with further details of our plans.

I thank you for your time and hope that we can meet at your earliest possible convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Mardon
Chief Executive

Airvolution Clean Energy Limited. Registered in England & Wales 11661881 at 50 Graybrook Street, London, England, W1H 7JG

+44 (0) 141 685 2285
www.airvolutionenergy.com

Airvolution Clean Energy Limited
3 West Regent Street
Glasgow
G2 1SW

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Appendix 7: News Release – Developer to Host Ackron Wind Farm Public Exhibition

PRESS RELEASE

Embargoed: 00.01 Friday 14 June 2019



DEVELOPER TO HOST ACKRON WIND FARM PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Airvolution Clean Energy, who develop wind farm projects on behalf of Statkraft, the largest renewable energy generator in Europe, will be holding a public exhibition at **Melwich** Village Hall on Wednesday, June 26th.

Airvolution will be presenting details of their proposed **Ackron** Wind Farm, located 2km southeast of **Melwich**.

No planning application has been made, this is early-stage engagement to introduce the company and their interest in the site.

Airvolution will explain their ideas around shared ownership, local construction and the fund legacy that could see £245,000 each year being available to the community, after construction.

The company also believe there is an opportunity for their project to bring improved broadband to the area.

Senior Development Manager for the **Ackron** Project, Lloyd Godwin, said: "This public exhibition is an opportunity for Airvolution to explain the details of the **Ackron** Wind Farm project to those attending and, even more importantly, to hear the views and thoughts of the community and elected representatives.

"We hope to see as many residents and interested parties as possible at the exhibition."

Public exhibition: Wednesday 26th June, 2pm - 8pm, **Melwich** Village Hall. All welcome to attend.

Project Website www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

Further details about Airvolution can be found at www.airvolutionenergy.com

ENDS

+44 (0) 1463 714403
john.ross@system2.eu
Airvolution Clean Energy Limited
3 West Square, 20194
Glasgow
G2 2JW

Airvolution Clean Energy Limited, Registered in England, Registered Office: 3 West Square, Glasgow, G2 2JW

Please note that all media enquiries for the **Ackron** Wind Farm proposal should be directed to:

System2:

John Ross
Head of Media Content
Tel: (01463) 714403
Mobile: 077300 99617
Email: johnross@system2.eu
Twitter: @system2john

or

Peter Kane
Director
Mobile: 07742 308213
Email: peterkane@system2.eu
Twitter: @system2peter

Notes:

About Airvolution:

Airvolution Clean Energy are leading independent wind farm developers with a proven track record and develop onshore wind projects in Scotland solely for Statkraft, Europe's largest renewable energy generator.

Airvolution are committed to maximising the local benefits to communities during construction and operations. During the construction of two turbines at **Yulelog** Farm in Anglesey, 35% of the construction spend stayed within Anglesey.

A community benefit fund is established at project sites which provides an annual financial contribution to local projects in the community, and shared ownership opportunities are actively discussed with communities during planning.

Ackron Wind Farm

For further details on the project, please visit the dedicated project website: www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

Media coverage, including social media posts 2019

The Northern Times

Home
News
Coronavirus
Sport
Inspiration
Lifestyle
What's On
Family Notices
Energy North
🔍

🏠 Home > 📰 News > 📄 Article

Windfarm plan for Melvich

👤 By Staff Reporter
🕒 Published: 17:00, 13 June 2019

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Developers of the Ackron project are to hold an exhibition later this month.

Plans are on the table for a windfarm near Melvich.

Airvolution Clean Energy is proposing a development two kilometres south east of the village, although a planning application has yet to be submitted.

The firm intends to hold a community engagement event at the village hall at the end of the month.

MOST READ



Trust buys mission building land for just £1



Promising progress at Golspie High School



Appeal for information following fatal road accident



Flagship Highland store to be 'wound down' as Debenhams to be liquidated



Man rescued after falling from boat



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Appendix 8: Public Notices for June 2019 Public Exhibition

In addition to print, digital adverts were also placed in each online paper, with impressions being delivered to residents within a 16km radius of the proposed extension site.

John O'Groat Journal public notices 14.6.19 and 21.6.19

ACKRON WIND FARM PROPOSAL

Airvolution and Statkraft would like to invite you to discuss plans for a 14 turbine wind farm at Ackron, 2km south east of Melvich.

Our team will be present and will be able to answer questions and explain more about the proposal.

WEDNESDAY, 26TH JUNE, 2PM TO 8PM

Melvich Village Hall, KW14 7YL

Find out more:

Telephone: 01463 714403

www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

info@airvolutionenergy.com



The collage shows several pages from the John O'Groat Journal. The top left page features the 'ACKRON WIND FARM PROPOSAL' advertisement, including the Statkraft and Airvolution logos and contact information. The top right page shows 'classifiedsnorth' with various job listings and advertisements. The middle section contains several 'publicnotices' and 'jobsnorth' ads. The bottom right page features a large advertisement for 'MOTORS.co.uk/north' with the slogan 'GET YOUR WHEELS IN MOTION' and contact details for car sales and repairs. The bottom left page shows a 'MOTORS.co.uk/north ADVERTISE TODAY' banner.

Northern Times public notices 14.6.19 and 21.6.19

ACKRON WIND FARM PROPOSAL

Airvolution and Statkraft would like to invite you to discuss plans for a 14 turbine wind farm at Ackron, 2km south east of Melvich.

Our team will be present and will be able to answer questions and explain more about the proposal.

WEDNESDAY, 26TH JUNE, 2PM TO 8PM

Melvich Village Hall, KW14 7YL



Find out more:

Telephone: 01463 714403

www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

info@airvolutionenergy.com



public notices			
<p>TO ADVERTISE IN THE NT RING</p> <p>01408 633003</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>ACKRON WIND FARM PROPOSAL</p> <p>Airvolution and Statkraft would like to invite you to discuss plans for a 14 turbine wind farm at Ackron, 2km south east of Melvich.</p> <p>Our team will be present and will be able to answer questions and explain more about the proposal.</p> <p>WEDNESDAY, 26TH JUNE, 2PM TO 8PM</p> <p>Melvich Village Hall, KW14 7YL</p> <p>Find out more:</p> <p>Telephone: 01463 714403</p> <p>www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk</p> <p>info@airvolutionenergy.com</p> <p> </p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>PLEASE NOTE:</p> <p>Our advertising deadlines are:</p> <p>Features: Fridays (prior to issue) 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>All other adverts: (except death notices) Tuesdays - 12 noon</p> </div>		
<p>SSF Generation 1 notice</p> <p>ELECTRICITY ACT 1989 (SECTION 36C)</p> <p>THE ELECTRICITY WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017</p> <p>Notice is hereby given that SSF Generation 1 notice (Company registration number 0231007) and office at 55 Victoria Road, Dundee, DD1 1JL, has applied to the Scottish Ministers to vary the section 36C consent to construct and operate the proposed 14-turbine wind farm at Ackron, 2km south east of Melvich, approximately 2.5km to the north west of the Central Grid Reference NZ 807 176 previously consented on 29th September 2017 by Scottish Ministers (the variation application). The proposed variation is subject to Environmental Impact Assessment.</p> <p>SSF Generation 1 has now submitted additional information to Scottish Ministers, which includes information on changes to the Proposed Scheme Development, required following ground investigation which indicates some subsidence of the application, namely subsidence of between 4 to approximately 17cm and subsidence of associated access track depth, instead of one turbine per search area, inclusion of one additional turbine per search area, subsidence of the concrete building plots, and construction of an additional area 250m² of access track.</p> <p>It is a condition of the variation application and the additional information prepared in relation to the proposed wind farm that the additional information be made available for public inspection in person, free of charge.</p> <p>Copies of the additional information are available for public inspection in person, free of charge:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;"> Planning and Design Department Dundee City Council Dundee City Centre Dundee, DD1 1JL Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm Monday 10am to 12pm (14th July 2019) </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;"> Dundee City Council Dundee City Centre Dundee, DD1 1JL Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm Monday 10am to 12pm (14th July 2019) </td> </tr> </table> <p>They may also be viewed at the Scottish Government Energy at Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ and at the following website: www.energy.scot.nhs.uk</p> <p>Copies of the information may be viewed from SSE Renewable Developments (SR) Ltd (at 01463 224742) or a change of 01463 224742 and 01463 224742. Copies of a short non-technical summary are available free of charge. Any representations to the application may be submitted via the Energy Consents (EC) website at www.energyconsents.gov.uk or by email to the Scottish Government, Energy Consents Unit, 10th Floor, 5, Albert Quay, 100 Leith Street, Glasgow G2 3JL, identifying the proposal and specifying the grounds for representation.</p> <p>Representations should be made, clearly stating the name (in block capitals), full return email and postal address of those making representations. Only representations sent by email to representations@energy.ec.gov.uk will receive acknowledgement.</p> <p>All representations should be received not later than 23rd July 2019, although Ministers may consider representations received after this date.</p> <p>Any subsequent additional information which is submitted by the developer will be subject to further public notice in the news and representations to such information are assigned to you by notice.</p> <p>In a result of a summary objection from the relevant planning authority or where Scottish Ministers decide to require their decision to be so, Scottish Ministers can also issue a Public Local Inquiry (PLI) to be held.</p> <p>Making a contribution to the environmental statement and all views and representations received. Scottish Ministers will administer the application for consent in one of the ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent the proposal with or without conditions attached to • Refuse the proposal <p>All previous representations received in relation to this development remain valid.</p> <p>General Data Protection Regulation</p> <p>The Scottish Government (Energy Consents) Unit processes personal data provided and consultation representations under the Electricity Act 1989. During the process, it is required to carry out a risk assessment for Scottish Government websites under the www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk and a privacy notice will be provided to you as published on the help page at www.energyconsents.gov.uk. There is a link to the Energy Consents Unit privacy notice on the help page at www.energyconsents.gov.uk. Please contact the Energy Consents Unit if you have any questions about how we process your personal information.</p> <p>Energy Consents Unit, 10th Floor, 5, Albert Quay, 100 Leith Street, Glasgow G2 3JL.</p>		Planning and Design Department Dundee City Council Dundee City Centre Dundee, DD1 1JL Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm Monday 10am to 12pm (14th July 2019)	Dundee City Council Dundee City Centre Dundee, DD1 1JL Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm Monday 10am to 12pm (14th July 2019)
Planning and Design Department Dundee City Council Dundee City Centre Dundee, DD1 1JL Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm Monday 10am to 12pm (14th July 2019)	Dundee City Council Dundee City Centre Dundee, DD1 1JL Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm Monday 10am to 12pm (14th July 2019)		

Appendix 9: June 2019 Leaflet Invite to Public Exhibition. A Freepost Reply Card Was Also Enclosed to Return Feedback

Airvolution Clean Energy


We're innovative and community focused

Airvolution is dedicated to engaging with communities and finding different ways to bring positive benefits.

We want to talk to you about how our project can bring new investment to your community. We have a track record of making sure that the economic value our projects bring is shared with local residents and businesses.


We are open to your ideas.

The projects we develop deliver an annual community fund. This project will generate over £240,000 per year for local groups and initiatives. We would also like to hear your views on enabling the community to have a financial stake in the project, so please come along to our exhibition on 26 June.



Hywel Williams, Hywel Williams Brothers
Contracted by Airvolution to build the substation at Yeading Farm, Angelsey


We won an award for our approach to helping to improve local life in our project at Yeading Farm, Angelsey.



Airvolution Clean Energy

Ackron Wind Farm Proposal

We would like to tell you more about ourselves and our proposal for a sustainable energy project, including community investment and improved broadband potential in your area.




Come along to our public exhibition from 26 June and meet your MP


A development partnership

Statkraft is a leading generator of renewable energy in Europe, committed to working ethically and innovatively. They have a proven track record for engaging fully with communities in Scotland and delivering substantial funds for community benefit.


Airvolution safely develops suitable wind farm projects throughout Scotland for Statkraft to build, own and operate.



Can't Make it?
We want to hear from you.



Please return the freepost reply card provided.






Phone the project hotline on: 01463 714403

Complete the reply card online:
www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

Airvolution Clean Energy Limited

1 Wind Power Centre,
Gardens,
G1 7JH

T: +44 (0)141 8221086
E: ackron@airvolution.co.uk
W: www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

Ackron Wind Farm Proposal

Project Summary:

14 Up to 14 wind turbines proposed

£245k Per year for community funding*

150m Maximum height

Exciting new opportunity to talk about energy ownership and local suppliers

Potential for improved broadband provision

* Based on 14 x 3.6MW turbines, and 05,000 per MW installed.

Community engagement is very important to us.

We would like to invite you to our public exhibition at Melvich Village Hall on 26th June. We are committed to listening to communities as we seek to shape our development before it is finalised.



We believe there could be an exciting opportunity for our project to bring improved broadband to the area. Please come along to find out more.

Project Exhibition:

Ackron Wind Farm

Melvich Village Hall,
Melvich, Thurso
KW14 7YL

Wednesday
26 June 2019
2pm – 8pm

www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk



You can find out more about our projects and the way we work at: www.airvolutionenergy.com



Appendix 10: Copy of Public Exhibition Poster Sent June 2019 - Posters Were Delivered To 15 Commercial Properties Within A 13km Radius and Each Recipient Was Invited to Advertise the Consultation by Displaying the Poster

Ackron Wind Farm Proposal

 **Involution Clean Energy Ltd**
1 West Regent Street,
Glasgow,
G2 1RW

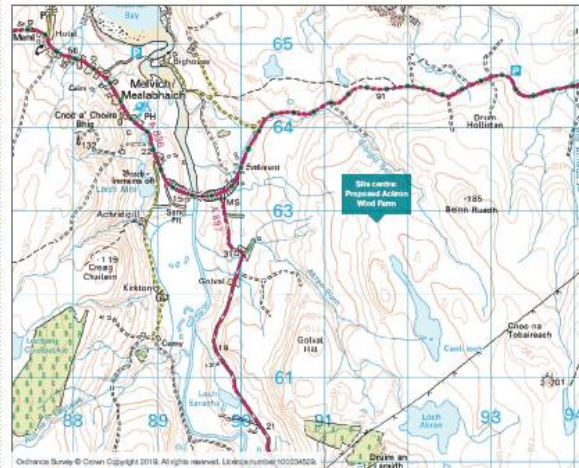
Project Summary:

We believe there is potential for a wind farm in this area and would like to tell you more about ourselves and our proposal, including community investment it could bring.

Project Exhibition:

- 14 Up to 14 wind turbines proposed
- £245k Per year for community funding*
- 🌪️ Maximum height 150m
- 💬 Exciting new opportunity to talk about shared ownership and local suppliers
- 📶 Potential for improved broadband provision

* Based on 14 x 3.5MW turbines, and £5,000 per MW installed.



There could be an exciting opportunity for our project to bring improved broadband to the area. Please come along to find out more.

Ackron Wind Farm

Melvich Village Hall,
Melvich, Thurso
KW14 7YL

Wednesday
26 June 2019
2pm – 8pm

www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk
Project hotline: 01463 714403



 www.involutionenergy.com

 **Statkraft** www.statkraft.co.uk

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Appendix 11: Copy of Public Exhibition Boards June 2019

Welcome

We are assessing the potential for Ackron Farm to host a sustainable energy project.

Our team are here to discuss plans and to listen to your views before we consider submitting a planning application.

About Airvolution

- A leading independent onshore wind developer with offices in Scotland and England
- Established in 2010, and solely develop wind farms in Scotland for Statkraft to build, own and operate since 2017
- Combined experience of over 2 Gigawatts of onshore wind projects delivered across Scotland, England and Wales
- A proven track record for delivering wind farm projects across the UK, having completed 11 to date

About Statkraft

- 3600 employees in 16 countries and has operated in the UK since 2006
- The largest generators of renewable energy in Europe
- More than 350 power plants around the world
- Invested over £1.4 billion in renewable energy infrastructure in the UK
- Owns and operates four onshore wind farms and one hydropower plant in the UK

Onshore wind generated revenues of £1.4 billion in 2017 —

Ackron Project

We believe this is a good site to assess the potential for generating clean electricity.

The layout shown below is what we think is currently possible. When our studies are complete, we will consult again and present our conclusions.

Key Facts

14 turbines to generate maximum capacity	150m maximum turbine height	210 GWh generating capacity
49 MW installed capacity	£245k per MW for construction	55,000 homes supplied

Based on 14 x 3.5MW turbines and £235 per MW installed

*Based on 14 x 3.5MW turbines, 100% capacity factor, 8760 hours per year, 100% availability and 100% capacity factor. Actual capacity may vary.

Our Preliminary Assessment

Proven wind speeds on site make it an excellent location for a wind farm.

The Site is **not** within Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC/Ramsar or East Hallidale SSSI.

Location facilitates access for delivery of turbine components.

The site is **not** covered by any statutory or nationally protected landscape-based planning designations.

The site is partially located within an area identified within the Council's Supplementary Guidance as an area with potential for wind farm development.

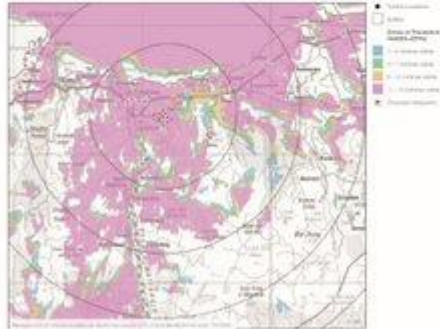
Onshore wind currently employs 5,800 people across Scotland —

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessments



Local residents will want to know how our proposal would look.

Today, we are able to share with you our interactive computer software to help indicate what the preliminary wind farm layout could look like from certain locations.



As part of our studies, we will be creating images showing how the wind turbines could look from a variety of locations. These will be available to view when the planning application documents are submitted to the planning authority.

The locations of the viewpoints will be agreed with Scottish Natural Heritage and Highland Council. They will form part of a full landscape and visual assessment of our proposal.

The design process will consider the various landscape designations surrounding the site such as those associated with the nearby Flow Country and the Fingert, Bealby and Portholme Special Landscape Area.

Please talk to a member of our team to find out more.

Scotland is considered to have some of the best wind energy resource in Europe

What are ZTVs?

- ZTVs (Zone of Theoretical Visibility) are areas around the site where the wind turbines could be seen from a given location.
- The ZTVs are used to help determine the potential visual impact of the wind farm layout.
- The ZTVs are used to help determine the potential visual impact of the wind farm layout.
- The ZTVs are used to help determine the potential visual impact of the wind farm layout.

Environmental Impact Assessment



The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a comprehensive assessment of the potential environmental effect of a project and is legally required.

This ultimately comprises a balancing exercise as to whether the environmental benefits of a renewable energy scheme outweigh its environmental impact.



The EIA is then incorporated into an EIA Report to accompany the planning application, which will be publicly available. Statkraft consultants, key stakeholders, and members of the public are able to comment upon the application before the Highland Council make a decision. Areas covered in the EIA Report will include landscape, ecology, ornithology, hydrology, geology, noise, land use, socio-economics, tourism, climate change, and carbon balance as well as the following:

Cultural Heritage



A survey will be undertaken that will identify any cultural heritage assets that will be of particular focus, such as the listed buildings in Melich and Hays and the Scheduled Historical single hut sites. Talk to a member of our team to find out more.

Traffic & Transportation



We are very aware of the need to minimise the impact on local residents during construction and will pay careful attention to the traffic routes we propose to use. Components would likely be delivered to Strathgairn Plant and then along the A9 and A830 to site. Our assessment will focus on the movement of construction equipment, road network to include adjoining roads and construction related traffic.

Wildlife



Independent experts have been undertaking bird surveys on and around the site for the past 2 years and further ecological surveys to be undertaken this summer. The surveys are in accordance with Scottish Natural Heritage standards and will inform the final design. The EIA Report will include full details of these surveys and demonstrate how significant impacts on protected or notable species will be avoided.

Our aim is to deliver increased biodiversity for wildlife on the site and along a 1km buffer zone.

Peatland & Habitats



Hereditary peat probing was undertaken earlier this year and the layout reviewed to ensure the avoided areas of deep peat. Further habitat details are scheduled for the summer and will identify any sites associated with peatland habitats, for example, heathland and bog.

70% of Scotland's electricity demand was met by renewables in 2017

Community Benefit



We want to talk with you about how our project can bring new investment to your community. We have a track record of making sure that the economic value our projects bring are shared with local residents and businesses.



"The contract was seen favourable to us. The local made know contacts and from regional news were because of it. We engaged ourselves on the site. All our workers lived with the value away, which meant staying in extra cap at the morning."

Hywel Pritchard, Pritchard Brothers
Contracted by Arkonidion to build the substation at Yagellog Farm, Argloway



Community Benefit Fund

A commitment to £5,000 per MW installed, as per Scottish Government best practice guidance.

Community Ownership

We work with Local Energy Scotland and communities to explore different models available. Tell us your views.

Broadband Potential

We would like to work with you to see if we can unlock the potential to deliver improved broadband in the area.

Local Investment

We have a history of ensuring local businesses benefit first and foremost by making a commitment to prioritise local suppliers.

Education & Enterprise

We welcome your views on how the wind farm can directly or indirectly benefit those who are in education or training, and support local businesses.

Onshore wind is the cheapest form of new-build electricity generation in the UK ...

Independent surveys consistently show over 78% of people support onshore wind



Wireless Broadband Feasibility Study



We are always exploring ways in which we can provide positive benefits to local communities near our projects.

We are often asked by people if we can help deliver faster broadband or even get them connected in the first place. Access to a reliable and fast broadband connection is often an issue in rural areas. With this in mind, we have taken some initial action to investigate this.



How it could work: A mast about 20m high on the site provides to a small site. Covers an area. The feasibility study shows the coverage potential by placing two masts at each end of the site.

We have commissioned an early stage Fixed Wireless Broadband Feasibility Study to explore the potential for using the infrastructure of our project at Arkonidion to deliver super fast broadband. Here's what we have discovered so far:

It's Feasible



Further technological and in-depth engineering studies are required, but initial findings show that fixed wireless broadband could be established to provide a service to large areas of the local community.

A Benefit



Such a service, if implemented, could provide the potential for commercial and residential benefits.

It's Fast



Potential download speeds could be as high as 30-40Mbps, and because fixed wireless broadband can offer a synchronous service, it means upload speeds would be just as fast, unlike the 'turn to the cabinet' service.

Next Steps



At a later stage, we would like to host a presentation with the independent supplier who carried out the feasibility study. If you would like to know more about its potential reach and capability, please talk to us.

A modern wind turbine will pay back all the energy used in its production within the first year

Planning consents for onshore wind farms are generally for a 25 year operating period



Proposed Timeline



Throughout the process, Airvolution and Statkraft will continuously engage with the local community and stakeholders about the emerging proposals.

1. Site selection	2. Pre-planning	3. Submit Application & Await Decision
<p>(12 months)</p> <p>Extensive research to identify suitable sites, positive economic and local impact, wind speed and turbine environmental and technical assessments.</p>	<p>(12 to 18 months)</p> <p>Prepare the new of England Consent (or the new of study prepared) (known as 'Planning') System in application for a Site Visit is submitted to ensure wind speed at the site. A private address using information gathered from site studies, public feedback and engagement with statutory consultees.</p>	<p>(12 months)</p> <p>An application will be submitted to the Planning Consent, accompanied by a comprehensive set of studies showing the results of all of the assessments. There is public consultation. Members of the public and statutory consultees can formally comment on the application.</p>
4. Construction	5. Operation	6. Decommission
<p>(12 to 18 months)</p> <p>If approved, construction begins at least one year after consent. Construction typically takes 18 to 24 months, and planning conditions are likely to include elements of construction.</p>	<p>(25 years)</p> <p>Turbines are managed by an on-site maintenance team, and operations to commence by obtaining planning conditions. A consent will have a permit throughout to support weathering community initiatives.</p>	<p>(12 months)</p> <p>At the end of the planning period, turbines are removed and the site returned to a natural state in a way to cover the cost.</p>

* We have just started this phase
Please note, these dates are indicative and provide a guide

Omission wind generates over £10m each year for Scottish communities



Next Steps



We welcome your comments and would be grateful if you would fill out one of the feedback forms provided.



Our board are all actively engaged. Your comments and feedback can help to shape and improve our proposals and help to generate

When we make our proposals we will consult appropriate government departments.

We will submit a consent application in early 2023 and the full suite of application documents would be publicly available in 2023.

We would like to keep you updated on our plans progress.

Contact Us

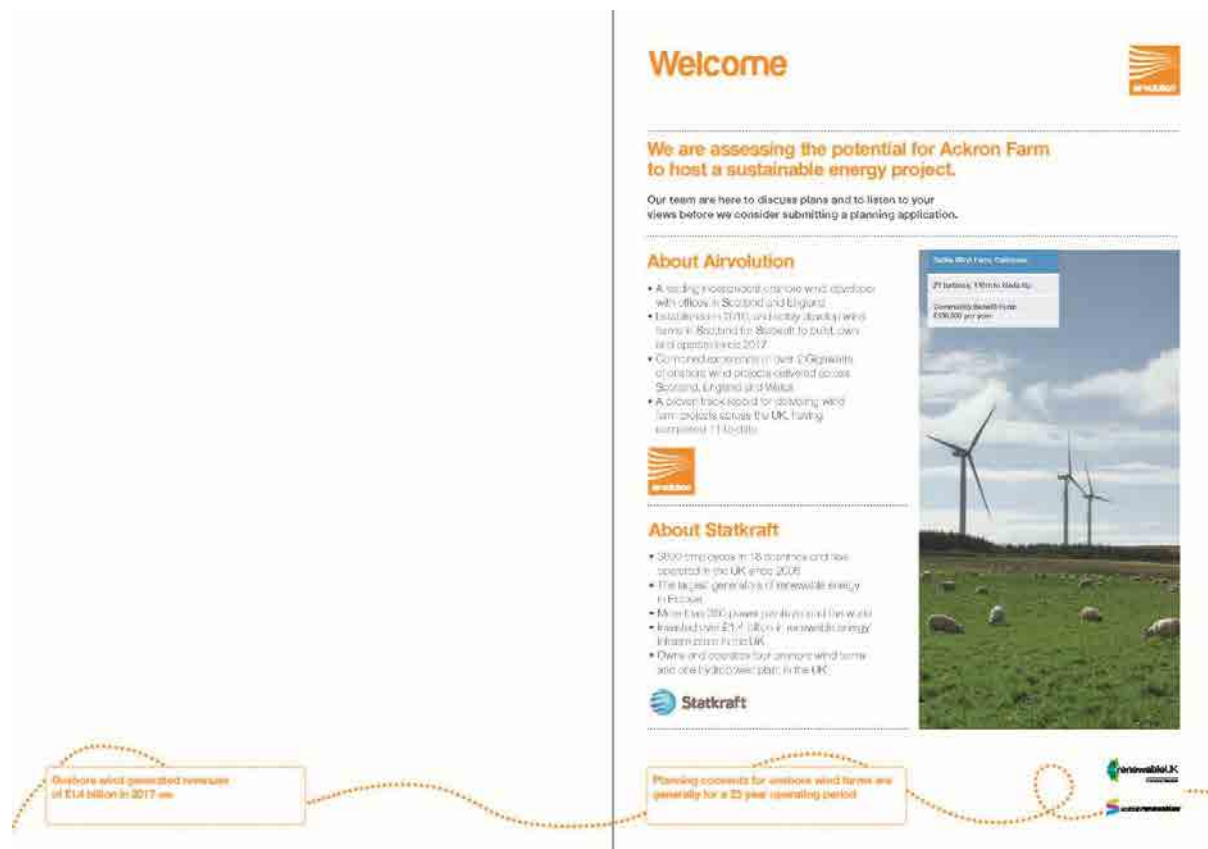
info@airvolution.co.uk
www.airvolution.co.uk

01629 714444
 01629 714444

14 turbines at Ackron
Farm are sufficient to generate
electricity equivalent to the
needs of over 10,000 homes.



Appendix 12: Copy of Public Exhibition Brochure June 2019



Ackron Project



We believe this is a good site to assess the potential for generating clean electricity.

The layout shown below is what we think is currently possible. When our studies are complete, we will consult again and present our conclusions.



Our Preliminary Assessment

Proven wind speeds on site make it an excellent location for a wind farm.

The site is **not** within Croichains and Sutherland Peatlands SAC/Flanner or East Hailstain SSSI.

Location facilitates access for delivery of turbine components.

The site is **not** covered by any statutory or nationally protected landscape-based planning designations.

The site is partially located within an area identified within the Council's Supplementary Guidance as an area with potential for wind farm development.

A modern wind turbine will pay back all the energy used in its production within 10 to 12 years* (Wind Energy Foundation of Scotland, 2018)

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessments



Local residents will want to know how our proposal would look.

All part of our studies, we will be creating images showing how the wind turbines could look from a variety of locations. These will be available to view with the planning application on occasions when it is submitted.

The locations of the viewpoints will be agreed with Scottish Natural Heritage and Highland Council. Single Farm parcel (SFC) landscape-related constraints (if any) will also be considered.

The design process will include the various landscape designations and any other local (such as the local authority) with the nearby Highland Council and Highland Council, Perth and Kinross Council, and Perth and Kinross Council.

Please talk to a member of our team to find out more.

Key Facts

14 sites to 15 wind turbines currently proposed	A maximum turbine height of just over 150m	Generating over 210 GWh per year**
49 MW installed capacity at up to	£245k per year for community benefit	Equivalent to the current consumption of over 55,000 homes**

*Based on 14 x 2.0MW turbines and 0.6MW per MW capacity
**Based on 14 x 2.0MW turbines, but available site area and average annual localised generation of 12,200kWh/0.625 GWh

Onshore wind currently employs 3,000 people across Scotland on

Environmental Impact Assessment



The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a comprehensive assessment of the potential environmental effect of a project and is legally required.

The ultimately comprises a balancing exercise as to whether the environmental benefits of a renewable energy scheme outweigh its environmental impact.



The EIA is then incorporated into an EIA Report to accompany the planning application, which will be publicly available. Statutory consultees, key stakeholders, and members of the public are able to comment upon the application before the Highland Council makes a decision. Areas covered in the EIA Report will include landscape, ecology, ornithology, hydrology, geology, noise, land use, socio-economics, tourism, climate change, and carbon balance as well as the following:

Independent surveys consistently show over 75% of people support onshore wind (Scottish Planning Forum)

Environmental Impact Assessment



<h3>Cultural Heritage</h3> <p>A survey will be undertaken this summer to inform our assessment, including visual effects. We have identified key heritage assets that will be of particular focus, such as the listed buildings in Melvich and Ferry and the Scheduled Historic Bridge that crosses the A9 and A930 to the west. Our assessment will focus on the movement of traffic along the public road network to include abnormal loads and construction related traffic.</p>	<h3>Traffic & Transportation</h3> <p>We are very aware of the need to minimise the impact on local residents during construction and will pay careful attention to the traffic routes we propose to use. Components would likely be delivered to Strathclyde Park and then along the A9 and A930 to site. Our assessment will focus on the movement of traffic along the public road network to include abnormal loads and construction related traffic.</p>
<h3>Wildlife</h3> <p>Independent experts have been undertaking bird surveys on and around the site for the past 3 years with further ecological surveys to be undertaken this summer. The surveys are in accordance with Scottish Natural Heritage standards and will inform the final design. The EIA Report will include full details of these surveys and demonstrate how significant impacts on protected or notable species were avoided.</p> <p>Our aim is to deliver increased improvements for wildlife on the site and show a biodiversity gain.</p>	<h3>Peatland & Habitats</h3> <p>Preliminary peat probing was undertaken earlier this year and the layout presented today has avoided areas of deep peat. Peatland habitat studies are scheduled for this summer and will identify any flora associated with peaty moorland, for example, heathland and bog.</p>

Onshore wind generates over £10m each year for Scottish communities (Scottish Planning Forum)

Community Benefit



We want to talk with you about how our project can bring new investment to your community. We have a track record of making sure that the economic value our projects bring are shared with local residents and businesses.



"This contract has been awarded to us. We have made some investments and have received many work orders as a result. We are very pleased to be on the site. All our workers have just received their wages, which means enjoying an extra day of pay in the coming week."

Mycol Prichard,
Prichard Electrical Services
Contractor to the substation at Yagellop farm, Anglesey



Community Benefit Fund

A commitment to £5,000 per MW installed, in accordance with Scottish Government best practice guidance.

Community Ownership

We work with Local Energy Scotland and communities to explore different models available. Tell us your views.

Employment Training

We would like to work with you to see if we can unlock the potential to deliver improved broadband in the area.

Local Investment

We have a history of ensuring local businesses benefit first and foremost by making a commitment to prioritise local suppliers.

Education & Awareness

We welcome your views on how the wind farm can directly or indirectly benefit those who are in education or training, and support local businesses.

70% of Scotland's electricity demand was met by renewables in 2017

Wireless Broadband Feasibility Study



We are always exploring ways in which we can provide positive benefits to local communities near our projects.

We are often asked by people if we can help deliver faster broadband or even get them connected in the first place. Access to a reliable and fast broadband connection is often an issue in rural areas. With this in mind, we have taken some initial action to investigate this.



We have commissioned an early stage Fixed Wireless Broadband Feasibility Study to explore the potential for using the infrastructure of our project at Ackron to deliver super fast broadband. Here's what we have discovered so far:

It's Feasible

Further technological and in-depth engineering studies are required, but initial findings show that fixed wireless broadband could be established to provide a service to large areas of the local community.

It's Fast

Potential download speeds could be as high as 30Mbps, and because fixed wireless broadband can offer a synchronous service, it means upload speeds would be just as fast. Unlike the 'file to the cabinet' service.

A Benefit

Such a service, if implemented, could provide the potential for commercial and residential benefits.

Next Steps

At a later stage, we would like to host a presentation with the independent supplier who carried out the feasibility study. If you would like to know more about its potential reach and capability, please talk to us.



Scotland is considered to have some of the best wind energy resource in Europe

Proposed Timeline



Throughout the process, Airvolution and Statkraft will continuously engage with the local community and stakeholders about the emerging proposals.

1. Site selection (12 months) Preliminary research to identify suitable sites. Positive indications include good wind speed and minimal environmental and technical constraints.	2. Pre-application (12 to 18 months)* Negotiate the view of Highland Council (in the event of study required) before an 'Scoping' study. Sometimes an application for a Preliminary Assessment is submitted to measure wind speed at the site. A Brown Review unit's information guides firm the studies, public feedback and engagement with statutory consultation.	3. Submit Application & Await Decision (12 months) An application will be submitted to the relevant Council, accompanied by a comprehensive EA Report showing the results of all studies undertaken. This is publicly available information. Members of the public and statutory consultancies can formally comment on the application.
4. Construction (12 to 18 months) If approved, construction begins at least one year after consent. Construction typically takes 12-18 months, and planning conditions are used to manage elements of construction.	5. Operation (25 years) Turbines are managed by an on-site maintenance team, and operation is controlled by central planning systems. A formally held active programme to support on-site community relations.	6. Decommission (12 months) At the end of the planning period, turbines are removed and the site restored. A final fund is in place to cover this cost.

* We have just started this phase. Please note, these dates are indicative and provide a guide.

Onshore wind is the cheapest form of new-build electricity generation in the UK

Next Steps



We welcome your comments and would be grateful if you would fill out one of the feedback forms provided.



Our plans are at an early stage. Your comments and feedback can help to inform and shape our approach to a final proposal.

When our studies are complete, we will consult again and present our considerations.

We could submit a planning application later this year or early 2020, and the full suite of application documents would be publicly available at that time.

We would like to keep you updated as our plans progress.

Contact Us

- Email: info@ackronwindfarm.com
- Project website: www.ackronwindfarm.co.uk
- 1162 71432 (local call rate applies)

14 new turbines at Ackron Farm are estimated to generate electricity equivalent to the needs of over 50,000 homes

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Appendix 13: Post Exhibition Letter to Melvich Community Council – Sent 10 July 2019

10 July 2019



Tina Wrighton
Melvich Community Council – Chair
Berrigoe
113 Portskerra
Melvich
KW14 7YL

By Post & Email: melvichcommunitycouncil@gmail.com

Ackron Wind Farm proposal

Dear Ms Wrighton,

As you will be aware, we held a public exhibition in Melvich Village Hall on 26 June to outline the early-stage proposals for the Ackron Wind Farm. Thank you for allowing us to use the hall.

We were pleased that the exhibition was well attended – we met with over 40 people throughout the day. We will take all the views expressed and everything we have learned on board as we move forward. We are currently in the process of responding to all those who sent us a reply card or attended the exhibition.

On the day, people were keen to discuss ideas around shared ownership, how we plan to use local companies and the potential for community funding of around £245,000 each year. There was also a lot of interest in the opportunity for the project to bring improved broadband to the area.

I enclose some copies of the brochure handed out at the exhibition, which contains most of the information that was displayed. This is also available to download on our project website www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk. We encourage people to register on the website to ensure they are kept up to date as the project progresses, and to easily contact us.

If you require further copies of the brochure, or wish to discuss any aspect of the project, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Lloyd Godwin
Senior Development Manager

Arvolution Clean Energy Limited. Registered in England & Wales 10851865 at 50 Seymour Street, London, England, W1H 7JG.

+44 (0) 181 481 2285
www.arvolutionenergy.com
Arvolution Clean Energy Limited
1 West Regent Street
Glasgow
G2 5RW

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Appendix 14: News Release - Positive Feedback from Wind Farm Public Exhibition 5.7.19



News release

Airvolution Clean Energy

Issued: Friday, 5 July 2019

For use: Immediate

POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM WIND FARM PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Airvolution Clean Energy, who propose to develop the Ackron Wind Farm in Sutherland, have been encouraged by the positive local response to the project.

More than 40 residents and other interested parties attended a public exhibition at Melvich Village Hall on 26 June to learn more about the proposal.

The early-stage engagement meeting included an opportunity to view an interactive map to show how the wind farm could look from different locations and to find out more about an opportunity for the project to bring improved broadband to the area.

In addition, the exhibition provided information on shared ownership, local construction and the community fund legacy that could see £245,000 each year being available after development.

Senior Development Manager for the Ackron Project, Lloyd Godwin, said: "Our plans are at an early stage and we gained some valuable input from the community that will help shape our plans."

"I'd like to thank everyone that took the time to meet us. There were some great suggestions for how the community fund could be put to good use and we made some connections with local suppliers who could be involved in the construction, should the project go ahead."

Airvolution develop wind farm projects on behalf of Statkraft, the largest renewable energy generator in Europe.

No planning application has been made for the Ackron Wind Farm. Airvolution will take all the information gained from the exhibition into account and assess results of site surveys before deciding the number and location of turbines that could be applied for in a formal planning application to Highland Council.

Those interested in the project are encouraged to register for news updates on the project website www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Airvolution:

Airvolution Clean Energy are leading independent wind farm developers with a proven track record and develop onshore wind projects in Scotland solely for Statkraft, Europe's largest renewable energy generator.

Further details about Airvolution can be found at www.airvolutionenergy.com

Ackron Wind Farm

Up to 14 wind turbines are proposed

The maximum height of the turbines would be 150m

The wind farm would provide new opportunities to discuss shared ownership and local suppliers

It has potential to provide an improved broadband service

A community fund could provide £245,000 each year after construction

For further details on the project, please visit the dedicated project website: www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

For more information contact:

John Ross
System2
01463 714403/077300 99617
johnross@system2.eu

01463 714403
www.airvolutionenergy.com
Airvolution Clean Energy Limited
1 Wood Report Street
Glasgow
G2 2JW

Airvolution Clean Energy Limited, Registered in England, No. 12345678, 100 High Street, London, England, W1A 1AA

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The Northern Times

Home News Coronavirus Sport Inspiration Lifestyle What's On Family Notices Energy North

Hundreds could get better broadband from wind farm technology

By Staff Reporter- NOSN - editor@nosn.co.uk

Published: 09:30, 11 October 2019 | Updated: 13:08, 11 October 2019

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At least 242 homes in Caithness and Sutherland could receive improved broadband using technology installed at a proposed wind farm, according to a new study.

The area is the first to be researched by Statkraft, Europe's largest generator of renewable energy, as part of a commitment to carry out feasibility studies on the possibility of bringing enhanced high-speed wireless broadband to communities at all its planned wind farm sites in Scotland.

Statkraft, whose portfolio includes the Baillie Wind Farm, is investigating the potential to build the Ackron Wind Farm, consisting of up to 14 turbines, near Melvich.

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No planning application has been made, but an analysis has shown it is feasible to install wireless technology into wind farm infrastructure to provide high-speed internet connection without using phone or cable lines.

Initial indications from the study, carried out by Highland-based Monsternet, show that at least 242 homes near the Ackron site could receive an improved broadband service, with the potential to extend coverage to many other homes and businesses in the area.

It is expected the wireless technology would have the capability of providing fast internet for anyone living within line of sight up to 10km from one of the network repeater masts.



MOST READ



Appendix 15: Update Letter to Tina Wrighton, Melvich Community Council, Including Broadband Presentation

Tina Wrighton
Chair
Melvich Community Council

By email: melvichcommunitycouncil@gmail.com

YOUR REFERENCE: FUS-REF: ACKRON WIND FARM
ACKRON WIND FARM
GLASGOW, 7 November 2019

I appreciate there may be new Community Councils in place by that time, but I hope someone would be able to attend. We are proposing the first meeting on the afternoon of 18 November or daytime on 20 November, near Thurso.

I look forward to hearing from you or another member of the Community Council who may be able to attend.

Yours sincerely,
for Statkraft UK Ltd

Allison Hood
Communications, E.P. Wind and Solar

Dear Tina,

I am writing with an update on the Ackron wind farm proposal. I am aware there are Community Council elections coming up and I wish the Council all the best in securing representation for Melvich over the next term.

Airvolution is now Statkraft

Since our June exhibition in Melvich, Airvolution Clean Energy are now wholly owned by Statkraft UK Ltd. Airvolution had worked exclusively on behalf of Statkraft since October 2017 and this acquisition brings all of the Airvolution team in-house as part of Statkraft.

Lloyd Godwin remains the Ackron Development Manager, and his new email address is Lloyd.Godwin@statkraft.com.

Next Engagement Events

We are currently planning to come back to the community early next year with a project update, to discuss with residents how the project has evolved. We will write to the Community Council again closer to the time with more information.

Potential for improved Broadband

We have recently made a commitment to investigate the potential of bringing enhanced broadband to communities near our proposed wind farms – covered recently in the [John O'Grady Journal](#) – working with Highlands based firm MonsterNet on this initiative.

We are now looking at the next step, which is to see how this could be rolled out to the best advantage of the area. We are looking to establish a meeting of key representatives in the Cathness/Sutherland area and would like to invite a member of the Community Council to participate. The meeting would provide an opportunity for Fergus at MonsterNet to talk about how other areas have approached broadband and for all to discuss how it could be developed here.

STATKRAFT UK LTD
1 West Regent Street
Glasgow G2 3RU
UK

PHONE: +44 (0)141 482 1900

WEBSITE: www.statkraft.co.uk

EMAIL: enquiries@statkraft.com

VAT REG NO.: UK402 190000

Page 30

Broadband presentation invite sent to other elected representatives and interested parties - 1.11.19

Dear
invitation

Presentation on Wireless Broadband - Wednesday March 19th, 12pm for 12.15pm - 1.15pm
With Fergus Weir, Managing Director of **MonsterNet**, Highland supplier of wireless broadband

Statkraft is hosting a presentation on the potential for wireless (fixed fibre) broadband capability from wind farms. We are keen to update members of the communities in Cathness and Sutherland on progress to date.

MonsterNet have worked with other communities to install wireless broadband and have recently completed feasibility studies on Bailie wind farm and the proposed Slicky and **Adonis** wind farms. Fergus Weir will be able to outline what wireless broadband is, how other communities have implemented it and the potential prospects that wind farms can bring.

Cathness Chamber of Commerce, **News** Business Centre, **News** 710044, **News** Toad, Thurso, Cathness, KW54 7QA

We expect to take no more than one hour of your time and light refreshments including tea, coffee and sandwiches will be available.

We very much hope you can join us on the day.

Broadband Working Group
Following the presentation and a P&A session, we will have a meeting for a small number of people to be part of a Broadband Working Group. The aim of the Group is to explore some of the issues in more detail and ways in which Statkraft may be of help on this important subject.

We think your attendance would help achieve a good balance of representation and hope you can attend. We will liaise with the chairperson, **Carl Reid**, and set up an agenda for the meeting in advance.

Invites to this group are:
Cllr Karl Rosie
Cllr Simon MacLellan
Cllr Lewis Murray
2 residents - Jemma Park, Julie Douglas
Cathness Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive - Trudy Murray
Bailie project partner - Tam Pottinger
Statkraft rep
MonsterNet rep

Spots are limited and need to be confirmed in advance.
Please RSVP to secure your place - to allison.hood@statkraft.com
Yours sincerely,

Statkraft UK Ltd.
41 Moorgate
London
EC2R 6PP
www.statkraft.co.uk

Allison Hood
Communications, UK Wind and Solar

Email: allison.hood@statkraft.com
Statkraft UK Ltd
41 Moorgate, London, EC2R 6PP
1 West Regent Street, Glasgow, G2 3RU
www.statkraft.co.uk

Feasibility Study for Wireless Broadband and Subsequent Presentation Invite



Ackron Wind Farm Community Wireless broadband feasibility study

Based on Line of Sight Feasibility study by Monsternet Highland Ltd, 13/06/2019

The following feasibility study is an initial analysis, assessment and costing for a method of delivering superfast broadband connectivity from the proposed Ackron Wind Farm, near Melvich, Sutherland. Specifically, to deliver superfast broadband speeds to the surrounding community by way of point-to-point and point-to-multi-point technologies deploying 5Ghz radio wireless connectivity.

1. Location summary
2. Fixed wireless link analysis
3. Topographical analysis
4. Infrastructure
5. Community broadband
6. Cost estimates
7. Radio Wireless broadband explainer
8. Survey photographs



Monsternet

1. Location Summary



We undertook to survey properties to the East and West of the proposed wind farm site between Melvich and Reay, within a 10km radius. 10km was chosen as it is the maximum recommended range for a point-to-multipoint (PtMP) radio networks.

Working on the basis that the available backhaul for this network would be served from a fibre connection at the proposed Wind Farm site, it was identified that the most suitable solution would require 2 separate point-to-multi-point (PtMP) radio masts, hosting radio sector antennas; one serving the communities around Melvich, Portskerra and Big House, the other serving Reay and neighbouring properties to the East.

There are very few locations or properties to the immediate south or immediate north of the wind farm, so these areas were removed from the survey work.

We selected properties to the west and east of the proposed mast sites at Ackron and assessed these properties based on 1) line of sight to the proposed mast sites and 2) potential market for superfast broadband i.e. are their current speeds poor/average/good.

Monsternet



The above image shows the identified properties - 246 in all, within the defined area. Mast 1 proposed site is located near the western edge of the landowner boundary. Mast 1 enables almost total visibility of all properties to the west in and around Portskerra and Melvich, with mast 2 affording almost total visibility of all properties to the east in and around Reay.

Approx 242 properties were identified as clear line of sight, with a further 4 with potential for clear line of sight (subject to trees and other obstacles)



**Please Join Us for a Presentation on Wireless Broadband
with Fergus Weir, Managing Director of Monsternet**

Wednesday 18 March 2020, 12pm for 12.15pm – 1.15pm (lunch provided)

***What is wireless broadband, how have other communities implemented it
and what connection can wind farms bring?***

Statkraft is hosting a presentation on the potential for wireless (line of sight) broadband capability from wind farms. We are keen to update members of the communities in Caithness and Sutherland on progress to date and what this could deliver for the area.

Monsternet are a Highland supplier of wireless broadband and have worked with other communities to install wireless broadband systems. They have recently completed feasibility studies on Baillie wind farm and the proposed Slickly and Ackron wind farms.

Venue:

Caithness Chamber of Commerce
Naver Business Centre
Naver House
Naver Road
Thurso
KW14 7QA

We expect to take no more than one hour of your time and light refreshments including tea, coffee and sandwiches will be available.

We very much hope you can join us on the day.

Spaces are limited and need to be confirmed in advance, please RSVP to secure your place to alison.hood@statkraft.com

Alison Hood

Communications, UK Wind and Solar
alison.hood@statkraft.com
Mobile +44 77 2068 0635

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Appendix 16: Letter Notifying Elected Representatives of Online Exhibition

Hood Alison

From: UK Projects
Sent: 20 October 2020 11:37
Cc: Godwin Lloyd; Hernes Maya
Subject: Ackron Wind Farm - Virtual Exhibition
Attachments: Ackron Exhibition Invite October 2020.pdf

Dear Councillor,

An online virtual exhibition (VE) opens today to present the final proposals for Ackron Wind Farm, near Melvich. The exhibition will run from 20 October to 10 November, and is being advertised in the following ways:

- Advertisements in the Northern Times and the John O'Groat Journal.
- Facebook ads to those living in the area.
- Direct mail to over 600 households and businesses. This includes a freepost envelope and freephone number as an alternative to going online.

As a representative of the area, I would be grateful for your assistance in sharing the event with local residents. Access to the exhibition is by clicking the link on the homepage of www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

Key dates for the VE:

- Website live 20 October to 10 November 2020.
- Live Q&A chat – 4 November, 11am to 1pm & 5pm to 7pm.
- Live Q&A chat – 10 November, 11am to 1pm & 5pm to 7pm.

We first exhibited plans for a 14 turbine wind farm in Melvich in June 2019. Site studies and feedback received led us to improve on this and we now present a 12 turbine project with changes that reduce the visual impact of the scheme, particularly from the coast, and the North Coast 500 route. We have:

- Moved the access to the site from the A836 to the A897. This means there is no access junction directly off the NC500 and there will be minimal visibility of the site tracks from this tourist route.
- Moved the turbines further south and further inland, to increase the distance from the NC500 route and minimising visual impact from coastal views.
- Reorganised turbines to minimise overlapping and outlier turbines.

We are working closely with Melvich Community Council and last week we virtually met with members to provide an update and discuss how we can minimise the impact on construction traffic. This is a fruitful and ongoing conversation and we will be happy to update you on this at a later stage.

At the end of the exhibition period we will provide a further update of the feedback received. If you would like a meeting to discuss any aspect of the project we would be very happy to arrange a suitable time.

Yours sincerely,

Lloyd Godwin & Maya Hernes
Ackron Development Managers

Statkraft UK Ltd

UK Wind and Solar

-- ukprojects@starkraft.com
-- Glasgow +44 14 1483 1986

Statkraft UK Ltd.

41 Moorgate, London, EC2R 8PP
1 West Regent Street, Glasgow, G2 1RW

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Appendix 17: Letter Notifying Community Councils of Online Exhibition

Hood Alison

From: UK Projects
Sent: 23 October 2020 18:46
To: chair@caithnesswestcc.co.uk
Subject: Ackron Wind Farm - Notice of Virtual Exhibition

An online virtual exhibition (VE) is live to present the final proposals for Ackron Wind Farm, near Melvich. The exhibition will run from 20 October to 10 November, and is being advertised in the following ways:

- Advertisements in the Northern Times and the John O'Groat Journal.
- Facebook ads to those living in the area.
- Direct mail to over 600 households and businesses. This includes a freepost envelope and freephone number as an alternative to going online.

Access to the exhibition is by clicking the link on the homepage of www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

Key dates for the VE:

- Website live 20 October to 10 November 2020.
- Live Q&A chat – 4 November, 11am to 1pm & 5pm to 7pm.
- Live Q&A chat – 10 November, 11am to 1pm & 5pm to 7pm.

We first exhibited plans for a 14 turbine wind farm in Melvich in June 2019. Site studies and feedback received led us to improve on this and we now present a 12 turbine project with changes that reduce the visual impact of the scheme, particularly from the coast, and the North Coast 500 route. We have:

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- Moved the turbines further south and further inland, to increase the distance from the NC500 route and minimising visual impact from coastal views.
- Reorganised turbines to minimise overlapping and outlier turbines.

If you would like a meeting to discuss any aspect of the project we would be very happy to arrange a suitable time.

Yours sincerely,

Lloyd Godwin & Maya Hernes
Ackron Development Managers


Statkraft UK Ltd
UK Wind and Solar

— ukprojects@statkraft.com
— Glasgow +44 14 1483 1986

Statkraft UK Ltd.
41 Moorgate, London, EC2R 6PP
1 West Regent Street, Glasgow, G2 1RW
www.statkraft.co.uk

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Northern Times public notices 16.10.20 and 23.10.20



Statkraft invite members of the public to attend a **VIRTUAL EXHIBITION** to view and discuss a proposed application for the 12 turbine Ackron Wind Farm.

In line with Scottish Government guidance due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will hold an online public exhibition to show the plans before an application is submitted to The Highland Council.

The consultation website will be live from 20 October 2020 with exhibition materials, dedicated live Q&A sessions and an opportunity to book one-to-one calls.

Visit www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk to click through to the online exhibition.

Those wishing to make comments on the proposals may do so online, and/or in writing before 10 November 2020:

www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk
 Email: ukprojects@statkraft.com
 Freephone: **0800 772 0668**
 Write to: **Freepost Statkraft**
(no stamp required)

Comments should be made to Statkraft UK and do not constitute a formal representation. An opportunity to make a formal representation will exist when a planning application is made.

We hope you can take part in the consultation events.

<p>general notices</p> <p>ADVERTISERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL HANDWRITTEN NOTICES SENT TO THE NORTHERN TIMES ARE PRINTED CLEARLY IN BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS</p> <p>BAR MEALS, LUNCHES & DINNERS DAILY Enjoy freshly prepared quality home cooked meals made with fresh local produce & served by friendly local staff.</p> <p>We cater for all functions including weddings, parties, dinner dances etc.</p> <p>CALL TO DISCUSS YOUR REQUIREMENTS</p> <p>JOHN O'GRADY BEEN AVAILABLE HERE</p> <p>Seaview Over 100 meat, vegetables and 50 different gins to choose from.</p> <p>public notices</p> <p>TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1987</p> <p>Statkraft invite members of the public to attend a VIRTUAL EXHIBITION to view and discuss a proposed application for the 12 turbine Ackron Wind Farm.</p> <p>In line with Scottish Government guidance due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will hold an online public exhibition to show the plans before an application is submitted to The Highland Council.</p> <p>The consultation website will be live from 20 October 2020 with exhibition materials, dedicated live Q&A sessions and an opportunity to book one-to-one calls.</p> <p>Visit www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk to click through to the online exhibition.</p> <p>Those wishing to make comments on the proposals may do so online, and/or in writing before 10 November 2020:</p> <p>www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk Email: ukprojects@statkraft.com Freephone: 0800 772 0668 Write to: Freepost Statkraft (no stamp required)</p> <p>Comments should be made to Statkraft UK and do not constitute a formal representation. An opportunity to make a formal representation will exist when a planning application is made.</p> <p>We hope you can take part in the consultation events.</p>	<p>public notices</p> <p>STATKRAFT ACKRON WIND FARM PROPOSAL</p> <p>Statkraft invite members of the public to attend a VIRTUAL EXHIBITION to view and discuss a proposed application for the 12 turbine Ackron Wind Farm.</p> <p>In line with Scottish Government guidance due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will hold an online public exhibition to show the plans before an application is submitted to The Highland Council.</p> <p>The consultation website will be live from 20 October 2020 with exhibition materials, dedicated live Q&A sessions and an opportunity to book one-to-one calls.</p> <p>Visit www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk to click through to the online exhibition.</p> <p>Those wishing to make comments on the proposals may do so online, and/or in writing before 10 November 2020:</p> <p>www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk Email: ukprojects@statkraft.com Freephone: 0800 772 0668 Write to: Freepost Statkraft (no stamp required)</p> <p>Comments should be made to Statkraft UK and do not constitute a formal representation. An opportunity to make a formal representation will exist when a planning application is made.</p> <p>We hope you can take part in the consultation events.</p>	<p>family notices</p> <p>Mairi Russell Funeral Services</p> <p>Your Local Funeral Director Serving The Community</p> <p>ALASDAIR RHIND FUNERAL DIRECTOR</p> <p>C. & P. SMITHLAND LTD PLUMBING, ELECTRICALS Drain, Guttering, Loft & Roof Repairs Day & Night Service Professional and efficient service and attention 1 hours available</p> <p>No. 1 Jobs Board in the North of Scotland</p> <p>jobs north www.jobs.north.co.uk</p>	<p>public notices</p> <p>STATKRAFT ACKRON WIND FARM PROPOSAL</p> <p>Statkraft invite members of the public to attend a VIRTUAL EXHIBITION to view and discuss a proposed application for the 12 turbine Ackron Wind Farm.</p> <p>In line with Scottish Government guidance due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will hold an online public exhibition to show the plans before an application is submitted to The Highland Council.</p> <p>The consultation website will be live from 20 October 2020 with exhibition materials, dedicated live Q&A sessions and an opportunity to book one-to-one calls.</p> <p>Visit www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk to click through to the online exhibition.</p> <p>Those wishing to make comments on the proposals may do so online, and/or in writing before 10 November 2020:</p> <p>www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk Email: ukprojects@statkraft.com Freephone: 0800 772 0668 Write to: Freepost Statkraft (no stamp required)</p> <p>Comments should be made to Statkraft UK and do not constitute a formal representation. An opportunity to make a formal representation will exist when a planning application is made.</p> <p>We hope you can take part in the consultation events.</p>
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Appendix 19: Sponsored Facebook Post to Target Those Living Within 18km Of the Site



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Appendix 20: Leaflet Invite to October 2020 Virtual Exhibition and Reply Card

We're innovative and community focused

Statkraft is dedicated to engaging with communities and finding different ways to bring positive benefits.

We want to talk to you about how our project can bring new investment to your community. We are open to your ideas.

Community Benefit Fund
We are committed to a Community Benefit Fund that delivers £5,000 per MW installed as per Scottish Government recommendation. If consented, the project will generate up to £249,500 per year for local groups and initiatives.

Shared Ownership
We are open to offering Shared Ownership on our projects, if there is local interest. We would like to hear your views on enabling the community to have a financial share in the project.

Improved Broadband
Join our online exhibition to find out more about the potential opportunity for this project to facilitate improved broadband access.

Local supply chain
We want to work with local businesses to deliver our projects. Visit our project website for information on how local businesses can register their interest.



Please return the freepost reply card provided.

ackron-windfarm.co.uk

Phone the project hotline: 0800 772 0668

1 West Regent Street, Glasgow, G2 1RW

Statkraft UK Ltd
1 West Regent Street
Glasgow
G2 1RW
+44 (0)141 483 1066

Invitation to Virtual Exhibition: 20 Oct – 10 Nov 2020

Ackron Wind Farm Proposal

We would like to update you about our plans for a wind farm in the area, before an application is submitted.
Join our online exhibition: view the plans and meet the team.



Following our exhibition in June last year, we have continued our site studies and assessed all feedback received on the initial plans put forward. We are now ready to share details of the improvements made to the site design before it is submitted. We believe we have designed a project that is sensitive to its surroundings, and makes the most of the ample wind resource available. In line with Scottish Government advice in relation to Covid-19, we are holding an online consultation where you can find out more from the project team.

About Us

Statkraft is Europe's largest generator of renewable energy, with origins going back 125 years in Norwegian hydro power. Our Scottish headquarters are in Glasgow and we have 4,000 employees across 17 countries.

www.statkraft.co.uk

Ackron Wind Farm Proposal



Project Summary

Community engagement is very important to us.

We would like to invite you to our online public exhibition.

Online Exhibition:

www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

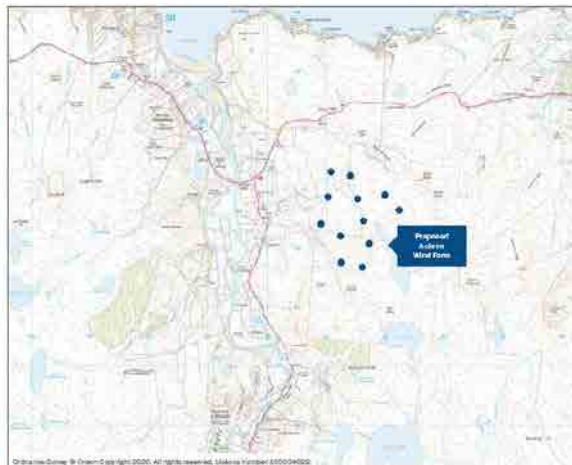
12 12 wind turbines proposed

£249k Up to £249,500 per year for a Community Fund*

A maximum height **150m**

Exciting new opportunity to talk about shared ownership and local suppliers

Potential for improved broadband provision



Our exhibition is being held online due to COVID19 restrictions in place.

The exhibition website will be available to visit between 20 Oct – 10 Nov 2020.

Ask questions, chat online or book a phone call

Live chat sessions with the project team

We will be available to answer questions and provide additional information

→ Wednesday 4 November, 11am - 1pm & 5pm - 7pm

→ Tuesday 10 November, 11am - 1pm & 5pm - 7pm

www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

We believe there could be an exciting opportunity for our project to bring improved broadband to the area. Please visit our website to find out more.

You can find out more about our projects and the way we work at www.statkraft.co.uk


* Based on a maximum generation capacity of 49.9MW and £5,000 per MW installed.

Appendix 21: News Release on Virtual Exhibition

Ackron Wind Farm - Virtual Exhibition

Tuesday, 20 October 2020 at 16:25

To: editor@northern-times.co.uk

 Ackron Exhibition Inv...
2.1 MB

Dear Editor

An online virtual exhibition (VE) opens today to present the final proposals for Ackron Wind Farm, near Melvich. The exhibition will run from 20 October to 10 November, and is being advertised in the following ways:

- Advertisements in the Northern Times and the John O'Groat Journal.
- Facebook ads to those living in the area.
- Direct mail to over 600 households and businesses. This includes a freepost envelope and freephone number as an alternative to going online.

Access to the exhibition is by clicking the link on the homepage of www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

Key dates for the VE:

- Website live 20 October to 10 November 2020
- Live Q&A chat – 4 November, 11am to 1pm & 6pm to 7pm.
- Live Q&A chat – 10 November, 11am to 1pm & 5pm to 7pm.

We first exhibited plans for a 14 turbine wind farm in Melvich in June 2019. Site studies and feedback received led us to improve on this and we now present a 12 turbine project with changes that reduce the visual impact of the scheme, particularly from the coast, and the North Coast 500 route. We have:

- Moved the access to the site from the A836 to the A897. This means there is no access junction directly off the NC500 and there will be minimal visibility of the site tracks from this tourist route.
- Moved the turbines further south and further inland, to increase the distance from the NC500 route and minimising visual impact from coastal views.
- Reorganised turbines to minimise overlapping and outlier turbines.

We are working closely with Melvich Community Council and last week we virtually met with members to provide an update and discuss how we can minimise the impact on construction traffic. This is a fruitful and ongoing conversation and we will be happy to update you on this at a later stage.

At the end of the exhibition period we will provide a further update of the feedback received. If you would like a meeting to discuss any aspect of the project we would be very happy to arrange a suitable time.

Yours sincerely,

Lloyd Godwin & Maya Hemea
Ackron Development Managers

Statkraft UK Ltd

UK Wind and Solar

— ukprojects@starkraft.com
— Glasgow +44 14 1403 1960

Statkraft UK Ltd,
41 Moorgate, London, EC2R 6PP

MEDIA COVERAGE 2020

Northern Times – 23.10.20

Friday, October 23 at Thursday, October 20 www.northern-times.co.uk Northern Times 15

Melvich wind farm online exhibition

By Alan Hendry
alan.hendry@northern-times.co.uk

ENERGY firm Statkraft has opened a virtual exhibition to present its final proposals for Ackron Wind Farm, near Melvich.

The exhibition began today on Tuesday and will run until November 10. It is being advertised in the local press, on Facebook and by direct mail to more than 600 households and businesses. This includes a freepost envelope and freephone number as an alternative to going online.

Access to the exhibition is by clicking the link on the homepage of www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk.

Live Q&A chats are scheduled for November 4 and November 10, from 11am to 1pm and from 5pm to 7pm both days.

Statkraft first exhibited plans for a 14 turbine wind farm at Melvich in June 2019. "Site studies and feedback received led us to improve on this and we now present a 12-turbine project with changes that reduce the visual impact of the scheme, particularly from the coast, and the North Coast 500 route," the company said in a statement.

It has moved the access to the site from the A836 to the A897, so there is no access junction directly off the NC500 and there will be "minimal visibility of the site tracks from this tourist route".

The turbines have been moved further south and further inland, to increase the distance from the NC500 and minimise visual impact from coastal views, according to the company.

It has also reorganised turbines in a bid to minimise overlapping and outlier turbines.

Statkraft says it is working closely with Melvich Community Council and last week had a virtual meeting with members to give an update and discuss how the impact of construction traffic can be minimised.

Statkraft senior project manager Lloyd Godwin said: "We believe this final scheme is a big improvement on what was originally presented to the community last year. By removing two turbines and locating the turbines further south we have been able to reduce the visual impact of the project from the coast.

"Our virtual exhibition will give people the chance to explore the changes made.

"I'm disappointed that due to Covid-19 restrictions we can't actually visit Melvich again and meet with people face-to-face as we've done previously.

"But the upside of a virtual exhibition is that it can last longer and give more people greater opportunity to see our revised plans.

"We are hopeful that our changes, showing sensitivity to visual impact and transport priorities, will meet with community approval."



Statkraft senior project manager Lloyd Godwin.

John O’Groat Journal – 23.10.20

Melvich wind farm on show

 By Alan Hendry
 alan.hendry@hnmmedia.co.uk

ENERGY firm Statkraft has opened a virtual exhibition to present its final proposals for Ackron Wind Farm, near Melvich.

The exhibition began on Tuesday and will run until November 10. It is being advertised in the local press, on Facebook and by direct mail to more than 600 households and businesses. Access is via www.ackron-windfarm.co.uk

Live Q&A chats are scheduled for November 3 and November 10, from 11am to 1pm and from 5pm to 7pm both days.

Statkraft first exhibited plans for a 14-turbine wind farm in June 2019 but this has now been reduced to 12 turbines. It has moved the access to the site from the A836 to the A987.

Senior project manager Lloyd Godwin said: “We believe this final scheme is a big improvement on what was originally presented to the community last year.



Senior project manager Lloyd Godwin says Statkraft has been able to reduce the visual impact of the Ackron project from the coast.

“The upside of a virtual exhibition is that it can last longer and give a greater opportunity to see our evolved plans.

Lloyd Godwin

“By removing two turbines and locating the turbines further south we have been able to reduce the visual impact of the project from the coast.

“Our virtual exhibition will give people the chance to explore the changes made. I’m disappointed that due to Covid-19 restrictions we can’t actually visit Melvich again and meet

with people face-to-face as we’ve done previously, but the upside of a virtual exhibition is that it can last longer and give more people greater opportunity to see our evolved plans.

“We are hopeful that our changes, showing sensitivity to visual impact and transport priorities, will meet with community approval.”

Online coverage

John O’Groat Journal 20.10.20 Virtual exhibition sets out plans for wind farm near Melvich
<https://bit.ly/3m3qBdU>

John O’Groat Journal
 Caithness Courier

Home News Coronavirus Sport Inspiration Lifestyle What’s on Business Energy North

Home News Article

Virtual exhibition sets out plans for wind farm near Melvich

By Alan Hendry - alan.hendry@hnmmedia.co.uk
 Published: 19:47, 20 October 2020 | Updated: 08:55, 21 October 2020

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Statkraft senior project manager Lloyd Godwin.

Energy firm Statkraft has opened a virtual exhibition to present its final proposals for Ackron Wind Farm, near Melvich.

The exhibition began today (October 20) and will run until November 10. It is being

Northern Times 21.10.20 Developers of planned wind farm near Melvich open online exhibition:
Live Q & A chats will take place next month <https://bit.ly/3jkSjkl>

Caithness Chamber of Commerce website screenshot

The screenshot shows the Caithness Chamber of Commerce website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Membership, #ProtectNorthHighlands - Test & Protect, News, Events, What We Do, and About Us. Below this is a large yellow banner with the text "Ackron Wind Farm Proposal, Virtual Exhibition: 20 Oct - 10 Nov 2020".

Below the banner, there is a section for the 10th November 2020, 00:01 to 23:59 @ Online event. The text states: "Statkraft would like to update you about their plans for a wind farm in the area, before an application is submitted. Join the online exhibition: view the plans and meet the team." It also mentions that Statkraft has updated their plans based on feedback and is now ready to share details of improvements made to the site design before it is submitted. They are holding an online consultation where you can find out more from the project team.

There is a Statkraft logo and contact information: E: info@caithnesschamber.com, T: 01847 890076.

Below this is a section titled "Invitation to Virtual Exhibition: 20 Oct - 10 Nov 2020 Ackron Wind Farm Proposal". It includes a photo of a wind turbine in a field and a photo of a person in a high-visibility jacket. The text describes the project and provides contact information for the project team.

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Appendix 22: Dedicated Website Page, I included Feedback and Broadband Quick Poll 2020. There Is Also A Project Website and Dedicated Low Call Community Hotline Number for Anyone Who Wishes to Find Out More About the Consultations

Interactive Images

Our application will include over 17 photomontages to show how the project would look from various viewpoints. We have prepared a selection of these to view below.

How to View Interactive Images:
Click on the thumbnails to view the full image (opens in new window).
Move the white line in the middle to compare the view of the original plan (2019) to the one we intend to submit in our planning application (2020).
The vertical lines help identify the turbine locations - the white lines show the final plan, the black lines show the original plan.
These lines exist if any part of the turbine or blade tip would be visible.



Viewpoint 3: From Reay
(click on image to compare before/after view)



Viewpoint 5: From near Halladale Inn, A836, Melvich
(click on image to compare before/after view)



Viewpoint 6: From Portskerra
(click on image to compare before/after view)



Viewpoint 8: From Strath Halladale
(click on image to compare before/after view)

The visualisations shown here are indicative, and the final locations of individual turbines subject to change. Access tracks and other supporting infrastructure are not shown here but will form part of our proposals. These visualisations are for exhibition purposes only. The viewpoints illustrated are representative of views in the area, but cannot represent visibility at all locations.



LOCAL SUPPLIERS BRINGING BENEFITS YOUR ID...

Register - Local Suppliers

If you see a business or would like to suggest one that we could use, please get in touch.

All fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

1. Please select your inquiry type. *

- I would like to register as a local supplier
- I would like to suggest a local business you could use
- I have a question about your approach to using local suppliers

About You

2. Your name *

Please add your comment here... 0/50

3. Your email address *

4. Your Contact Telephone *

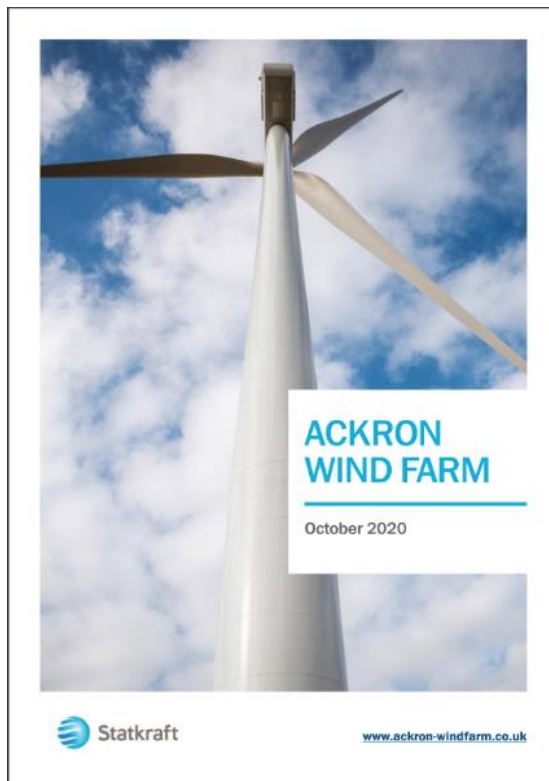
About the Supplier

5. Company Name *

Please add your comment here... 0/255

6. Address

Screenshot of Public Exhibition Brochure OCTOBER 2020



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Appendix 23: Virtual Exhibition Website (October-November 2020) Summary

Project Report
20 October 2020 - 10 November 2020

Statkraft UK Projects

Welcome. About Ackron Wind Farm



Ackron - Your Questions, Contact, Feedback



What will Ackron Wind Farm look like?



Ackron - Community Benefits & Local Investment



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Appendix 24: Transport Update Discussion with Melvich Community Council



You asked us two straightforward questions

- Can we ensure HGV deliveries of concrete and cement to the Ackron Wind Farm site will not use the A897?
- Will we stipulate that in writing in your contract with any construction supplier who will deliver concrete and cement to the wind farm?
- Our answer to both questions is **YES**
- We are delighted to be relaying this news to you and we are also pleased to explain that we are going to go even further than that
- We will **also** put it in writing with the Melvich Community Council
- So let us explain

Transport Routes to Ackron



Abnormal Load Route

Wind turbine components will be transported as abnormal loads from the Port of Scrabster.

General Construction Traffic

Traffic from the south will approach the site via the A9 and A836 corridors and will not use the A897 from Helmsdale.

Transport – Our Commitments

To reassure the community, HGVs (concrete and cement) **will not be permitted to approach the site from Helmsdale via the A897**

We will ensure this by:

- Putting a restriction in the construction contract with the appointed Principal Contractor
- Adding this to the Summary of Mitigation of the Planning Application
- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Melvich Community Council – a pledge from us that HGVs (concrete and cement) will not use the A897 from Helmsdale, in writing
- A Traffic Management Plan will be agreed and approved by the Council in advance of commencing any construction work that reflects the commitments set out in the planning application

Transport – Going Further

- We will also use best practice to mitigate the possible effects of deliveries, such as:
 - Drivers of all delivery vehicles to be made aware of the presence of schools and that formal pedestrian crossing facilities are not always present along the route
 - Drivers to be made aware of 20 mph speed limits in vicinity of schools and reminded that strict adherence to all speed limits is a legal requirement
 - Where possible, reduce the number of deliveries by winning material via use of onsite borrow pits and utilisation of locally based quarries
 - Where feasible, abnormal loads will be delivered outwith peak traffic times (in convoy and under escort)
 - Maintain communication with local residents to ensure awareness of when abnormal loads and concrete deliveries are expected to occur (text message)

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Appendix 25: Letter of Transport Commitment to Melvich Community Council



Mr Andrew Mackay
Chair
Melvich Community Council

By email: k47nni@aol.com

DATE:
30 November 2020

POSTAL ADDRESS:
Statkraft UK Ltd
1 West Regent Street
Glasgow
G2 1RW

PHONE:
+44 (0)141 483 1986

INTERNET:
www.statkraft.co.uk

E-MAIL:
ukprojects@statkraft.com

Ackron Wind Farm – Construction Traffic

Dear Mr Mackay

As promised, following our meeting with the Community Council on 15 October 2020, we have listened to the concerns raised by members regarding the use of the A897 during construction, and worked to put them to rest.

We have studied the solution that you asked us to put in place, for the duration of the construction period, of a restriction on Ackron Wind Farm traffic on the A897 – which would be included in construction contracts with contractors. The construction period is anticipated to last approximately 15 months, and we have discussed these with Officers at The Highland Council as the Local Planning Authority.

I am very pleased to be able to confirm, that should Ackron Wind Farm be consented, a restriction will indeed be placed on construction traffic to and from the site, using the A897. As requested by the members of Melvich Community Council, this restriction will include the movement of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and light goods vehicles (LGVs) including vans and cars, from utilising the A897 between Helmsdale and the Project site entrance, during the construction period of the Project.

To capture this commitment we will include this restriction in the actual planning application documents, and if consent is granted, will be included in the Balance of Plant contract. This will provide everything that the Melvich Community Council members requested with regard to transport: a stop on HGVs, cars and vans using the A897 by contractors working on the Ackron Wind Farm project, and for this to be specified in our planning application and captured in the construction contract.

As discussed, exceptions shall be granted to sub-contractors living or staying along the A897 and the B871 roads, to ensure that local accommodation businesses on these roads are not affected by the above restriction. This will also ensure that sub-contractors are not discouraged from staying in accommodation along the A897 and the B871. Benefits will also include minimising carbon footprint of these movements.

For absolute clarity, a very small section of the A897 (approx. 200m) will be required in order to access the Project from the A836 to the north; however, this will not cause significant impact along the road due to the limited length of road that will be utilised.

As you will be aware, this commitment will be subject to planning authority approval. We thank all members of Melvich Community Council for providing us with such helpful guidance and feedback on the issues that are important locally, which in turn has led to us making this unique commitment to you.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Mardon
Head of Business and Project Development, UK Wind and Solar