

Car Duibh Wind Farm Limited

An Càrr Dubh Wind Farm EIA

Appendix 13.1: Outline Access Management Plan

Final report
Prepared by LUC
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Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
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Appendix 13.1

Outline Access Management Plan

Introduction

13.1.1 This Outline Access Management Plan (OAMP) has been prepared by LUC on behalf of Car Duibh Wind Farm Ltd (the Applicant) to illustrate how public access rights will be managed on off road access tracks during construction of the An Càrr Dubh Wind Farm¹ (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'). Access on the public road network has been assessed within **Chapter 11: Access Traffic and Transport** of the EIA Report. The OAMP will be reviewed and refined as required by the Principal Contractor prior to construction to ensure it is fit for purpose.

Proposed Development Description

13.1.2 The Proposed Development includes up to 13 wind turbines and associated infrastructure located approximately 6km north-west of Inveraray and is wholly within the Argyll and Bute Council administrative area. The construction phase of the Proposed Development is approximately 18 months, and the operational period is anticipated to be 40 years. The development description is discussed in detail in **Chapter 4: Project Description** of the EIA Report.

Methodology

13.1.3 This OAMP has been written in line with the requirements set out in the SNH (now NatureScot) Guidance for the Preparation of Outdoor Access Plans². The guidance specifies the five steps that should be set out within an Outdoor Access Plan as shown in **Table 13.1.1** below and used to form the basis of this OAMP.

Table 13.1.1: Outdoor Access Plans methodology best practice guidelines

Step	Description
Step 1	Identify the purpose, aims and objectives of the Outdoor Access Plan.
Step 2	Establish the outdoor access baseline affected by the development proposal.
Step 3	Identify predicted development impacts and potential enhancements on the outdoor access baseline.
Step 4	Mitigate the predicted development impacts, and design potential enhancements.
Step 5	Manage and monitor the implementation of the Outdoor Access Plan.

Access Baseline

13.1.4 The Applicant has consulted The Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (Scotways). There are no recorded Rights of Way, Heritage Paths or Scottish Hill Tracks that cross or are close to the Site.

13.1.5 The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 gives the public rights to non-motorised access to most land in Scotland. This allows the right to walk, cycle, ride a horse and camp within the Site of the Proposed Development, provided it is done responsibly.

13.1.6 As set out in **Chapter 13: Socio-Economics** of the EIA Report, there are three Core Paths³ crossing or running alongside the Site access (part of the route covered by the Core Paths are also listed as the Inveraray Forest Circuit on Walk Highlands⁴) and one Core Path within 50m of the start of the Site Access. The Core Paths are outlined in **Table 13.1.2** and also shown on **Figure 13.1a** and **13.1b** within the EIA Report.

13.1.7 It is anticipated these routes may be used recreationally by walkers, cyclists or horse-riders by residents or tourists, including from Inveraray. The route may also be used by forestry workers, utilities workers (for the Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line) or Scottish Water workers accessing the Steallaire Bàn Loch. Wider access rights apply across the Site and enable public access to forestry tracks and onto the open moorland within the Site. There are no other formal recreational routes within the Site, with all recreational routes outwith the Site discussed in **Chapter 13**.

13.1.8 There are existing risks to public access within the Site, namely:

- Forestry vehicles and other maintenance vehicles already use C200(b); and
- There is recreational shooting which occurs on the estate at various times throughout the year.

13.1.9 As there is 6.6km of existing stone access track in situ there will be limited disturbance to habitats along the access track. 16.5km of new access track is proposed extending from the existing track north-west to the area where the turbines will be located. A full suite of ecological and ornithology surveys has been completed for the Site which has considered impacts on habitat and protected species (See **Chapter 7: Ecology** and **Chapter 8: Ornithology** of the EIA Report). The range of environmental constraints identified by extensive surveys on the Site have been paramount in shaping the design of the project which is outlined in **Chapter 3: Site Selection and Design Strategy** of the EIA Report.

Table 13.1.2: Core Paths within/traversing/within 50m of the Site access

Path Name	Total Walk Length and Info	Location
C200(a) – Coille Bhraghaid-Queens Drive-Inveraray ⁵	1.2km stone track with moderate slope – not waymarked.	Route is an extension to the north-west of C203(a) which goes up slope through woodland and joins C200(b). The Site access passes through the join of these two paths at the south-west of Inveraray.
C200(b) – Coille Bhraghaid-Queens Drive-Inveraray ⁶	4.7km stone track with moderate slope – not waymarked.	Acircular route through woodland passing Steallaire Bàn waterfall. It can be accessed from C200(a) or possibly through the forestry track off the A819 at Electric Cottage. The Site access follows this Core Path for approximately 3km. Image 13.1.1 and 13.1.2 show a view of the track C200(b).
C203(a) – Bealach an Fhuarain, Inveraray (circular) ⁷	0.2km section of a circular route around Inveraray. Stone track with gentle slope – not waymarked.	The Site access goes through this route where it terminates and C200(a) begins to the south-west of Inveraray from Upper Avenue (off the A83).
C199(e) - Furnace to Inveraray via Kenmore	1.5km stone track with a flat slope – not waymarked.	The path is located south of Inveraray and begins 50m south of the Site (Inveraray Bypass) it heads south to Furnace.

¹ The Proposed Development was originally called Car Duibh Wind Farm but has been renamed An Càrr Dubh Wind Farm following local feedback and further advice to accurately reflect both local Gaelic and the wind farm location. Statkraft (2021) Project updates [online]. Available at: <https://www.statkraft.co.uk/projects/carduibh/project-updates/>

² Scottish Natural Heritage (2010) Guidance for the preparation of Outdoor Access Plans [pdf]. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2017-06/B639282%20-%20A%20Brief%20Guide%20to%20Preparing%20Outdoor%20Access%20Plans%20-%20Feb%202010.pdf>

³ As listed on the Argyll and Bute Council website. Available at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/core-paths>

⁴ Walkhighlands (undated) Inveraray Forest circuit [online]. Available at: <https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/inveraray-forest.shtml>

⁵ Forms part of the Inveraray Forest Circuit.

⁶ Forms part of the Inveraray Forest Circuit.

⁷ Forms part of the Inveraray Forest Circuit.

Image 13.1.1: A view of Core Path C200(b)



Showing existing stone access track through coniferous woodland plantation along Core Path C200(b) south-east of Steallaire Bàn Loch.

Image 13.1.2: A view of Core Path C200(b)



Showing existing stone access track through woodland at a potential pinch point (Orange1 on Figure 13.1.1) where an existing bridge crosses the Allt Riabhachan.

Potential Access Impacts

Construction Phase Impacts

13.1.10 The primary impact on access through the Proposed Development would be at the construction phase. Outdoor access to the three Core Paths will be temporarily affected during the construction phase of the Proposed Development. It is anticipated that construction would take approximately 18 months.

13.1.11 The nature of the effects identified are summarised below:

- Health and Safety implications during the construction phase arising from the potential 'inter-face' between the Core Paths and construction activity (e.g. unavoidable shared use of access tracks involving vehicular movements, machinery operations, and equipment/materials storage); and
- Adverse effects on particular interest groups (e.g. walkers, cyclist, and horse-riders) during construction.

13.1.12 Chapter 13 of the EIA Report identified the significance of these effects as shown in **Table 13.1.3** below which are moderate-minor (adverse). It is predicted that after mitigation (i.e. implementation of the Access Management Plan) there would be Minor (adverse) effects which are not significant in EIA terms.

Table 13.1.3: Summary of all predicted effects on access and recreation⁸

Predicted Effect	Significance	Mitigation	Significance of Residual Effect
Construction			
Public access (Core Path C200(a)): Adverse effects on walkers, cyclists and horse-riders and Health and Safety implications.	Minor (adverse)	Standard health and safety mitigation implemented via the project Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). Access Management Plan presented in outline in this appendix.	Minor (adverse)
Public access (Core Path C200(b)): Adverse effects on walkers, cyclists and horse-riders and Health and Safety implications.	Moderate (adverse)		Minor (adverse)
Public access (Core Path C203(a)): Adverse effects on walkers, cyclists and horse-riders and Health and Safety implications.	Minor (adverse)		Minor (adverse)
Public access Inveraray Forest Circular Route: Adverse effects on walkers, cyclists and horse-riders and Health and Safety implications.	Moderate (adverse)		Minor (adverse)

⁸ Effects related to changes to views and visual amenity are not covered by the Access Management Plan and are discussed in the EIA Report in **Chapter 6** and **Chapter 13**.

Predicted Effect	Significance	Mitigation	Significance of Residual Effect
Core Path C199(e) Furnace to Inveraray via Kenmore: Adverse effects on walkers, cyclists and horse-riders and Health and Safety implications.	Minor (adverse)		Minor (adverse)
Recreation: Disruption to estate sporting activities – recreational shooting.	Minor (adverse)	Standard health and safety mitigation implemented via the project CEMP and CTMP.	Minor (adverse)
Additional informal recreation within the Site including other areas not covered by Core Paths.	Minor (adverse)	Standard health and safety mitigation implemented via the project CEMP and CTMP.	Minor (adverse)

Operational Phase Impacts

13.1.13 During operation of the Proposed Development, there will not be any access restrictions on any of the Core Paths and access conditions would return to how they were before.

13.1.14 Potential access impacts during the operational phase include operational site monitoring, turbine servicing and maintenance, maintaining site access tracks and bridges, maintaining drainage ditches, and repairing gates and fences. Additional impacts would include potential ice throw and lightning during adverse weather.

Access Arrangements and Mitigation

General Access Arrangements

During Construction

Health and Safety

13.1.15 All construction activities will be managed within the requirements of the Construction (Design and Management) (CDM) Regulations 2015 and will not conflict with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The design of the Proposed Development will continue to take full account of these regulations. To further reduce possible health and safety risks, a Health and Safety Plan for the project will also be drawn up. All construction staff and contractors will be required to comply with the safety procedures and work instructions outlined in the Plan at all times.

13.1.16 To ensure that hazards are appropriately managed, risk assessments will be undertaken for all major construction activities, with measures put in place to manage any hazards identified.

13.1.17 During construction, access into the area of the site where the turbines are to be located will be restricted for the general public on health and safety grounds. Access gates may be installed at the Site entrance to limit unauthorised vehicles from entering the Site.

13.1.18 It is anticipated that there is no option for alternative access in place of the Core Paths (as there is forestry on either side of the Core Paths and limited alternative routes within the area. See **Image 13.1.1** and **13.1.2**) and that the provision of measures will be implemented to ensure the health and safety of any Core Path users for the duration of construction. This will include but not be limited to the following:

- Closure of the footpath. This will likely be temporary closures for short durations during specific works;
- Installation of route crossing points (including signage);
- Consideration of temporary traffic lights/temporary management systems (particularly where C203(a) joins with C200(a) and crosses the Inveraray Bypass);

- Consideration of diversions;
- Agreement that path users would have the right of way;
- Separation of plant and pedestrian mechanisms (for example including Heras fencing as a barrier);
- Consideration of a temporary restraint system (VRS) will be undertaken for higher risk areas to provide additional protection to Core Path users if construction works will be undertaken whilst the paths remain open;
- Information signage, leaflets etc advising on the development construction activity (plant, vehicles, and machinery) and the temporary changes to baseline access provision (See **Image 13.1.3** for example warning signage⁹);
- Enforcement of speed limit on tracks for all construction vehicles/plant;
- Enforcement of speed limit advisory signage including on exit of the Site to remind drivers of local speed limits;
- Use of hazard/flashing beacons on all construction vehicles when using access tracks; and
- Delivery of Toolbox Talks to all Site workers to ensure awareness of potential presence of path users.

13.1.19 These measures will ensure that access is enabled as far as possible without the health and safety of the route users being compromised. If for any reason there are times when safe access is not possible, this will be communicated to the public through on-site and off-site public information including, for example, the project website and liaising with local community councils.

Interest Groups

13.1.20 It is anticipated that both local residents and tourists may use the Core Paths. To mitigate for adverse effects on these users (walkers, cyclists and horse-riders), a communication strategy will be considered during construction. This will include on-site and off-site public information/interpretation board provision. Boards will contain phone numbers of liaison officers who may be contacted for further information.

13.1.21 The Applicant would liaise with the landowners to minimise the disruption to estate run activities where possible.

During Operation

13.1.22 During operation, signage will be put in place at the entrance to the Proposed Development to highlight to the public the risk of entering the Proposed Development (e.g. ice throw and lightning etc.) and ongoing estate activities (shooting etc.).

13.1.23 There would be infrequent visits for wind farm maintenance, however, this is not predicted to be significant or adversely affect the health and safety of the public as it would not be largely different to the current baseline whereby the track is currently accessed by the Estate, forestry vehicles, Scottish Water and maintenance vehicles for the Overhead Power Line (OHL).

⁹ Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 8 compliant temporary road signage would be used, **Image 13.1.1** is just an indicative example for illustrative purposes.

Image 13.1.3: Example of pedestrian warning sign (left) and construction staff warning sign (right) to be used along the length of the access track



Wider Access Rights

13.1.24 No additional measures are proposed for wider access rights.

Access Enhancements

13.1.25 During operation, there will not be any enhanced access granted via the newly constructed tracks through the wind farm, gates will be in situ along the wind farm access tracks. The access regarding Core Paths and wider access rights¹⁰ will return to how it was previously at the baseline.

Management and Monitoring

13.1.26 The Access Management Plan will be implemented by the Principal Contractor who will work with the Access Officer within Argyll and Bute Council to finalise this plan prior to construction commencing. The Access Management Plan will be reviewed every 6 months during construction to ensure it has fully considered all the impacts on the access baseline.

13.1.27 The access tracks and all temporary infrastructure (e.g. Heras fencing, route crossing points and signage) will be maintained throughout the construction phase.

Conclusions

13.1.28 There is an inherent residual risk along the Core Paths for path users during construction. Areas of lower risk and areas of higher risk/pinch points have been depicted on **Figure 13.1.1**. The figure shows three areas in green where the risks are deemed lower due to the topography and open nature allowing path users to have a clear line of sight. Areas in orange show two potential

higher risk areas with a pinch point over the existing bridge crossing the Allt Riabhachan (**Image 13.1.2**), and where C200a joins with C200b. Higher risk areas and pinch points will require additional measures to ensure public safety (as discussed above). The Principal Contractor will be responsible for reviewing and updating this Access Management Plan prior to construction commencing.

13.1.29 The Applicant aims to manage access during construction of the Proposed Development and by implementing this Access Management Plan, it is anticipated that, on the whole, access will be able to continue without compromising the health and safety of any track users. During operation of the Proposed Development, there will not be any access restrictions on any of the Core Paths and access conditions to the Core Paths and wider access rights would return to how they were at the baseline. The Applicant aims to ensure public health and safety by installing information signage about the wind farm and potential risks. There will be gates in situ along the newly constructed wind farm tracks and access will not be enhanced to the public along these routes as a result of the Proposed Development.

¹⁰ As set out in The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.