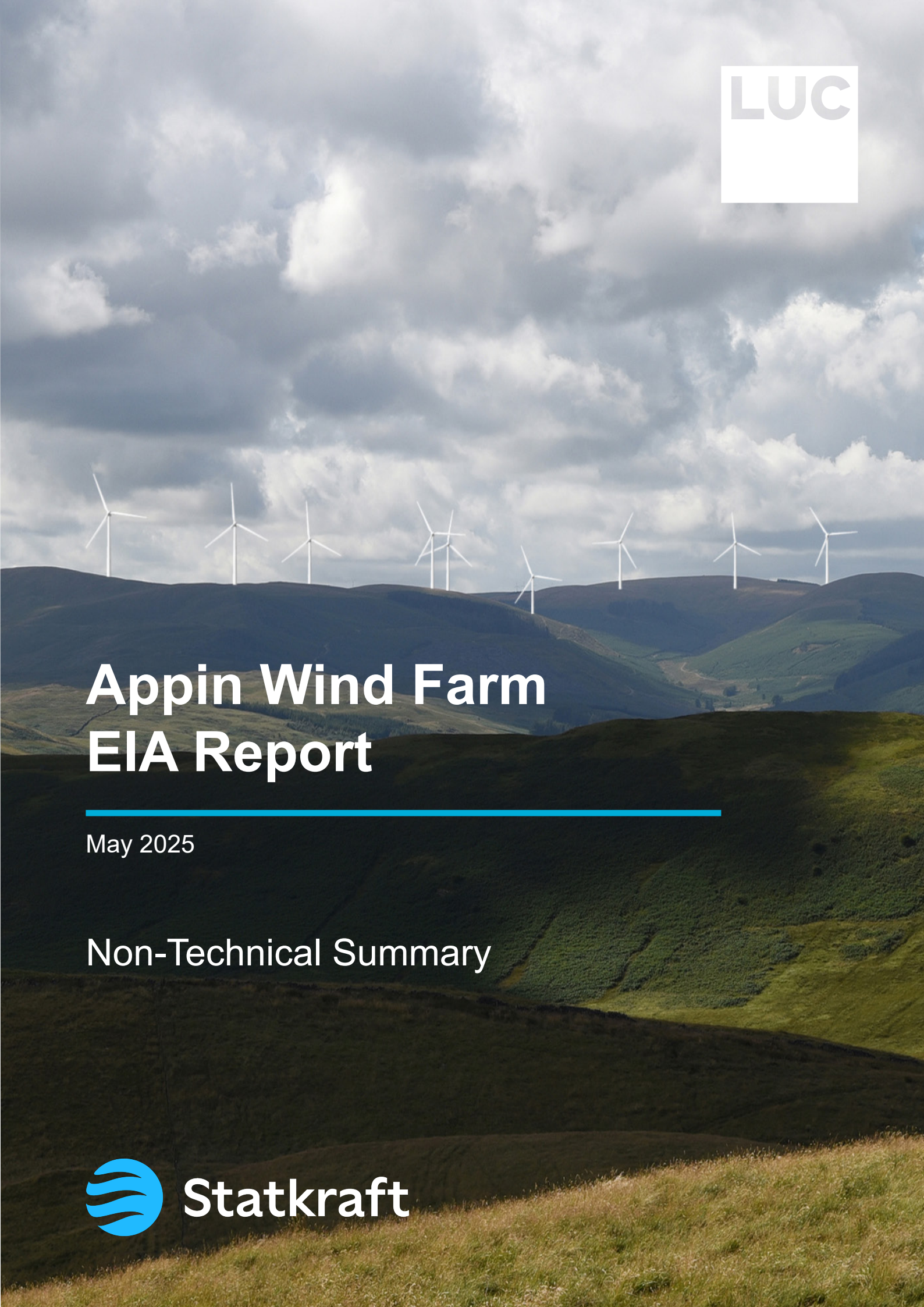


Appin Wind Farm EIA Report

May 2025

Non-Technical Summary

Statkraft

Preface

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report has been prepared in support of an application by Appin Wind Farm Limited (a company wholly owned by Statkraft UK Limited) ('the Applicant') to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) for Section 36 consent under the Electricity Act to construct and operate Appin Wind Farm ('the Proposed Development') in the Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC) administrative area.

The Proposed Development is located 6.2 km north of Moniaive and 14.8 km east of Carsphairn. The Proposed Development will comprise up to nine turbines with a maximum of 200 m tip height, and other associated infrastructure.

The EIA Report comprises the following volumes:

- Volume 1: Written Text;
- Volume 2: Figures;
- Volume 3: Visualisations;
- Volume 4: Technical Appendices; and
- Volume 5: Confidential Documents.

In addition to the above, the application is accompanied by a Standalone Non-Technical Summary (NTS) (this document) a Planning Statement, a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report, a Socio-Economic Benefits Report as well as a tracked change version of the Standard Onshore Wind Conditions updated as applicable to the Proposed Development.

A hard copy of the EIA Report will be available for public viewing during the application consultation period at the following addresses:

- Dumfries and Galloway Council, Kirkbank House, English Street, Dumfries, DG1 2HS; and
- Glencairn Memorial Institute, 3 Chapel Street, Moniaive, Thornhill, DG3 4EJ

Hard copies of the NTS are available free of charge from:

- Write: Appin Wind Farm Limited, c/o Statkraft UK Limited, The Garment Factory, 10 Montrose Street, Glasgow, G1 1RE
- Telephone: 0800 772 0668
- Email: UKProjects@statkraft.com

Hard copies of the EIA Report and further information may be obtained by arrangement with the above address for £2,500 per copy, or £15 per disk/USB memory stick copy.

The documents will also be available for viewing online on the Scottish Government ECU planning portal (https://www.energyconsents.scot/ApplicationSearch.aspx), DGC planning portal (https://eaccess.dumgal.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple&searchType=Application), and on the application website (https://projects.statkraft.co.uk/appin/).

Any public representations to the application may be submitted via the ECU website at www.energyconsents.scot/Register.aspx; by email to the Scottish Government, Energy Consents Unit mailbox at representations@gov.scot; or by post to the Scottish Government, Energy Consents Unit, 4th Floor, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU, identifying the proposal and specifying the grounds for representation.

The Applicant will advertise the submission of the application in the local and national press (The Herald) and on the dedicated project website. The advert will state the deadline for submitting representations to Scottish Ministers.

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 This document is a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report for Appin Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'). It accompanies an application for consent for the Proposed Development made by Appin Wind Farm Limited (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant'). The NTS summarises the key findings of the EIA which has been undertaken to assess the potential impacts from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development .

1.1.2 The Proposed Development is located wholly within the Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC) area (within the Tynron Community Council area), centred on BNG 272887, 597709, and approximately 6.2 km north of Moniaive and 14.8 km east of Carsphairn as shown on **Figure 1**.

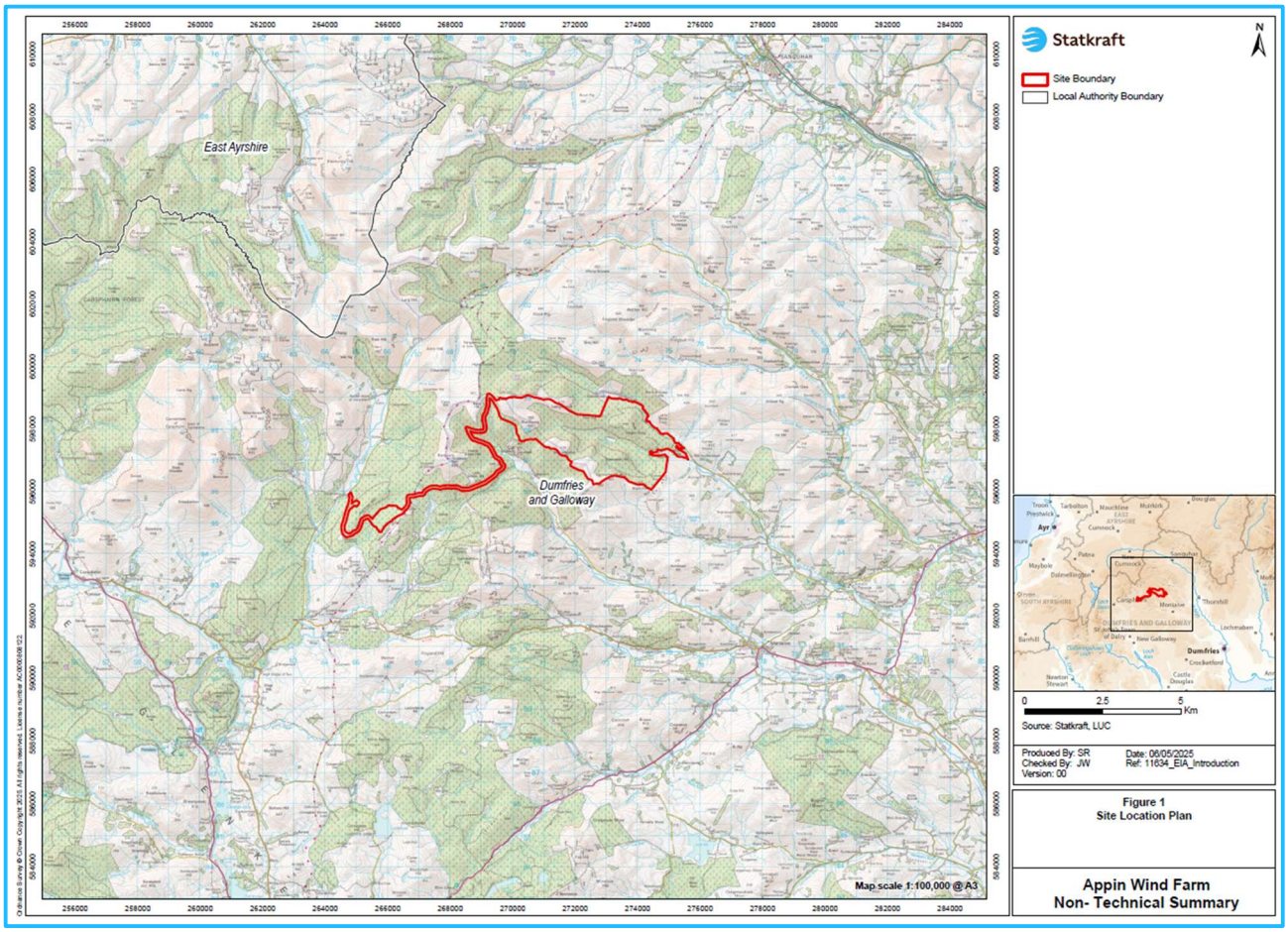


Figure 1 – Site Location

1.1.3 The Proposed Development consists of up to nine wind turbines with a maximum tip height of 200 m and associated ancillary infrastructure.

1.1.4 As the generating capacity of the Proposed Development would exceed 50 MW, an application for consent is being submitted to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989, with the Applicant also seeking a direction that deemed planning permission is granted under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

1.2 The Applicant

1.2.1 The Applicant, Appin Wind Farm Limited, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Statkraft UK Limited (Statkraft).

1.2.2 Statkraft is at the heart of the UK's energy transition. Since 2006, Statkraft has gone from strength to strength in the UK, building experience across wind, solar, hydro, storage, grid stability, EV charging, green hydrogen and a thriving markets business. Statkraft has invested over £1.4 billion into the UK's

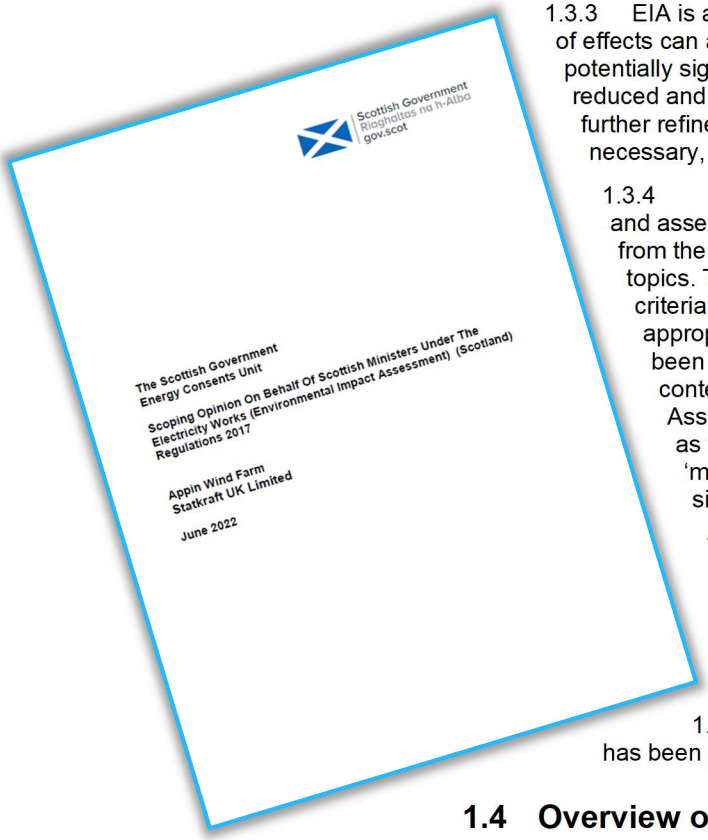
renewable energy infrastructure and facilitated over 4.5GW of new-build renewable energy generation through Power Purchase Agreements (PPA). Statkraft develops, constructs, owns and operates renewable facilities across the UK and across its UK businesses employs over 550 people in Scotland, England and Wales.

1.2.3 Further information about Statkraft can be found at www.statkraft.co.uk.

1.3 Environmental Impact Assessment

1.3.1 An EIA is carried out where a proposed development has the potential to result in significant environmental effects. As it is considered possible that the Proposed Development may result in significant environmental effects, an EIA has been undertaken to accompany the application for Section 36 consent.

1.3.2 EIA involves the compilation, evaluation and presentation of any likely significant environmental effects resulting from a proposed development, to assist the consenting authority, statutory consultees and wider public in considering an application.



1.3.3 EIA is an iterative process whereby the identification and assessment of effects can also inform the design of a proposed development so that potentially significant adverse environmental effects can be avoided, reduced and, if possible, removed. A proposed development can then be further refined to avoid or reduce potential environmental effects, where necessary, through the use of mitigation measures.

1.3.4 The EIA Report presents information on the identification and assessment of the likely significant environmental effects resulting from the Proposed Development across a number of environmental topics. The significance of these effects has been assessed using criteria defined in the topic chapters of the EIA Report. Where appropriate, or as otherwise defined, the significance of effects has been categorised as major, moderate, minor or negligible. In the context of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (hereafter referred to as the 'EIA Regulations') likely effects assessed as being of 'major' or 'moderate' significance are considered to be significant effects.

1.3.5 The scope of the EIA was informed by an EIA Scoping Opinion provided by the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in consultation with consultees including DGC, NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and other consultees.

1.3.6 As required by the EIA Regulations, the EIA Report has been prepared by 'competent experts' in relevant specialisms.

1.4 Overview of the Site and Proposed Development

1.4.1 The Site is located approximately 6.2 km north of Moniaive and 14.8 km east of Carsphairn within Dumfries and Galloway. There are several dispersed dwellings in the area around the Site with the nearest larger settlement being Sanquhar, approximately 11.2 km north/north-east of the Site. The A702 passes within approximately 7 km of the Site to the south-east between Thornhill and St John's Town of Dalry, and the A76 runs along Nithsdale, approximately 12 km to the south-east of the Site.

1.4.2 The main Site where the turbines are located comprises a single block of commercial forestry under one private ownership, while the access track passes through land owned by a second private landowner and land owned by Forestry Land Scotland (FLS). The Site comprises two narrow ridges, extending out from Colt Hill. The north-eastern fringes of the Site are characterised by deep valleys and upland farming. The central valley within the Site consists of steep wooded slopes, with more level ground generally being found on the two ridges towards the Site's perimeter as well as the lower ground in the vicinity of Appin Burn, which flows through the centre of the Site from approximately north-west to south-east.

2 The Proposed Development and Design Evolution

2.1 Site Selection

2.1.1 The Site was selected by the Applicant for a number reasons, including the following:

- it has a very good wind resource;
- it is not covered by any planning allocations or policies which would preclude wind energy development;
- it is not covered by any internationally or nationally designated sites for ecology, landscape or geology;
- it is compatible with the existing commercial forestry use;
- it can be developed whilst maintaining a distance of 1 km between the turbines and the closest residential properties;
- it has suitable ground conditions with limited areas of deep peat;
- it has a suitable access point using a route previously used for turbine deliveries; and
- there is an existing network of tracks across the Site which would help minimise the length of new track required by utilising and upgrading existing forestry tracks to service the Proposed Development where possible.

Example wind turbine

2.2 Design Evolution

2.2.1 The final design of the Proposed Development is the outcome of an iterative process which has aimed to balance achieving the maximum energy yield possible for the Site whilst also minimising the potential effects on the environment.

2.2.2 A number of parameters and considerations informed the site selection and design of the Proposed Development. Detailed information on the design evolution can be found in **Chapter 3** of the EIA Report.

2.2.3 The initial input to the design process for the Proposed Development was the desk-based constraints including proximity to landscape designations and residential properties, and the presence of watercourses and areas of steep slope. The desk-based data was augmented with field-based survey work including ornithological surveys, habitat and protected species surveys, peat probing, hydrology surveys, cultural heritage and noise surveys.

2.2.4 Following an initial round of public consultation and receipt of the EIA Scoping Opinion the turbine size was reduced from 230 m tip height to 200 m, to reduce the visual impact of the turbines from key viewpoints. The number of turbines has also reduced from 25 at the EIA Scoping stage, to nine in the final design of the Proposed Development.

2.2.5 Potential impacts from the ancillary infrastructure, including the access tracks were minimised by using the existing forestry access tracks where possible and use of existing borrow pits rather than creating new ones.

2.3 The Proposed Development

2.3.1 The Proposed Development is described in detail in **Chapter 4** of the EIA Report. The layout of the Proposed Development is shown on **Figure 2**. The main components of the Proposed Development will comprise the following:

- up to nine turbines (including internal transformers), each up to a maximum blade tip height of 200 m;
- foundations supporting each turbine;
- associated crane hardstandings and adjacent laydown areas at each turbine location;
- a network of on-site access tracks (of which 14.8 km will be upgraded existing track and approximately 13 km will be new track, all with a typical running width of 5 m) with turning heads and passing places;

- fifty-four watercourse crossings and associated infrastructure (48 upgraded existing crossings and six new crossings);
- a network of underground cables and cable trenches to connect the turbines to the on-site substation;
- vehicle turning heads;
- on-site passing places (location and size to be determined by the turbine supplier);
- site signage;
- a permanent compound containing the control building and substation;
- two temporary construction compounds and three temporary borrow pits; and
- a Nature Enhancement Management Plan (NEMP).

2.3.2 An Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is included in the EIA Report as **Technical Appendix 4.1**. The Outline CEMP describes the measures which would be employed during the construction phase of the Proposed Development to protect the environment.

Lifespan of the Proposed Development

2.3.3 Construction of the Proposed Development is anticipated to take approximately 18 months. The Proposed Development would have an operational life of up to 50 years, at the end of which it would be decommissioned, a process which would take approximately 12 months.

Access

2.3.4 Access to the Site would be directly from the C35s north of Strahanna via an existing forestry access track junction. It is anticipated that the Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AIL) (i.e. the turbine components) will travel to the Site from the north via the M8 and M73/74. Full details of the transport route and access to the Site are provided in **Chapter 11** of the EIA Report, and Section 10 of this report.

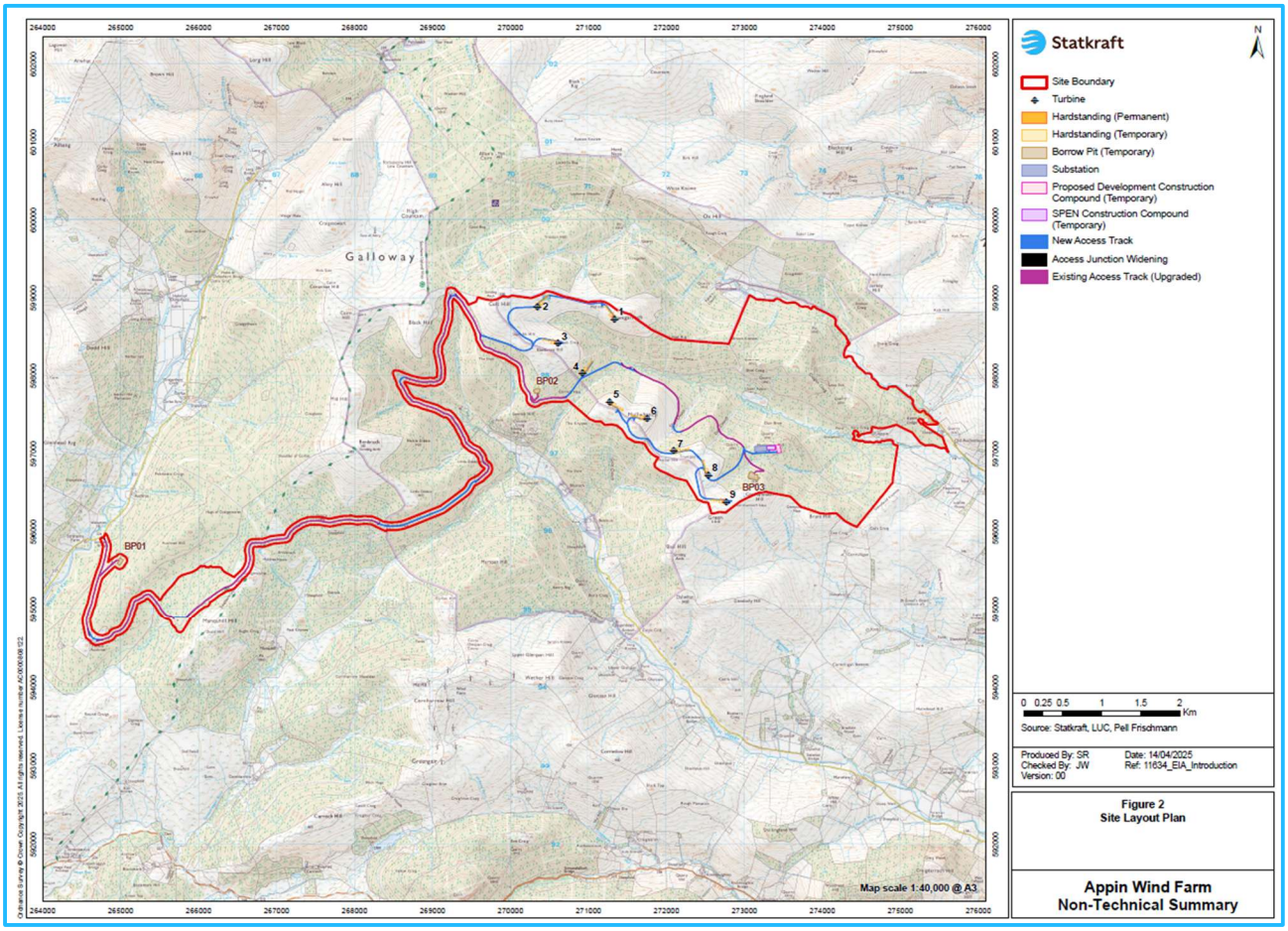


Figure 2 - Site Layout Plan

Grid Connection

2.3.5 The grid connection will require separate statutory consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. The grid connection application will be made by SPEN who are responsible for the transmission and distribution of electricity in central and southern Scotland. Therefore, potential environmental effects as a result of the off-site grid connection cannot be considered within this EIA Report, but will be subject to a separate consenting and impact assessment process undertaken by SPEN.

2.4 Forestry

2.4.1 **Appendix 4.2** of the EIA Report details the likely implications of the Proposed Development on the woodland resource within the Site boundary, and how it will be managed.

2.4.2 The Proposed Development is partially located within commercial forestry and areas of forestry have been identified that would require to be felled for construction and operation.

2.4.3 The forestry study area includes privately owned forest units Auchrae and Manquhill Forests, and Appin Forest. Part of the access and some of the ancillary infrastructure for the wind farm are also located in the National Forest Estate at Cairnhead Forest.

2.4.4 A total of 62.52 ha of forestry will require to be felled to enable the construction and operation of the Proposed Development; 22.03 ha will be permanently felled and 40.73 ha will be temporarily felled. Temporary felling areas would be restocked where possible, including 10.55 ha which would be replanted as broadleaved species as part of the NEMP. Therefore, there would be a net loss of woodland area.

2.4.5 To comply with the criteria of the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy (CoWRP) the Applicant is committed to providing compensatory planting off-site. At least 22.03 ha of compensatory planting will be provided, the details of which would be agreed with Scottish Forestry prior to the construction of the Proposed Development.

2.5 Aviation

2.5.1 **Technical Appendix 2.2** of the EIA Report details the potential aviation impacts as a result of the Proposed Development.

2.5.2 The assessment of effects on aviation and radar considers the potential for technical impacts and the operational acceptability of any such impacts. Rather than following an EIA process of assessing the significance of effects, the primary consideration is the actual or likely position of the specific aviation stakeholders. The assessment of effects on these receptors is therefore one of technical analysis and consultation and seeks to identify if any identified effects are likely to be ‘acceptable’ or ‘not acceptable’ to the asset owner, and if not acceptable, to establish any potential technical mitigation solutions.

2.5.3 The Site lies approximately 42 km south-east of Prestwick Airport and in the line-of-sight of Lowther Hill Radar. The Applicant is in ongoing discussions to agree mitigation for any impacts to these facilities. From a military perspective, the turbines will be located in low priority Low Flying Area and therefore require standard infrared aviation lighting to be placed on the turbines.

2.5.4 As the turbines are over 150 m in height they are required to be visibly lit at night by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The CAA has approved a reduced lighting scheme for the Proposed Development such that only Turbine 1, Turbine 2, Turbine 5 and Turbine 9 will require to be lit (details are set out in **Technical Appendix 4.6**).

2.6 Shadow Flicker

2.6.1 Shadow flicker may occur when the sun passes behind the blades of a turbine and casts a shadow over neighbouring properties. As the blades rotate, the shadow of the blades flicks on and off, an effect known as shadow flicker. The effect can only occur inside buildings, where the flicker appears through a window opening.

2.6.2 The shadow flicker study area is defined as ten times the rotor diameter of the Proposed Development turbines, a study area of 1.62 km. Two properties sit within the shadow flicker study area and were assessed for shadow flicker effects. The shadow flicker model predicts shadow flicker effects to be possible at one property for a maximum occurrence of 4.04 hours per year and a realistic estimate of 1.1 hours per year when taking account of likely weather conditions.

2.6.3 The Applicant is committed to promptly investigating any complaints of shadow flicker and taking appropriate action as required. This would comprise an investigation which considers the weather conditions at the time of the alleged shadow flicker, to determine which turbines were creating the effect and the extent of the shadow flicker created. If a loss of amenity is confirmed, then the shadow flicker control module would be activated. The module controls the turbine causing the shadow flicker

which would be programmed to shut down on specific dates at specific times when the sun is bright enough, there is sufficient wind to rotate the blades, and the wind direction is such that nuisance shadow flicker could occur.

2.7 Climate and Carbon Balance

2.7.1 Onshore wind farms by their very nature tackle the issue of climate change. The 'Carbon Calculator' is the Scottish Government's tool to support the process of determining the carbon impact of wind farm developments in Scotland (adverse and beneficial), which in turn establishes any effect on climate.

It is estimated that the Proposed Development would displace approximately 3.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2) in its lifetime when compared to the amount of CO_2 fossil fuels would have produced to generate the same amount of electricity.

2.7.2 The Proposed Development is expected to take approximately 1.8 years to offset the carbon released to the atmosphere (the CO_2 debt) from the construction of the wind farm. Following this the Proposed Development would in effect be in a net gain for the remaining 48.2 years of its operational life, contributing to national CO_2 reduction targets.

2.8 Telecommunications

2.8.1 Consultation was undertaken with telecommunication providers at the EIA Scoping stage which did not reveal any telecommunications receptors which could be affected as a result of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

2.9 Major Accidents and Disasters

2.9.1 The Proposed Development is not located in area which is considered to be vulnerable to major accidents and natural disasters, such as flooding, sea level rise, or earthquakes.

2.9.2 Effects which could be deemed to cause a major accident or disaster relate primarily to potential peat slide risk events which have been assessed as part of the peat landslide hazard risk assessment (PLHRA) to understand the risk of peat instability during construction and the receptors which this could affect – see **Technical Appendix 6.4**.

2.9.3 With regard to risks of accidents during the construction phase, the construction works for the Proposed Development would be undertaken in accordance with primary health and safety legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Construction (Design and Management) (CDM) Regulations 2015 which would include a requirement to produce emergency procedures in a Construction Phase (Health & Safety) Plan in accordance with the Regulations.

2.9.4 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.

2.9.5 Appropriate warning signs would be installed concerning restricted areas of the Site such as the substation compound, switchgear and metering systems. All on-site electrical cables would be buried underground with relevant signage.

2.9.6 Monitoring systems and protocols are in place to monitor weather conditions at the Site and to monitor the condition of the turbines themselves, for example, re-starting turbine blades in a controlled manner following an icy period to prevent ice-throw.

3 Benefits of the Proposed Development

3.1 Contribution Towards Government Targets

3.1.1 The Proposed Development would:

- make a meaningful contribution of over 60 MW of installed onshore wind capacity, towards meeting the renewable energy generation targets set out by the Scottish Government, including the goal for Scotland to have a fully decarbonised energy system by 2045;
- make a valuable contribution towards UK generation targets and the reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases, principally CO_2, in becoming carbon neutral in 1.8 years as demonstrated by the carbon calculator; and

- make Scotland, and therefore the UK, less reliant on imported and price-volatile fossil fuels by generating the equivalent energy to supply the approximate domestic needs of over 82,600[1] average UK households.

3.2 Socio-economic Benefits

3.2.1 Full details of the socio-economic benefits of the Proposed Development are explained in a separate **Socio-Economic Benefits Report**, with a summary being provided below.

Community Benefit Fund

3.2.2 Should the Proposed Development gain consent, a Community Benefit Fund would be made available to the community as set out within the Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report. This is offered on the basis of a payment per MW of installed electricity generating capacity at the Scottish Government recommended rate at the time of commissioning the Proposed Development. At present the recommended rate is £5,000 per MW (index linked) of installed electricity generating capacity.

Shared Ownership

3.2.3 Should there be an interest for local groups or organisations to have a financial interest in the Proposed Development, the Applicant would be willing to engage locally to bring this forward. This would offer local community groups the ability to invest in the Proposed Development. Local Energy Scotland can provide independent advice and support to communities interested in the shared ownership opportunity.

It is estimated that the community benefit fund would accrue benefits to the local community of over £300,000 per annum, worth approximately over £15 million over the 50 year operational life of the Proposed Development.

Stem Fund

3.2.4 During the development phase, the Applicant will make a one-off payment of £6,500 to Science Scotland to deliver 10 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) workshops in primary schools near the Proposed Development. Science Scotland will organise the workshops and liaise directly with the schools, with Statkraft staff invited to attend to provide information and support relating to the Proposed Development.

3.2.5 Once the Proposed Development is operational, an additional £10,000 per year will be allocated to the local community, specifically ring-fenced to support STEM education. This annual fund could be used by schools to run further science workshops or by individuals seeking assistance with further education in STEM subjects. It will be managed alongside the main community benefit fund, with the option for the community to contribute additional funding if desired.

Recruitment and Skills

3.2.6 It is estimated that the construction of the Proposed Development would directly support an estimated 74 temporary full-time jobs locally and 223 jobs within Scotland during the 18-month construction period. The local economy would be expected to be boosted by approximately £6 million (net Gross Value Added, GVA) and the Scottish economy by approximately £12 million (GVA) during construction. It is anticipated that the Proposed Development would employ up to 13 local members of staff during its operational period.

3.3 Outline Nature Enhancement Management Plan

3.3.1 An Outline Nature Enhancement Management Plan (ONEMP) is provided as **Technical Appendix 7.6**. It is anticipated that the document would be further developed, following the granting of consent, in discussion with DGC, SEPA, Nith District Salmon Fishery Board and NatureScot. The aim of the outline NEMP is to establish the key objectives and principles by which parts of the Site would be enhanced for the benefit of biodiversity, which would then form the basis for the more detailed NEMP.

3.3.2 The ONEMP has five key aims to improve and enhance biodiversity:

- ditch blocking to improve and enhance carbon-rich soils;
- enhance fisheries and other aquatic wildlife habitats through riparian tree planting;
- improvement of nesting and foraging opportunities for birds and bats;

[1] Based on a 64.8 MW installed capacity, average Scottish domestic consumption of 3,078 Kwh per year (BEIS December 2022) and the average load factor detailed in the CfD Allocation Round 6: Standard Terms Notice (Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, 6th March 2024) which states a load factor for new build projects (for delivery years 2026-2029) of 44.8% for onshore wind (>5MW) (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e85ee662ff48001a87b243/cfd-ar6-standard-terms-notice.pdf)..

- improvement of invertebrate habitat opportunities through pond creation and retention of dead wood; and
- improvement of the quality and condition of woodland habitat on Site.

3.3.3 Monitoring is proposed as part of the ONEMP in operational years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10 and 15 of the Proposed Development and will consist of checks of the habitat enhancement measures. The Applicant will provide a summary of the NEMP activities and monitoring results to NatureScot and DGC each year of monitoring. The frequency of monitoring and reporting will be agreed with key stakeholders.

The Applicant will work with Buglife across all aspects of the NEMP to maximise the benefits for invertebrates in collaboration with other work Buglife is undertaking in the area.

4 Landscape and Visual Amenity

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 EIA Report **Chapter 5** identifies and assesses the potential impacts that the Proposed Development would have on landscape character, designated landscapes, views and visual amenity of the local environment.

4.1.2 The assessment uses a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)[2] map to predict the potential visibility and therefore changes to the landscape character and views caused by the Proposed Development.

4.2 Baseline

4.2.1 The study area includes a range of landscapes from lowland valley farmland to rounded open hills and plateaux; slopes with large coniferous plantations; and narrow valleys. Twenty representative assessment viewpoints were chosen following consultation to assess the changes to visual amenity, as experienced by visual receptors (people) from the area around the Proposed Development.

4.3 Predicted Effects

Construction and Decommissioning

4.3.1 The landscape and visual effects of construction works on the Site, involving tree felling, ground disturbances and installation of the turbines are judged to be significant for the 18-month construction period.

Operation

Landscape Character Types (LCT)

4.3.2 Landscape effects during operation are identified as being potentially significant out to a maximum of 8 km from the Site. Significant effects on the following Landscape Character Types (LCT) are anticipated: the Southern Uplands with Forest – Dumfries and Galloway (LCT 178) within 3 km of the Site, the Upland Glens – Dumfries and Galloway (LCT 166) within 8 km of the Site, the Southern Uplands – Dumfries and Galloway (LCT 177) within 5 km, and the Foothills – Dumfries and Galloway (LCT 175) within 5 km of the Site. Beyond 8 km no significant effects on landscape character are predicted.

Designated Landscapes

4.3.3 Most of the designated landscapes within 20 km of the Proposed Development have limited or no visibility of the Proposed Development. Significant effects have been identified on the Thornhill Uplands Regional Scenic Area (RSA), within approximately 8 km of the Site, however these effects will be localised in the context of this large designated area and are therefore localised.

[2] The ZTV is an analysis of the theoretical visibility of the proposed turbines based on a 'bare earth' model and as such represents the maximum visibility of the turbines. The actual visibility is expected to be less in some parts of the study area due to screening afforded by vegetation/woodland and buildings.

Visual Receptors

4.3.4 The assessment of visual amenity considers the effects of changes to the views that people would see from the surrounding area as a result of the introduction of the Proposed Development to the existing landscape.

4.3.5 The ZTV (**Figure 4**) illustrates that theoretical visibility of the turbines is generally curtailed by the uplands around the Site such that visibility is largely contained within 3-5 km of the Site except from higher ground or where views between hills are possible.

4.3.6 The ZTV depicts that there is a limited area, effectively the eastern half of the area within approximately 10-11 km that would be influenced by the Proposed Development. Within that area, the Proposed Development would be relatively nearby, and effects would generally be significant.

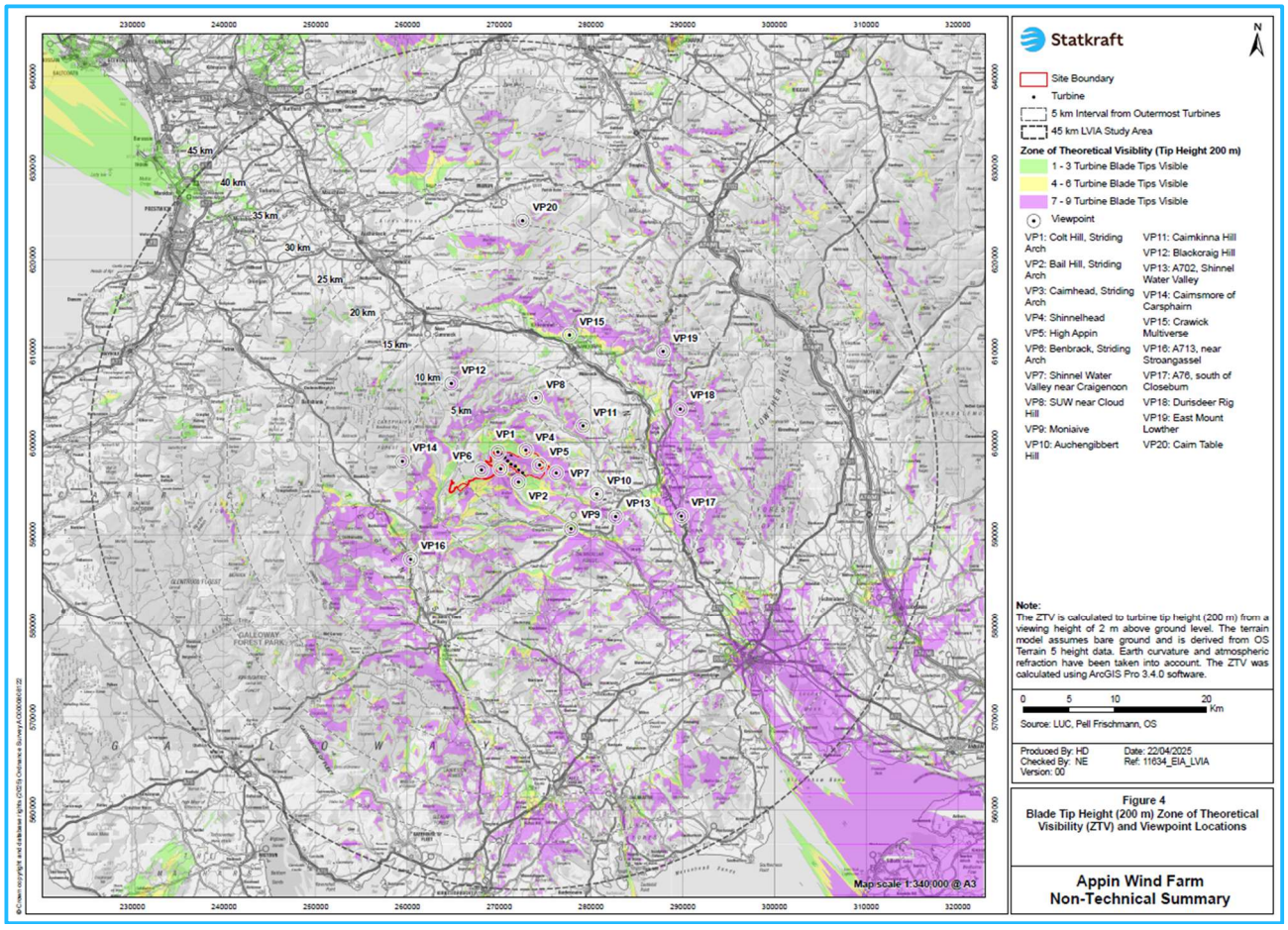


Figure 4: Zone of Theoretical Visibility

4.3.7 Major (significant) effects on views are predicted at five representative viewpoints and Moderate (significant) effects at a further six representative viewpoints. All of these viewpoints are within approximately 11 km of the Site.

Residential Visual Amenity

4.3.8 The Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) (**Technical Appendix 5.3**) assesses individual properties or groups of properties within 3 km of the Proposed Development. The RVAA considers the change to visual amenity at each property/group of properties, including consideration of likely views from the property, its curtilage (garden) and approach.

4.3.9 An assessment of the eight properties around the Proposed Development found that there would be a high magnitude of change to the views from one property within approximately 2.5 km to the nearest turbine, but that the effects at the property would not reach what in current guidance is called a 'Residential Visual Amenity Threshold'[3].

[3] Landscape Institute (March 2019) Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA). Technical Guidance Note 2/19.

Aviation Lighting

4.3.10 Due to military and civilian activities that are carried out in airspace above the Proposed Development, visible red lighting is required on four turbines (turbines 1, 2, 5 and 9). The lights would turn on half an hour after sunset and would be switched off half an hour before sunrise. Agreed mitigation includes the reduction of intensity of the lights during conditions of clearer visibility. In addition, the lights used will be designed such that the brightness of the light emitted is decreased for viewers close to the turbines viewing the lights from below.

4.3.11 An assessment of the effects of the lighting on views after dark has been carried out (**Technical Appendix 5.2**) which considers the appearance of the proposed lighting in night-time views (including relative to any existing lights in views); and any change to the night-time viewing experience from various viewpoints and routes.

4.3.12 Significant night-time landscape effects due to visible red lighting are predicted for the same LCTs identified in the daytime assessment (see paragraph 4.3.2 above).

4.3.13 Significant night-time visual effects are predicted for Viewpoint 1: Colt Hill, Striding Arch; Viewpoint 2: Bail Hill, Striding Arch; Viewpoint 4: Shinnelhead; Viewpoint 6: Benbrack, Striding Arch; Viewpoint 7: Shinnel Water valley near Craigencoon; Viewpoint 8: Southern Upland Way near Cloud Hill; and Viewpoint 10: Auchengibbert Hill. This is due to the introduction of aviation lighting to a dark sky context, seen in relatively close proximity. It is predicted that these effects will reduce to not significant for VP4, VP8 and VP10, due to the influence of 19 lit turbines at Sanquhar II Wind Farm in future baseline views.

Decommissioning Effects

4.3.14 Effects during decommissioning are anticipated to be similar to but lower in significance than construction.

Cumulative Effects

4.3.15 The cumulative assessment considers the effects of the introduction of the Proposed Development to the landscape in addition to other wind farms which are consented but not yet constructed or with an active planning application.

4.3.16 There are no instances in which the effects of the Proposed Development in the context of these additional wind farms are judged to be greater than the Proposed Development alone.

Overview of Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement

4.3.17 Measures to reduce effects upon the landscape resource and visual amenity were achieved through changes to the design of the Proposed Development.

4.4 Summary

4.4.1 The appearance of the Proposed Development in views from nearby properties, settlements and hills formed a key consideration in the development of the design. While significant effects on both the landscape and visual receptors remain, and are inevitable for tall, modern structures of this nature, these are localised within 11 km of the Proposed Development.

5 Geology, Hydrology, and Peat

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 **Chapter 6** of the EIA Report considers the potential effects of the Proposed Development in relation to hydrology, geology and peat. It details the baseline environmental conditions, based on desk studies and a comprehensive field survey conducted from September 2021 to February 2025.

5.1.2 The assessment was undertaken based on the findings of field survey, consultation and desk-based data collection. Phase 1 and 2 peat surveys were undertaken based on Scottish Government (2017) guidance, along with hydrological surveys, groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystem (GWDTE) surveys, private water supply (PWS) surveys and a watercourse crossing assessment.

Sphagnum moss identification

5.1.3 Where possible, measures to avoid and minimise impacts have been embedded into the Proposed Development design, e.g. avoidance of deeper peat, 50 m buffers from watercourses, buffers from GWDTEs where possible, and the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for treatment and attenuation of surface water runoff.

5.2 Baseline

5.2.1 Consultation, a desk study and Site surveys identified the geological, hydrological and peat baseline.

5.2.2 Most of the Site is underlain by peat of less than 0.5 m depth, with some isolated areas of deeper peat on the hilltops and a plateau area north of the Magmallach Burn. Deeper peat was avoided during the design iterations.

Watercourse intercepted by access track

5.2.3 The Proposed Development is located within the Appin Burn, Dalwhat Water, Stroanfreggan Burn, Auchrae Burn and Water of Ken catchments. Most of the Proposed Development is within the Appin Burn catchment which flows in an easterly direction towards the Shinnel Water and lies within the wider catchment of the Shinnel Water.

5.2.4 Whilst areas of potential GWDTE were identified on-site, the majority of the potential GWDTE habitats were found to have at most a low dependency on groundwater and are not considered to be GWDTE, as they are associated with surface water drainage within the forestry rides. One groundwater flush/spring located at the top of the Appin Burn valley, between Blackcraig Hill and Colt Hill was identified to be of moderate dependency with respect to groundwater. However, the ecological importance of this feature was deemed low resulting in an overall low GWDTE value.

5.2.5 A review of private water supplies (PWS) near the Proposed Development found no risk to them as all are more than 250 m from any planned excavations, with the closest PWS to the site being over 1 km distant. Water flow analysis also shows that no proposed areas of construction will drain toward these supplies and will not be affected by the Proposed Development.

5.3 Predicted Effects

Subject to adoption of best practice construction techniques and a site-specific CEMP, no significant adverse effects on geology (including soils and peat) or the water environment have been identified.

Construction

5.3.1 The design of the Proposed Development has sought to utilise existing tracks where possible and minimise new watercourse crossings where practicable. Six new watercourse crossings are required which will either be of bottomless arch culvert or single span bridge design (**Technical Appendix 6.1**).

5.3.2 In addition to the watercourse crossings, there are five locations where the 50 m water course buffer hasn't been met, however with the implementation of additional mitigation at these locations, no significant effects are predicted.

5.3.3 Similarly, it has not been possible to achieve all required buffers on GWDTEs, but no significant effects are predicted.

5.3.4 The proposed turbines have been located in areas of shallow or no peat, avoiding siting any infrastructure on peat depth greater than 1 m. Where peat would be encountered by the Proposed Development it can be readily managed and accommodated within the Site layout with no significant environmental effects. No surplus peat would be generated, and the volumes of peat / peaty soil generated from the proposed excavations would be used to reinstate track verges, turbine bases, crane hardstandings and the temporary construction compounds.

5.3.5 The peat landslide hazard risk assessment (PLHRA) (**Technical Appendix 6.4**) confirms that there are very limited areas of peat instability risk where the Proposed Development is proposed to be located. With the employment of appropriate good practice mitigation measures, all of the areas of peat instability can be considered as an insignificant risk.

Operation

5.3.6 Operation of the Proposed Development would require limited activities relative to the construction and decommissioning phases. Should any maintenance be required on-site during the operational life of the Proposed Development which would involve construction type activities; mitigation measures as per the final CEMP would be adhered to.

Decommissioning

5.3.7 Effects during decommissioning would be less than those during the construction phase. Methods and mitigation will follow best practice and guidance at the time of decommissioning and a Decommissioning, Restoration and Aftercare Strategy will be agreed with the relevant consultees at that time.

Cumulative Effects

5.3.8 Potential cumulative effects have been considered associated with other wind farm developments located within 5 km and in the same surface water catchments as the Proposed Development.

5.3.9 These developments have either been developed or consented recently and therefore will be required to be constructed and managed in accordance with best practice, industry standards and relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance regulated by statutory consultees. These standards ensure that, with respect to soils, geology and the water environment, potential impacts are mitigated and controlled at source, therefore no potential significant adverse cumulative effects are anticipated.

Overview of Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement

5.3.10 With embedded mitigation measures in place, including use of SuDS and adhering to the CEMP, there will be no significant effects on hydrology and peat receptors. The CEMP will contain a Peat Management Plan which details how the peat excavated during construction will be reused. In addition, protections like silt fences and settlement ponds will be used in sensitive areas to reduce sediment run-off, and an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will oversee compliance on-site. As noted above, additional mitigation measures will be put in place at site-specific locations, where watercourse buffers and GWDTE buffers could not be achieved.

5.4 Summary

5.4.1 No likely significant effects have been identified, with residual effects assessed to be of negligible or minor significance.

6 Ecology

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 EIA Report **Chapter 7** evaluates the potential effects of the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development on important ecological features including protected habitats and species.

6.2 Baseline

6.2.1 There are five national statutory designated sites for ecological features located within 10 km of the Site: Upper Nithsdale Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Tynron Juniper Wood SAC, Chanlockfoot Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Stenhouse Wood SSSI and Tynron Juniper Wood SSSI.

6.2.2 Part of the Site lies within the Transitional Zone of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Reserve. The Site is also located on the periphery of the Nith Valley Priority Area for Red Squirrel Conservation (PARC) and within a Scottish Forestry priority area for grey squirrel control.

6.2.3 To identify the ecological baseline the following surveys were undertaken: Extended Phase 1 Habitat surveys, National Vegetation Classification (NVC) surveys, Protected Terrestrial Mammal Surveys, Fish Habitat Surveys and Bat Surveys.

6.2.4 The surveys identified that the Site is predominantly characterised by commercial forestry, consisting mostly of Sitka spruce with some scattered larch. The Site has limited evidence of protected terrestrial mammals, limited optimal fish habitat, and a bat species assemblage dominated by common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle.

6.3 Predicted Effects

Construction

6.3.1 The Proposed Development has the potential to affect notable habitats and the species that use them through direct habitat loss as well as effects from pollution and run-off (such as silt) without appropriate control measures. Pollution prevention controls, good practice measures, and embedded mitigation,

Juvenile otter on-site forest track

detailed within the outline CEMP will ensure that habitats are not adversely impacted by the Proposed Development. To ensure that the aquatic environment is safeguarded, a water quality monitoring plan will be put in place prior to, during and post-construction.

6.3.2 The CEMP will include a Species and Habitat Protection Plan (SHPP), an ECoW will be appointed to oversee the implementation of the ecology mitigation measures.

6.3.3 There would be no significant adverse effects on habitats or protected species due to construction of the Proposed Development.

Operation

6.3.4 Potential operational effects are restricted to bats which may be affected as a result of potential collision, changes in air pressure or disruption to their commuting and foraging routes. Due to the low activity levels recorded during bat surveys, and by maintaining the Proposed Development infrastructure 50 m away from key bat habitat features, no significant adverse effects on bats are anticipated.

Decommissioning

6.3.5 Effects during decommissioning would be less than those during the construction phase. Methods and mitigation will follow best practice and guidance at the time of decommissioning and a Decommissioning, Restoration and Aftercare Strategy will be agreed with the relevant consultees at the time.

Cumulative Effects

6.3.6 No significant cumulative effects are predicted for habitats or protected species.

The additional enhancement of habitats proposed as part of the NEMP would result in beneficial effects on nature conservation.

Overview of Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement

6.3.7 Several key mitigation measures have been built into the design of the Proposed Development. The layout avoids sensitive areas like deep peat and important wildlife habitats, a 50 m buffer from watercourses has been achieved apart from a few exceptions (**Chapter 6**) and a 50 m buffer has been maintained around bat foraging areas. Where new water crossings are needed, they will be carefully designed to allow fish and other animals to move freely. Existing tracks are used where possible to minimise habitat disturbances. As noted above, the CEMP will include a SHPP, and a Fish Monitoring Plan will track the health of aquatic habitats before, during, and after construction. The NEMP will support restoration and long-term improvements to local biodiversity.

6.4 Summary

6.4.1 No likely significant effects have been identified, with residual effects assessed to be of negligible or minor significance.

7 Ornithology

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 **Chapter 8** of the EIA Report evaluates the effects of the Proposed Development on ornithological receptors (birds).

7.2 Baseline

7.2.1 Existing data on bird species and protected areas within 20 km of the Site was reviewed. Information was gathered from national and local organisations, including the RSPB and the local raptor groups.

7.2.2 Field surveys were carried out from September 2020 to August 2021, with an additional breeding bird survey of the access route in early 2025. Field surveys included both static vantage point surveys which recorded bird flights and breeding walkover surveys and focussed on target bird species potentially affected by the Proposed Development, such as species of European conservation

importance (as listed on Annex I of the Birds Directive), species listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act, and red-listed species on 'Birds of Conservation Concern'.

7.2.3 The flight surveys recorded red kite, goshawk, and geese flying through the area, and the breeding surveys found a small number of breeding waders (including curlew and snipe) near the Site.

7.3 Predicted Effects

Construction

7.3.1 The Site has been identified as having low sensitivity for ornithological features and no significant effects of construction of the Proposed Development have been identified.

Operation

7.3.2 As noted above, the Site is not considered to be particularly sensitive for birds and no significant effects of operation of the Proposed Development have been identified.

Decommissioning

7.3.3 The level of impact during decommissioning is considered to be of a similar scope and magnitude, or lower, than would occur during the construction phase, as such, decommissioning of the Proposed Development will not result in any significant effects on birds.

Cumulative Effects

7.3.4 No significant effects (including cumulatively) are predicted for ornithology during the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development.

7.3.5 For cumulative impacts of the Proposed Development, alongside other wind farm projects, all impacts have been concluded as being negligible, with the exception of habitat loss / displacement impacts on goshawk which have been determined as having a minor adverse impact, however this is still not significant in the context of the EIA Regulations.

Overview of Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement

7.3.6 Notwithstanding the lack of potential impacts on target bird species, some standard mitigation measures will be implemented during construction to protect birds, including:

- good practice construction measures, pollution prevention controls and monitoring as set out in the outline CEMP;
- development of a Construction Breeding Bird Protection Plan (BBPP) which will form part of the CEMP; and
- if Site clearance activities (including forestry works) were to commence during the core breeding bird season (1 March to 31 August, inclusive), they will be subject to a pre-clearance survey by a competent ornithologist to identify any active wild bird nests with works proceeding subject to exclusion buffers where nests are discovered.

7.3.7 An ECoW will oversee implementation and compliance during construction.

7.4 Summary

7.4.1 No significant effects on birds are predicted as a result of the Proposed Development.

8 Cultural Heritage

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 EIA Report **Chapter 9** considers the archaeological and cultural heritage value of the Site and assesses the potential for significant effects on archaeological features and heritage assets resulting from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

8.1.2 The assessment considers potential effects, including construction, operation and cumulative effects of the Proposed Development upon heritage assets identified during a desk-based study and Site surveys.

8.2 Baseline

8.2.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the Site. There are 86 non-designated heritage assets that have been identified within the Site which, other than a possible Bronze Age cairn, represent post-medieval agricultural activities, including farmsteads and sheep folds.

8.2.2 Within 5 km of the Site boundary (the 'Inner Study Area) there are three scheduled monuments, 11 listed buildings, 15 non-designated heritage assets of high importance and 18 non-designated heritage assets of Regional importance. These represent human activities from prehistory to the post-medieval period.

8.2.3 Within 10 km of the Site boundary (the 'Outer Study Area') there are a further 17 scheduled monuments, 113 listed buildings, two Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDL) and two conservation areas. These represent human activities from prehistory to the post-medieval period.

8.3 Predicted Effects

Construction

8.3.1 During construction nine non-designated heritage assets of low importance and one non-designated asset of medium importance may experience the partial alteration of their physical remains. This will result in a small magnitude of change judged to be a minor level of effect to these assets.

Operation

8.3.2 The operation of the Proposed Development may result in setting change to six non-designated heritage assets of low importance, located within the Site. This will result in a small magnitude of change judged to be a minor level of effect to these assets. In addition, one non-designated heritage asset of medium importance is located within the Site adjacent to the access track, which may experience setting changes of a small magnitude resulting in a minor effect.

8.3.3 Within the 0-5 km Inner Study Area, and the 5-10 km Outer Study Area, the operation of the Proposed Development may result in setting changes to two designed heritage assets, one non-designated heritage asset of high importance, and two non-designated heritage assets of medium importance. This will result in a small magnitude of change judged to be a minor level of effect to these assets.

Decommissioning

8.3.4 Effects during decommissioning would be less than those during the construction phase. Methods and mitigation will follow best practice and guidance at the time of decommissioning and a Decommissioning, Restoration and Aftercare Strategy will be agreed with the relevant consultees at that time.

Cumulative Effects

8.3.5 Although the developments considered as part of the cumulative effects assessment will be visible from many of the assets within the Inner and Outer Study Areas, this will not change the way in which their cultural significance is appreciated, experienced or understood. Therefore, no cumulative effects have been identified.

Overview of Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement

8.3.6 No likely significant effects have been identified and following the adoption of construction best practice presented in the CEMP, including the clear demarcation of known heritage assets, it is anticipated that any potential direct physical effects due to accidental damage or micrositing during construction can be further reduced

8.4 Summary

8.4.1 No significant effects on cultural heritage are predicted as a result of the Proposed Development.

9 Noise and Vibration

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 **Chapter 10** of the EIA Report evaluates the effects of noise during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development on nearby noise sensitive receptors (NSRs) (i.e. properties which are potentially sensitive to noise such as residential homes).

9.1.2 Onshore wind turbine developments generally occur in rural locations where background noise levels can be low and therefore wind turbines can be audible. Noise limits are set in accordance with the

guidance documents ETSU-R-97[4] and the Institute of Acoustics Good Practice Guidance (IOA GPG)[5] The noise limits are established in relation to existing background noise levels and apply to the combined cumulative noise levels from all wind farms within the study area.

9.1.3 During operation, turbines emit noise from the blades as they pass through the air. The amount of noise emitted varies depending on the wind speed. When there is little wind the turbine rotors will turn slowly and produce lower noise levels than during high wind speeds, however, background noise levels at nearby properties will also increase at high wind speeds.

Example of noise measuring equipment

9.2 Baseline

9.2.1 To undertake an assessment of the construction noise impact the assessment followed UK guidance (BS 5228) using modelling techniques to predict how noisy different construction activities would be. Multiple realistic scenarios representing different phases of construction were considered. Predictions assumed worst-case conditions, and that construction would mostly occur during daytime hours, with limited night-time activities.

9.2.2 For the operational noise assessment there were 13 Noise Sensitive Receptors (NSRs) identified and three of these were chosen as representative properties for the Proposed Development. Of these three residential properties the closest was Blairoch just over 1.2 km from the nearest proposed turbine.

9.3 Predicted Effects

Construction

9.3.1 Disruption due to construction would be localised, temporary and intermittent in nature. The construction noise is considered typical for activities of this type and no specific mitigation is required to comply with the required noise limits, nevertheless several safeguards exist to control and minimise the effects of construction noise to be implemented through the CEMP. The residual effect from construction noise would be not significant.

Operation

9.3.2 Predictions for a candidate turbine (Vestas V162 7.2 MW) have been undertaken to produce a model of the noise generated during operation and includes the effect of noise in combination with the nearby consented Sanquhar II, Lorg and Manquhill Wind Farms and the proposed Euchanhead and Cloud Hill Wind Farms.

9.3.3 For all NSRs, cumulative noise levels due to the operation of the Proposed Development together with the other wind farms within the area are predicted to be on or below the required noise limit during the daytime and night-time across all wind speeds.

Decommissioning

9.3.4 Activities that occur during the decommissioning of the Proposed Development are unlikely to produce higher noise levels than those produced during the construction and many of the activities will be similar in nature. As such it is assumed that if construction noise levels are predicted to be below the threshold levels then decommissioning noise would also be within the threshold levels.

Overview of Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement

9.3.5 With the implementation of the measures outlined in the CEMP construction noise effects will be mitigated and controlled. During operation the Applicant will be required to ensure that the Proposed Development complies with ETSU noise limits at all residential properties.

[4] The Working Group on Noise from Wind Farms (1996). ETSU-R-97, The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms.
[5] Institute of Acoustics (2013). A Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise.

9.4 Summary

9.4.1 All noise levels will be within required thresholds during construction, operation and decommissioning and there will be no significant effects.

10 Traffic and Transport

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 **Chapter 11** of the EIA Report considers the likely significant effects on transport and access associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

10.2 Baseline

10.2.1 Access to the Site would be via the A713 to Carsphairn and then via the B729 to Smittons and the C35S. The C35S would then be followed north to Strahanna where access would then be taken using an existing forestry access junction.

10.2.2 The study area includes local roads that are likely to experience increased traffic flows resulting from the Proposed Development including:

- A713 to St Johns Town of Dalry;
- B741 to Carsphairn;
- B720 to Smittons; and
- C25S to the Site.

10.2.3 To assess the impact of construction traffic on the study area, existing traffic data was obtained from the Transport Scotland and the Department for Transport (DfT) databases.

10.3 Predicted Effects

Construction

10.3.1 The Proposed Development would lead to increased traffic volumes on a number of roads in the vicinity of the Site during the temporary 18-month construction phase.

10.3.2 The maximum traffic effect associated with construction of the Proposed Development is predicted to occur in month four of the construction programme. During month four there will be a total of 4,946 vehicle movements, which equates to 226 vehicle movements per day, comprising of 166 two-way HGV movements and 60 two-way car / LGV movements.

10.3.3 The movement of traffic associated with the delivery of large wind turbine components (known as Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AIL)) would require small scale and temporary remedial works at a number of locations along the identified delivery route. The AIL will travel as part of a convoy accompanied by Police Scotland.

10.3.4 Effects associated with the construction traffic generated would be most pronounced in close proximity to the Site access junction and on the final approaches to the Site. As vehicles travel away from the Proposed Development, they would disperse across the wider road network, diluting any potential effects. Therefore, it is expected that the effects relating to construction traffic are unlikely to be significant beyond the study area.

With the implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan no significant effects are anticipated in respect of traffic and transport issues.

The Applicant will communicate and update the local community as construction progresses.

Example of a wind turbine blade delivery

Operation

10.3.5 Traffic levels during the operational phase of Proposed Development would be up to two vehicles per week for maintenance purposes and no significant effects are anticipated.

Decommissioning

10.3.6 Traffic levels during the decommissioning of the Proposed Development are expected to be lower than during the construction phase as some elements of the Proposed Development will be broken up on-site for onward transport.

Cumulative Effects

10.3.7 None of the committed developments in the study area would conflict with the construction of the Proposed Development and, therefore, no cumulative effects are identified.

10.3.8 Should any of the current schemes under planning consideration at present be consented, any crossover of traffic with the Proposed Development flows will be addressed via an overarching Traffic Management and Monitoring Plan (TMMP).

Overview of Proposed Mitigation / Enhancement

10.3.9 The following measures will be implemented to mitigate any adverse effects of construction traffic during the construction phase and in line with mitigation required for this type of development:

- Construction Traffic Management Plan;
- Abnormal Load Transport Management Plan;
- Outline Access Management Plan; and
- A Staff Travel Plan.

10.3.10 The movement of AIL traffic will require small scale and temporary remedial works.

10.4 Summary

10.4.1 With the implementation of appropriate mitigation, no significant residual effects are anticipated in respect of traffic, and transport issues.

11 Summary of Significant Effects

11.1.1 **Chapter 12** of the EIA Report describes the Summary of Significant Effects of the Proposed Development, which has been carried out in accordance with regulatory requirements and guidance on good practice. The findings of the surveys undertaken, in addition to consultation, have informed the design process and assessment. Design modifications and pre-construction, construction and operational mitigation have been implemented to remove and reduce significant adverse effects.

11.1.2 Following the implementation of mitigation, significant adverse effects remain on the landscape and visual amenity as these effects cannot be mitigated further given the inherent nature of the wind farm, however they have been reduced to the lowest practical level through the iterative design process.

11.1.3 An Outline NEMP is proposed is to enhance the Site for the benefit of biodiversity, including through improvements to benefit carbon rich soils, fisheries and aquatic wildlife habitats, nesting and foraging birds and bats, and improvement of invertebrate habitat quality. The additional enhancement of habitats proposed as part of the NEMP would result in overall beneficial effects on nature conservation.

12 Next Steps

12.1.1 The ECU will consider the Section 36 application and the findings of the EIA. Before making a decision on the application, the ECU will consult a number of consultees including DGC, NatureScot and SEPA, and will consider all representations received from other parties including members of the public.

12.1.2 Any public representations to the application may be submitted via the ECU website at www.energyconsents.scot/Register.aspx; by email to the Scottish Government, Energy Consents Unit mailbox at representations@gov.scot; or by post to the Scottish Government, Energy Consents Unit, 4th Floor, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU, identifying the proposal and specifying the grounds for representation.

13 References

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