Technical Appendix 4.5: Outline Outdoor Access Management Plan

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Appendix 4.5
Outline Outdoor Access Management Plan

Aim of the Outline Access Management Plan

1.1 This Outline Access Management Plan (OAMP) has been prepared by LUC on behalf of Appin Wind Farm Ltd (the Applicant) to illustrate how public access rights will be managed on off-road access tracks during construction of the Appin Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development').

1.2 Access on the public road network has been assessed within **Chapter 11** of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report, and visual effects on recreational receptors are assessed from representative viewpoints on recreational access routes in **Chapter 5** of the EIA Report.

1.3 The OAMP will be reviewed and refined as required by the Contractor prior to construction to ensure it is fit for purpose. This final version of the AMP will be agreed with Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC) in advance of construction as per the Standard Conditions submitted as part of the Proposed Development application.

Proposed Development Description

1.4 The Proposed Development includes up to nine wind turbines and associated infrastructure located approximately 6.2 km northwest of Moniaive and is wholly within the DGC administrative area. The construction phase of the Proposed Development is approximately 18 months, and the operational period is anticipated to be 50 years. The development description is discussed in detail in **Chapter 4** of the EIA Report.

Methodology

1.5 This OAMP has been written in line with the requirements set out in the SNH (now NatureScot) Guidance for the Preparation of Outdoor Access Plans[1]. The guidance specifies the five steps that should be set out within an Outdoor Access Plan as shown in **Table 1.1** below and used to form the basis of this OAMP.

Table 1.1 Outdoor Access Plans methodology best practice guidelines

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.

[1] 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

Outdoor Access Baseline

1.6 The Applicant has consulted The Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (ScotWays) and DGC at the EIA Scoping stage of the proposals (see **Table 1.2**).

Table 1.2 Consultation Responses

Consultee	Consultation Stage	Issue Raised	Response/ Action Taken
DGC	Scoping	Confirmed that the Site interacts with a Core Path (Core Path 51; Benbuie to Troston Hill) but there are no other recorded Core Paths or Rights of Way affected by the Proposed Development.	At the scoping stage, the Site interacted with only one Core Path. Further Core Paths (including the Southern Upland Way (SUW)) have been identified which the Site interacts with as the design has progressed and site access options have been identified. It is also noted that the SUW was raised as a point of concern during the scoping process in relation to landscape and visual impacts. Further information in this respect is outlined in **Chapter 5** of the EIA Report. Core Paths have been considered as a receptor within **Chapter 5** of the EIA Report. Mitigation measures which address the presence of Core Paths within the Site are outlined below.
ScotWays	Scoping	It was noted that the Scoping Report refers to the SUW and the local core path network (including the directly affected Core Path 51 *Benbuie to Troston Hill*). Anticipate that this will be assessed and in relation to forestry traffic.	Impacts to visual amenity from the local core path network have been assessed. Further details are provided within **Chapter 5** of the EIA Report. Refer also to Vantage Point (VP) 8: SUW near Cloud Hill (**Volume 3, Figure 5.18a-c**). Mitigation measures which address the presence of Core Paths within the Site are outlined below.
Tynron Community Council	Scoping	Requested that local Core Paths and SUW are factored into the traffic assessment.	Mitigation measures which address the presence of Core Paths within the Site are outlined below.

1.7 Further to the consultation responses noted above, a review of the DGC Core Paths interactive map viewer[2] highlights that there are several other core paths located within, or in close proximity to the Site in addition to Core Path 51 flagged by DGC. The SUW is crossed by an existing forestry access track which will be used to access the Site, and there are a number of other core paths within, and near, the Site boundary. The Core Paths relevant to the Site are outlined in **Table 1.3** and also shown on **Figure A4.5.1**. **Figure A4.5.1** also shows the Proposed Development in relation to the SUW. It is anticipated these routes may be used recreationally by walkers, cyclists or by equestrians.

[2] Dumfries and Galloway (Undated). Core Paths portal [online]. Available at: https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/leisure-sport-culture/parks-outdoor-spaces/core-paths

Table 1.3 Core Paths within/traversing the Site (including main access)

Path Name	Location and Information
UNNO/504/14 –SUW Section 4: Dalry to Sanquhar	The SUW crosses an existing forestry access track which will also be used by the Proposed Development and then runs parallel to the existing forestry access track for approximately 1.5 km at Craigencarse.
GLEN/51/3 / GLEN/51/4 / GLEN/51/5 – Benbuie to Troston Hill	Arduous hill path (DGC, Undated[2]). Core paths follow existing forestry access tracks which will also be used to access the Proposed Development.
GLEN/52/6 – Cairnhead to Blackmark Hill	Arduous hill path (DGC, Undated[2]). No path is shown on OS mapping and route appears to follow a fence-line. The Proposed Development access track will cross the Core Path to the south-west of Little Dibbin Hill at one location.

1.8 In addition to the designated paths detailed in **Table 1.3**, the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 gives the public rights to non-motorised access to most land in Scotland under the "right to roam". This allows the right to walk, cycle, ride a horse and camp within the Site of the Proposed Development, provided it is done responsibly.

1.9 There are existing risks to public access along the identified paths and within the Site, namely:

- forestry vehicles and other maintenance vehicles; and
- recreational shooting which occurs in the western section of the Site at various times throughout the year.

Potential Access Impacts

Construction Phase Impacts

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

1.11 The nature of the effects identified are summarised below:

- Health and Safety implications during the construction phase arising from the potential interface 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
- potential adverse effects on particular interest groups (e.g. walkers, cyclist, and horse-riders) during construction activity.

1.12 Chapter 11 of the EIA Report identifies the significance of these effects to be minor after mitigation (i.e., implementation of the Access Management Plan). Minor effects are not significant in the context of the EIA Regulations.

Operational Phase Impacts

1.13 Potential activities taking place 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.

1.14 During normal operation of the Proposed Development, there will not be any access restrictions on any of the Core Paths or the SUW. However, operational impacts may arise to recreational users to the core paths and SUW as management of access may be required during some maintenance activities i.e. blade replacement.

Decommissioning Phase Impacts

1.15 The operational life of the Proposed Development and associated infrastructure will be 50 years. Following this, an application could be submitted to retain or replace the turbines, or they could be decommissioned. If decommissioned, all new access tracks will be reinstated. Access tracks which are currently in existence will be left onsite.

Access Arrangements and Mitigation

General Access Arrangements

During Construction

Health and Safety

1.16 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. To further reduce possible health and safety risks, a Health and Safety Plan for the Proposed Development 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 Health and Safety Plan at all times.

1.17 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 which could pose a health and safety risk to users of core paths.

1.18 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.

1.19 It is anticipated that there is no option for alternative access in place of the Core Paths due to the presence of forestry and limited alternative routes within the area. As such, it is assumed that access management 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:

- Management of access during specific works at SUW (Core Path UNNO/504/14) and Core Path GLEN/52/6 crossings and where the access track follows Core Path GLEN/51/3 and GLEN/51/4.
- Installation of route crossing points (including signage) at SUW (Core Path UNNO/504/14) and Core Path GLEN/52/6 crossing.
- Consideration of temporary traffic lights/temporary management systems.
- Consideration of diversions where possible.
- 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 vehicle restraint system (VRS) will be undertaken for higher risk areas to provide additional protection to Core Path uses if construction works will be undertaken whilst the paths remain open, e.g. for crossing of SUW.
- Details of a communication and liaison strategy (as outlined in **Technical Appendix 4.1**) to advise local communities and other users of construction works and vehicle movements prior to any construction starting on-site and communication would be maintained on a regular basis until construction is

complete and the Proposed Development is operational. This would be aimed at pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians:

  - further consultation with stakeholders including DGC's Access Officer. These meetings would be closely aligned with the commencement of construction of the Proposed Development; and
  - the community liaison strategy could be designed not just to establish processes to keep the community informed, but also to review incidents that have occurred and how these have been / should be resolved and to discuss the forthcoming programme of work.

- Information signage, leaflets etc advising on the development construction activity (plant, vehicles, and machinery) and the temporary changes to baseline access provision.
- The Contractor will ensure that speed limits are always adhered to by their drivers and associated subcontractors. Advisory speed limit signage will also be installed on approaches to areas where path users may interact with construction traffic. Signage will be installed on the site exits that makes drivers aware of local speed limits and reminding drivers of the potential presence of pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians in the area. This will also be emphasised in the weekly toolbox talks.
- Speed limits.
- Use of hazard/flashing beacons on all construction vehicles when using access tracks.
- Delivery of Toolbox Talks to all Site workers to ensure awareness of potential presence of path users.

1.20 The Applicant is also willing to consider any additional mitigation measures which would reduce the effect of the construction activities on recreational users.

1.21 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 onsite and off-site public information including, for example, the project website and liaising with local community councils.

Interest Groups

1.22 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 offsite public information/interpretation board provision. Boards will contain phone numbers of liaison officers who may be contacted for further information.

1.23 The Applicant would liaise with the landowners to minimise the disruption to existing activities where possible.

During Operation

1.24 During operation, signage will be put in place at the entrance to the Site to highlight to the public the risk of entering the Site (e.g. ice throw and lightning etc.) and ongoing site activities (shooting etc.).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 tracks are currently accessed by the landowners and forestry vehicles.

1.25 Some maintenance activities, such as blade replacement, would require implementation of access management measures to ensure safe delivery and installation.

Access Enhancements

1.26 During operation, there will not be any enhanced access granted via the newly constructed tracks through the Proposed Development and gates will be in situ along the Proposed Development access tracks.

The access regarding Core Paths and wider access rights[3] will return to how it was previously at the baseline.

Management and Monitoring

1.27 The Access Management Plan will be implemented by the Contractor and the Applicant who will work with the Access Officer within DGC to finalise this plan prior to construction commencing. The AMP is considered to be a live document and will be reviewed throughout the construction phase to ensure it has fully considered all the impacts on the access baseline.

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

Conclusions

1.29 The Applicant aims to manage access appropriately and responsibly during construction of the Proposed Development and by implementing this Outline Access Management Plan, it is anticipated that, access to the Site will be able to continue without compromising the health and safety of any track users. On any occasion where continued access is not possible, measures will be implemented to ensure the safety of users. During operation of the Proposed Development, access management will be required on the Core Paths and the SUW during some maintenance activities such as blade replacement. . The Applicant aims to ensure public health and safety by installing information signage about the Proposed Development and potential risks.

[3] As set out in The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

Statkraft

N

- Site Boundary
- Turbine
- Hardstanding (Permanent)
- Hardstanding (Temporary)
- Borrow Pit (Temporary)
- Substation
- Proposed Development Construction Compound (Temporary)
- SPEN Construction Compound (Temporary)
- New Access Track
- Access Junction Widening
- Existing Access Track (Upgraded)

Access Management Plan - Core Paths

- Southern Upland Way
- Core Path

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Km

Source: Statkraft, LUC, Pell Frischmann

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Figure A4.5.1
Access Management Plan - Core Paths

Appin Wind Farm
EIA Report

Map scale 1:40,000 @ A3