

Coille Beith Wind Farm

Statement on Socio-economic Benefits

June 2025



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1 Executive Summary

- 1.1.1 This Socio-Economic Benefits Report identifies how Statkraft and Coille Beith Wind Farm Limited aim to maximise the socio-economic benefits through developing the supply chain, developing skills, empowering communities and undertaking environmental protection and enhancement.
- 1.1.2 It is anticipated that Coille Beith Wind Farm will contribute £61.3 million to Gross Value Added (GVA) through its construction, while supporting up to 758 Person Years of Employment globally. Through the promotion of its local supplier register and funding specifically allocated to supporting education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Coille Beith Wind Farm will be able to support the development of both skills and businesses in the renewable industry. Coille Beith Wind Farm will provide a community benefit fund of £396,000 per annum (index linked) as well as a Nature Enhancement Management Plan (NEMP) that will deliver peatland restoration and enhanced opportunities for local biodiversity.
- 1.1.3 Across the country Statkraft supports the development of skills of internal staff, through a culture of training and movement within the business, and of future generations, through the support of apprenticeships, internships, scholarships, and support of local schools. Statkraft spent over £141 million with businesses in the UK in 2024, supporting national and local suppliers through its promise to ensure that all contractors personnel are paid the living wage.
- 1.1.4 Statkraft seeks every opportunity to ensure the benefits of its projects are felt across the communities, from tax contributions in excess of £9 million and £4 million distributed in community benefit funds through its operational wind farms, supporting local shows, hosting emergency services training exercises, and undertaking broadband feasibility studies.
- 1.1.5 Statkraft's collaborations with Buglife and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust ensure that ecological conservation and enhancement is at the forefront of every project that Statkraft develops, with in-house specialist staff advising on opportunities to maximise positive biodiversity opportunities.
- 1.1.6 Overall, Statkraft and Coille Beith Wind Farm are set to provide lasting economic, social, and environmental value to the local community and beyond.

2 Introduction

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 Statkraft is Europe's largest generator of renewable energy and has around 7,000 employees in more than 20 countries. Statkraft produces hydropower, wind power, solar power, and delivers grid stability projects generating 66 TWh of renewable power.
- 2.1.2 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 4.5 GW 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.
- 2.1.3 In 2023 both the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (Scottish Government, 2023a) and Onshore Wind Sector Deal (OSWD) (Scottish Government, 2023b) were published, both documents aiming to address climate change by promoting renewable energy while maximising the socio-economic benefits both locally and nationally.
- 2.1.4 These reports detail how Statkraft and Coille Beith Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as 'the Proposed Development'), which will be delivered by Coille Beith Wind Farm Limited (a wholly owned subsidiary of Statkraft), will support and contribute to the socio-economic commitments of NPF4 and the OSWD.

2.2 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

- 2.2.1 NPF4 (Scottish Government, 2023a) aims to provide a consistent framework for decision-making by delivering centralised development management policies. It outlines a long-term spatial strategy for Scotland out to 2045 based on six spatial principals that are intended to influence all plans and decisions.

- 2.2.2 The principles are stated as playing a key role in delivering the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework¹.
- 2.2.3 The Spatial Strategy under NPF4 is aimed at supporting the delivery of:
- 'Sustainable Places': *"where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity"*;
 - 'Liveable Places': *"where we can all live better, healthier lives"*; and
 - 'Productive Places': *"where we have a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy"*.
- 2.2.4 The National Spatial Strategy in relation to 'sustainable places' is to make a net zero future, where emissions are reduced to combat the impacts of climate change, whilst protecting and restoring our environment. The Strategy encourages the development and expansion of renewable energy generation.
- 2.2.5 NPF4 addresses national planning policy by topic with reference to above three themes formulated with the aim of delivering sustainable, liveable and productive places. Of particular relevance to Statkraft is Policy 11: Energy. This policy prioritises the expansion of renewable, low carbon, and zero emission technologies. A key component of Policy 11 is section c), which is the requirement to maximise socio-economic benefits rather than just take them into account. These socio-economic benefits include employment opportunities, as well as the growth of associated business and supply chain opportunities. The Proposed Development's socio-economic contribution also supports the Scottish Government's approach to Community Wealth Building, as set out at Policy 25 and is detailed in Section 6 of this document.
- 2.2.6 A full assessment of how the Proposed Development responds to the planning policies of NPF4 is provided in the Proposed Development's Planning Statement which should be read in conjunction with this report.

2.3 Onshore Wind Sector Deal (OWSD)

- 2.3.1 In September 2023 the Scottish Government and the onshore wind industry signed the OWSD (Scottish Government, 2023b). Statkraft was a key member of the working group, taking a leading role in the shaping of the OWSD. Statkraft fully supports the commitments of the OWSD to deliver 20 GW of onshore wind by 2030 whilst maximising the socio-economic benefits to Scotland. Statkraft currently sits on several Working Groups across the industry to deliver on the commitments of the OWSD.
- 2.3.2 The OWSD aims to both achieve the Scottish Government's targets of 20 GW of onshore wind by 2030, but also foster collaboration between the Scottish Government, the wind industry, and local communities to encourage and nurture sustainable growth and economic prosperity.
- 2.3.3 The OWSD has three specific aims for the wind industry:
- supply chain, skills and circular economy;
 - community; and
 - land use and environment.
- 2.3.4 There are also planning, regulatory, and legislative aims for the Scottish Government.

Supply Chain, Skills and Circular Economy

- 2.3.5 The OWSD aims to *"support the enhancement of the current skills and training provision by further and higher education and other training providers to focus on delivering the needs of the wind industry and to position Scotland as a world leader in material circularity"*. This objective seeks to both increase the available level of skilled and experienced staff within the industry, local and national government, agencies and regulators to deliver the 20 GW of onshore wind target, while supporting the Government's broader objectives of increasing diversification within the workplace.
- 2.3.6 In particular, the onshore wind industry will:
- commit to an appropriate level of apprenticeships, training opportunities and skilled jobs across the sector and supporting industries;
 - publish data on the percentage of local content in the supply chain and the operation and maintenance arrangements of onshore wind projects at the point of commissioning;
 - establish a collaborative approach to promoting supply chain opportunities;



¹ The Scottish Government National Performance Framework sets out 'National Outcomes' and measures progress against a range of economic, social and environmental 'National Indicators'.

- identify and pursue geographic operation and maintenance capacity, and seek collaborative co-investment in operation and maintenance facilities and logistics infrastructure to deliver local impact;
- collaborate with the Coalition for Wind Industry Circularity (CWIC) to facilitate publishing its full programme of commitments; and
- deliver one specialist blade treatment facility within Scotland.

Community

2.3.7 The Community aims of the OWSD intend to continue and enhance the industries 'good neighbour' approach through all stages of the project life-cycle offering impactful community benefit and practical routes to shared ownership. The onshore wind industry will therefore:

- engage with the local community at the earliest opportunity to agree a community package that will meet or exceed the principles set out in the Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefit (2019a) and the Good Practice Principles for Shared Ownership from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments (2019b);
- aim to provide an in-principal community benefit agreement prior to the Financial Investment Decision (FID) and will ensure that community benefit agreements become binding once FID is achieved;
- ensure that if projects are sold or transferred the obligation to maintain and continue the community benefit fund is a condition of the sale or transfer;
- seek opportunities to provide support and funding that enables more ambitious projects to make a long-term strategic impact in supporting a just transition to net zero to be delivered if aligned with community priorities;
- look for opportunities where the industry can take a collaborative approach to co-ordinating community benefit funds between projects and local communities where there are common or overlapping areas of benefit; and
- identify and engage with the key stakeholder organisations during the pre-planning application phase of projects to highlight community shared ownership opportunities and provide community bodies with sufficient time to investigate these opportunities.

Land Use and Environment

2.3.8 The OWSD recognises the twin threats of the global climate and the biodiversity crises. It is clear that, in line with NPF4, new onshore wind projects must enhance biodiversity and optimise land use and environmental benefits. It identifies that a balance must be struck between maximising the need for increased capacity of onshore wind and the impacts these developments may have on land use and the environment.

2.3.9 Therefore, the onshore wind industries agree to:

- adopt the Scottish Government's national approach to measuring and evidencing biodiversity enhancement once this is in place and provide monitoring data to a central repository²;
- provide monitoring information on peatland management and restoration to a central repository so that this can be tracked over time;
- establish a working group to explore and learn lessons from the Hagshaw Energy Cluster³ approach to biodiversity enhancement; and
- provide information on wind farm site boundaries, infrastructure, and Nature Enhancement Management Plans (NEMP) to a central data repository.

2.4 Statement on Socio-Economic Benefits

2.4.1 This Statement on Socio-Economic Benefits follows the outline template that has been authored by Scottish Renewables (2025) in consultation with Scottish Government and other statutory consultees, focusing on four key areas:

- developing the supply chain;
- developing skills;
- empowering communities; and
- environmental protection and enhancement.

² Excluding data which can not legally be made generally available.

³ Seven operational wind farms and a further four consented wind farms in South Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire.

- 2.4.2 Although this report has been produced to accompany the planning application for the Proposed Development, Statkraft aims to ensure that the community and socio-economic benefits of its business are spread across the country. Therefore, a number of its initiatives are not project specific but supported by the operation of Statkraft projects. Hence, this report looks at both Statkraft's and the Proposed Development's supply chains, skills, community and environmental enhancement benefits.

3 Coille Beith Wind Farm Limited

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 Coille Beith Wind Farm ('the Proposed Development') is an onshore wind farm development comprising of 11 turbines with anticipated capacity of approximately 79.2 MW.
- 3.1.2 The Proposed Development has been in development since 2021, and should it be consented it is anticipated that construction will start in approximately 2030-2031. Construction will take approximately 1.5 years, and consent is sought for 50 years of operation.
- 3.1.3 The Proposed Development is located in The Highland Council (THC) area, Scotland and it is anticipated that the majority of the socio-economic, community, and environmental benefits will be felt in the Highlands, and in Scotland.

3.2 Developing the Supply Chain

Gross Value Added

- 3.2.1 Gross Value Added (GVA) is the unit of value generated by any industry engaged in the production of goods and services. For the Proposed Development the direct GVA is estimated to be £61.3 million during the construction phase with £7.4 million spent in the Highlands and £14.7 million spent in the wider Scotland. When taking into account the wider supply chain benefits, the indirect and induced⁴ effects of construction, this increases to £12.9 million GVA in the Highlands and £46.8 million GVA across the whole of Scotland (including the Highlands)⁵.
- 3.2.2 During operation it is estimated that £81,195 per MW is spent annually⁵. For the Proposed Development this would equate to an annual total direct GVA of £2.8 million, £1.2 million of which would be spent in the Highlands area, and an additional £0.4 million in the wider Scotland. When considering the indirect and induced expenditure this increases the GVA annually in the Highlands to £1.8 million and £1.1 million in the wider Scotland⁵.



Employment

Operation of the Proposed Development would generate 22 Full Time Equivalent roles in Scotland

- 3.2.3 As construction of the Proposed Development is anticipated to take 18 months, employment during construction has been calculated as Person Year of Employment (PYE), which allows a comparison to be made between full time and fixed duration employment, and is calculated based on the construction expenditure⁵. The construction of the Proposed Development is therefore anticipated to create up to 758 PYE, 91 of which will be in the Highlands and up to 279 in Scotland as a whole (including the Highlands). When taking into consideration, induced and indirect effects, this increases to 497 PYE in Scotland of which 141 PYE would be in the Highlands.
- 3.2.4 Employment generated during operation is calculated as Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to take into consideration that roles may be part-time. Based on Renewable UK research⁵ it estimated that the Proposed Development will create up to 22 direct FTE in Scotland, of which 16 will be in the Highlands. These roles will cover servicing, maintenance, repairs, marketing and other operational support over the 50-year operational lifespan of the Proposed Development. These direct roles will support an additional 20 indirect FTE in Scotland, of which ten will be in the Highlands.

⁴ Indirect and induced expenditure and employment arise from the placing of contracts with other business, both locally and nationally, who supply services and materials to the Proposed Development.

⁵ Based on research completed by Renewable UK (2015) and taking into consideration indexation to 2025 prices.

Local Suppliers

- 3.2.5 In order to maximise these opportunities in the Highlands, Coille Beith Wind Farm Limited maintains a live Local Supply Chain Register for the Proposed Development. This will remain available throughout the project development and planning cycle. This has been promoted at the Proposed Development's public exhibition events and the Register will be made available to the construction, operation, and decommissioning managers as well as the construction Contractor.
- 3.2.6 Ahead of construction, the Applicant will undertake further work to ensure that opportunities are accessible to local suppliers. These might include promotion of opportunities through local business groups, holding supplier drop-in events, and holding meet the buyer events.

3.3 Developing Skills

- 3.3.1 The Proposed Development is committed to fostering a future workforce skilled in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) by implementing initiatives aimed at encouraging individuals to pursue careers in these fields.

During Development

- 3.3.2 Engaging children in STEM subjects at an early stage is key to promoting careers within the industry and within science and technology more widely. During the development phase, ten science workshops will be offered to the primary schools around the Proposed Development site. These will focus on sustainability and energy making with the aim of sparking interest and raising attainment in STEM subjects in primary school pupils. These sessions will help to support the work of teachers within the classroom setting.

During Operation

- 3.3.3 The Proposed Development will contribute to an annual Skills Fund to support children and adults in development of STEM knowledge and skills who live within the host or adjacent Community Council areas.
- 3.3.4 The fund could be used for scholarships by members of the community to support their learning in STEM, for example paying course fees, living and travel expenses while attending a remote college, or to assist with childcare for parents returning to education.
- 3.3.5 The fund will also be available to primary and secondary schools which are attended by children from the host or adjacent Community Council areas who wish to apply for STEM workshops, equipment, activities or learning.
- 3.3.6 The fund will be a maximum value of £10,000 per year, index linked to CPI.
- 3.3.7 The fund is additional to an existing scholarship programme at the University of the Highlands and Islands which is funded by Statkraft. As of the start of the 2025-26 academic year, this scholarship will support six students studying STEM subjects throughout the entirety of their courses.

**£10,000
annual Skills
Fund for local
education in
STEM**

3.4 Community Empowerment**Community Benefit Fund**

- 3.4.1 Should the Proposed Development gain consent, a Community Benefit Fund would be made available to the community. This is offered on the basis of a payment per MW of installed 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 (Scottish Government, 2019a) (index linked from the first payment based on the Retail Price Index) of installed electricity generating capacity. It is estimated that, depending on the type of investment selected, the community benefit fund alone would accrue benefits to local groups and organisations of approximately £19.8 million over the 50-year life of the Proposed Development.
- 3.4.2 If consented, Statkraft will work with local communities in the surrounding areas, and experienced independent third parties such as Foundation Scotland and Caithness Chamber of Commerce, to develop a community benefit scheme which meets the needs of the surrounding communities.

Community Ownership

- 3.4.3 In line with the Onshore Wind Sector Deal Statkraft is willing to offer Shared Ownership for the Proposed Development, should there be sufficient interest from local groups or organisations. The Applicant would be willing to engage locally in order to bring this forward and Local Energy Scotland can provide independent advice and support to communities interested in the shared ownership opportunities.

Energy Security

- 3.4.4 The Proposed Development, if consented, would provide a valuable contribution to security of supply for the wider region, Scotland and the United Kingdom. . The Proposed Development will help to ensure that energy supply throughout the United Kingdom and Scotland remains dependable and secure, and it would help reduce reliance on imported gas and energy, which can be subject to volatile price fluctuations and disruption due to external factors.

3.5 The carbon-free nature of the energy generated by the Proposed Development will help Scotland and the United Kingdom to continue to reduce reliance on carbon emitting power sources, contributing to targets to run the UK energy grid purely on forms of energy which do not generate carbon emissions. Environmental Protection and Enhancement

Nature Enhancement Management Plan

- 3.5.1 Statkraft is committed to implementing a NEMP as part of the Proposed Development to provide significant biodiversity net gain benefits to the site.
- 3.5.2 An Outline NEMP is provided within the EIA Report (refer to Technical Appendix 6.5) which identifies opportunities for biodiversity enhancement across the Site. The four key aims of the NEMP are therefore:
- Enhance and restore peatland habitats within the Site (including Forest to Bog);
 - Enhance fisheries and other aquatic wildlife habitats through riparian tree planting;
 - Improve the opportunities for nesting birds, roosting bats, and other notable species;
 - Improve the condition of Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) habitat.
- 3.5.3 Statkraft has been working closely with experienced ecologists and Buglife to develop the NEMP to ensure that it will deliver tangible biodiversity benefits over the lifespan of the Proposed Development and tie-in with other biodiversity enhancement measures being undertaken in the Highlands.



4 Statkraft – Developing the Supply Chain

4.1 National Suppliers

- 4.1.1 Although Statkraft has a large team in-house to deliver their renewable energy projects (refer to Section 3.1), the projects are supported by an even larger team of external specialists providing services in the development, construction, and operation of the renewable energy projects. These services range from legal advice to technical surveys and assessment (e.g. ecologists, hydrologists, archaeologists), and from fencing contractors to the installation of met masts.
- 4.1.2 In 2024 Statkraft spent £141 million on UK businesses who provided services to Statkraft. Of this £18 million was generated by services employed in the development and operation of wind farms, and while many of the companies are UK-wide, the majority of the work for the wind farms was undertaken by people living and working in Scotland.

**£141 million
spent on UK
business in
2024**

4.2 Local Suppliers

- 4.2.1 Statkraft is eager to build and develop a local supply chain for our projects. From the outset Statkraft advertises and maintains a Local Supply Chain Register which aims to identify all potential suppliers who can support each project through development, construction, operation, and decommissioning. The Register covers both on-site services such as power, engineering, site maintenance and fencing, and off-site services such as accommodation, catering, and car hire. The Register is available to the Project/Asset Manager through each stage of the project and is also provided to the Principal Contractor during construction.

- 4.2.2 The Local Supply Chain Register is advertised at all community events which Statkraft hosts, and suppliers can access the Register through Statkraft's website. In addition, Statkraft also organises and attends events for networking and engagement between local suppliers and Statkraft. These events aim to establish long-term partnerships with local suppliers, providing information and support to suppliers, and identifying services in the local area.
- 4.2.3 Digital advertising tools are central to the success of the Register, which include google and social media ads targeting specific services and geographical areas.
- 4.2.4 Using Statkraft's Loch na Cathrach project as an example, Statkraft has actively sought out local suppliers through invitational events for the project. Statkraft will work with the lead contractors to ensure that as many opportunities as possible are made available to local businesses.
- 4.2.5 Recently Statkraft's Mossy Hill Wind Farm in Shetland invited local businesses to a Meet the Buyer event where the project team provided information on the project, the anticipated timescales, the procurement process and the type of suppliers that will be required. The event was attended by the Project Manager as well as Statkraft's procurement and construction managers who were available to answer questions from the local business.
- 4.2.6 Statkraft are committed to adhering to the OWSD commitment to publish the percentage of local content in the supply chain and the operation and maintenance arrangements of onshore wind projects at the point of commissioning.



"It's great to see Statkraft engaging with the local business community as the investment at Windy Rig continues. GTR are just one of many DG Chamber members that have played a part to make this project happen, we congratulate Statkraft for keeping as much work 'local' as possible."

**Lee Medd, Member Services Manager,
DG Chamber**

4.2.7 Data was collected during the construction of our most recent wind farms in Dumfries & Galloway. On the 43MW Windy Rig and 37.8MW Twentysilling Hill projects, it was estimated that spend with Scottish companies during Windy Rig (completed January 2022) and Twentysilling Hill (completed April 2022) was £9 million and £10 million respectively.

4.2.8 There is a broader opportunity for developers to work together to encourage efficient and effective use of resources within local areas. Where available, Statkraft will work with other industry partners to maximise opportunities for local suppliers to be involved in projects, developing skill sets, and minimising adverse impacts to the communities.

4.3 Living Wage

- 4.3.1 Statkraft has been recognised as an accredited 'Living Wage Employer'. The Real Living Wage is a voluntary UK wage rate set by the Living Wage Foundation, and it is calculated by taking account of the real cost of living which meets every day needs.
- 4.3.2 This recognition underscores our commitment to ensuring that all our employees receive fair compensation that meets the cost of living. Statkraft believes that investing in our people is crucial and we are dedicated to fostering a supportive and equitable workplace for all.
- 4.3.3 Statkraft has implemented a contractual requirement that 100% of contractors' personnel on-site will be paid the living wage. This includes all contracted services in offices, on construction sites or any other outsourced activities.



4.4 Chambers of Commerce

- 4.4.1 Statkraft is a proud member of the local Chamber of Commerce where our projects are based. Through joining the Chamber of Commerce, Statkraft can support local business initiatives and promote supply chain opportunities linked to our projects.

- 4.4.2 Statkraft maintains memberships in Inverness Chamber of Commerce and Caithness Chamber of Commerce and engages with a range of business and suppliers through these organisations. Should the Proposed Development be consented, Statkraft will use these established relationships to encourage interest from local suppliers.

4.5 Highland Community Interest Company

- 4.5.1 Statkraft supports the Highland Community Interest Company, both financial and professionally through advice to the steering committee, to maximise the sustainable socio-economic benefits by bringing regional investment from the tourism and renewable industries. This has included tourism and renewables conference, community roadshows and consultation with business and community leaders to position the region as sustainable tourism leader.

5 Statkraft – Developing Skills

5.1 Statkraft Employees

- 5.1.1 Across the United Kingdom Statkraft has over 550 employees, which include approximately 50 employees based in Scotland. These employees range from those at the start of their careers to those with over 30-years' experience in renewable energy development. These direct employees in turn support indirect employees. An indirect employee is employment which supplies services purchased (or otherwise) by the direct employees (e.g. doctors, teachers, cleaners, shop assistants, etc).

- 5.1.2 While Statkraft's Scotland office is in Glasgow, employees live and work across Scotland, from Edinburgh to the Shetland Islands, and therefore the direct and indirect employment benefits are spread across Scotland.

- 5.1.3 Statkraft has been accredited as a Great Place to Work since 2023, a Great Place to Work for Women in both 2023 and 2024, and Great Place to work for Development and for Wellbeing in 2024.

- 5.1.4 Statkraft aims to always prioritise a healthy and sustainable work environment. The Glasgow office was recognised as the 2024 category winner in The British Council for Offices (BCO) Regional Awards for Scotland.

Professional Development

- 5.1.5 Continuous learning and professional development is promoted and encouraged for all Statkraft employees, regardless of their position or career path. As well as encouraging attendance on external learning courses, Statkraft hosts internal training on a range of topics from leadership to health and safety to digitalization.

- 5.1.6 Statkraft supports their employees through their professional development, in gaining additional qualifications or progression to chartership or similar, as well as encourage movement within the business.

Apprenticeships

- 5.1.7 Statkraft has initiated an apprenticeship programme aimed at nurturing future electrical engineers. This initiative is in collaboration with Coleg Sir Gar and is advertised on our website.

- 5.1.8 The program offers a structured pathway for apprentices to become electricians with two distinct tracks: a five-year course leading to a Higher National Development or a three-year course leading to a Higher National Certificate. Statkraft aims to provide exposure and training to support the apprentices progress through these stages based on performance assessments, ensuring that only those who meet our standards advance to the next level. There are currently two apprentices who commenced their training in 2023, and new apprentices are planned to enrol.



Internships

5.1.9 Statkraft strongly believes in supporting the next generation to have experience and knowledge of the renewable energy industry. Statkraft's paid internship programme has been running since 2022 and seen 20 interns join the business so far, in a variety of different areas from development, to public relations, to grid contracts and operations management.

5.1.10 The interns have been given responsibilities in project development and operation from the start, working and gaining experience alongside permanent staff. In addition, Statkraft has fully funded interns to undertake additional training such as confined spaces, fork-lift truck, working at height, networking and leadership coaching, as well as the opportunity to represent Statkraft at industry events.

5.1.11 The internships have provided invaluable experience, providing graduates with responsibilities, visibility and influence on the Statkraft projects. Many of these interns are now full-time employees of Statkraft, with others working elsewhere in the industry.



Employee Recruitment

5.1.12 Statkraft actively recruits new employees for positions across the UK throughout the year. In order to ensure a balanced recruitment process, all job adverts undertake a gender de-coder to ensure that applicants from all genders are encouraged to apply. Statkraft re-enforces this by offering flexible and remote working, paid time off, enhanced parental and adoptive leave, sabbatical leave, and Equity, Diversity & Inclusion goals which all staff are encouraged to promote.

5.1.13 Statkraft's recruitment team actively review each applicant's skills, considering all available vacancies, not just the role they applied for, thereby ensuring best fit for each individual and each team.

5.2 Statkraft's Education Partnerships and Skills

5.2.1 Statkraft has formed two higher education partnerships, to help promote skills development, education and research across Scotland. Other strategic partnerships include that with Highland Renewables, where the tourism and renewable industries work together to encourage sector collaboration.

University of Highlands and Islands

5.2.2 As part of its commitment to skills development, in 2023, Statkraft announced a partnership with the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) this includes:



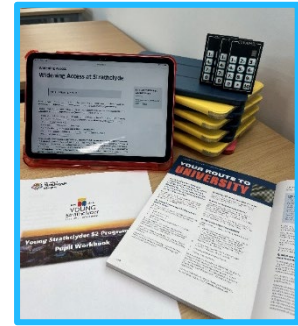
- a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Scholarship Fund. This represents a minimum investment of £72,000 and involves two £3,000 scholarships annually for the duration of a student's programme at UHI. This is a contribution of £18,000 per year, with six students at UHI receiving support from Statkraft at any one time. In addition to financial support, the programme prioritises career and network development by hosting a visit to the Glasgow office and assigning recipients with a Statkraft employee as an ongoing contact in industry.

- In collaboration with UHI a Skills Report for the consented Loch na Cathrach hydropower project has been produced. The aim of this report is to provide insight into the education and skills requirements for training a local workforce and to stimulate an increase in local residents training in identified key areas of need.

University of Strathclyde

5.2.3 In 2023, Statkraft established a strategic partnership with the University of Strathclyde, aimed at developing future talent within Scotland's renewables sector. This collaboration seeks to encourage innovation and develop the skills necessary for Scotland to deliver on legislated net zero targets. There are four separate forms this collaboration will take:

- The partnership supports the university's existing STAR Scholarship programme for students, offering annual scholarships to two undergraduate students for the duration of their studies. The programme provides students from backgrounds considered less likely to go to university, with £1,500 per annum to support their studies. Statkraft invites the students to visit the Glasgow office to meet colleagues and investigate renewables as a sector for future employment.
- Statkraft supports the Young Strathclyder programme activities to widen access to higher education. This includes funding to IT equipment allowing pupils to investigate their future study & career options across all Scottish college and university courses along with other further education options such as apprenticeships.
- Statkraft maintains a discretionary fund for the support/sponsorship of student projects, academic conferences etc, based on agreed qualifying criteria.
- Statkraft and the University of Strathclyde are exploring routes to wider collaboration including joint research projects.



Inspiring Futures

5.2.4 Statkraft regularly participate in events to inspire the future net zero workforce, for example:



- Statkraft's Alltwalis Wind Farm supports the education of local primary school children through providing funds for IT equipment as part of its Community Benefit Fund, and also by welcoming children to the wind farm site. Guided by Statkraft operation colleagues, children are given the opportunity to learn how wind farms operate, including taking a look inside a turbine, and discovering what is required to maintain the infrastructure. The children are shown the onsite workshop which is used for repairs and also learn how staff are kept safe by the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Colleagues also teach the children some basic first aid training and allow them to use and practice with first aid equipment.

▪ In collaboration with the Education Development Trust with support from the Mayor of London and EU's European Social Fund, Statkraft hosted sixth form students for work experience opportunities. The students, aged between 16 and 18, received insights from across the development team and many other business areas, including HR, IT, Legal, Markets, Public Affairs and EV charging.

- Statkraft supports the Lord Mayor's Appeal 'We Can Be' initiative which aims to enable young women in the City of London to make informed career choices by providing opportunities for female students to gain career insights into opportunities within Statkraft and the wider renewable industry.
- A STEM outreach event at Chelsea Football Club was attended by representatives from Statkraft, where students aged 11-13 came from various schools around West London to learn about careers in sustainability. There were a variety of representatives from Statkraft who ran the workshops and undertook a speed networking exercise. Statkraft delivered a clear message that the clean energy industry is a growing sector, encouraging them to pursue STEM subjects.
- Statkraft staff visit schools, both close to their projects, and within their staffs local neighbourhoods to provide young students with information on the renewable energy and encourage older students to progress careers in STEM roles.

6 Statkraft – Empowerment of Communities

6.1 Community Benefit Fund

6.1.1 One of the ways Statkraft demonstrates a commitment to being a good neighbour is to deliver a Community Benefit Fund equating to £5,000 per MW installed from wind farm projects. This matches the recommendation outlined in The Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefit from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments (Scottish Government, 2019a).

- 6.1.2 Currently Statkraft's operational projects contribute over £500,000 per annum across the UK in funding to their respective hosting communities. It is estimated that Statkraft's consented projects will add a further £1.6m per annum to local communities following construction.

Statkraft's operational projects have delivered **£5 million** to local communities across Scotland.

- 6.1.3 Statkraft will adapt its approach for the way community benefit funds are administered. This provides communities with some flexibility to set up and allocate funds to suit them. For example, the £130,000 per annum provided by Baillie Wind Farm distributes 80% to a Community Benefit Fund and 20% to the Caithness Business Fund. The Community Benefit Fund has so far supported a range of worthwhile initiatives such as educational school trips and sporting activities, while the Caithness Business Fund distributes grants to support small businesses based within the Caithness and North Sutherland area.
- 6.1.4 Statkraft's Alltwalis Wind Farm has a community benefit fund of over £100,000 per annum and has supported a range of community projects including improving the football pitch for the local team, support with equipment for the local white water rafting group and contributions to the local fire and rescue service.

6.2 Community Ownership

- 6.2.1 Statkraft is committed to offering local communities the opportunity to invest in the wind farms it develops, should there be enough local interest, and it is financially viable.
- 6.2.2 We work with Local Energy Scotland, and others as appropriate, to explore community ownership opportunities for our projects.
- 6.2.3 We offer and facilitate, when requested, meetings with organisations such as Local Energy Scotland and local communities so they can learn and understand more about the opportunity for community ownership.

6.3 Business Rates

- 6.3.1 Through our market activities and renewable energy assets we create value for the UK. Statkraft pays tax according to where value is created, and these taxes are used by both central and local governments to pay for service used by the British public. The UK tax contribution made by Statkraft in the 2023 financial year was in excess of £8.15 million.

6.4 Supporting Emergency Services

- 6.4.1 Statkraft's Alltwalis Wind Farm regularly hosts emergency training exercises on site with Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services. The training exercises focus on at height and confined spaces work by providing Fire and Rescue staff with opportunities to carry out exercises within the Alltwalis turbines. In addition, "casualty" training is undertaken within the wider Alltwalis site, where the fire and rescue service practice locating and providing emergency first aid to "casualties".
- 6.4.2 Statkraft is a member of Safety On, actively participating in industry learnings and training to continually improve and promote a health and safety cultural for our staff and our neighbours.



6.5 Improving Broadband Connectivity

- 6.5.1 In addition to the Community Benefit Funds outlined above, Statkraft looks to provide additional enhancement to community groups in the vicinity of its developments, seeking to provide tailored solutions to local socio-economic challenges. An example of this is the commitment to all communities where it develops wind farms to fund a broadband feasibility study.
- 6.5.2 For example Statkraft's proposed Loch Liath Wind Farm project, located west of the Great Glen, funded an independent consultancy specialising in connectivity and smart technology to evaluate the broadband connectivity options for nearby communities. This is provided to the Community Council and local groups to help them identify which improvements would best suit their area.

6.6 Supporting Local Community Events

6.6.1 Statkraft supports a variety of local and national shows across Scotland and the UK. This includes sponsorship, attendance and contributions towards prizes. In 2024 some of the events that Statkraft supported included:

- The Inverary Highland Games;
- The Halkirk Highland Games;
- The Ford Village Gala Day;
- The Douglas Gala;
- The Scottish Game Fair;
- The Royal Highland Show; and
- The Borders Union Show.



6.6.2 Statkraft has also hosted events at our sites. The Rheidol Hydropower Scheme welcomed a range of local businesses from bee-keepers, the local riding school, crafters, and walking groups to be part of their Summer Fete, which saw over 300 members of the local community attend.

6.6.3 With local staff providing information on Statkraft's renewable projects as well as the community benefit funds Statkraft's projects provide, the local community also had the opportunity to discuss careers in the renewable industry, as well as doing some face-painting.

7 Statkraft – Environmental Protection and Enhancement

7.1 Ecology Team

7.1.1 Statkraft recognises that in addition to addressing the climate crisis, our projects can also tackle the biodiversity crisis. It is estimated that over 1 million species across the world are at threat of extinction, while in Scotland 11% of species are under threat of extinction and nearly half of all species have decreased in abundance (Scottish Government, 2023). Renewable energy projects can play an important, and vital, role in halting the decline of our biodiversity through careful and considered design, the implementation of appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures, and enabling the transition away from carbon fuels.

7.1.2 In recognition of the importance of this topic, Statkraft has a dedicated in-house ecology team who provide advice and guidance on all of our renewable energy projects to minimise the adverse effects of construction and operation, and maximise positive biodiversity opportunities. The team, with over 14 years' experience, and supported by a range of external experts, review the design of our projects, warning of potential impacts to protected fauna and flora, developing mitigation to remove and reduce impacts, and design and implement a NEMP to enhance the biodiversity at all of Statkraft's renewable energy projects.

7.1.3 Statkraft's ecology team collate ecological and peat data from our projects, in development, construction and operation, to learn, adapt and make continual improvements to our NEMPs. Statkraft will make the data on our management plans and the monitoring results of the implementation available to the Scottish Government's central repository once this is established and is working closely with the Working Group on this.

7.1.4 Statkraft acknowledges the importance of protecting and enhancing our ecology in order to halt the decline of our biodiversity, but the ability to do this is also determined by our capability to halt the effects of climate change. At Statkraft, we see both the climate and biodiversity crisis as issues that should not be addressed separately, but addressed simultaneously. It is well-known that a healthy and functioning ecosystem has climate-benefiting properties and therefore we strive to deliver projects that have dual benefits. Having a dedicated ecology team ensures our projects can deliver clean, green, renewable energy whilst providing greater ecological value and benefits to the surrounding site.

7.2 Buglife

7.2.1 Buglife is a UK charity dedicated to the conservation, education and policy change to protect insects, bugs and invertebrates and enhance their populations across the UK. Invertebrates, making up seven of every ten species on the planet, are vital to human life from creating nutrient rich soil to providing essential pollination services. A UK Parliamentary Report published in March 2024 stated that the economic value of pollinator insects alone to the UK is around £500 million (House of Commons Committee, 2024).



7.2.2 However, insect decline, driven by habitat loss and fragmentation, climate change, alien species, light pollution, pesticides and other aspects of agricultural intensification. In April 2024, the results of the 2023 Bugs Matter Citizen Science Survey was published which shows that the abundance of flying insects sampled on vehicle number plates had fallen by 76% since 2004 in Scotland⁶.

7.2.3 Statkraft recognises the importance of insects and bugs to our ecosystems and is a corporate partner of Buglife to promote the recognition of the importance of invertebrates. All Statkraft's onshore wind developments' NEMPs are reviewed, amended where appropriate, and approved by Buglife to ensure Statkraft maximises opportunities to provide bespoke habitat management measures that will increase invertebrate populations across our projects.

If we and the rest of the back-boned animals were to disappear overnight, the rest of the world would get on pretty well. But if the invertebrates were to disappear, the world's ecosystems would collapse.' Sir David Attenborough

7.2.4 Buglife will support Statkraft in the implementation of our NEMPs following projects consents as well as providing a focus on monitoring the effectiveness of the measures during operation.

7.3 Bumblebee Conservation Trust

7.3.1 The Bumblebee Conservation Trust is a UK charity dedicated to the conservation of bumblebees across the UK. Bumblebees are key pollinators of a huge variety of flowers and crops and in the last 100 years bumblebee populations have crashed, with two species becoming extinct in the UK. This decline poses a serious threat to biodiversity and agricultural productivity, as bumblebees play a crucial role in pollination services that support food production and healthy ecosystems.

7.3.2 The Bumblebee Conservation Trust engages in a range of conservation activities aimed at reversing the decline of bumblebee populations. These efforts include habitat restoration projects that create and maintain wildflower-rich environments which are crucial for bumblebee survival. The Bumblebee Conservation Trust also runs public awareness campaigns to educate communities about the importance of bumblebees and how individuals can contribute to their conservation.



7.3.3 As a Business Member of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Statkraft supports these conservation activities. This partnership includes collaboration on habitat management practices at Statkraft's sites in the UK, ensuring that ground preparation techniques and plant species selection contribute positively to bumblebee conservation.

8 Conclusions

8.1.1 Statkraft brings substantial socio-economic benefits to the local community, the Highlands, and the wider UK through their renewable energy projects. The Proposed Development alone is expected to contribute an estimated £61.3 million in GVA during construction, with direct and indirect job creation during both the construction and operational phases. The Proposed Development supports local economic growth and community welfare through the potential creation of initiatives like the STEM education fund, the Community Benefit Fund, and potential shared ownership opportunities.

8.1.2 The Proposed Development will enhance energy security by contributing to the UK's low-carbon power generation. The NEMP and our partnerships with Buglife and The Bumblebee Conservation Trust highlights our strong commitment to the environment. Overall, the Proposed Development is set to provide lasting economic, social, and environmental value to the local community and beyond.

⁶ [Bugs-Matter-Summary-Report-2023.pdf](#)

9 References

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