Giant’s Burn Wind Farm

June 2025

Socio-Economic Benefits Report

Statkraft

Contents

1 Executive Summary

1.1.1 This Socio-Economic Benefits Report identifies how Statkraft and Giant's Burn Wind Farm Limited aim to maximise 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 Giant's Burn Wind Farm will contribute £39 million in direct GVA through its construction, while supporting up to 482 direct and indirect Person Years of Employment. Through the promotion of its local supplier register and funding specifically allocated to supporting education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Giant's Burn Wind Farm will be able to support the development of both skills and businesses in the renewable industry. Giant's Burn Wind Farm will provide a community benefit fund of approximately £250,000 per annum, totalling around £12.5 million over the 50 years of operation, as well as a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy aiming to create long-lasting improvements and opportunities for biodiversity across the Site.

1.1.3 Across the country Statkraft supports the development of skills of both 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 for local schools. Statkraft spent over £141 million on business 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 local communities, from tax contributions in excess of £9 million and £3.5 million distributed in community benefit funds by its operational wind farms, to support of 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 are 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 its Giant's Burn 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 electricity in 2024.

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

2.1.3 In 2023 both the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (Scottish Government 2023a) and Onshore Wind Sector Deal (OWSD) (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 Giant's Burn Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as 'the Proposed Development'), which will be delivered by Giant's Burn Wind Farm Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of Statkraft), will support and contribute to the socio-economic commitments of NPF4 and the OWSD.

2.2 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 to 2045 based on six spatial principles 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 Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework[1].

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 the 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 Chapter 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 Giant's Burn Wind Farm Planning Statement, which should be read in conjunction with this report.

2.3 Onshore Wind Sector Deal

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 and 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 target of 20 GW of onshore wind by 2030, and to 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;

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

- establish a collaborative approach to promoting supply chain opportunities;
- 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 industry's '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-principle community benefit agreement prior to the Final 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 that 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 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 industry agrees 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 repository[2];
- 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 Cluster[3] 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;

[2] Excluding data which cannot legally be made generally available.

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

- empowering communities; and
- environmental protection and enhancement.

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 and Giant's Burn Wind Farm supply chain, skills, community and environmental enhancement benefits.

3 Giant's Burn Wind Farm Limited

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Giant's Burn Wind Farm is an onshore wind farm development comprising seven turbines, with an anticipated capacity of approximately 50.4 MW, and a battery energy storage system (BESS) with a rated power of approximately 23 MW giving a total site output of over 73 MW.

3.1.2 The Proposed Development has been in development since 2019, and should it be consented it is anticipated that construction will start in 2028. 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 Argyll and Bute Council area, Scotland, and it is anticipated that the majority of the socio-economic, community and environmental benefits will be felt in Scotland, predominantly in Argyll and Bute.

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 £39 million during the construction phase with £4.7 million spent in Argyll and Bute and £14 million spent in Scotland overall. When taking into account the wider supply chain benefits, the indirect and induced[4] effects of construction, this increases to £8.2 million GVA in Argyll and Bute and £29.7 million GVA in Scotland overall[5].

3.2.2 During operation it is estimated that £81,195 per MW is spent annually. For the Proposed Development this would equate to an annual total direct GVA of £1.8 million, £0.7 million of which would be spent in the Argyll and Bute area, and an additional £0.3 million in the rest of Scotland. When considering the indirect and induced expenditure this increases the GVA in Argyll and Bute to £1.1 million annually and £0.7 million in the rest of Scotland annually[5].

Employment

Operation of the Proposed Development would generate 14 Full Time Equivalent roles in Scotland

3.2.3 As construction of the Proposed Development is only anticipated to take 18 months, employment during construction has been calculated as Person Years of Employment (PYE), which allows a comparison to be made between full time permanent and fixed duration employment, and is calculated based on the construction expenditure[5]. The construction of the Proposed Development is therefore anticipated to create up to 482 PYE, 58 of which will be in Argyll and Bute and up to 174 in Scotland as a whole.

When taking into consideration, induced and indirect effects, this increases to 316 PYE in Scotland of which 90 PYE would be in Argyll and Bute.

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 research[5] it estimated that the

[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.

Proposed Development will create 14 direct FTE in Scotland, of which 10 will be in Argyll and Bute. 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 13 indirect FTE in Scotland, of which six will be in Argyll and Bute.

Local Suppliers

3.2.5 In order to maximise these opportunities in Argyll and Bute, Giant's Burn Wind Farm Ltd maintains a live Local Supply Chain Register for the Proposed Development. 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, who will be mandated to maximise the use of local suppliers.

3.3 Developing Skills

3.3.1 Giant's Burn Wind Farm Ltd 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 Interesting children in STEM subjects at an early stage is key to promoting careers within the industry. During the development phase, ten engaging science workshops will be offered to the closest primary schools to the Proposed Development. These will focus on sustainability and energy-making, aiming to spark interest and raise attainment in STEM subjects from primary school pupils.

3.3.3 The Applicant has fostered a close relationship with Dunoon Grammar School. In September 2024 this included an "Exploring Renewables" event comprising interactive presentations to S1 – S3 assemblies on the process of wind farm development and potential career opportunities within the industry; a workshop with the senior pupils leadership team (S5 and S6) on the more technical aspects of careers in renewables. The Applicant is committed to repeating these events throughout the development process.

During Operation

3.3.4 Giant's Burn Wind Farm Ltd 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.

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

3.3.5 The fund could be used for scholarships by members of the community to support their learning in STEM, for example for paying course fees, living and travel expenses while attending a remote college, or to assist with childcare for parents returning to education.

3.3.6 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.

3.3.7 The fund will be a maximum value of £10,000 per year, index linked to CPI.

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 of installed electricity generating capacity per year (Scottish Government, 2019a), index-linked. 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 £12.5 million in real terms over the 50-year life of the Proposed Development.

Community Ownership

3.4.2 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.

3.4.3 The Applicant met with Cowal Community Energy (CCE) – a coalition of development trusts in the Cowal peninsula - in February 2025 to discuss community ownership opportunities. CCE is a company with charitable status, whose purpose is to invest in community-owned renewable assets. The Applicant followed up with a letter of intent to CCE, committing to further discuss community

ownership of part of the Proposed Development.

Energy Security

3.4.4 The Proposed Development, if consented, would provide a valuable contribution to security of supply for the region, for Scotland and for the wider Great Britain (GB) area. The Proposed Development would contribute to an adequate and dependable Scottish and GB generation mix, through enabling the generation of more low carbon power from indigenous and renewable resources and would enable the Proposed Development to make a significant contribution to Scottish and wider UK energy security and decarbonisation goals.

3.5 Environmental Protection and Enhancement

Biodiversity Enhancement Plan

3.5.1 Statkraft is committed to implementing a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP) as part of the Proposed Development to provide significant biodiversity net gain benefits to the Site.

3.5.2 A Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (BES) is provided within the EIA Report (refer to Technical Appendix 6.5) which identifies opportunities for broadleaved woodland and riparian woodland planting and an improvement of carbon rich soils. It also proposes an improvement of habitat for black grouse and raptor species such as golden eagle, and an enhancement of structural diversity of habitats throughout the Site. This document will be used as the basis for the BES that will be agreed with consultees post-consent. The key aims of the BES are therefore:

- Peatland Restoration through:
  - Repair of eroded/bare areas using excavated peat
  - Repair of eroded/bare areas using machine-based peatland ACTION techniques
  - Repair of eroded/bare areas using hand techniques
  - Re-use of translocated peat
  - Forest-to-bog restoration
- Ecological Compensation and Enhancement through:
  - Tree planting
  - Riparian planting
  - Non-riparian tree planting
  - Pine marten denning opportunities
  - Boxes for pine marten and red squirrel
  - Grazing management
- Enhancement of Habitat for Bird Species including:
  - Golden eagle and black grouse

3.5.3 Statkraft has been working closely with experienced ecologists and Buglife to develop the BEP 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 wider area.

3.6 Local Project Collaborations

The Dunoon Project

3.6.1 The Dunoon Project is an ongoing initiative in the public domain, which aims to develop a world-class outdoor activities hub on the hills and forests above the town, to attract domestic and international tourists back to Dunoon and to revitalise the local economy. It proposes high-quality mountain-biking trails, a cable car gondola, a zipline, eco-friendly accommodation, retail and cafe facilities and a visitor

centre on Kilbride Hill, 2km to the south of the Proposed Development. The Applicant has met regularly with the parties who are taking The Dunoon Project forward, to discuss respective progress and updates, on the basis that The Dunoon Project and the Proposed Development are complementary sustainability projects. It has been agreed to continue dialogue with a view to future collaboration where possible.

Argyll Data Development

3.6.2 Argyll Data Development Ltd are proposing a 184-acre data hub at Killellan Farm, south of the Proposed Development. Working with a consortium of strategic partners, the development already has first phase consent and is seeking artificial intelligence (AI) Growth Zone designation from the UK government. Initial discussions have taken place regarding the possibility of a future private wire opportunity to provide power from the Proposed Development to the proposed data centre, which has a predicted maximum demand of 600MW, scalable up to 2GW, which the developer intends to procure from 100% renewable sources, in order to be sustainable as well as productive for the local economy.

Recreation

3.6.3 The Proposed Development will also look to improve local access to the site for public recreation. Many locals currently use the nearby forest roads and trails for walking, running and cycling. There is scope to introduce a circular trail around the Proposed Development site, including improved access to Bishop's Seat.

4 Statkraft – Developing the Supply Chain

4.1 National Suppliers

4.1.1 Although Statkraft employs a large team in-house to deliver their renewable energy projects (refer to Section 5.1), the projects are supported by an even larger network of external specialists providing services in the development, construction and operation of renewable energy projects. These services range from legal advice to technical surveys and assessment (e.g. ecologists, hydrologists, archaeologists), from fencing contractors to met mast installers.

£141 million spent on UK business in 2024

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.

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 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 life-cycle 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 hosts events for networking and engagement with local suppliers. 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, which include Google and social media ads targeting specific services and geographical areas, are central to the success of the Register.

4.2.4 Using Statkraft's Loch na Cathrach pumped storage hydro 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 businesses.

4.2.6 As a Developer we 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.

4.2.7 Data was collected during the construction of our most recent wind farms in Dumfries & Galloway. On the 43MW Windy Rig (completed January 2022) and 37.8MW Twentyshilling Hill (completed April 2022) projects, it was estimated that spend with Scottish companies during construction 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 possible, Statkraft will work with other industry partners to maximise opportunities for local suppliers to be involved in projects and develop skill sets.

"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

4.2.9 The Applicant has been approached by several local businesses regarding services for the Proposed Development, including local construction firms, marine services and accommodation providers.

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 everyday 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 at least 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 Chambers of Commerce where our projects are based. Through joining Chambers of Commerce Statkraft can support local business initiatives and promote supply chain opportunities linked to our projects.

4.5 Highland Community Interest Company

4.5.1 Statkraft supports the Highland Community Interest Company, both financially and professionally through advice to the steering committee, to maximise sustainable socio-economic benefits through 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, including over 50 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 Shetland, 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 and 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 a 2024 category winner in The British Council for Offices (BCO) Regional (Scotland) and National (UK) Awards, commended for its sustainability principles, staff engagement and satisfaction.

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 encouraging mobility 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 Diploma 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 gain 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 and 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 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 go through a gender language de-coder to ensure that applicants from all genders are encouraged to apply. Statkraft reinforces this by offering flexible and remote working, paid time off, enhanced parental and adoptive leave, sabbatical leave, and Equity, Diversity and 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 the 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 new £3,000 scholarships annually for the duration of a student's programme at UHI. This is a contribution of
- £18,000 per year, with up to 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 scholars a Statkraft employee as an ongoing contact in industry.
- In collaboration with UHI a Skills Report for the consented Loch na Cathrach hydro project has been published. 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. To date, this collaboration includes the following:

- 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 for 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 operations 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 staff's local neighbourhoods, to provide young students with information on renewable energy and encourage older students to consider 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 host 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 adapts its approach to 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 services 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 culture 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 tailored solutions to local socio-economic challenges. An example of this is the commitment to fund a broadband feasibility study to all communities where it develops wind farms.

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 events across Scotland and the UK. This includes sponsorship, attendance and contributions towards prizes. In 2024 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 including beekeepers, 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, supported by a range of external specialist consultants, review the design of our projects, highlighting potential impacts to protected fauna and flora, developing mitigations to reduce and remove impacts, and design and implement Biodiversity Enhancement Strategies 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 Nature Enhancement Plans. 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 influenced by our capability to halt the effects of climate change. At Statkraft, we see the climate and biodiversity crises as issues that should not be addressed separately, but simultaneously. It is well-known that a healthy and functioning ecosystem has climate-benefiting properties and therefore we strive to deliver projects that have these 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, and Europe's only charity dedicated to the conservation of all invertebrates. Their work includes restoring nature, species recovery, education and awareness raising, campaigning and saving important invertebrate sites from development. Invertebrates, making up 70% of all species on the planet, are vital to human life from creating nutrient rich soils 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 numbers are in 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 has fallen by 76% since 2004 in Scotland.

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' Biodiversity Strategies 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 BEPs following project 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.

Bumblebee Conservation Trust
Business Member 2024/25

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.

Long-lasting Legacies

7.3.4 Statkraft aims to provide long-lasting legacies in their biodiversity enhancement work, ensuring that the benefits are enduring.

7.3.5 For example for the past 20 years, Rheidol Hydropower Scheme has provided a safe and stable nesting site for a family of barn owls (*Tyto alba*), thanks to a long-standing collaboration with a local species habitat protection group. In the early 2000s, Statkraft mounted two specially designed owl boxes on the sheltered rear wall of the generator building.

7.3.6 The location provides ideal conditions: seclusion, protection from the elements, and access to nearby hunting grounds. With support from the local conservation group—licensed to monitor and ring the owlets, Statkraft has been able to track the success of multiple breeding seasons, contributing valuable data to national barn owl conservation efforts.

8 Conclusions

8.1.1 Statkraft brings substantial socio-economic benefits to the local community, to Argyll and Bute, and to Scotland and the UK through their renewable energy projects. The Proposed Development alone is expected to contribute an estimated £39 million in direct GVA, with direct and indirect job creation during both the construction and operational phases. The Proposed Development supports the Supply Chain, Skills development, local economic growth and Community Empowerment through the potential of initiatives like the Community Benefit Fund, potential shared ownership and collaboration with other significant local projects. In addition, it promises Environmental Protection and Enhancement.

8.1.2 The Proposed Development will enhance energy security by contributing to the UK's low-carbon power generation. The Nature Enhancement Management Plan 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.

9 References

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