Technical Appendix 10.2: Outline Access Management Plan

Contents

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Purpose

This Outdoor Access Management Plan (OAMP) has been produced to demonstrate how public access will be safeguarded throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning of Giants Burn Wind Farm ('the Proposed Development'). This OAMP should be treated as a live document that will be subject to review by Argyll and Bute Council's ('the Council') Principal Contractor, Transport Officers and Access Officers. Should the Proposed Development be granted consent, a full AMP will be submitted to and approved by the Council.

The Proposed Development

The Proposed Development has been designated to minimise potential impacts as per IEMA's mitigation hierarchy, by proposing mitigation measures to reduce, or completely avoid significant environmental effects. IEMA's Mitigation Hierarchy[1] has been implemented, where practical, to provide the most appropriate mitigation solutions and as per Scotway's Scoping response, dated the 16th of April 2024, turbines have been located at a '*minimum distance, equivalent to the height of the blade tip, from the edge of any public highway (road or other public right of way) or railway line*'. The closest turbine has been located 2.5 times the height of the tallest turbine, 200 m to tip, and is located approximately 565 m from the nearest core path (C223) to reduce any potential impacts on users of core paths during the construction and operational phases.

To minimise the length of new track required to access the areas of the Site where turbines are located, existing access tracks and watercourse crossings have been upgraded where possible to minimise groundwork disruptions and the potential risk of sedimentation run-off and water pollution into existing watercourses.

Resultantly, there was a need to consider potential health and safety concerns on users of surrounding recreational resources and this OAMP will demonstrate how public access will be safeguarded throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

Methodology

This OAMP has been drafted in line with NatureScot's guidance, Preparation of Outdoor Access Plans[2]. In this document, it outlines five major steps to address how the safe outdoor access can be maintained when direct impacts to recreational resources are anticipate. These are:

- Step 1: Identify the Purpose, Aims and Objectives of the OAMP;
- Step 2: Establish the Outdoor Access Baseline affected by the development proposal;
- Step 3: Identify predicted development impacts and potential enhancements on the Outdoor Access Baseline;
- Step 4: Mitigate the predicted development impacts, and design potential enhancements; and
- Step 5: Manage and Monitor the implementation of the OAMP.

Step 1: Purpose, Aims and Objectives

The aim of this OAMP is to provide safe and continuous use of core paths and recreational receptors which will be impacted by the Proposed Development. This will be achieved by minimising any anticipated impacts through appropriate mitigation and offsetting measures. Where appropriate, opportunities to enhance the experience of this core path, and recreational use in the area, will be explored. The core paths and recreational receptors are shown on Figure 10.2 and include the following:

- Core Path C211(b) – Ardnadam Heritage Trail Loop;
- Core Path C223(a) and (c) – Dunans Loop to Invereck and Loch Lomond and the National Park's Boundary;
- Heritage Path SA/HP416/1;
- Right of Way SA/SA37/1;
- Scottish Hill Track SA/HT94/2; and
- National Cycle Route 75 – Dunoon to Portavadie.

[1]IEMA. (2024). Implementing the Mitigation Hierarchy from Concept to Construction. Available at: IEMA - Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (Accessed on: 15/10/2024)

[2] NatureScot (2010) Preparation of Outdoor Access Management Plans: Microsoft Word - A409251.doc (Accessed 29/01/2025)

Step 2: Outdoor Access Baseline

In Scotland, people have a statutory 'right to roam', subject to reasonable limitations and restrictions (such as private land ownership) under The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003[3]. This includes designated core paths that are drawn up by each Council that give 'public reasonable access throughout their area'[4]. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code highlights how individuals can responsibility utilise their access rights, which is based on three principles[5]:

- Respect the interest of others;
- Care for the environment; and
- Taking responsibility for your own actions.

In Argyll and Bute, the Council has an established network of 1,167 miles of core paths, 200 miles of Scotland's Great Trails, as well as 180 miles of the National Cycle Network, giving a reasonable 'right of access' for people to explore the local outdoor environment.[6]

Further, The Scottish Outdoor Access Code outlines that, in Scotland, you can access most land to enjoy the outdoors (such as hills, woods, beaches and parks) given you behave responsibly[7]. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code outlines this responsibility based on three key principles:

- Respect the interests of others;
- Care for the environment; and
- Take responsibility for your own actions.

Step 3: Predicted Impacts on Recreation

Construction Phase

Direct impacts are predicted for recreational users of Core Path C223(a) and (c), C211, SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75. This is due to the access route to Site, from a new vehicle access off the B836, which:

- Follows Core Path C223(c), for approximately 3.2 km;
- Follows SA/HP416/1 and SA/SA37/1 for approximately 0.3 km;
- Follows SA/HT94/2 for approximately 0.1 km;
- Crosses Core Path C211 in two places; and
- Takes access from the B836 / National Cycle Route 75 / C223(a).

These recreational routes and their interaction with the new and upgraded sections of access track can be seen in Figure 10.2. Direct temporary impacts will be due to the presence of safeguarding features, such as signage and security gates, which will introduce new features to the route.

Users of these recreational receptors may also experience indirect impacts when passing close to the Site, in the form of visual impacts and / or noise. Recreational users will experience views of construction activities, including the construction of emerging turbines, access tracks, borrow pits, crane pads and foundations. Recreational users are transient receptors so views will not be constant whilst travelling along any path or route. Any potential for recreational users to be impacted by dust will be identified and mitigated against in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Operational Phase

Limited potential direct impacts are anticipated to recreational users of Core Path C211(b), C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 during the operational phase and the risk to public safety is considered to be very low; however, mitigation is still proposed in order to ensure the safety of

[3] UK Government (2003) Land Reform Act: Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (Accessed 29/01/205)

[4] NatureScot (2023) Core Paths Plan: Core paths plans | Scottish Outdoor Access Code (Accessed 29/01/2025)

[5] Scottish Outdoor Access Code (2022) What is the Outdoor Scottish Access Code?: What is the Scottish Outdoor Access Code? | Scottish Outdoor Access Code (Accessed 29/01/2025)

[6] Argyll and Bute Council (2024) Outdoor Access in Argyll and Bute. Available at: Outdoor Access in Argyll and Bute | Argyll and Bute Council (Accessed 13/06/2025)

[7] NatureScot (2024) What is the Scottish Outdoor Access Code? Available at: What is the Scottish Outdoor Access Code? | Scottish Outdoor Access Code (Accessed 13/06/2025)

recreational users as the Proposed Development will require periodic maintenance and given that public access is shared with vehicular access tracks, and the access tracks are proposed to be upgraded for recreational use once the Proposed Development is operational, sufficient mitigation should be proposed.

Recreational users will experience indirect visual impacts during the operational phase, including views of the Proposed Development, and its associated infrastructure.

Decommissioning Phase

During the decommissioning phase, it is assumed that all impacts will be similar to those during the construction phase.

Step 4: Mitigation

This OAMP has been prepared to provide likely mitigation measures to ensure that Core Path C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 remain accessible. A full OAMP will be created in conjunction with the Council's Core Path C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 so that they may remain accessible throughout the construction phase.

Construction Phase

Construction of the Proposed Development is anticipated to last approximately 18 months, with some periods of cessation due to adverse weather conditions. It is assumed that construction will continue year-round. The Developer is committed to enabling day-to-day access where this would not compromise the safety of the general public; however, during the period when construction activities are possible, access restrictions are likely to remain in place for the duration.

The Site's access and safety protocols are robust and comprehensive. A breakdown of key mitigation measures is outlined below:

- Notification of the timings when access to Core Path C211(b), C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 that crosses the access route to Site, will be limited due to construction traffic movements. This will result in some localised, temporary delays for walkers and will be managed by on-site contractors. As well as this, alternative routes would be suggested, and access will be made available at evenings, weekends and public holidays during restricted periods. This will be communicated in advance to local community councils, local and / or recreational websites (such as Scotways, or Argyll and Bute Council) and posters in public / community buildings;
- Communicating with residents, businesses and third-parties in close proximity to the Site by letter advising of working hours and timetables for construction traffic movements to and from Site that will affect Core Path C211(b), C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75. Advanced signage will be placed on Core Path C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 and other surrounding core paths six months prior to the beginning of any construction works;
- Erection of signage, as shown in, along Core Path C211(b), C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 during construction works, which will include regular updates on the programme. Examples of temporary signage are shown in Tile 1.

Tile 1: Example Signage

These measures collectively contribute to maintaining a safe working environment and minimising risks associated with construction activities on-site. It should be noted that access to the construction site will be controlled through a security checkpoint at the entrance. Unrestricted entry is prohibited without undergoing a site-specific induction. Visitors without training will be escorted by authorised personnel. When construction activities cease, access restrictions will be removed. Where temporary restrictions are required, these would be kept to the minimum required time and appropriate signage would be erected.

Operational Phase

Limited direct impacts are anticipated to recreational users of Core Path C211(b), C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 during the operational phase and the risk to public safety is considered to be very low. Occasionally, maintenance vehicles will be on Site, who would utilise the access route to Site. It is noted in NatureScot's guidance, that it 'is unlikely to require any special provision'; however, it is still considered to be best practice to ensure that the safe operation of these routes can safely continue[8]. As such, it is anticipated that measures similar to those outlined in the construction phase will be put in place to ensure the safe and continuous use of these paths should operational vehicles be on Site. All measures will be agreed by the Council's Principal Contractor, Transport Officer and Access Officer at the times of the paths' inception.

Further, as the Applicant is committed to the public use of access tracks once the Proposed Development is operational. These paths would create links with the existing core path network in the area, to increase the tourism and recreational offering of the area. Any safety measures needed to safeguard recreational users of Core Path C211(b), C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 will also be extended to this new path network.

Recreational users will also experience indirect visual impacts during the operational phase, including views of the Proposed Development, and its associated infrastructure. Recreational users are transient receptors so views will not be constant whilst travelling along any path or route. Although the Proposed Development will be visible during this phase of development, it is not anticipated that this will impact, especially to a significant level, users' decisions to utilise these recreational routes.

Decommissioning Phase

During the decommissioning phase, it is assumed that all impacts will be similar to those during the construction phase.

Step 5: Management and Monitoring of the OAMP

The Principal Contractor will manage and monitor the use of the finalised OAMP at the time of its inception. The Council's Access Officers, or an elected steering group (involving key users of Core Path C211(b), C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75) can help to monitor the implementation of the OAMP to ensure users of these paths and routes have no restriction on this route or any safety concerns. The Applicant will establish key timescales to review the implementation of the OAMP with the Council's Principals Contractor to consider if:

[8] NatureScot (2024) Good Practice During Wind Farm Construction. Available at: Good practice during wind farm construction | NatureScot (Accessed 17/06/2025)

- All mitigation objectives have been achieved;
- If the Proposed Development has been successfully integrated into the environment (in respect of its access provision elements); and
- Whether any new or enhanced mitigation solutions have come to light that can be implemented.

Conclusion

This OAMP has been produced to demonstrate how public access will be safeguarded throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning of Proposed Development. This OAMP has anticipated any impacts to recreational users of Core Path C211(b), C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 and provided appropriate mitigation solutions, and management procedures, to ensure that safe recreational use of this core path can continue.

Should the Proposed Development be granted consent, a full AMP will be submitted to, and approved by, the Council. The Applicant is committed to delivering the mitigation and access enhancements provided within this OAMP, following any revisions from the Council's Principal Contractor, Transport Officer and Access Officer, to ensure that Core Path C211(b), C223(a) and (c), SA/HT94/2, SA/HP416/1, SA/SA37/1 and National Cycle Route 75 can be safely accessed at all times throughout the lifetime of the project.