

13 Socio-Economics and Tourism

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13 Socio-Economics and Tourism

13.1 Executive Summary

- 13.1.1 Investment in renewable energy is central to the regional and national economy, particularly as part of the economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. In the short term, the construction of renewable energy projects is labour intensive, supporting employment during the recovery. At the same time, investment in renewable energy leaves lasting benefits, as it contributes towards decarbonising the Scottish economy and achieving net-zero targets.
- 13.1.2 The Proposed Development, an onshore wind development south of Straiton in South Ayrshire, comprises nine 6.6 MW turbines for an anticipated generating capacity of 59.4 MW. Its construction and operations will create new jobs, good jobs and green jobs. These could contribute to the retention of young people in the local area, alleviating the demographic pressures from an ageing population and depopulation.
- 13.1.3 The Proposed Development is set to deliver a wide range of benefits locally, regionally and nationally. Through a community benefit fund, each year local communities could receive approximately £300,000, which they will then be able to invest in local projects.
- 13.1.4 The Proposed Development can bring wider benefits to the local communities. As the Proposed Development will require a good broadband connection to operate, the Applicant has commissioned a broadband feasibility study to understand if the broadband connection can be improved for the local communities too. Through a community benefit fund, each year local communities could receive around £297,000 per annum, which they will then be able to invest in local projects. The Applicant is also open to considering shared ownership for the Proposed Development, if local communities are interested. Any profits from such a scheme could then be reinvested locally leading to the generation of additional benefits.
- 13.1.5 The construction and operations of the Proposed Development itself will be associated with economic benefits. In similar assessments, these are captured by its contribution towards Gross Value Added (GVA), a measure of economic output, and employment.
- 13.1.6 It was estimated that the construction and development of the Proposed Development could generate up to:
- £4.4 million GVA and support 62 years of employment in South Ayrshire; and
 - £16.4 million GVA and 225 years of employment across Scotland.
- 13.1.7 During its operations and maintenance, each year the Proposed Development is expected to generate up to:
- £0.4 million GVA and support five jobs across South Ayrshire; and
 - £0.6 million GVA and eight jobs across Scotland.
- 13.1.8 Given the relative impact of the Proposed Development when compared with the size of the economies of South Ayrshire and Scotland, the effect of both its construction and development, and operations and maintenance were assessed as **negligible** (beneficial).
- 13.1.9 The Applicant is committed to maximise local and regional economic benefits from the construction and operations of the Proposed Development. To achieve this, the Applicant has engaged with the local chambers of commerce. The Proposed Development also provides an opportunity for developing local skills and interest in the onshore wind industry, with the Applicant keen to engage with local schools and colleges (including primary schools in Maybole and Straiton).
- 13.1.10 The Proposed Development will also support the provision of local public services through payments of non-domestic rates worth each year up to £0.4 million.

13.1.11 The assessment also considered any impacts on tourism and recreation. The review of the literature on the relationship between onshore wind farm development and tourism in Scotland did not find any relationship between the two.

13.1.12 However, the assessment considered any potential impacts on local tourism assets, defined as those laying within a 15 km radius from the Proposed Development. None of the impacts on tourism and recreation assets was considered as significant from the perspective of EIA Regulations. While there are no significant negative impacts expected, there may be positive benefits, as the Applicant is considering improving core path signage through information boards, which may lead to the valorisation of these assets.

13.2 Introduction

13.2.1 This Chapter considers the socio-economic and tourism assessment of the Proposed Development. It includes the following sections:

- 13.3 sets out legislation, policy and guidelines informing the assessment;
- 13.4 considers responses to the scoping report and how they have been addressed in the Chapter;
- 13.5 presents the assessment methodology and significance criteria adopted;
- 13.6 sets out a socio-economic and tourism baseline;
- 13.7 considers standard mitigation;
- 13.8 lists the receptors brought forward for assessment;
- 13.9 considers the potential effects associated with the Proposed Development;
- 13.10 describes additional mitigation and enhancement measures;
- 13.11 considers any residual effects;
- 13.12 carries out a cumulative assessment; and
- 13.13 summarises the Chapter's findings.

13.2.2 This Chapter was written by BiGGAR Economics, an independent economic consultancy. BiGGAR Economics has considerable experience in assessing the socio-economic and tourism impacts of similar developments, having worked on over 100 wind farm projects across the UK.

13.3 Legislation, Policy and Guidelines

13.3.1 There is no specific legislation, policy or guidance available on the preferred methods to assess the socio-economic impacts of a proposed onshore wind farm development. The proposed method is based on established best practice, including that used in UK Government and industry reports on the sector.

13.3.2 In particular, the assessment draws on studies by BiGGAR Economics on the UK onshore wind energy sector, including a report published by RenewableUK and the then Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in 2012 on the direct and wider economic benefits of the onshore wind sector to the UK economy (DECC & RenewableUK, 2012), and a subsequent update to this report published by RenewableUK in 2015 (RenewableUK, 2015).

13.3.3 The evidence collected in those studies is frequently reviewed and updated by BiGGAR Economics, based on its most recent experience working with wind farm developers. Evaluations of costs and the extent to which contracts are carried out in Scotland and within local authority areas, as well as experience working with developers in the south of Scotland have all contributed to this assessment.

13.3.4 Similarly, there is no formal guidance on the methods that should be used to assess the effects that wind farm developments may have on tourism and leisure interests. The assessment is based on

best practice and draws on BiGGAR Economics' experience in assessing the socio-economic, tourism and recreation impacts of onshore wind developments across Scotland.

13.4 Consultation

13.4.1 Consultations have been undertaken with statutory and non-statutory organisations to inform the scope of the assessment reported in this EIA. The consultation responses relevant to the assessments carried out in this Chapter are summarised in Table 13.1.

Table 13.1 – Consultation Responses

Consultee	Consultation Response	Comment/Action Taken
British Horse Society	Request for developers to work with representatives of the local horse-riding community to understand their road safety and countryside access concerns and facilitate engagement with other partners and consider whether any road safety interventions should be introduced.	Tourism and recreation are considered as part of the tourism baseline in 13.6 and the assessment of potential effects on tourism and recreation assets in 13.9. Road safety and access to the countryside are considered in Chapter 12. Throughout the project, the Applicant has engaged with the BHS.
Crosshill, Straiton and Kirkmichael Community Council	Request for a thorough and detailed assessment of potential effects on tourism with reference to the evidence contained in the Moffat Report. Consideration of the following attractions, recreational trails and accommodation providers: Blairquhan, the Monument, Straiton Church, Straiton Trails and Galloway Forest Park.	An assessment of potential effects on tourism is included in section 13.9, alongside evidence of research on the relationship between tourism and wind farm development, inclusive of the Moffat Report. The attractions identified have been included in the assessment either as part of the recreational trails or the visitor attractions considered.
Dailly Community Council	Request to scope in temporary effects on the regional and national economy during decommissioning and effects on tourism, accommodation providers and routes during decommissioning.	The effects on the economy and tourism associated with future decommissioning are considered in section 13.9.
South Ayrshire Council	Consideration of the effects on the recreational use of the area and on tourism. Core path SA47 shall not be damaged or obstructed and it would be of benefit to improve the signage of the core path route.	An assessment of potential effects on tourism is included in section 13.9. This includes a discussion of effects on core path SA47. Road safety and access to the countryside are considered in more depth in Chapter 12.

	Consideration of cumulative impacts.	Cumulative impacts are considered in section 13.12.
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13.5 Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria

Study Area

13.5.1 The socio-economic and tourism baseline considers the following Study Areas:

- Local area¹, defined as the area within 15 km of the Proposed Development;
- South Ayrshire; and
- Scotland.

13.5.2 The assessment of socio-economic effects covers:

- South Ayrshire; and
- Scotland.

13.5.3 The tourism assessment is based on those tourism assets located within the local area, that is, within 15 km of the Proposed Development.

Desk Study

13.5.4 The drafting of this Chapter was based on desk-based research and did not require any site visit. The team who carried out the assessment are familiar with the socio-economic and tourism characteristics of South Ayrshire and the Local Area.

Assessment of Socio-Economic Effects

13.5.5 There is no specific legislation or guidance available on the methods that should be used to assess the socio-economic effects of a proposed onshore wind farm development for the purposes of an EIA. Therefore, to identify and assess the significance of predicted socio-economic effects, the assessment has been based on professional judgement for the degree of change resulting from proposals, using methods commonly used in EIAs for proposed renewable energy developments, as outlined below.

13.5.6 The assessment of economic effects was undertaken using a model that has been developed by BiGGAR Economics specifically to estimate the socio-economic effects of wind farm developments. This model, which was also the basis of an assessment of the UK onshore wind sector for the then Department of Energy and Climate Change, is frequently updated to reflect the most recent evidence available on the onshore wind sector in Scotland.

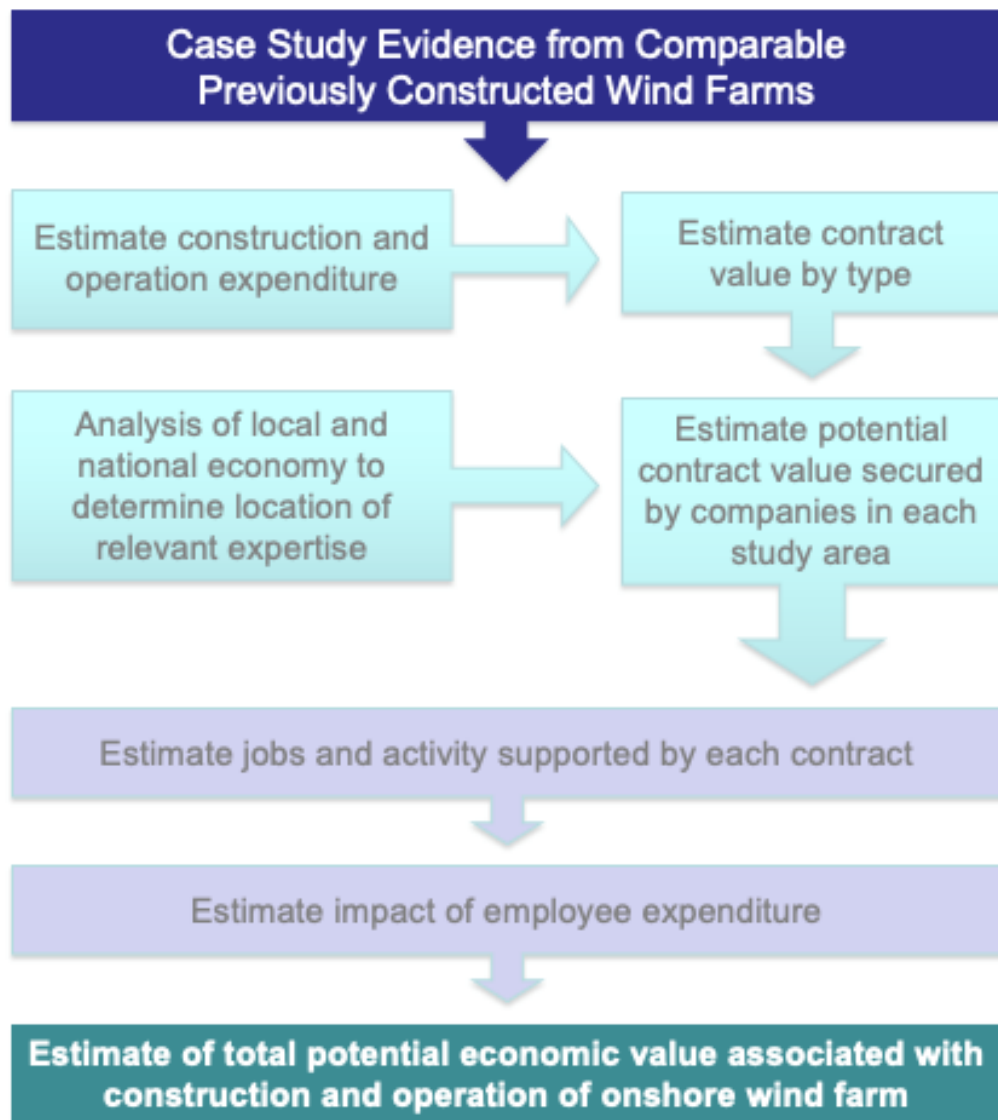
13.5.7 The units of measurement which are used to quantify the economic impacts of the Proposed Development are:

- Gross Value Added (GVA): this is a measure of the economic value added by an organisation or industry and is typically estimated by subtracting the non-staff operational costs from the revenue of an organisation;
- years of employment: this is a measure of employment which is equivalent to one person being employed for an entire year and is typically used when considering the short-term employment impacts, such as those associated with construction; and

¹ includes the following 2011 data zones: Doon Valley South: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05; Doon Valley North: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06; Carrick South: 03, 04, 05, 07; Maybole: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07; and Carrick North 01. Some of these data zones are located in East Ayrshire.

- jobs: this is a measure of employment, which considers the full-time equivalent employment in an organisation or industry.
- 13.5.8 Employment figures, when expressed as years of employment and as jobs, are based on a standard working week of 35 hours.
- Stages in Socio-Economic Analysis**
- 13.5.9 To begin estimating the economic activity supported by the Proposed Development, it is first necessary to calculate the expenditure during the construction and development phase, and the operation and maintenance phase. The total expenditure figure is then divided into its main components using assumptions regarding the share that could be expected by main and sub-contractors. This provides an estimate for each main component contract that can be secured by companies in South Ayrshire and Scotland.
- 13.5.10 There are three sources of economic activity:
- component contracts and the jobs they support (direct impact);
 - wider spending in the supply chain (indirect impact); and
 - spending of people employed in these contracts (induced impact).
- 13.5.11 There are four key stages of this model, which are illustrated in Figure 1:
- estimation of total capital expenditure;
 - estimation of the value of component contracts that make up total expenditure;
 - assessment of the capacity of businesses in the Study Areas to perform and complete component contracts; and
 - estimation of economic impact from resultant figures.
- 13.5.12 This methodology is considered best practice in the assessment of the socio-economic benefits linked to an onshore wind development.

Figure 1 - Approach to Direct and Indirect Economic Impact Assessment



Tourism and Recreation Assessment

13.5.13 The potential effects of wind farm developments on tourism and recreation is a well-researched subject, and as such, key studies have been referenced, including:

- The Economic Impacts of Wind Farms on Scottish Tourism (Glasgow Caledonian/Moffat Centre, 2008); and
- Wind Farms and Tourism Trends (BiGGAR Economics, 2017).

13.5.14 Tourism and recreation assets and visitor accommodation are identified within 15 km of the Proposed Development.

Assessment of Potential Effect Significance

13.5.15 The significance of the effect of the Proposed Development on each tourism and recreation asset and the economy of each Study Area is considered by determining the type and magnitude of change on each.

- 13.5.16 The impact magnitude is assessed using the economic model and professional judgement, considering the socio-economic effects of the Proposed Development on South Ayrshire and Scotland.
- 13.5.17 The significance of effects from the Proposed Development on tourism and recreation assets is assessed with reference to evidence from research and comparable wind farm developments.
- 13.5.18 The significance of effects on each economic, tourism and recreational asset is determined based on the criteria provided below in Table 13.2. Major and moderate effects are considered significant in relation to the EIA Regulations.

Table 13.2 - Significance Criteria

Significance	Description
Major	Major loss/improvement to key elements/features of the baseline conditions such that post-development character/composition of baseline condition will be fundamentally changed. For example, a major long-term alteration of socio-economic conditions, a major reduction/improvement of recreational assets, or a substantial change to tourism spend.
Moderate	Loss/improvement to one or more key elements/features of the baseline conditions such that post-development character/composition of the baseline condition will be materially changed. For example, a moderate long-term alteration of socio-economic conditions, a moderate reduction/improvement in the recreational asset, or a moderate change to tourism spend.
Minor	Changes arising from the alteration will be detectable but not material; the underlying composition of the baseline condition will be similar to the pre-development situation. For example, a small alteration of the socio-economic conditions, a small reduction/improvement in the recreational asset, or a small change in tourism spend.
Negligible	Very little change from baseline conditions. Change is barely distinguishable, approximating to a “no change” situation.

Requirements for Mitigation

- 13.5.19 Where applicable mitigation measures are identified, these will be highlighted. However, mitigation requirements in socio-economics, tourism and recreation assessments are generally limited and none have been identified within this assessment.

Assessment of Residual Effect Significance

- 13.5.20 The significance of residual effects was assessed based on the criteria set out in Table 13.2.

Limitations to Assessment

- 13.5.21 The assessment of tourism assets was undertaken based on the existing assets prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, when no restrictions were in place. Since then, changes will have occurred. With limited international tourism activity taking place at the time of writing, expectations are that the negative impacts on the tourism economy will take some time to recover from. Whilst there has been an increase in domestic tourism (staycations), international visitors tend to be higher spenders than domestic tourists and many tourism businesses have been operating below capacity due to ongoing restrictions.
- 13.5.22 By the time of construction and operation and maintenance, it is expected that these measures will be lifted. However, uncertainty remains as to the state and composition of the tourism industry in South Ayrshire at that time. It is also noted that rural areas of Scotland tend to have a relatively large share of small businesses and self-employment compared to urban areas. Some of these businesses may have failed as a result of the restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 13.5.23 The same limitations apply to baseline economic indicators, in particular unemployment and economic activity rates.

13.6 Baseline Conditions

Strategic Economic Context

National Performance Framework

- 13.6.1 Scotland's National Performance Framework (Scottish Government, 2018) explicitly includes 'increased well-being' as part of its purpose and combines measurement of how well Scotland is doing in economic terms with a broader range of well-being measures. The National Performance Framework is designed to give a more rounded view of economic performance and progress towards achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth and well-being across Scotland and aims to:

- create a more successful country;
- give opportunities to all people living in Scotland;
- increase the well-being of people living in Scotland;
- create sustainable and inclusive growth; and
- reduce inequalities and give equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress.

- 13.6.2 The National Performance Framework sets out 11 outcomes, underpinned by 81 indicators, that combine to give a better picture of how the country is progressing towards these goals. As well as GDP and employment measures, the National Performance Framework's outcomes reflect the desired fabric of communities and culture, education, the environment, health and well-being and measures to help tackle poverty. It is these indicators on which the Scottish Government focuses its activities and spending to help meet the national outcomes.

- 13.6.3 The Proposed Development would contribute to achieving several of the national outcomes through the development and operation of the wind farm as well as through community investment and development.

Scotland's Economic Recovery from Covid-19

- 13.6.4 The growth of the renewable energy sector was a priority for the Scottish Government prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The importance of the sector as a driver of economic recovery and transformation is difficult to overstate.

- 13.6.5 In June 2020, the report of the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER) (Advisory Group on Economic Recovery, 2020) to the Scottish Government highlighted the importance of renewable energy to national economic recovery. Recommendations in the report included "prioritisation and delivery of green investments", including that the green economic recovery is central to recovery overall and that Scotland should lever its natural advantages, such as "the almost limitless quantities of renewable energy from wind, wave and tidal power".

- 13.6.6 The Scottish Government's response (Scottish Government, 2020) outlines how it intends to implement the recommendations made in the AGER report, prioritising a sustainable recovery that supports all parts of Scotland, while meeting climate environmental targets.

- 13.6.7 The 2020/21 Programme for Government (Scottish Government, 2020), the latest Government programme to date, indicates the longer term economic strategic priorities for Scotland. The programme focuses on economic recovery, emphasising that the aim is not a return to business as usual, but a transition to a "fairer, greener and wealthier country". The Programme is centred around three commitments:

- the creation of new jobs, good jobs and green jobs;

- promoting lifelong health and wellbeing; and
- promoting equality and supporting young people to reach their potential.

13.6.8 Investment in renewable energy is part of the Scottish Government's first commitment. In particular, the plan sets out a range of measures to "protect biodiversity, create green jobs and accelerate a just transition to net-zero". Specific commitments made include around £100 million in investment for a Green Job Fund and around £60 million to help industrial and manufacturing sectors decarbonise, grow and diversify.

13.6.9 Consequently, the renewable energy sector can make an important contribution to national and regional economic recovery and transformation in Scotland. Projects drive economic recovery when they are labour intensive in the short term, improve economic competitiveness and productivity in the long term, and deliver wider benefits, including environmental benefits.

Local Energy Policy Statement

13.6.10 The Scottish Government's latest statement on Local Energy Policy (Scottish Government, 2021) highlights the role of localised energy solutions as part of a green recovery to the Covid-19 pandemic and towards a net-zero and decarbonised economy. The strategy is interlinked with other strategic documents in a concerted effort to increase energy efficiency; reduce emissions and eradicate fuel poverty.

13.6.11 The statement identifies the wide range of stakeholders involved in local energy and sets out the following key principles:

- people: engaging with stakeholders from the outset and supporting the different ways each of these will want to be involved;
- places: local energy projects should reflect the features of the local area and work in collaboration with others;
- network and infrastructure: consider the existing energy infrastructure in the area and secure high level and quality of supply to all;
- pathway to commercialisation: create projects that are commercially viable, can be replicated in the future and support net zero emissions; and
- opportunity: projects should create high value jobs and support the wider industry and its workforce.

South Ayrshire Economic Development Strategy 2013-2023

13.6.12 Published in 2012, the South Ayrshire Economic Development Strategy (South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership, 2012) sets out the local authority's ambitions until 2023. Underpinned by increasing competitiveness and ensuring a more sustainable economy, the strategy considers a series of local initiatives and priorities, based on South Ayrshire's strengths and weaknesses. In doing so, it seeks to ensure that South Ayrshire will have:

- a more diversified economy;
- an entrepreneurial culture;
- equality of economic opportunity;
- an attractive place in which to live, work, visit and invest;
- vibrant and dynamic town centres;
- a more dynamic rural economy; and
- high quality connectivity.

13.6.13 The commitment to ensuring a more diversified economic base, includes reference to the attraction of new and dynamic industries connected with renewables, media and digital technologies.

Ayrshire Growth Deal

13.6.14 The Ayrshire Growth Deal (UK Government, 2020) is part of a series of city region deals that have been agreed across Scotland and the rest of the UK to decentralise regional economic development. Signed in November 2020, the Deal is set to benefit East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire with a total of £251 million, including £103 million from the UK Government, £103 million from the Scottish Government and the remainder from local partners (UK Government, 2020).

13.6.15 The deal is expected to unlock £300 million in private sector investment and could support up to 7,000 new jobs. Both energy and tourism, in particular marine tourism, feature across the themes of the projects selected for funding.

Socio-Economic Indicators

Population

13.6.16 In 2019 the local area, as defined by those data zones falling within 15 km of the Proposed Development, had a population of 15,885, or around 14% of the population of South Ayrshire (National Records of Scotland, 2020). In 2020 the population of South Ayrshire was 112,140, roughly 2% of the total population of Scotland (National Records of Scotland, 2021).

13.6.17 South Ayrshire and the local area had a smaller share of their populations comprised of people aged 0-15 years old, compared to the rest of Scotland. The difference between their working age populations (i.e., people aged 16-64) was relatively larger than that across their populations aged 0-15: in South Ayrshire 58.6% of people were of working age, compared with 60.6% in the local area and 63.9% across Scotland.

13.6.18 Differences in the population structure are also reflected in the share of the population aged 65 years old and over. In South Ayrshire 25.8% of the population fell into this group, compared with 23.6% in the local area and 19.3% across Scotland.

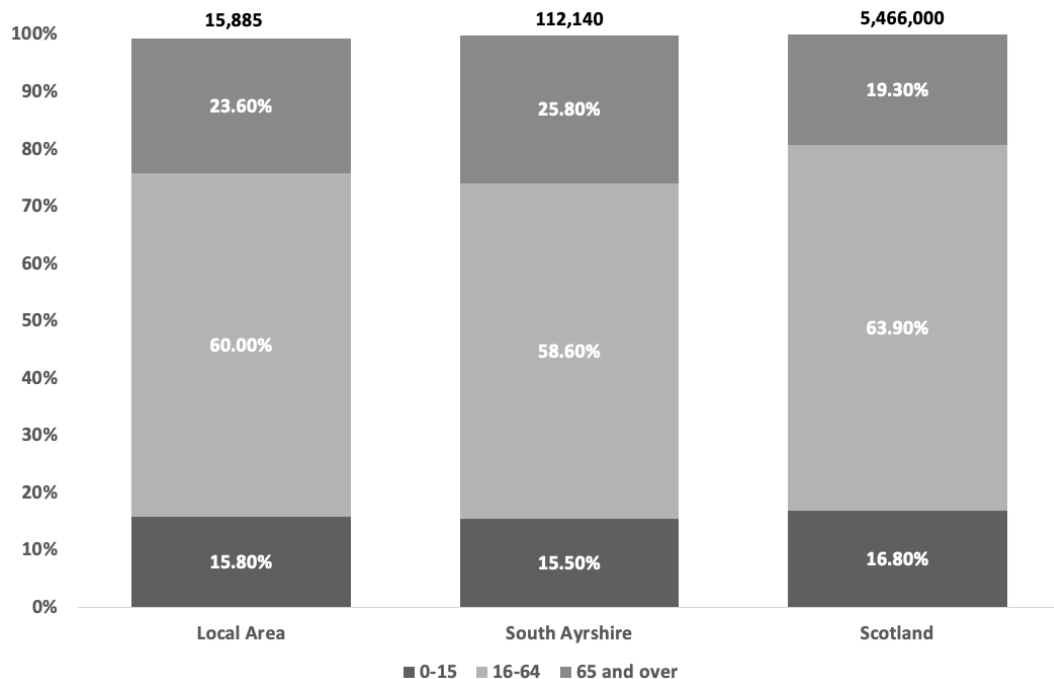


Figure 13.2 - Population Estimates

Source: National Records of Scotland (2021), Mid-2020 Population Estimates Scotland; *National Records of Scotland (2020), 2019 Population Estimates – data zone level.

13.6.19 As shown in Table 13.3, over the period leading up to 2043, the population of South Ayrshire is expected to decline by around 7% to just over 105,000, whereas the population of Scotland is expected to increase by 3% to 5,574,819 (National Records of Scotland, 2019).

13.6.20 Both the populations of South Ayrshire and Scotland will age, though the trend will be more pronounced in South Ayrshire. By 2043, the share of the population aged 65 or over in South Ayrshire is expected to increase by 36% from 25.0% to 34.1%, whereas that of Scotland is expected to increase by 24% from 18.9% to 24.9%. Similarly, the fall in the share of the working age population will be more marked in South Ayrshire (-12%) than in Scotland (-6%).

Table 13.3 - Population Projections, 2018-2043

	South Ayrshire		Scotland	
	2018	2043	2018	2043
Total	112,550	105,191	5,438,100	5,574,819
0-15	15.7%	13.9%	16.9%	14.8%
16-64	59.3%	52.0%	64.2%	60.3%
65 and over	25.0%	34.1%	18.9%	24.9%

Source: National Records of Scotland (2019), Projected Population of Scotland (2018-based).

Economic Structure

13.6.21 In 2020, the employment rate among those of working age in South Ayrshire (75.8%) was lower than that of Scotland (76.8%) (Office for National Statistics, 2021). Likewise, the unemployment rate of South Ayrshire (3.8%) was slightly higher than that for Scotland as a whole (3.4%).

13.6.22 In 2020, full-time workers living in South Ayrshire had a median annual income of £33,491, which was higher than the median annual income of workers across Scotland (£31,836) (Office for National Statistics, 2021). Data on the median annual income of the population working in South Ayrshire points to a similar trend, though all these estimates shall be interpreted with care, as the statistical errors associated with South Ayrshire's estimates are larger than for Scotland's.

Table 13.4 - Labour Market Indicators

	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Unemployment Rate	3.8%	3.4%
Employment Rate	75.8%	76.8%
Median Annual Income (£) – Resident Analysis	33,491	31,386

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2021), Annual Population Survey 2020; ONS (2021) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020 – Resident Analysis.

13.6.23 In 2019, over a third of those in employment in South Ayrshire were employed either in human health and social work activities (18.8%) or in wholesale and retail trade (16.7%), as shown in Table 13.5. In Scotland as a whole, these two sectors employed around 29% of those in employment. Manufacturing (10.4%) and accommodation and food services (10.4%) also played a larger role in the South Ayrshire economy than in Scotland (Office for National Statistics, 2020).

Table 13.5 - Industrial Structure, 2019

	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	3.1%	3.3%
Mining and quarrying	0.2%	1.1%
Manufacturing	10.4%	6.5%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	0.1%	0.7%
Water supply, sewerage, etc.	0.3%	0.7%
Construction	5.2%	5.5%
Wholesale and retail trade	16.7%	13.3%
Transportation and storage	5.2%	4.1%
Accommodation and food service	10.4%	8.2%
Information and communication	1.0%	3.3%
Financial and insurance activities	1.5%	3.2%
Real estate activities	1.5%	1.5%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	4.7%	7.1%
Administrative and support service activities	3.6%	7.8%
Public administration and defence	5.2%	6.0%
Education	7.3%	7.9%
Human health and social work activities	18.8%	15.4%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	3.1%	2.7%
Other service activities	2.6%	1.7%
Total Number of People Employed	48,000	2,602,000

Source: Office for National Statistics (2020), Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), 2019.

- 13.6.24 The Covid-19 pandemic and the shift to home-working across parts of the economy may have resulted in some people returning to South Ayrshire. This would have implications for the local authority's socio-economic structure. However, no data are available on this trend as a result of lags in the publication of relevant statistics on population and the economy, nor is it known whether this trend will outlast the Covid-19 pandemic

Socio-economics Summary

- 13.6.25 The population of the local area and South Ayrshire is relatively older than that of Scotland as a whole. This trend is likely to strengthen in the future, when South Ayrshire is expected to see its population decline, at a time when Scotland's will increase. While the labour market outcomes are relatively worse in South Ayrshire compared to the Scottish average, the median income of residents is higher than across Scotland as a whole. Manufacturing and hospitality are relatively more important in South Ayrshire than in Scotland.
- 13.6.26 The creation of high skill and high paying jobs in the onshore wind sector may be important for the area to retain its young people and rejuvenate the region's population structure.

Strategic Tourism Context

Scotland's Outlook 2030

- 13.6.27 Following on from the Tourism Scotland 2020 (TS2020) Strategy (Scottish Tourism Alliance, 2012), a collaborative network of industry experts created Scotland's Outlook 2030 (Scottish Tourism Alliance, 2020), which is focused on creating a world-leading tourism sector in Scotland that is sustainable in the long-term.
- 13.6.28 The strategy is focused on four key priorities:
- people;
 - places;
 - businesses; and
 - experiences.
- 13.6.29 The strategy recognises the effects of climate change, technological advancements, Brexit and changing consumer behaviour on tourism and highlights the need for collaboration between government, communities and the public and private sectors.
- 13.6.30 There are six conditions that the strategy highlights as being crucial for success:
- using technological advancements and information to understand changes and trends in tourist behaviours;
 - ensuring policies are in place that support the vision;
 - enabling investment opportunities into Scotland's tourism market;
 - improving transport and digital infrastructure;
 - greater collaboration between businesses in the industry; and
 - positioning Scotland as a great place to live and visit locally and globally.
- 13.6.31 A main commitment of the strategy is to address the effects of energy demand associated with tourism and make the sector commit fully to Scotland's ambition of becoming a net-zero society by 2045.

The Maybole Regeneration Project

- 13.6.32 The redevelopment of Maybole, the ancient capital of Carrick, is part of an attempt to make South Ayrshire more attractive to visitors (Maybole Town Centre Regeneration, 2021). Maybole's regeneration sees the involvement of its community and businesses, as part of an investment worth up to £7.5 million over a four-year period. The projects aim to:
- improve buildings in the town's centre;
 - build and improve cycling and walking routes;
 - create opportunities for community participation and learning; and
 - redevelop the public spaces in the town's High Street.

Tourism Indicators

- 13.6.33 In 2018, the sustainable tourism sector generated £121.5 million GVA in South Ayrshire and £4.1 billion GVA across Scotland (Scottish Government, 2020). In 2019, the sector employed 6,000 people in South Ayrshire, or about 2.6% of the total employment in the sustainable tourism sector in Scotland (229,000). In both of these measures, the sector's share in South Ayrshire is slightly higher than the local authority's relative share of Scotland's population (2.1%).

Table 13.6 - Employment and GVA in the Sustainable Tourism Sector, 2018-19

	South Ayrshire	Scotland
GVA (£ million)	121.5	4,141
Employment	6,000	229,000

Source: Scottish Government (2020), Growth Sector Statistics.

- 13.6.34 In 2019, South Ayrshire attracted almost six million day-visitors, who spent on average £48 per trip, around £7 more than the average spending of day visitors to Scotland (VisitScotland, 2021). In the same year there were 61,000 domestic overnight visitors to South Ayrshire spending an average of £220, which was slightly lower than the average spending per domestic overnight visit in Scotland as a whole (£241) (Visit Britain, 2020).
- 13.6.35 The spending per international overnight visit in the Ayrshire and Arran region (no data were available for South Ayrshire) was £612 and lower than that of international visitors to Scotland (£734).

Table 13.7 - Visits and Expenditure by Visitor Type

	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Domestic Day Visits	5,900,000	140,800,000
Domestic Overnight Visits**	373,000	12,426,000
International Overnight Visits	61,000*	3,460,000
Spending per Day Visit	£48	£41
Spending per Domestic Overnight Visit**	£220	£241
Spending per International Overnight Visit	£612*	£734

Source: Visit Scotland (2021), Insight Department: Ayrshire and Arran Factsheet 2019, *2017-2019 average is used due to 2019 data relying on a small sample. **Visit Britain (2020), the Great Britain Visitor Survey 2019.

- 13.6.36 According to the respondents to the Scottish Visitor Survey 2015/16 (VisitScotland, 2017), some of the main reasons for their visits to the Ayrshire and Arran region included:
- the scenery and landscape;
 - to get away from it all; and
 - the area's history and culture.
- 13.6.37 Other respondents spent time in the area to visit friends, were returning visitors or had always wished to visit. The main motivation for visiting was the landscape and scenery, mentioned by 68% of the respondents to the survey. History and culture were the main reasons to visit for 27% of those surveyed.

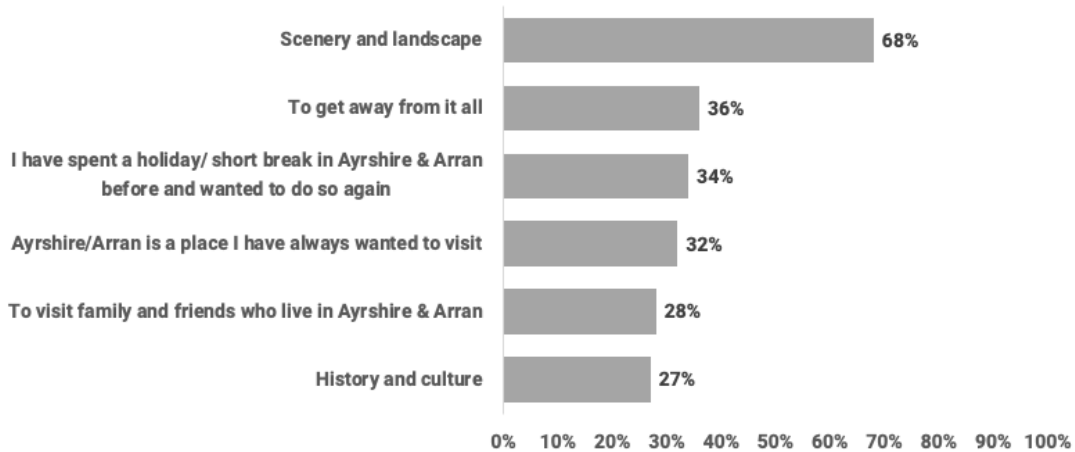


Figure 13.3 - Top Reasons for Visiting the Ayrshire and Arran Region

Source: Visit Scotland (2017), Scotland Visitor Survey 2015 & 2016.

13.6.38 This evidence is in line with Visit Scotland’s findings (VisitScotland, 2021) from the use of social listening as a way to provide insights into what is being said on social media about tourism in the region. In 2019, there were over 3,400 online mentions of Ayrshire and Arran as a holiday destination, 41% of which referred to castles and historical landmarks.

13.6.39 Culzean Castle, which lies 17 km from the Proposed Development, is one of the most popular visitor attractions in Ayrshire attracting over 330,000 paying visitors in 2019. Other popular attractions in South Ayrshire include Dundonald Castle, which attracted nearly 25,000 visitors, and Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, which welcomed over a quarter of a million visitors in 2019.

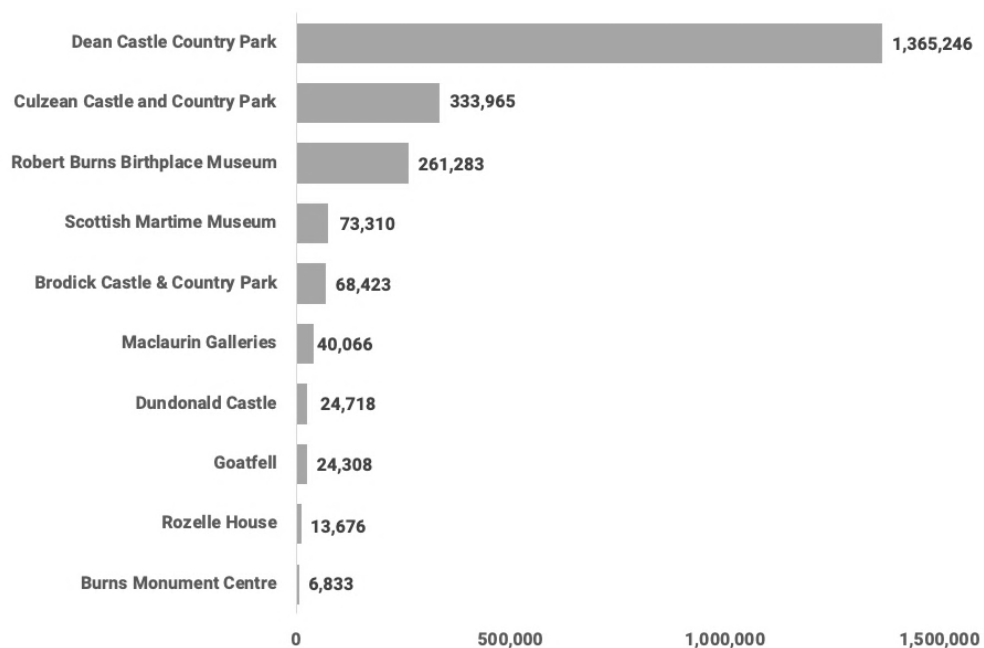


Figure 13.4 - Top 10 Visitor Attractions in Ayrshire and Arran, 2019

Visit Scotland (2021), Insight Department: Ayrshire and Arran Factsheet 2019.

Visitor Attractions

13.6.40 Through an online search including on the Visit Scotland portal, the analysis identified those visitor attractions located within 15 km of the Proposed Development. These are described in Table 13.8. The baseline includes Culzean Castle even if it is located further than 15 km of the Proposed Development, given its importance as a visitor attraction in South Ayrshire.

Table 13.8 - Visitor Attractions

	Key Features	Distance
Culzean Castle	Once home to David Kennedy, 10th Earl of Cassillis, the Castle hosts an extensive collection of pistols and military swords and a scenic oval staircase. Outdoors visitor can spend time in the associated park.	17 km
Souter Johnnies Cottage	18th century cottage of the shoemaker who was made famous in Robert Burns poem "Tam o' Shanter".	15 km
Crossraguel Abbey	A ruined former abbey near the town of Maybole. Built in the 13th century, it was used by Benedictine Monks until the reformation in 1560.	13 km
Carrick Centre	Community centre in Maybole. A hub for Maybole community which offers a place for socialising and for local businesses to meet.	12 km
Scottish Industrial Railway Centre	An industrial heritage museum operated by the Ayrshire Railway Preservation Group.	10 km
Scottish Dark Sky Observatory	Astronomical observatory that sits at the edge of the gold-tier rated Galloway Forest Dark Sky park. While the Observatory was recently damaged by a fire, it is assumed that it will be rebuilt.	9 km
Straiton (St Cuthbert's) Church	Founded in the 13 th century by Duncan, Earl of Carrick, the Church features elements belonging to different historical periods.	4 km
Galloway Forest Park	Britain's largest forest park, Galloway Forest Park offers visitors with a wide range of recreational activities.	<1 km

Source: Visit Scotland (2020).

Recreational Trails and Core Paths

- 13.6.41 Through an online search on the recreational walking portal Walkhighlands, a series of recreational paths were identified. These are set out in Table 13.9.
- 13.6.42 Most of the walking activity in the area tends to take place in the forests rather than on the hilltops.

Table 13.9 - Recreational Trails

	Key Features	Distance
Killdoon Hill	A circular walking route from Maybole which includes an ascent of Killdoon Hill.	10 km
Craiglea Trail and Loch Doon Castle	A 3.5 km trail that begins on the shore of Loch Doon at the ruined castle and climbs up to the north to give excellent views of the loch.	10 km
Dimurchie Trail, Barr	A walk through dense woodland into rolling farmlands which offers views over the village of Barr and the surrounding hills.	9 km
Ness Glen near Loch Doon	A former showplace which has a carved path through a wooded gorge that runs alongside the river.	9 km
Maxwellston Hill, Dailly	A rough hill walk to a panoramic viewpoint.	8 km
Devil's trail	A straightforward walk through Changue Forest which includes views over the Carrick Hills and Stinchar Valley.	8 km
Barony Hill	A contrasting walk that takes in a summit ridge, moorlands views, woodland and a couple of ruined castles.	6 km
Cornish Hill and Loch Circuit, Stinchar Bridge	A circular walk above the vast forests of Carrick which leads into open hills to views of Cornish Loch.	4 km
Lady Hunter Blair's Walk, Straiton	A short walk through a wooded glen which features spectacular waterfalls.	4 km
Shalloch on Minnoch, via the North Ridge	A boggy and featureless route to the most northerly major summit on the ridge that runs northwards from the Merrick.	4 km
Monument and Bennan Hill, Straiton	A circular route over the hills overlooking Straiton, reaching the Craigengower monument. Located in what is known as Ayrshire's 'Rambling Territory'.	2 km

Source: *Walkhighlands (2021), Ayrshire, available at: <https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/glasgow/ayrshire.shtml>*

- 13.6.43 Core paths give public access to the outdoors within a local authority. In doing so, they provide opportunities for cycling, walking, horse riding and other outdoor activities (South Ayrshire Council, 2021). The following core paths were identified as being within 15 km of the Proposed Development: SA1, SA32, SA33, SA34, SA36, SA41, SA42, SA43, SA45, SA46, SA47, SA48, SA49, SA51, SA52, SA53, SA54 and SA56.
- 13.6.44 Among these paths, SA47 runs through the north western ridge of the Proposed Development.
- 13.6.45 The following core paths were scoped out of the assessment since they had already been included as part of the recreational trails considered:
- SA33 and SA34 (Kildon Hill, Maybole);
 - SA41, SA42 and SA43 (Barony Hill); and
 - SA52, SA53 and SA54 (Dinmurchie Trail, Barr).

Accommodation Providers

- 13.6.46 Accommodation providers were initially identified through a web search on the VisitScotland portal.

As this is unlikely to feature all providers, especially smaller ones without the resources to advertise there, the analysis has also considered the offering advertised on the VisitStraiton website, as well as portals such as Airbnb and Booking.com.

13.6.47 The web search identified 38 accommodation providers within 15 km of the Proposed Development, including:

- two accommodation providers on the west bank of Loch Doon;
- three around Waterside;
- three in and around Kirkmichael
- twelve around Straiton;
- two south of Craig;
- eight in and around Maybole;
- one in Barr; and
- seven in the Water of Girvan valley.

Table 13.10 - Accommodation Providers by Area and Type

	Self-Catering	Hotel & Castle	Caravan, Camping Parks, Glamping	B&Bs	Total
Loch Doon west			2		2
Straiton	10	1		1	12
South of Craig	2				2
Water of Girvan valley	4		1	2	7
In and around Maybole	5		2	1	8
Kirkmichael	2	1			3
Barr				1	1
Waterside	2		1		3
Total	25	2	6	5	38

Source: Visit Scotland (2021), Accommodation: South Ayrshire, available at: <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/accommodation/search-results?prodtypes=acco&loc=South+Ayrshire&locplace=2891&locprox=0&stay=&endDate=&r1a=2&r1children=0&r1infants=0&r1c=0&avail=off>, Bookings.com, AirBnb and VisitStraiton (2021), Stay, available at: <https://visitstraiton.com/stay/>.

13.6.48 There are a series of accommodation providers on the coastline, in particular around Culzean, Maidens and Turnberry. These have not been considered as they are located more than 15 km from the Proposed Development. They are, however, expected to cater to a different section of the market, compared to those providers scoped into the assessment, based on their position on the coastline and proximity to visitor and recreational attractions such as Culzean Castle and Trump Turnberry.

Recreational Tourism

13.6.49 Recreational tourism in South Ayrshire is mostly linked to golfing. The main golf courses in South

Ayrshire are the Royal Troon, Turnberry and Prestwick Golf Club, which have all hosted the Open. Golfing activity also takes place at a series of other local courses. Trump Turnberry Golf Resort is around 18 km from the Proposed Development. Water sports are practiced in Troon, Prestwick, Ayr, Girvan and Ballantrae.

13.6.50 Walking and cycling are also popular activities in the region. In addition to the recreational trails considered above, in the proximity of the Proposed Development there is a mountain biking trail: Merrick Circle in Galloway Forest, on the banks of Loch Doon, which is around 9 km from the Proposed Development. Since the Proposed Development will not affect the recreational value of this asset, its effect was assessed as **negligible**.

13.6.51 Another local recreational attraction is the Adventure Doon, a centre for family-friendly archery-based sports games, located around 11 km from the Proposed Development.

Tourism Baseline Summary

13.6.52 Tourism in South Ayrshire has a similar importance as elsewhere in Scotland. The area features several historical attractions, including Culzean Castle, and has a focus on recreational tourism, in the forms of walking and cycling.

13.7 Standard Mitigation

13.7.1 With respects to socio-economic and tourism impacts, no standard mitigation measures have been identified.

13.8 Receptors Brought Forward for Assessment

13.8.1 The receptors that have been taken forward for assessment are:

- the economy of South Ayrshire;
- the economy of Scotland; and
- the tourism economy within 15 km of the Proposed Development.

13.9 Potential Effects

Construction

13.9.1 The first step in assessing the revenue that could be generated during the construction and development phase was to estimate the total construction costs of the Proposed Development. The estimate of costs was based on the number of turbines and generating capacity of the wind farm. This relied on BiGGAR Economics' experience working with developers on similar projects.

13.9.2 Based on the Proposed Development consisting of nine turbines for an anticipated installed capacity of 59.4MW, it was estimated that the total development and construction expenditure could amount to £70.9 million. Construction and development contracts were then split based on contract type into:

- development;
- turbines;
- balance of plant; and
- grid connection.

13.9.3 A series of assumptions, based on BiGGAR Economics' experience, were then made as to the relative size of each of these contracts. On that basis, it was estimated that turbine contracts would be the ones associated with the largest expenditure £50.4 million or 71.1% of capital expenditure (CapEx), followed by balance of plant contracts (20.0%), grid connection contracts (5.0%), and development and planning contracts (3.8%).

Table 13.11 - Development and Construction Expenditure by Contract Type

	% CapEx	Value (£m)
Development and Planning	3.8%	2.7
Turbines	71.1%	50.4
Balance of Plant	20.0%	14.2
Grid Connection	5.0%	3.6
Total	100%	70.9

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis.

- 13.9.4 To estimate the economic impact from construction and development, it was then necessary to make assumptions on the ability of businesses within South Ayrshire and Scotland to carry out construction and development contracts. These were based on evidence from the RenewableUK study and from BiGGAR Economics' experience working with developers on onshore wind projects in the south west of Scotland.
- 13.9.5 It was estimated that during the construction and development phase businesses in South Ayrshire could be awarded contracts worth up to £6.7 million, equivalent to 9% of total CapEx. Spending across Scotland (inclusive of expenditure occurring in South Ayrshire) could account for up to 27% of total construction and development costs, or around £19.3 million.
- 13.9.6 Based on assumptions on the ability of businesses to fulfil different contract types, it was estimated that the largest opportunity for businesses in South Ayrshire would be associated with balance of plant contracts, worth around £3.3 million. Similarly, the largest opportunity for businesses across Scotland was in balance of plant contracts generating a revenue of £9.6 million.

Table 13.12 - Development and Construction Expenditure by Study Area

	South Ayrshire		Scotland	
	%	£m	%	£m
Development and Planning	10%	0.3	63%	1.7
Turbines	4%	1.9	9%	4.4
Balance of Plant	23%	3.3	68%	9.6
Grid Connection	35%	1.2	100%	3.6
Total	9%	6.7	27%	19.3

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis.

- 13.9.7 Having estimated the turnover associated with construction and development expenditure in each Study Area, it was possible to quantify the economic impact generated. This was done by dividing the turnover generated from each contract by the turnover per GVA ratio for the industrial sectors involved in carrying out those works, based on data from the UK Annual Business Survey (Office for National Statistics, 2020). In this way, it was estimated that the Proposed Development could generate up to £3.2 million direct GVA in South Ayrshire and £9.1 million direct GVA across Scotland.

Table 13.13 - Development and Construction Direct GVA by Study Area (£m)

Contract Type	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Development and Planning	0.2	1.1
Turbines	0.9	2.1
Balance of Plant	1.6	4.4
Grid Connection	0.5	1.4
Total	3.2	9.1

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Note: totals may not add up due to rounding.

- 13.9.8 Similarly, to estimate the direct employment supported by construction and development contracts, it was necessary to divide turnover by the relevant turnover per job ratios, as sourced from the UK Annual Business Survey. In this way, it was estimated that contracts associated with the construction and development of the Proposed Development could support up to 46 direct years of employment in South Ayrshire and 132 direct years of employment across Scotland.

Table 13.14 - Development and Construction Direct Employment by Study Area and Contract Type (Years of Employment)

Contract Type	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Development and Planning	3	15
Turbines	14	33
Balance of Plant	23	63
Grid Connection	7	20
Total	46	132

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

- 13.9.9 It was then necessary to consider the impacts arising from spending across the supply chain (indirect impacts) and from the spending of those employees working on wind farm related contracts (induced impacts). This was done by applying the Scottish Type 1 and Type 2 employment and GVA multipliers from the Scottish Government's Input-Output Tables (Scottish Government, 2020) to the estimates of direct employment and GVA.

- 13.9.10 Since these multipliers reflect the magnitude of effects over the Scottish economy, it was necessary to adjust them at the level of the South Ayrshire economy. Based on previous experience on similar developments, it was assumed that 33% of supply chain effects would occur in South Ayrshire. In this way, it was estimated that indirect impacts could account for £0.5 million GVA and seven years of employment in South Ayrshire and £4.3 million GVA and 60 years of employment across Scotland.

Table 13.15 - Development and Construction Indirect Impact

	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Indirect Impact (£m)	0.5	4.3
Indirect Impact (years of employment)	7	60

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis.

- 13.9.11 Similarly, based on an analysis of spending patterns of households across the UK (Office for National Statistics, 2019), it was estimated that induced impacts in South Ayrshire could be around 70% of those taking place across Scotland. It was estimated that the spending of those involved in primary and secondary contracts could generate £0.8 million GVA and support eight years of employment

in South Ayrshire and £3.1 million GVA and 33 years of employment across Scotland.

Table 13.16 - Development and Construction Induced Impact

	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Induced Impact (£m)	0.8	3.1
Induced Impact (years of employment)	8	33

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis.

- 13.9.12 Adding up direct, indirect and induced impacts, it was estimated that through its construction and development, the Proposed Development could generate up to £4.4 million GVA and support 62 years of employment in South Ayrshire and £16.4 million GVA and 225 years of employment across Scotland.

Table 13.17 Economic Impact During Development and Construction

	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Economic Impact (£m)	4.4	16.4
Economic Impact (years of employment)	62	225

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis.

- 13.9.13 The effect of construction and development on the economies of South Ayrshire and Scotland was assessed as **negligible** (beneficial).

Operation

- 13.9.14 To estimate the economic impact associated with spending on operations and maintenance, a similar approach to that adopted for construction spending was followed. Based on the Proposed Development's capacity, operations and maintenance expenditure could amount to up to £1.5 million per year.
- 13.9.15 On the basis of previous experience working in the south west of Scotland, it was estimated that around 32% of annual operation and maintenance contracts, equivalent to £0.5 million, could benefit South Ayrshire, whereas around 46% or £0.7 million could benefit the Scottish economy.

Table 13.18 - Annual Operation and Maintenance Expenditure by Study Area

	South Ayrshire		Scotland	
	%	£m	%	£m
Operations and Maintenance	32%	0.5	46%	0.7

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis.

- 13.9.16 Applying turnover per GVA and turnover per job ratios from the UK Annual Business Survey to the turnover from operations and maintenance contracts, it was estimated that each year throughout its operation the Proposed Development could generate up to £0.3 million direct GVA and support four direct jobs in South Ayrshire and £0.4 million direct GVA and five direct jobs across Scotland.

Table 13.19 - Annual Operations and Maintenance Direct Impact

	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Economic Impact (£m)	0.3	0.4
Economic Impact (jobs)	4	5

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis.

- 13.9.17 The indirect and induced impacts associated with the operations and maintenance of the Proposed Development were estimated following the same methodology as for construction and development impacts. Adding up direct, indirect and induced impacts, it was estimated that the Proposed Development could support: £0.4 million GVA and five jobs in South Ayrshire, and £0.6 million GVA and eight jobs across Scotland.

Table 13.20 - Annual Economic Impact During Operation and Maintenance

	South Ayrshire	Scotland
Economic Impact (£m)	0.4	0.6
Economic Impact (jobs)	5	8

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis.

- 13.9.18 The effect on the Scottish and South Ayrshire economies of annual expenditure on operations and maintenance was assessed as **negligible** (beneficial).

Decommissioning

- 13.9.19 The Proposed Development would also have an economic impact during the decommissioning phase. Very few onshore wind projects to date have been fully decommissioned in the UK and, as a result, there is minimal data regarding the economic costs and impacts associated with this phase. Given that decommissioning activity would take place in future decades, it is difficult to predict what local economic conditions at that time would be. For these reasons, the decommissioning costs and impacts have not been quantified in this assessment.
- 13.9.20 The scale of the economic activity during the decommissioning phase would likely be less than that during the construction phase. Therefore, the impact on the economies studied would be less than that assessed for the construction phase.
- 13.9.21 The effect on the South Ayrshire economy and Scottish economy was assessed as **negligible** (beneficial) and therefore not significant in EIA terms.

Wider Economic Benefits

Community Benefits

- 13.9.22 In addition to generating economic benefits during its construction and operations, the Proposed Development will benefit the communities living in its proximity through a community benefit fund. In line with the Scottish Government's guidance on community benefits for onshore wind developments (Scottish Government, 2019), the Applicant intends to deliver an annual community benefit fund worth £5,000 per MW.
- 13.9.23 Based on a generating capacity of approximately 59.4 MW, the fund is expected to be worth around £297,000 per year or £8.9 million over the wind farm's lifetime.
- 13.9.24 This money will then be invested to fund projects within local communities to suit their development needs. For instance, the area close to the Proposed Development tends to have poor telephone signal, which could be improved through appropriate investment from the community benefits fund.

- 13.9.25 The selection of priorities for local investment could also benefit from the Applicant’s commissioned feasibility study aimed at identifying the potential for improving broadband connection. This study, which also supports the operational needs of the Proposed Development, could be used by local communities to inform investment in fibre or fixed wireless. Improvements in broadband may lead to better digital access for residential and commercial properties alike. This is in line with the investment in digital infrastructure advocated by Scotland’s Outlook 2030 (Scottish Tourism Alliance, 2020).
- 13.9.26 The projects that have been awarded community benefits from the Applicant’s Berry Burn Wind Farm in Moray also provide an insight into what other communities in Scotland have been able to achieve with community benefit funding.
- 13.9.27 To date, Berry Burn Community Fund has awarded over £1.2 million (Berry Burn Community Fund, 2021). Awards are given three times a year and fund a range of projects, including:
- £25,000 awarded to Rothes Way Association to establish Stage 2 of a multi-use path linking Rothes and Craigellachie and joining the Speyside Way;
 - £9,000 to Forres Skate Park Initiative funding a feasibility study for a proposed skate park in the Forres area;
 - £3,000 to Grantown Grammar School to support a stage school show by hiring personal microphones and costumes; and
 - £2,800 to Sanquhar Dam Renovation Group for the shredding and mulching of non-native species around the Sanquhar Dam.
- 13.9.28 As an illustration of the potential economic impacts from the community benefit fund, it was assumed that the money was spent in hiring development officers, who would then lead economic development projects in the area. Based on the turnover per job ratio in the voluntary sector (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, 2018), the community benefit fund could support five jobs during each year of operation.
- 13.9.29 The effect associated with the annual revenue generated by the community benefit fund was assessed as **negligible** (beneficial).

Non-domestic Rates

- 13.9.30 Throughout its operations, the Proposed Development will also contribute to public finances through the payment of non-domestic rates. The existing methodology determining the non-domestic rates paid by onshore wind developments is based on the revenue of developments receiving subsidies. As such, it was necessary to make assumptions on the rates paid by subsidy-free developments.
- 13.9.31 Based on discussions with onshore wind developers on current expectations, it was assumed that future onshore wind developments may pay around £7,000 per MW of installed capacity. This is an estimate and actual rates will depend on valuations made by rates assessors. Applying this rate to the Proposed Development’s anticipated capacity, it was estimated that during each year of its operation, it will contribute around £0.4 million in non-domestic rates.
- 13.9.32 The effect of the annual non-domestic rates revenue from the Proposed Development on the South Ayrshire economy was assessed as **negligible** (beneficial).

Shared-Ownership

- 13.9.33 If local residents are interested, the Applicant is open to the possibility for local communities to have a share in the Proposed Development. To assess this, the Applicant has already carried out an initial consultation, to which around 43% of respondents reported that they were either interested in the proposal (25%) or unsure (18%). The structure of any shared ownership scheme would be finalised post-consent.

13.9.34 In 2019, the Scottish Government published guidance on the shared ownership of onshore renewable developments (Scottish Government, 2019). This aims to advise communities, developers, local authorities and other stakeholders on how to deliver a shared ownership scheme, with the Scottish Government's ambition being that by 2030 there will be 2GW of community and locally owned energy.

Recreation and Tourism Effects

13.9.35 This section assesses whether there would be an effect on the tourism economy as a result of the Proposed Development leading to a change in behaviour, for example, a change in visitor numbers or tourism income.

The Logic behind Tourism Effects

13.9.36 It is logically impossible to prove there is no link between onshore wind developments and tourism. However, it is possible to consider what the link would be, if a relationship existed, and use this to assess the likelihood that any such dynamics may be in place in the context of the Proposed Development.

13.9.37 For a wind farm development to have a harmful effect on the tourism economy, the following logic would apply; tourists would need to:

- highly value the landscape and views experienced during their trip;
- be aware of a landscape or visual impact of a wind farm;
- consider such a landscape or visual impact to be negative, detracting from their trip in some way;
- change their behaviour as a result (for example, the decision to visit, the decision to return or recommend, length of stay, activities undertaken);
- change their spending patterns as a result of this behaviour change; and
- change their spending patterns to a scale that would be noticeable to tourism businesses and impact on their business performance.

13.9.38 What this logic chain reveals is that there is a difference between a landscape and visual impact experienced by tourists and an effect on the tourism economy. If some tourists did view wind farms but that did not impact on their consumer behaviour, it could not be argued that there was an effect on the tourism economy.

13.9.39 Similarly, if some potential visitors to an area where a wind farm had been developed, decided not to visit the area because they felt strongly that they did not wish to see the wind farm, this would only impact on the economy if they had intended to spend money in the local tourism economy. For instance, if these potential visitors had planned to visit only for the day (and so would not be considered to be tourists in any case), and did not plan to spend any money in the local area, then there would be no loss to the tourism economy.

13.9.40 Furthermore, if many tourists were to experience views of the wind farm but did not consider that to be a material issue, or indeed were positively disposed towards wind farms, then this would be unlikely to result in negative impacts on the local tourism economy.

Evidence on Wind Farms and Tourism

13.9.41 The most comprehensive study of the potential effects of wind farms on tourism was undertaken by the Moffat Centre at Glasgow Caledonian University in 2008 (Glasgow Caledonian/Moffat Centre, 2008). The study was based on effects that could happen and found that, although there may be minor effects on tourism providers and a small number of visitors may not visit Scotland in the future, the overall effect on tourism expenditure and employment would be very limited.

13.9.42 This study is now over a decade old and in the intervening time wind farms have become a more

common feature in Scotland. As such, it would be expected that any adverse effects on the tourism economy would now be apparent.

- 13.9.43 In 2017, BiGGAR Economics undertook a study into the effects of wind farms constructed between 2009 and 2015 on tourism at the national, regional and local level (BiGGAR Economics, 2017). This study updated work on the same subject carried out in 2016.
- 13.9.44 In the study, tourism employment was considered over the period 2009 to 2015. During this time period, the number of wind farms increased in Scotland and in almost all local authority areas, while employment in sustainable tourism also grew substantially. The analysis found no correlation between tourism employment and the number of turbines at the national or local authority level.
- 13.9.45 The study also considered the impact on employment at a much smaller, more granular level, in data zones up to 15km from developments. The sites considered were constructed between 2009 and 2015. As these sites did not exist in 2009, comparing employment in 2009 and 2015 was considered an effective measure of the effect of wind farms on local employment, while excluding construction impacts, such as wind farm related employees staying in local accommodation.
- 13.9.46 At the local authority level in these smaller areas, no link was found between the development of a wind farm and tourism related employment. In 21 out of the 28 areas considered, employment in this sector grew. In 22 of the areas, employment either grew faster or decreased less than the rate for the relevant local authority area as a whole.
- 13.9.47 Overall, the conclusion of this study was that published national statistics on employment in sustainable tourism demonstrate that there is no relationship between the development of onshore wind farms and tourism employment at the level of the Scottish economy, at the local authority level, nor in the areas immediately surrounding wind farm developments.
- 13.9.48 This lack of evidence for negative impacts on tourism is not surprising when evidence of public attitudes to renewable energy is considered.
- 13.9.49 Public support for renewable energy is high, as a result of concerns about climate change. In the UK Government's latest Tracker Survey on public attitudes, undertaken in September 2020 (Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2020), 82% of those surveyed were concerned about climate change, with 16% not concerned. There were high levels of support for renewable energy, with 80% supporting and 3% opposing. For onshore wind specifically, there was 73% support, with 7% opposed (including just 2% strongly opposed). The opposition has reduced over time, as onshore wind developments have become more familiar, from 12% opposition in 2012 when the survey was first undertaken (Department for Energy and Climate Change, 2012). Given this high level of support, it is not surprising that the development of wind farms has not led to any adverse effect on the tourism economy that has been detected.
- 13.9.50 The factors that determine the success of the tourism sector do not include the presence or otherwise of an onshore wind farm. In our experience, the issues that influence tourism include the ability and willingness to travel (as highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic), economic performance (and so whether tourists have disposable income available for leisure trips), exchange rates, the quality of the overall tourism product, the effectiveness of destination marketing and the quality and value for money of the services offered by tourism businesses.
- 13.9.51 Within that overall context, the following assessment nevertheless considers whether there might be any specific effects on local tourism assets. This assessment considers whether the Proposed Development could result in changes in the behaviour of tourists that might lead to effects on the tourism economy.

Tourism Recreation Assets

Visitor Attractions

- 13.9.52 Culzean Castle and Country Park, around 17 km from the Proposed Development, was once home to David Kennedy, 10th Earl of Cassillis. Visitors have the opportunity to see an extensive collection of pistols and military swords and the scenic oval staircase within the castle; to walk in the country

park; and to spend time in the play areas. No change in any of the features that make the castle popular with visitors is expected to arise as a result of the Proposed Development. For this reason, it is unlikely that visitors' behaviour will change. The effect of the Proposed Development on Culzean Castle and Country Park was assessed as **negligible**.

- 13.9.53 Crossraguel Abbey, Carrick Centre, Souter Johnnie's Cottage and the Scottish Industrial Railway Centre all lay between 10 and 12 km from the Proposed Development. About 14 km from the Proposed Development lays Souter Johnnie's Cottage, home to the shoemaker mentioned in Burns' Tam o'Shanter, which features displays of arts and craft. Around 12 km from the Proposed Development is Crossraguel Abbey with the ruins of a monk's church, pigeon tower and cloister. Carrick Centre in Maybole is around 11 km from the Proposed Development. It includes a play area and a café, and hosts exhibitions of local art. The Scottish Industrial Railway Centre, around 10 km from the Proposed Development, offers the possibility to be on a working steam locomotive, see a range of steam and diesel locomotives and a museum with pictures and other memorabilia.
- 13.9.54 The main reasons for which tourists visit these attractions relate to their historical and heritage value. These factors are not going to be affected by the presence of the Proposed Development in the area. As a result, its effect on these tourist attractions was assessed as **negligible**.
- 13.9.55 The Scottish Dark Sky Observatory is around 9 km from the Proposed Development. Located on a hilltop, two telescopes allow visitors to view the universe. While the Observatory was recently damaged by fire, it is assumed that it will be rebuilt and, for this reason, was included in the assessment. The LVIA considered any impacts arising from the Proposed Development's turbine lighting and found that the effects on the Dark Sky Park were not significant. The effects on its recreational value were assessed as **negligible**.
- 13.9.56 Similarly, Galloway Forest Park and its forests are less than 1km from the Proposed Development, though the Proposed Development is unlikely to affect any of the recreational activities carried out in the park. As a result, the effect of the Proposed Development on the Scottish Dark Sky Observatory and Galloway Forest Park were assessed as **negligible**.
- 13.9.57 Straiton Church is around 4 km from the Proposed Development. Alongside its spiritual value to visitors, it has a long history reaching back to its foundation in the 13th Century. None of these features are likely to be affected by the Proposed Development. For this reason, its effect has been assessed as **negligible**.

Recreational Trails

- 13.9.58 The baseline identified 11 recreational paths within 15 km of the Proposed Development.
- 13.9.59 Kildon Hill, Craiglea Trail, and Loch Doon Castle and Dinmurchie Trail in Barr are three recreational trails around between 9 and 10 km from the Proposed Development. Kildon Hill, to the north west, is a loop from Maybole, which includes an ascent to Kildon Hill. The Craiglea Trail and Loch Doon Castle is a 3.5 km trail to the south east of the Proposed Development with views on the lake. Dinmurchie Trail to the south west of the Proposed Development features views on Barr and the hills around it. Given these trails' relative distance from the Proposed Development, it is expected that visitors will be unlikely to change their behaviours. As a result, the effect on these walks was assessed as **negligible**.
- 13.9.60 Ness Glen, near Loch Doon is around 9 km to the east. Around 8 km to the west of the Proposed Development is Maxwellston Hill, Dailly, one of the harder walks in the area, a 3 km trail that goes through a gorge carved by the river Doon. The Devil's trail is a 7 km walk going through Changue Forest with views over the Carrick hills and Stinchar Valley. Barony Hill, to the west of the Proposed Development is a 11 km loop passing through Dailly. Considering their distance from the Proposed Development, it is unlikely that any of these recreational trails will be affected by it. As a result, its effect on them has been assessed as **negligible**.
- 13.9.61 Cornish Hill and Loch circuit, Stinchar bridge, Lady Hunter Blair's walk and Shalloch on Minnoch via the north ridge are all located around 4 km from the Proposed Development. Lady Hunter Blair's walk is a 3 km trail to the north of the Proposed Development with views on waterfalls. Shalloch on

Minnoch via the north ridge goes up to Shalloch on Minnoch, a hill in the range of the Awful Hand. Cornish Hill and Loch circuit, Stinchar bridge is a circular trail with views of Cornish Loch. The reasons for walkers to use these trails are likely to include spending time outdoors and their views. No particular change is expected as a result of the Proposed Development's distance and for this reason its effect has been assessed as **negligible**.

13.9.62 Monument and Bennan Hill, Straiton is an 8 km circuit located around 2 km north of the Proposed Development going over the hills overlooking Straiton. This path, which partly includes core paths SA47 and SA48, could feature views of the Proposed Development. While these may not deter walkers along this route, it is acknowledged that some may change their behaviour as a result of the Proposed Development. For this reason, its effect has been assessed as **minor**.

13.9.63 Core path SA47 runs through the north western edge of the site. Considering the predominantly localised usage of this path, the effect of the Proposed Development on this asset and the local tourism economy was assessed as **negligible**. The Proposed Development could result in an improvement to the path as the Applicant is considering the installation of information boards on the core path. Improvements in signage could increase the number of walkers using this and add value to an environmental asset in the area.

Core Paths

13.9.64 The assessment includes ten core paths: SA1, SA32, SA36, SA45, SA46, SA47, SA48, SA49, SA51 and SA56. These paths are between 4 and 15 km from the Proposed Development. Their likely users are local residents who use them to gain access to the countryside to walk or engage in physical activity. These users are considered less sensitive to change than other visitors, as those coming from outside the area have a wider array of options when choosing where to spend time outdoors. For this reason and given the distance of the paths from the Proposed Development, its effect on them has been assessed as **negligible**.

Accommodation Providers

13.9.65 The research on wind farms and tourism finds no evidence of adverse impacts on the tourism sector. Nevertheless, this section considers whether there are locations where tourism behaviour in relation to accommodation providers might change. Therefore, the proposition that tourism accommodation businesses offer, including the focus of their marketing, is relevant to assessing whether any behavioural changes might be expected.

13.9.66 The baseline has identified 38 accommodation providers that are located within 15 km of the Proposed Development.

13.9.67 Between 10 and 14 km from the Proposed Development, there are eight accommodation providers, six located in and around Maybole and two to its east. These properties market themselves based on the area's secluded nature, the recreational activities available and their location in and around Maybole. It is unlikely that there will be any change in visitor behaviour with respect to these accommodation providers, since the Proposed Development will not affect their offering and their close location to the area's recreational and visitor attractions. For these reasons, its effect on them has been assessed as **negligible**.

13.9.68 The baseline identified three accommodation providers in Waterside, including two self-catering properties and a provider of glamping pods. These are 10-11 km from the Proposed Development and market themselves based on their location in the Doon Valley and the activities available in the area. These features are unlikely to change as a result of the Proposed Development and for this reason its effect was assessed as **negligible**.

13.9.69 At around 9 km from the Proposed Development to the west of Loch Doon, there are two accommodation providers: glamping pods and a caravan and camping park. These properties market themselves based on their proximity to Galloway Forest Park and the range of activities the area offers, including mountain biking, horse riding and walking. This offer is unlikely to change as a result of the Proposed Development and its effect on these providers is assessed as **negligible**.

13.9.70 Three accommodation providers were identified in and around Kirkmichael, between 7 and 9 km

from the Proposed Development. These include Cloncaird Castle with its cottage offering, a B&B and a self-catering property. Given these properties' distance from the Proposed Development, it is unlikely that their current offering will be affected. For this reason, the effect of the Proposed Development on these accommodation providers was assessed as **negligible**.

- 13.9.71 There are seven providers located within the valley of the Water of Girvan, going from Crosshill to the north, to Old Dailly to the south west. They are all between 6 and 12 km distant from the Proposed Development. These providers include four self-catering properties, two B&Bs and a caravan and camping park. In Barr there is an additional accommodation provider around 10 km south west of the Proposed Development. The marketing of these properties is mainly based on the area's offering, including closeness to Culzean Castle and Burns Cottage, availability of a range of recreational activities and the providers' location in the Ayrshire countryside. Given these properties' distance from the Proposed Development and their offer being linked to the recreational activities available in the area, the effect on them was assessed as **negligible**.
- 13.9.72 A total of 12 accommodation providers were identified in and around Straiton and located between 4 and 5 km from the Proposed Development. Self-catering providers and cottages account for ten of these, the remaining two being Blairquhan Castle and a bed and breakfast. With a history tracing back to the 14th century, Blairquhan Castle is now an exclusive venue for weddings and corporate events. A series of accommodation providers are linked to the Castle, including MacKenzie Cottage, the Blairquhan cottages and McIntyre Cottage. The assessment in Chapter 11 Cultural Heritage and Chapter 6 Landscape and Visual, did not find any significant effects for Blairquhan Estate. In addition, the Proposed Development is unlikely to alter its ability to attract visitors. The remaining providers tend to market themselves based on the recreational activities available in the area, including golfing, fishing, cycling, walking and stargazing; or based on the area's secluded nature. It is unlikely that the presence of the Proposed Development will change these characteristics of the accommodation providers considered. For this reason, its effect on them was assessed as **negligible**.
- 13.9.73 Two accommodation providers are located south of Craig: Balbeg Country Holidays and Glenlinn Cottage. Balbeg Country Holidays is less than 2 km from the Proposed Development. It markets itself as being surrounded by unspoilt countryside within an area of outstanding natural beauty. It is also close to recreational and visitor attractions across Ayrshire. Figure 6.17 in the LVIA shows that up to nine turbines may be visible from the property. Whereas the range of activities available to visitors will not change, the Estate's secluded nature may be affected as a result of its proximity to the Proposed Development. For this reason, the effect of the Proposed Development on this accommodation provider was assessed as **minor**. Glenlinn Cottage is located within the proposed turbine development area. However, this provider is financially involved in the Proposed Development.
- 13.9.74 It is acknowledged that some accommodation providers in the area may benefit from the Proposed Development during its construction and development, when workers will need to be lodged in the area.

Recreational Tourism

- 13.9.75 South Ayrshire is renowned for its recreational tourism, mainly golfing. The closest of its main golf courses to the Proposed Development is Trump Turnberry, around 17 km distant. The quality and availability of recreational activities in South Ayrshire is unlikely to change as a result of the Proposed Development. For this reason, no changes in recreational visitors' behaviour are anticipated and its effect was assessed as **negligible**.
- 13.9.76 The two recreational assets closest to the Proposed Development are Adventure Doon in East Ayrshire, around 10 km distant, and Merrick Circle part 2, a series of mountain biking trails in Galloway Forest. These two recreational assets attract visitors for the activities they offer. These are not going to change or be diminished in their quality by the presence of the Proposed Development. As a result, its effect on these assets was assessed as **negligible**.

Decommissioning

- 13.9.77 Very few onshore wind projects to date have been fully decommissioned in the UK and, as a result,

there is minimal data regarding the effects on tourism assets associated with this phase. However, it is likely that the level of activity required will be smaller than that required during the construction of an onshore wind farm.

- 13.9.78 For this reason, it is expected that no significant effects on any of the tourism assets considered will result from the future decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

13.10 Additional Mitigation and Enhancement

Maximise Local Economic Benefits

- 13.10.1 It is recognised that there is a role for the Applicant to play in ensuring that local businesses can benefit from the opportunities associated with the Proposed Development.
- 13.10.2 Maximising the extent to which local suppliers benefit from the spending associated with an onshore wind farm has several potential advantages. First, sourcing materials and services locally may reduce costs, as it avoids expenditure associated with transport or with sourcing skills from further afield. Having local experience readily available is also convenient from the developer's perspective, in case it requires urgent access to this expertise. A third benefit is that larger local content strengthens the economic case at a local level for a project.
- 13.10.3 To support developers in maximising the local economic content that could be realised through their projects, in 2014 RenewableUK published the "Local Supply Chain in Onshore Wind, Good Practice Guide" (RenewableUK, 2014). The report made the following suggestions:
- maximise your local presence and begin early: start identifying potential suppliers early by being active and visible locally;
 - partnerships work: look for partnerships with business groups and local authorities;
 - the developer's role is that of an enabler: use information on potential suppliers to ensure primary contractors maximise local opportunities;
 - provide the right information, at the right time: consider adopting an iterative process when communicating with businesses and leave them time to learn and adjust;
 - communicate technical requirements early: this will give the opportunity for upskilling or the emergence of consortia to occur; and
 - if you can, demonstrate local content in planning: where possible include a demonstrable commitment to local content in planning and carry out ex-post auditing.

Supply Chain and Skills Initiatives

- 13.10.4 The Applicant has already undertaken initiatives and seeks to have a proactive approach towards its supply chain.
- 13.10.5 For instance, the Applicant has made contact with the local chambers of commerce, something which will help when advertising contract opportunities associated with the Proposed Development. The Applicant is a member of the Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce and is keen to work with them to promote the opportunities associated with the Proposed Development.
- 13.10.6 The Applicant also seeks to engage in activities developing local skills and interest in the onshore wind industry. To this aim, it has already been involved with Dumfries and Galloway College. However, as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, there have been limits on the kind of engagements allowed. When possible, the Applicant would welcome having people from the College and other local educational establishments visit the Proposed Development's site.

13.11 Residual Effects

Construction

- 13.11.1 Construction is likely to result in a temporary **negligible** (beneficial) effect on the economy of South Ayrshire and on that of Scotland.

Operation

- 13.11.2 The effect of the annual spending on the operations and maintenance for the Proposed Development is expected to be **negligible** (beneficial) for the economies of South Ayrshire and Scotland. The effect on tourism assets is expected to be **negligible**, apart from **minor** effects on Balbeg Country Holidays and on the trail Monument and Bennan Hill, Straiton.

Decommissioning

- 13.11.3 The decommissioning of the Proposed Development is likely to result in a temporary **negligible** (beneficial) effect on the economies of South Ayrshire and Scotland.

13.12 Cumulative Assessment

- 13.12.1 This section lists the operational wind farms, those under construction, consented and in application within 20 km from the Proposed Development. It then goes on considering any cumulative impacts linked to socio-economics and tourism.

- 13.12.2 In accordance with the assessment undertaken in the LVIA Chapter (Chapter 6), those proposed wind farms that are at the scoping stage, with the exception of the proposed Carrick Wind Farm, adjoining the southern boundary of the Proposed Development, are excluded because there is insufficient information of the size and scale of the development proposed and uncertainty over whether they will be progressed to a formal application.

- 13.12.3 The following onshore wind developments have been considered as part of the cumulative assessment:

- Operational Wind Farms: Assel Valley, Dersalloch, Dowhill Farm, Hadyard Hill, Leffinwyne Farm, Maclachrieston Farm, Mark Hill, North Threave, Penwhapple and Tralorg;
- Under Construction: South Kyle and Torrs Hill;
- Consented: Benbrack Variation, Chapleton Farm, Enoch Hill, Kirk Hill, Knockshinnoch, Over Hill, Polquhairn and Windy Standard III;
- Application: Clauchrie, Craiginmoddie and North Kyle; and
- Scoping: Carrick.

Supply Chain

- 13.12.4 The presence of multiple sites at different stages of their development represents a positive economic opportunity for the local supply chain. Given the existing operational developments and developments that have already received approval in its proximity, the Proposed Development has the potential to generate beneficial cumulative impacts. This will be the case if it were to further encourage the development of a local renewable energy supply chain. The presence of an existing supply chain in the local area and a pipeline of projects may also lead to new businesses engaging with the sector.

- 13.12.5 The development of a strong local supply chain would help to increase the economic benefits of the Proposed Development and similar projects in the local area, which could help to increase the magnitude of the long-term beneficial economic effects considered in this Chapter.

Tourism

- 13.12.6 An onshore wind farm could have a cumulative adverse effect on the tourism economy, if the inclusion of a new development ended up negatively affecting tourist behaviour and expenditure. In particular, visitors could react to visual or traffic impacts.
- 13.12.7 The cumulative visual impact of the Proposed Development and the cumulative traffic and transport impact of the Proposed Development are considered in the Chapters on visual impacts (Chapter 6) and traffic and transport (Chapter 12). It is important to note that even if these Chapters do identify significant effects they would not necessarily result in impacts on the tourism and recreation economy.
- 13.12.8 It is expected that cumulative effects on tourism as a result of the Proposed Development will not be significant. This is what is suggested by the available evidence on the relationship between the development of onshore wind farms and the tourism economy in Scotland. While its landscapes have accommodated an increasing number of wind farm developments, tourism activity has also increased. Similarly, there is wide support towards onshore wind developments and, if anything, support has increased over time, which makes it unlikely that aversion to this type of developments will affect the decision of most visitors.

13.13 Summary

- 13.13.1 Investment in renewable energy is central to regional and national economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. In the short term, the construction of renewable energy projects is labour intensive, supporting employment during the recovery. At the same time, investment in renewable energy leaves lasting benefits, as it contributes towards decarbonising the Scottish economy and achieving net-zero targets.
- 13.13.2 The populations of the local area and of South Ayrshire are relatively older than that of Scotland as a whole. This trend is likely to reinforce in the future, when the population of South Ayrshire is expected to decline, at a time when Scotland's will increase. Labour market outcomes are relatively worse in South Ayrshire compared to the Scottish average, with manufacturing and hospitality relatively more important in South Ayrshire than across Scotland. This is in line with the relative importance played by the tourism sector, mainly through the area's recreational tourism offerings.
- 13.13.3 By supporting high paying, high skilled jobs, the Proposed Development could contribute to the retention of young people in the local area, alleviating the demographic pressures from an ageing population and depopulation. Investment in onshore wind energy could also support the diversification of the local business base.
- 13.13.4 It was estimated that the Proposed Development during its construction and development could generate up to:
- £4.4 million Gross Value Added (GVA) and support 62 years of employment in South Ayrshire; and
 - £16.4 million GVA and 225 years of employment across Scotland.
- 13.13.5 The effect of the construction of the Proposed Development on the economy of South Ayrshire and Scotland was assessed as **negligible** (beneficial).
- 13.13.6 During its operations, it was estimated that the Proposed Development could generate each year:
- £0.4 million GVA and support five jobs in South Ayrshire; and
 - £0.6 million GVA and eight jobs across Scotland.
- 13.13.7 The effect of spending on operations and maintenance was assessed as **negligible** (beneficial) both with respect to the South Ayrshire and Scottish economies.
- 13.13.8 The Applicant aims to maximise local economic benefits by ensuring that local suppliers are aware of possibilities associated with contracts for the Proposed Development. To this end, it has engaged

with the local chambers of commerce. Similarly, the Applicant is keen to work with Dumfries and Galloway College to further skills and interest in the onshore wind sector.

- 13.13.9 The Proposed Development is also expected to deliver payments of almost £300,000 per annum in community benefits. To support local communities in informing their investment priorities, the Applicant has commissioned a feasibility study to consider how broadband connection close to the Proposed Development could be improved. It was estimated that the community benefit fund could support up to five jobs each year. The effect of the economic impacts associated with the spending of community benefit funding was assessed as **negligible** (beneficial).
- 13.13.10 The Applicant is also open to considering shared ownership for the Proposed Development, if local communities are interested. The profits from such a scheme could then be reinvested locally, leading to the generation of additional benefits.
- 13.13.11 The Proposed Development will also make annual contributions to public finances through the payment of non-domestic rates worth £0.4 million. The effect of these payments on public revenue was assessed as **negligible** (beneficial).
- 13.13.12 The assessment also considered the effects of the Proposed Development on tourism and recreation. A literature review of the evidence on the relationship between onshore wind developments and the tourism economy found no relationship between the two.
- 13.13.13 To consider more localised impacts, the analysis focussed on those tourism assets located within 15 km of the Proposed Development. It found that there were no significant effects from the perspective of EIA legislation. While no significant negative impacts were found, there may be positive benefits, as the Applicant is considering improving core path signage through information boards, which may lead to the valorisation of these assets.

Table 13.21 – Summary of Effects

Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measure	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial/ Adverse		Significance	Beneficial/ Adverse
Construction					
£4.4 million GVA and 62 years of employment in South Ayrshire during the construction and development phase.	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
£16.4 million GVA and 225 years of employment across Scotland during the construction and development phase.	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
Operation					
£0.4 million GVA and five jobs in South Ayrshire during the operations and maintenance phase.	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
£0.6 million GVA and eight jobs in Scotland during the operations and maintenance phase.	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
Economic benefits from community benefit funding.	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
Annual payment of an estimated £0.4 million in non-domestic rates.	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
Effect on tourism assets.	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
Effect on Balbeg Country Holidays.	Minor	Adverse	N/A	Minor	Adverse
Effect on other accommodation providers.	Negligible	N/A	N/A	Negligible	N/A

Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measure	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial/ Adverse		Significance	Beneficial/ Adverse
Effect on recreational trail Monument and Bennan Hill, Straiton.	Minor	N/A	N/A	Minor	N/A
Effect on core path and other recreational trails.	Negligible	N/A	N/A	Negligible	N/A
Decommissioning					
GVA and employment supported in South Ayrshire.	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
GVA and employment supported in Scotland.	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial

Table 13.22 – Summary of Cumulative Effects

Receptor	Effect	Cumulative Developments	Significance of Cumulative Effect	
			Significance	Beneficial/ Adverse
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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