

Loch Liath Wind Farm

During the May/June 2021 consultation, some questions and comments were frequently raised. Below is our response to these.

(July 2021)

There are too many wind farms in this area

The Highland Council's [Spatial Framework for Onshore Wind Energy](#) (2020) indicates that the location of the proposed Loch Liath Wind Farm may be appropriate, with some scope to accommodate large scale turbines. As part of our work towards the planning application for the project, we have undertaken substantial analysis into the landscape and visual considerations in the vicinity of the development. We continue to develop the project with the aim of finding the right balance between maximising the electricity output and carefully siting and designing the proposal to relate to the existing landscape, including other wind developments.

Our analysis shows that less than 10% of land in Scotland is suitable for onshore wind farms. To find out what makes a site suitable for onshore wind, a recent webinar hosted by Future Net Zero featured our Head of Development who goes through the steps in new site searching. Please visit [this link](#) to view.

Wind turbines should be offshore

We need a mix of all types of renewable energy generation. New-build onshore wind is presently the most cost-effective way to generate new electricity, out of all forms of electricity.

I don't like the look of onshore wind farms

We appreciate not all people like the look of wind turbines, but they are very much part of the answer to increasing our carbon-free electricity generation and decreasing the need for fossil fuels. The UK Government has surveyed attitudes towards different types of electricity generation since 2012 and the results consistently show around 75% support for onshore wind ([BEIS Attitudes Tracker](#)).

If there is concern about a specific view, please let us know and we'll try to provide suitable illustrations at our next consultation event later this year.

Wind turbines are bad for the environment [construction, peat disturbance, use more carbon than they save]

All wind farm applications are required to report their "carbon payback period" in the Environmental Impact Assessment. This uses a Scottish Government calculator which includes all emissions from the manufacture of the turbines, including any peat disturbance, as well as construction and decommissioning. This is usually in the range of 1-2 years, and part of the work we do during the development phase is to get that number as low as possible.

We commission experienced technical consultants to undertake detailed environmental surveys of the peatland habitat, ecology and ornithology, amongst many others. This information is used to inform the proposed layout of the project and we work closely with these consultants to minimise impacts. We will commit to implementing management plans prior to, and throughout, the construction phase to minimise any damage or disturbance. In addition, a detailed habitat management plan will be implemented for the lifetime of the project which will aim to bring long term benefits to local wildlife. Statkraft is committed to improving habitat across our projects. We were finalists in two prestigious industry awards for our efforts in Moray where we committed to maximising habitat improvements of an area of bog habitat, which was devastated by a wild fire, to deliver a biodiversity gain.

What is the transport route for the turbines? Are the roads suitable for this construction and ongoing access?

We are confident a suitable access route can be proposed and this is part of our detailed planning work. A Traffic Management Plan will be agreed with the Highland Council prior to construction commencing.

What is the benefit to locals?

There are several ways our projects can bring local benefits. We are always open to discussing how this can be tailored to each area. The construction phase provides a significant opportunity for local businesses to get involved - over 80 businesses completed our local suppliers register for the construction of our Keith Greener Grid project.

The operation of a wind farm brings significant local investment. Statkraft commit to delivering a community benefit fund with all new wind farms at £5,000 per MW installed per year, as per Scottish Government best practice guidance. The exact total amount will depend on the number and type of turbines installed, but as a guide, this is around £25,000 per turbine per year, over the operating period of the wind farm.

For more FAQs go to www.lochliath.co.uk