

## Appin Wind Farm

### Public Consultation Feedback Report

#### March 2023

### About Appin Wind Farm

Appin Wind Farm is a proposal for up to 17 turbines, with 15 up to a maximum of 230m to turbine blade tip height and 2 up to a maximum of 200m to turbine blade tip height. Since it was introduced in March 2022, it has reduced in scale from 25 turbines all at a blade tip height of up to 230m. The wind farm is located approximately 12.5km west of Thornhill, 6.5km north west of Tynron and 6km north west of Moniaive. The table below highlights some key information about the proposal.

	No. of Turbines	Max Blade Tip Heights	Expected Installed Capacity (MW)	Estimated Generation (homes equivalent)	Community Fund (per year)
<b>Appin Wind Farm</b>	Up to <b>17</b>	Up to <b>230m</b> <sup>(1)</sup>	Over <b>50 MW</b> <small>(section 36 consent application)</small>	Just over <b>47,000</b> <small>Homes per year <sup>(2)</sup></small>	Minimum <b>£250,000</b> <small>per year <sup>(3)</sup></small>

- (1) Current layout is based on 15 turbines up to 230m to blade tip height and 2 turbines up to 200m to blade tip height.
- (2) Based on 50 MW Installed Capacity, wind resource assessment and average Scottish domestic consumption of 3,520kWh pa (BEIS Dec. 2021). Candidate turbine still tbc'd.
- (3) Community Benefit Fund based on 50MW x £5k per MW of installed capacity. If consented, value of fund determined by actual installed capacity. Candidate turbine still tbc'd.

A programme of community engagement and online consultation for the proposal began in March 2022 and is ongoing.

### Initial Consultation Period: Introducing the project

Community engagement and feedback is very important to us as we develop and shape Appin Wind Farm. In March 2022, when the project was first introduced into the public domain with a request for a Scoping Opinion from the Scottish Government, we launched a dedicated project website, providing the opportunity for interested parties to view and, importantly, comment on the proposal.

At the same time, we wrote to the host and neighbouring Community Councils\* and local political representatives to raise awareness of the development and offer an opportunity to meet to provide feedback on the consultation approach and the proposal. Members of the project team presented to Tynron Community Council at a face to face meeting on 9 June 22.

With Covid-19 restrictions eased, we are pleased to be able to meet the local community at in-person events for the Appin proposal.

### Main Consultation Period

This overview presents the findings of the feedback received during the first round of consultation. This was held between 29 August and 19 September 2022 and included two in-person events in Glencairn and Tynron, an online consultation website and non-digital sources of feedback such as by phone and postal feedback forms. Feedback

\*Community Councils of: Tynron, Glencairn, Carsphairn, Penpont and Keir Community Councils.

forms were accepted until 17 October 2022, however responses received since this date continue to be evaluated and responded to, if required, and will help to shape and inform the proposal through the development and design stages.

The consultation was publicised in various ways to ensure as many local residents as possible were made aware of the events, including:

- Advertisements in the Dumfries and Galloway Standard and Galloway News at the start of the consultation period. The notice provided the dates and venues for the consultations and information on the online and in-person events.
- Mailing to all households and businesses (944 in total) surrounding the site with an invitation to the in-person exhibitions and information about the online consultation. Feedback cards and freepost envelopes were included within the mailing for those who preferred to write back rather than attend the exhibitions or respond via the online form.
- Writing to host and neighbouring Community Councils and local ward members at the start of the consultation, with copies of adverts should they wish to highlight the events on social media. Posters of the advert were provided to Carsphairn Community Council on their request; and
- On the Appin Wind Farm project website, outlining details of the planned consultation events;

#### *In-Person Exhibitions 7 September – 8 September 2022*

The in-person Physical Exhibitions were held:

- Wednesday, 7 September 2022 – Glencairn Memorial Institute, Moniaive. 2pm -7pm
- Thursday, 8 September 2022 – Tynron Parish Hall, Tynron. 2pm – 7pm

On display at each exhibition were a number of information boards covering:

- Information about the developer;
- An overview of the proposed development, including proposed layout;
- Details of key viewpoints (still to be agreed with Dumfries and Galloway Council, East Ayrshire Council and NatureScot);
- A zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) of the proposed development; and
- Community benefit, construction/supplier register and shared ownership.

Printed copies of the online exhibition brochure were available for members of the public to take away. Finally, feedback forms were available at the event for members of the public to fill out or take away along with a freepost envelope.

The exhibitions had a total of 53 visitors over the two days. 25 visitors attended at Moniaive, and 28 visitors attended at Tynron. Members from the host and neighbouring Community Councils attended the exhibition events.

The attendees were very engaged in the project and asked the team a number of questions and queries which reflected the questions and queries submitted on the feedback forms. A summary of the responses to the key questions can be found attached to this report.

#### *Online Exhibition 29 August – 19 September 2022*

The virtual exhibition, accessed via a link from the main project website, sought to replicate the type of information and materials at the physical exhibitions. This included:

- Exhibition Brochure online – to provide the same detailed information available at the exhibition events about the proposal and as a substitute for information that was presented on boards at a village hall exhibition;

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- Extensive FAQ section to inform the residents and other interested parties about the project;
- One live Q&A session with the project team was planned for 16 September between 12 noon and 2pm which was cancelled due to the period of National Mourning due to the death of Her Majesty the Queen. Notice of cancellation was posted on the Exhibition website and alternative ways to get in touch with the team to ask queries or contact us were provided; telephone number, email address and free post address.
- A 'ring back' service to allow members of the public to have a dedicated chat with our team at a date/time suitable to them; and
- An opportunity to leave comments through online feedback forms.

We will hold a second exhibition before we submit a Section 36 application for the proposed Appin Wind Farm to the Scottish Government in 2023.

## Summary of Consultation Responses

Of the 944 households and businesses surrounding the site contacted with the invitation and freepost feedback form, we received 64 (6.8%) back. In addition, we also received 64 website visits to the virtual exhibition website.

From the completed offline forms, 79% of those who responded to the question agreed that the country needs to generate more electricity from renewable sources, 15% didn't agree and the remaining 6% were unsure or did not answer. Just under half, 47% of those who responded to the question agreed that onshore wind power is a good way to help achieve this aim, 40% didn't agree and 13% were unsure.

Of those who responded to the question: 'Do you think this site is an acceptable location for a wind farm?', 52% don't think so, 32% believe that it is an acceptable location and of the remaining respondents 16% are unsure.

In terms of local benefits, we are aware that BT are rolling out improved broadband for the area through the R100 programme. We are in the process of completing a broadband feasibility study which highlights what measures could potentially be explored by the community for properties in the area that may not be covered by the R100 programme. We will share our feasibility report once this is complete.

Half (50%) of those who responded to the shared ownership question responded that they were interested or unsure about shared ownership. We suggest hosting an information session with Local Energy Scotland to provide the community with more information on shared ownership more generally during the development stage.

Over 60% of respondents responded positively to the question 'Would you like updates?' and we look forward to keeping them up to date at key project milestones.

## Key Topics from Consultation

During the consultation period, some questions and comments were frequently raised. When responding to feedback these questions and our responses to those were included. This is appended to this report and included on the project website. We have written back to all those who provided feedback and gave us permission to correspond with them. The majority would have received their correspondence in November 2022, with the remaining queries completed in early 2023.

We would welcome discussions with the community on the various topics raised, all of which, will be considered as the design and layout for the wind farm develops.

*For more FAQs go to [www.appinwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.appinwindfarm.co.uk)*

## **Appin Wind Farm**

*During the August - October 2022 consultation, some questions and comments were frequently raised. Below is our response to these. (November 2022)*

### ***There are too many turbines/wind farms in this area/the turbines are too tall?***

Since the project was introduced (March 2022) the proposed number of the turbines has reduced; from 25 turbines to 17 turbines, and the height of two turbines reduced from 230 m to tip height to 200 m to tip height. These changes were made following further studies and taking into account initial feedback.

The 17 turbines layout was presented during this exhibition period. Further feedback was received regarding the number of turbines in the area and as we continue to listen to feedback and complete further studies we expect the proposal submitted to planning will have fewer turbines. Our aim is to design a proposal which reflects the topography, fits with surrounding wind farm projects (consented or in planning), seeks to minimise visual impact while maximising the output of zero carbon energy.

We will hold a second exhibition, early in 2023, where viewpoints and wirelines will be produced for the revised layout. Attendees at the exhibition will also have the opportunity to view a 3D model of the site providing the local community the opportunity to understand what the proposed development may look like should it be consented and constructed.

The Scottish Government has a target to achieve net zero emissions by 2045. Onshore wind is expected to play a role in achieving this aim. Our analysis shows that the area suitable for onshore wind development in Scotland is limited due to a range of factors. To find out more about what makes a site suitable for onshore wind, you are invited to watch this webinar 'Location, Location – the challenges to siting onshore wind farms in Scotland' where our Head of Development explores the challenges faced in finding the best sites to maximise Scotland's excellent natural wind resources. Please visit [this link](#) to view.

### ***Wind turbines should be offshore or other renewable technologies such as hydro or solar should be considered.***

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

### ***Wind farms are bad for the environment i.e. wildlife***

We have consulted with NatureScot and other statutory stakeholders on the scope of the surveys and we have commissioned experienced technical consultants to undertake detailed environmental surveys of the habitat, ecology and ornithology, amongst others. This information is used to inform the proposed layout of the project and we work closely with these consultants to minimise impacts as we work towards finalising our design, which will be submitted as part of our Section 36 application.

Should the project be consented, we will implement construction and environmental 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. The site for the wind farm is predominantly plantation forestry with some grassland and limited bog habitat around the periphery, it is our aim that the Habitat Management Plan will bring long term benefits to local wildlife and flora.

### ***Queries about Community Benefit, Shared Ownership and the Broadband Feasibility Study***

There are several ways our project can bring benefits to the local area, should it be consented. Statkraft follows Scottish Government best practice guidance for community benefit funds. This means that all new wind farms will benefit from a Community Benefit Fund of £5,000 per MW of installed capacity per year and in the first instance engagement is undertaken with the host and surrounding Community Councils\* when discussions regarding the fund commence. Other than confirming the value of the fund available, £5,000 per MW of installed capacity, no other decisions have been made regarding the community benefit fund. It is important to note that the provision, or otherwise, of a community benefit fund is not material to a wind farm planning decision.

Separate to the Community Benefit Fund, we are happy to explore the opportunity of shared ownership with the community for the proposed development.

Lastly, we are finalising the broadband feasibility study which has been carried out for the local area. We commission a feasibility study for all our projects to explore what the potential may be for improving local infrastructure as the wind farm is connected. For the avoidance of doubt the broadband connection that may be required to be installed and operated for the wind farm will be at the cost of the developer. However, where the study indicates that there is the opportunity to improve internet connection for the local community, and where R100 may not provide coverage, the local community could decide to explore this element further for its residents.

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