



MachairWind Offshore Windfarm

Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Appendix 10

Pre-Application Consultation Report

Appendix 10 Full Analysis of Statutory Consultation Feedback



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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

Term	Definition
ADLS	Aircraft Detection Lighting Systems
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
GBS	Gravity Base Structures
MCA	Maritime Coastguard Agency
NLB	Northern Lighthouse Board
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OSP	Offshore Substation Platforms
PAC	Pre-Application Consultation
Q&A	Question and Answer
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
RYA	Royal Yachting Association
SLVIA	Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
SPR	ScottishPower Renewables
WDA	Windfarm Development Area
WTG	Wind Turbine Generator



1 FULL ANALYSIS OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. This appendix provides the full analysis of Statutory Consultation feedback received during the Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) process. Its purpose is to present, in a clear and transparent manner, how comments from stakeholders, statutory consultees, and members of the public have been reviewed, considered, and integrated into the ongoing development of the Project and the Applicant's decision-making process. The responses set out in this appendix demonstrate the Applicant's commitment to meaningful engagement and to ensuring that feedback plays an active role in shaping the proposals.
2. The information included here goes beyond the high-level themes summarised in the main PAC Report. This appendix sets out all feedback in full, together with detailed explanations of how the Project team has addressed the points raised. This includes project design refinement, updates to technical assessments, clarification of technical matters, and identification of areas requiring further work. By providing the complete underlying analysis, this appendix demonstrates how the key themes presented in the main report were drawn from the full dataset of consultation responses, supporting the overall transparency and accountability of the Statutory Consultation process.
3. The feedback collected through the Statutory Consultation process was analysed using a structured, multi-stage approach designed to ensure that all responses were accurately interpreted, consistently categorised, and fully reflected in the reporting. All comments were systematically reviewed, and initial patterns were identified through sentiment-based analysis, allowing the Project team to understand consultees' perceptions and to ensure that isolated or minority views were not overlooked. Open-text responses received particular attention, with detailed qualitative assessment used to identify recurring sentiments, key issues raised, and areas requiring clarification or further technical work. This analysis was complemented by a quality assurance process overseen by the Stakeholder Engagement Manager, ensuring methodological consistency across consultation rounds. Quantitative data from closed survey questions was assessed alongside qualitative insights, with "other" responses grouped thematically to provide a comprehensive understanding of the full range of stakeholder views. Together, this blended analytical approach enabled the development of clear, accessible outputs and ensured that the consultation findings presented in the PAC Report and appendices were robust, transparent, and reflective of all feedback received.

1.1 STATUTORY CONSULTATION ROUND ONE

1.1.1 Feedback Form Analysis

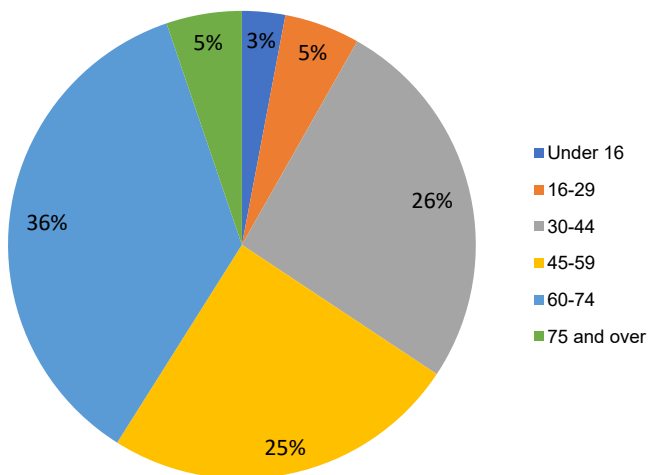
4. Statutory Consultation Round One took place between 26 May and 06 July 2025, providing communities across Islay, Jura, Colonsay, Ross of Mull and Iona with an early opportunity to comment on the Project. Over the six-week period, the Applicant held a six in-person events, two webinars and a virtual consultation room, resulting in 154 attendees across the events and 143 completed feedback forms. This section provides the full analysis of that feedback.
5. To support a consistent and structured analysis of public feedback, the Statutory Consultation feedback form was organised into themed sections covering key aspects of the Project. These sections included questions on renewable energy and climate change, the Windfarm Development Area (WDA), benefits and opportunities, and views on the consultation process itself, followed by an 'About You' section to help understand the profile of respondents. The subsections that follow present the results in the same order as the questionnaire, making clear how feedback was gathered and how respondents engaged with each topic area, with the exception of the optional 'About you' section which has been presented first to provide context behind where the responses have come from.



1.1.1.1 About you

6. The 'About You' questions helped the project team gain insight into the characteristics and diversity of respondents, as well as assess the effectiveness of various communication approaches used to promote it.
7. The following questions were included in this section:
 - Question 10) Please select where you live?
 - Question 11) What age bracket are you?
 - Question 12) Are you responding as...?
8. Responses indicated that the majority of respondents were local residents of Colonsay and Ross of Mull, with the most frequently reported age group being 60-74 years.
9. Respondents could also identify their connection to the area in Q12, with multiple selections permitted. The most commonly selected roles were local resident (76.2%), local business owner (31.5%), landowner (18.2%), and crofter (17.5%). Other roles selected included tourist (7%), member of the fishing community (7%), Community Council (3.5%), energy sector representative (1.4%), elected representative (0.7%), and "other" (10.5%).

Age Distribution of Respondents



Geographical Distribution of Respondents

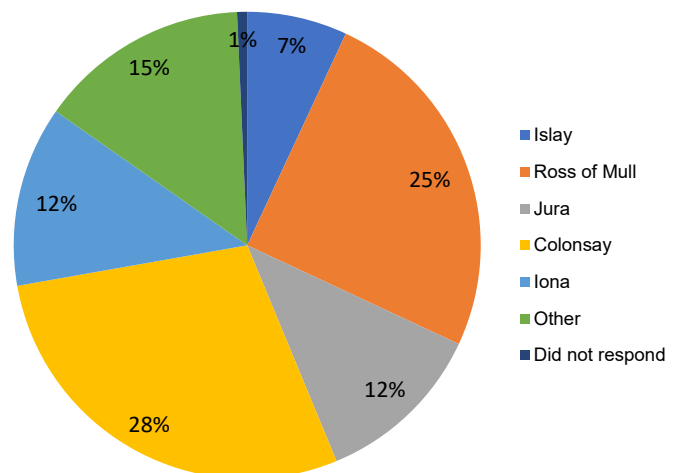


Plate 1.1 Statutory Consultation Round One - Question 10/11 Age and Geographical Demographics



Demographics - Are you responding as?

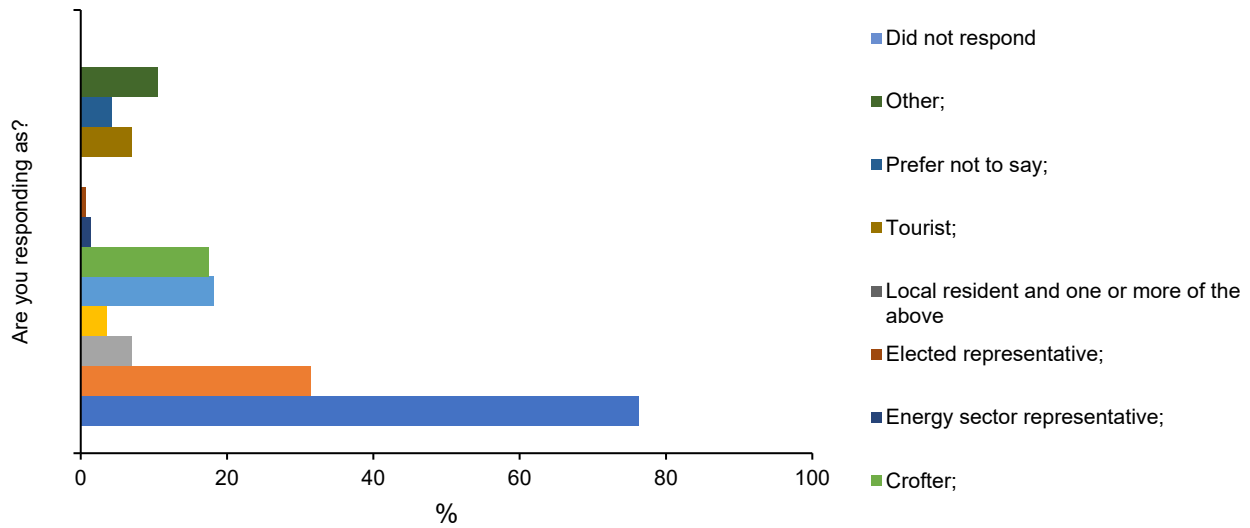


Plate 1.2 Statutory Consultation Round One - Question 12 Demographics

1.1.1.2 Renewable Energy

1.1.1.2.1 Question 1) Context about the importance of addressing climate change

10. Respondents were asked which statement they most agreed with:

- Climate change is the most important issue we face that must be addressed (50%);
- Climate change is important but there are other more important issues to be addressed (44%);
- Climate change is not an important issue (2%); and
- No opinion (4%).

In general, how do you feel about climate change?

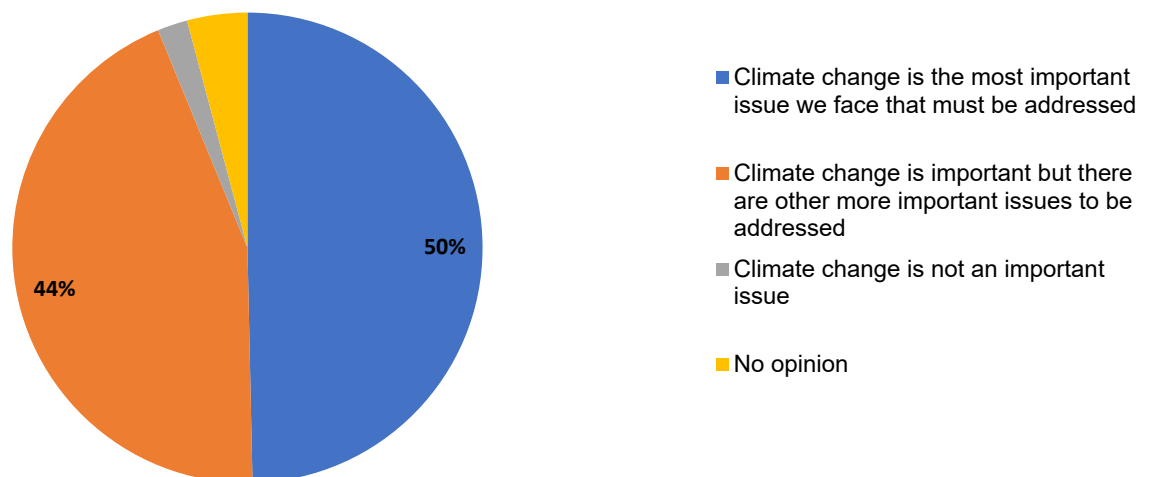


Plate 1.3 Statutory Consultation Round One - Question 1 In general, how do you feel about climate change?



- 1.1.1.2.2 Question 2) The role of offshore windfarms in the context of addressing climate change, economic benefits and the UK's energy security and affordability.
11. 42% of respondents agreed (agreed or strongly agreed) that offshore wind will play a crucial role in addressing the worst impacts relating to climate change, while 32% disagreed (disagreed or strongly disagreed) and 24% neither agreed nor disagreed.
 12. 46% of respondents agreed (agreed or strongly agreed) that offshore wind can bring a range of economic benefits to Scotland and the UK, while 26% disagreed (disagreed or strongly disagreed) and 27% neither agreed nor disagreed.
 13. 45% of respondents agreed (agreed or strongly agreed) that offshore wind has a significant role to play in the future Scotland's and the UK's energy security and affordability while 28% disagreed (disagreed or strongly disagreed) and 25% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The role of offshore windfarms in the context of addressing climate change, economic benefits and the UK's energy security and affordability

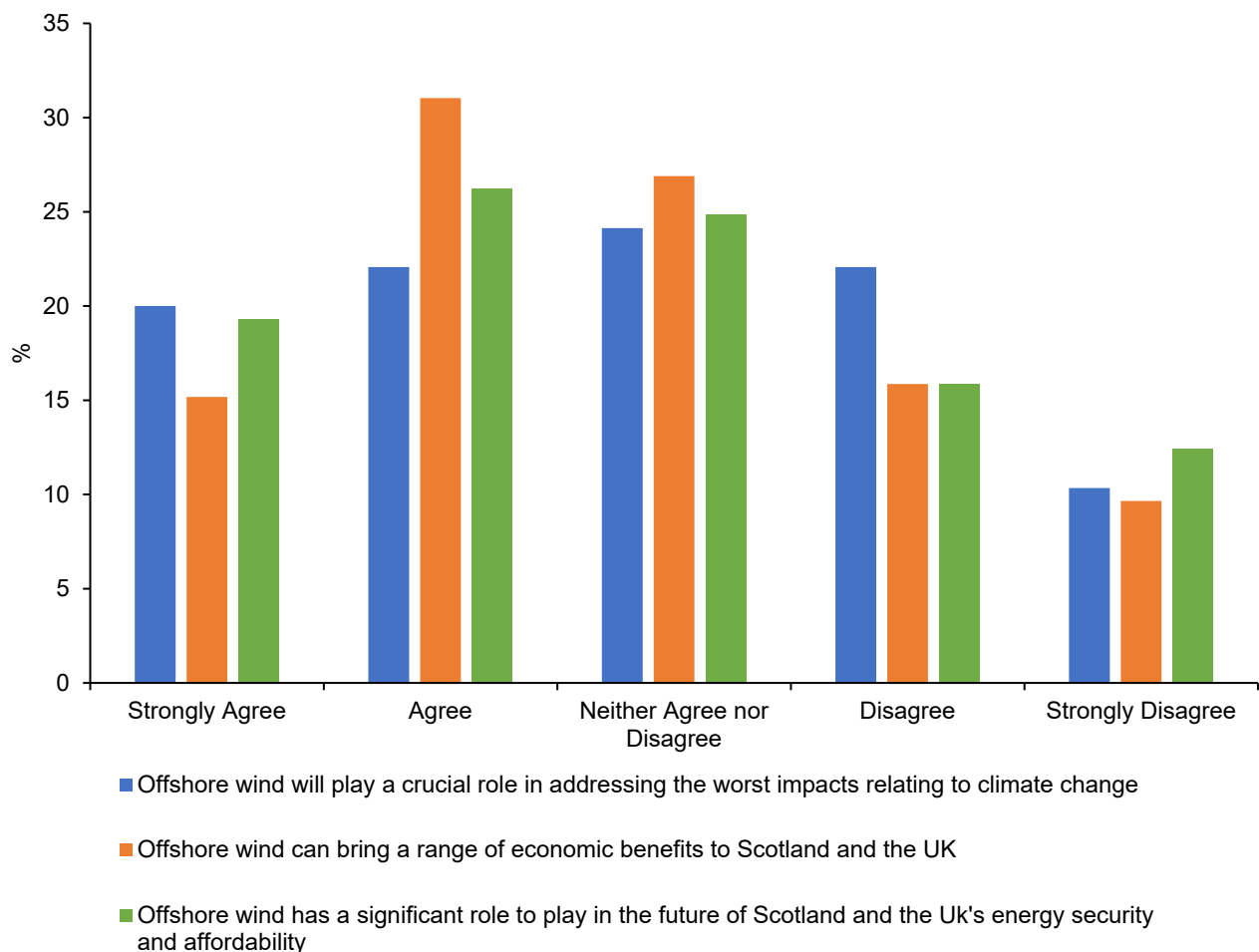


Plate 1.4 Statutory Consultation Round One – Question 2 The role of offshore wind in the context of addressing climate change, economic benefits and the UK's energy security and affordability



1.1.1.3 Windfarm Development Area

1.1.1.3.1 Question 3) The perceived impacts of the MachairWind Offshore Windfarm on key environmental, economic, and social factors.

14. In this question respondents were asked to consider the impacts of the Project on a range of topics and to select whether they perceived the impact to be positive, no impact, negative or not sure.
15. 49% of respondents agreed that the impact on sustainability and climate change would be positive and 23% agreed that the impact on jobs and the local economy would be positive.
16. 84% of respondents agreed that the impact on seascape and landscape views would be negative and 77% agreed that the impact on wildlife and the natural environment would be negative.

What impact do you think the MachairWind Offshore Windfarm could have on the below topics? Please explain your reasoning in the box provided below?

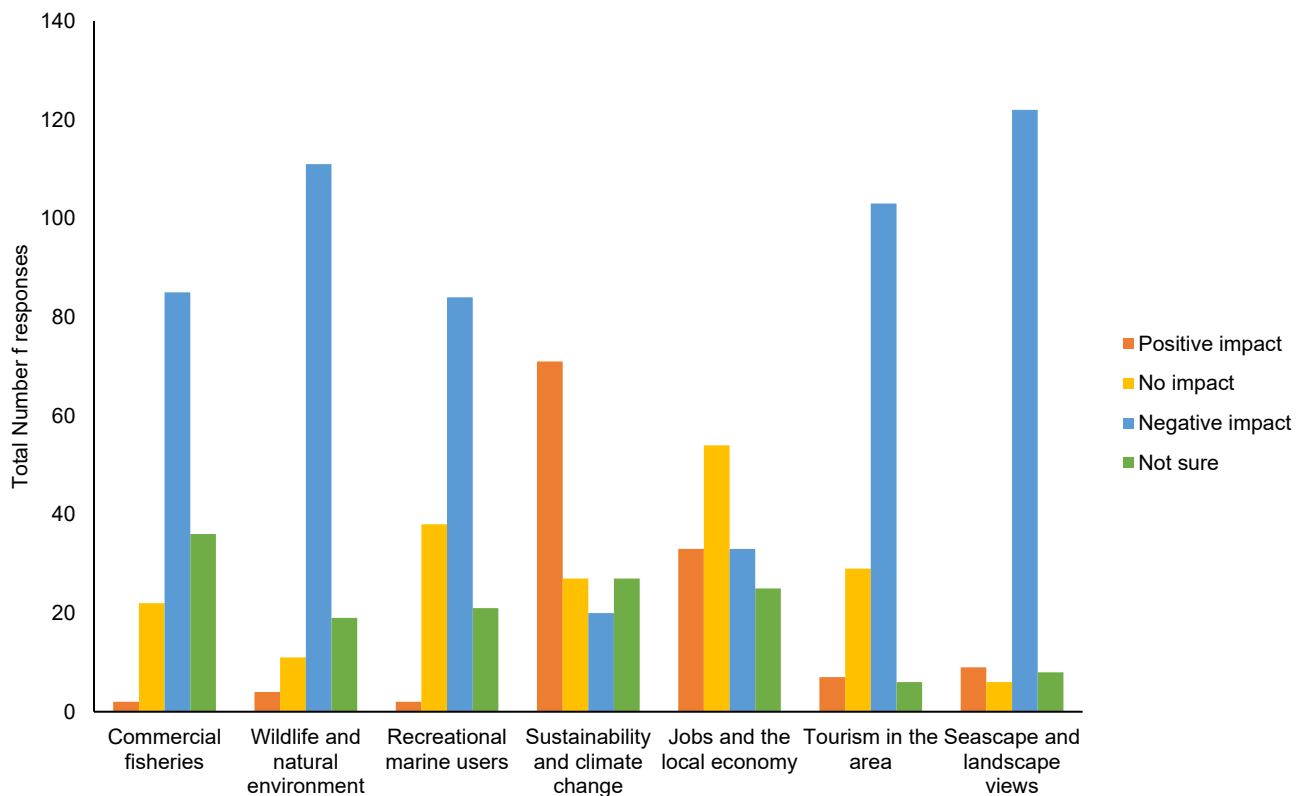


Plate 1.5 Statutory Consultation Round One – Question 3 What impact do you think the MachairWind Offshore Windfarm could have on the below topics?

17. Responses to the free-text portion of this showed a similar response, with 40% of respondents agreeing that the impact on offshore wind/climate change would be positive and 23% of respondents agreed that the impact on wildlife/climate change would be negative.

1.1.1.3.2 Question 4a and 4b) Views on the WDA layout based on provided photomontages.

18. Respondents were asked to share their views on the photomontages for each of the turbine layouts: 88 turbines (340m height) and 147 turbines (260m height). Respondents were prompted to consider



distance to shore, height of turbines and horizontal spread of turbines when considering their feedback.

19. For the 88 turbine (340m height) layout photomontages, 7% of respondents provided a positive view, 6% provided a neutral view and 87% provided a negative view. Of the positive responses, 67% were in relation to the horizontal spread of turbines, while 33% were in relation to the height of turbines. Of the negative responses 40% were in relation to the height of turbines, 34% were in relation to the distance to shore and 26% were in relation to the horizontal spread of turbines.
20. For the 147 turbine (260m height) layout photomontages, 10% of respondents provided a positive view, 3% provided a neutral view and 87% provided a negative view. Of the positive responses, 89% were in relation to the height of turbines while 11% were in relation to the horizontal spread of turbines. Of the negative responses 35% were in relation to distance to shore, and 33% were in relation to both height of turbines and horizontal spread of turbines.



4a) Views on the 88 turbine layout based on provided photomontages

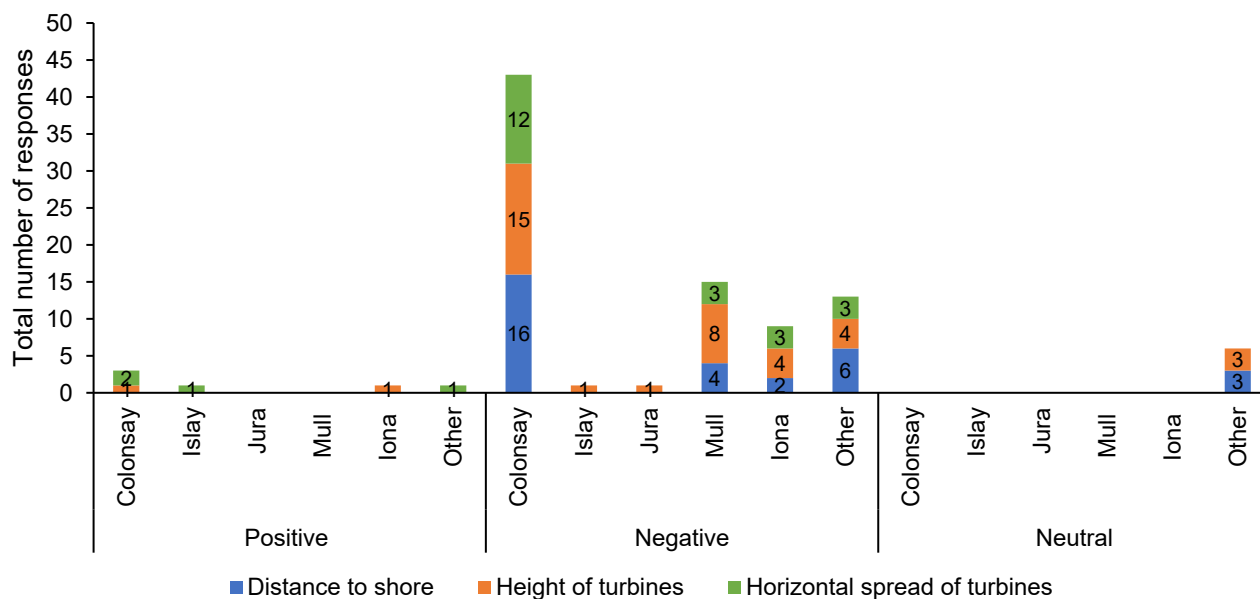


Plate 1.6 Statutory Consultation Round One – Question 4a) Views on the 88-turbine layout based on provided photomontages.

4b) Views on the 147 turbine layout based on provided photomontages

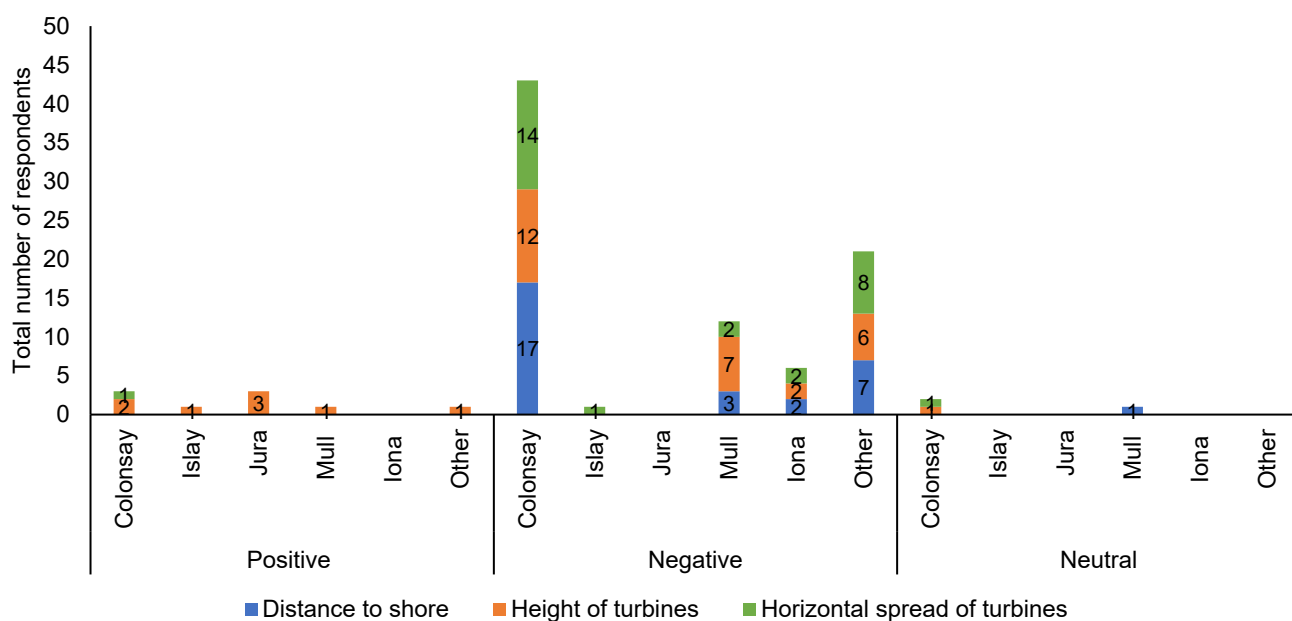


Plate 1.7 Statutory Consultation Round One – Question 4b) Views on the 147-turbine layout based on provided photomontages.

-
21. Responses to the free-text portion of these questions highlighted other key themes from respondents such as offshore wind/climate change, wildlife and environment, local economy/community and location.
- 1.1.1.3.3 Question 5) Feedback on proposed WDA or additional information required at the next round of consultation
22. In the 106 responses to this free-text question, there were 205 comments made, of which 2% indicated positive feedback on offshore wind/climate change (75%) and visual impact (25%).
23. 39% of responses indicated neutral feedback or a request for more information on a range of key themes, such as community benefit fund (15%), local economy/community (9%) and layout/location (8%).
24. 59% of responses indicated negative feedback on a range of key themes such as visual impact (19%), layout/location (14%) and wildlife/environmental (12%).
- 

Feedback on proposed WDA or additional information requested at the next round of consultation - Key Themes

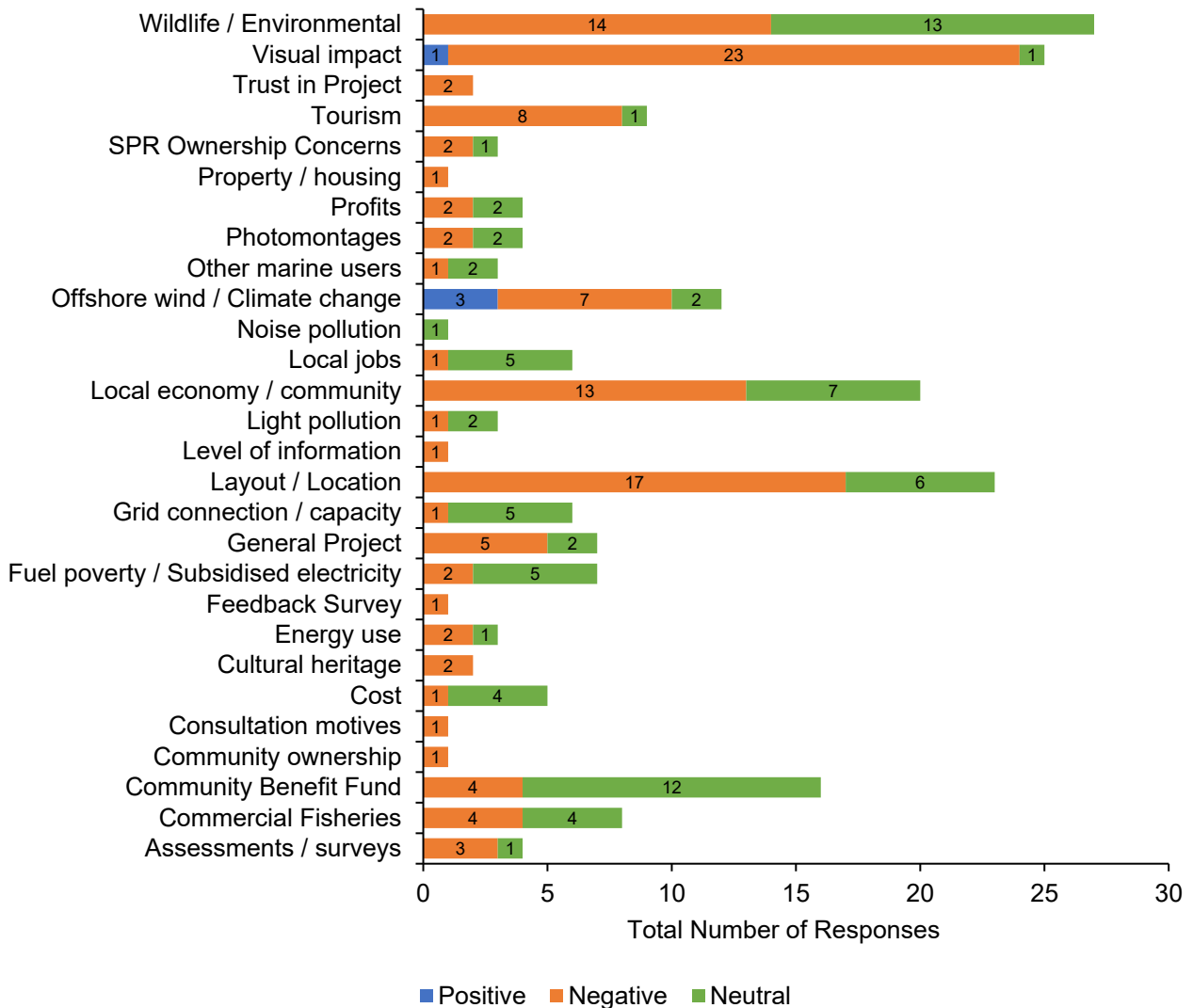


Plate 1.8 Statutory Consultation Round One – Question 5 Feedback on proposed WDA or additional information requested at the next round of consultation

Benefits and Opportunities

1.1.1.3.4 Question 6) Opportunities for the Project to deliver wider benefits and leave a positive legacy.

25. Of the responses to the opportunities that the respondent would like to see from the Project, the preferred opportunities included: community benefit fund (68%), environmental enhancements (67%), local employment opportunities (57%) and investment in community-led initiatives (57%).

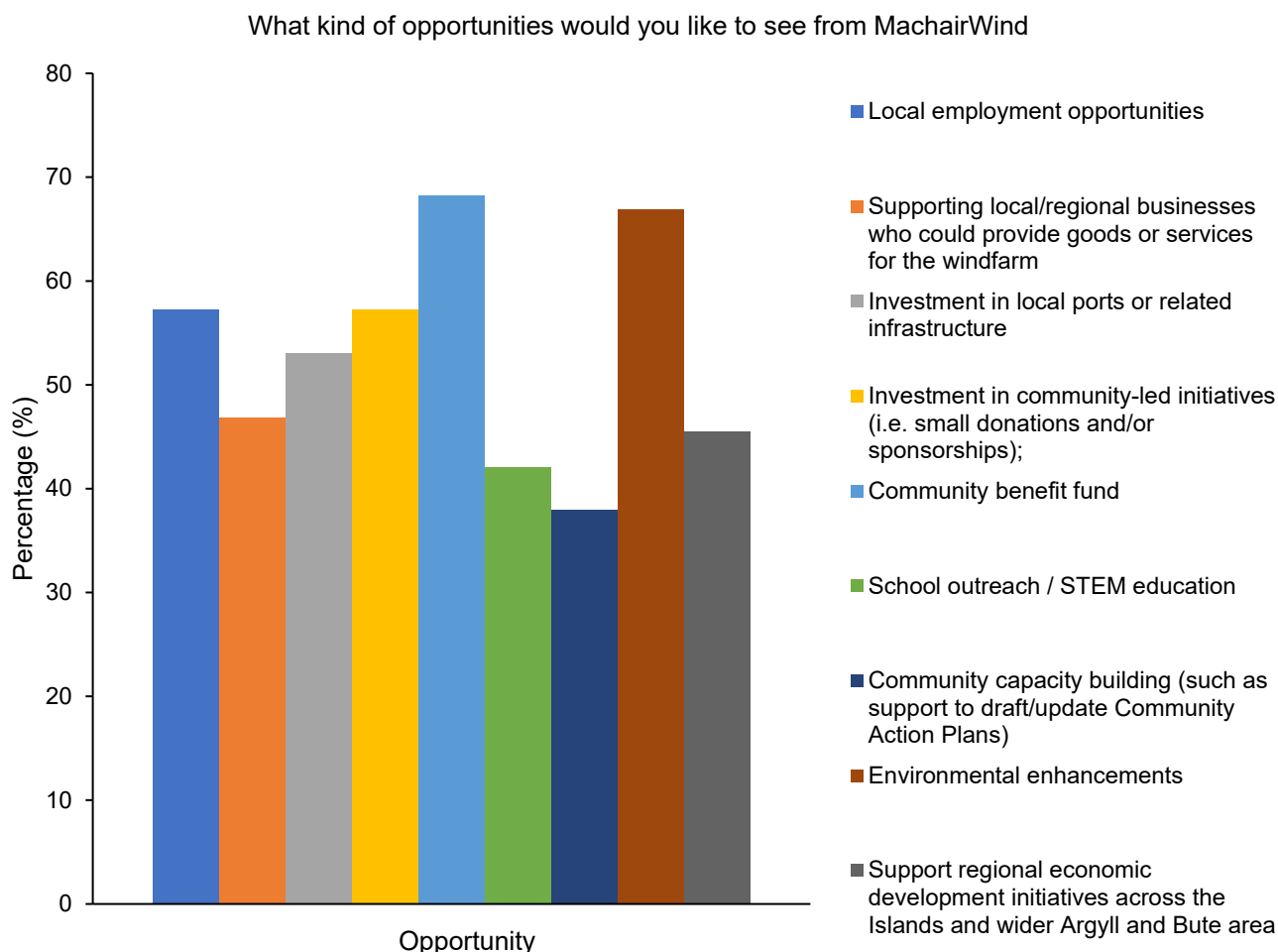


Plate 1.9 Statutory Consultation Round One – Question 6 What kind of opportunities would you like to see from MachairWind

1.1.1.4 Consultation

1.1.1.4.1 Question 7) Usefulness of the consultation

26. Respondents provided views on the consultation. Of the responses received, 57% agreed (agreed or strongly agreed) that the consultation had enhanced their knowledge of the Project while 21% disagreed (disagreed or strongly disagreed); 50% agreed that the consultation provided them with an opportunity to share their views on the WDA while 23% disagreed; and 34% agreed the level of information in the consultation was appropriate to their needs while 38% disagreed.



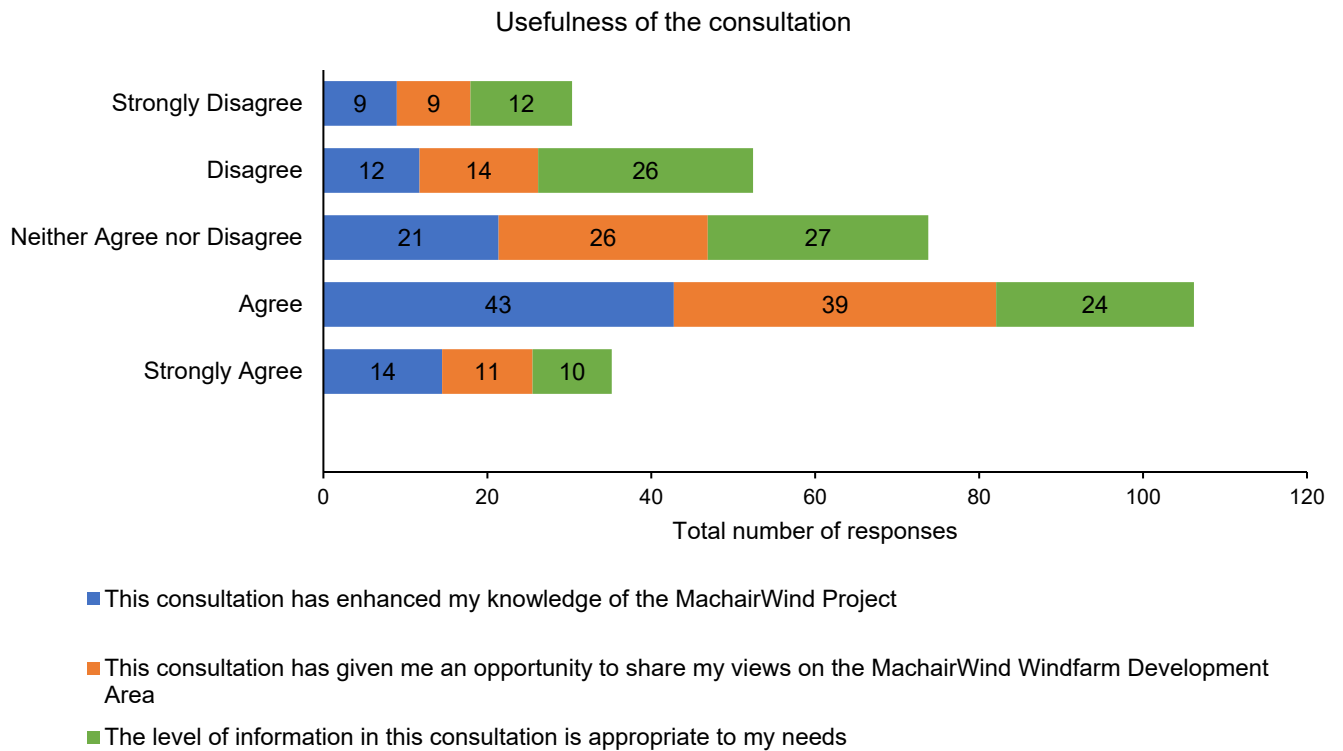


Plate 1.10 Statutory Consultation Round One – Question 7 Usefulness of the consultation

27. Responses to the free-text portion highlighted other positive feedback in relation to the level of information with some respondents stating the information was ‘well-presented and gave a clear impression of what was involved’, the photomontages provided, and the webinar events. Negative feedback was also received in relation to the level of information in relation to the level of detail, some respondents found the information too light touch and raised concerns about which topics were focussed on.

1.1.1.4.2 Question 8) Methods of communication

28. Responses indicated that the preferred methods of communication are email (28%) and face-to-face events (25%), with the least preferred methods being press/media coverage (>1%).



As the Project develops, how would you like us to keep you updated?

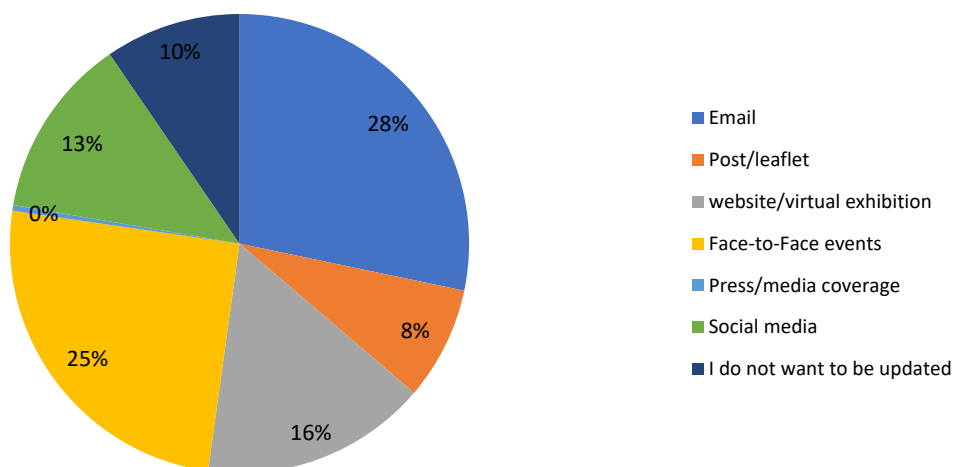


Plate 1.11 Statutory Consultation Round One – Question 8 As the Project develops, how would you like us to keep you updated?

1.1.1.4.3 Question 9) Any further comments

29. Of the 111 responses to this free-text question, 10% of respondents provided positive feedback in relation to the Project, regarding key themes including offshore wind/climate change, consultation materials, consultation events and local job opportunities. 72% of respondents provided negative feedback in relation to the Project, regarding key themes including community benefit, fuel poverty/subsidised energy and profits from the Project.



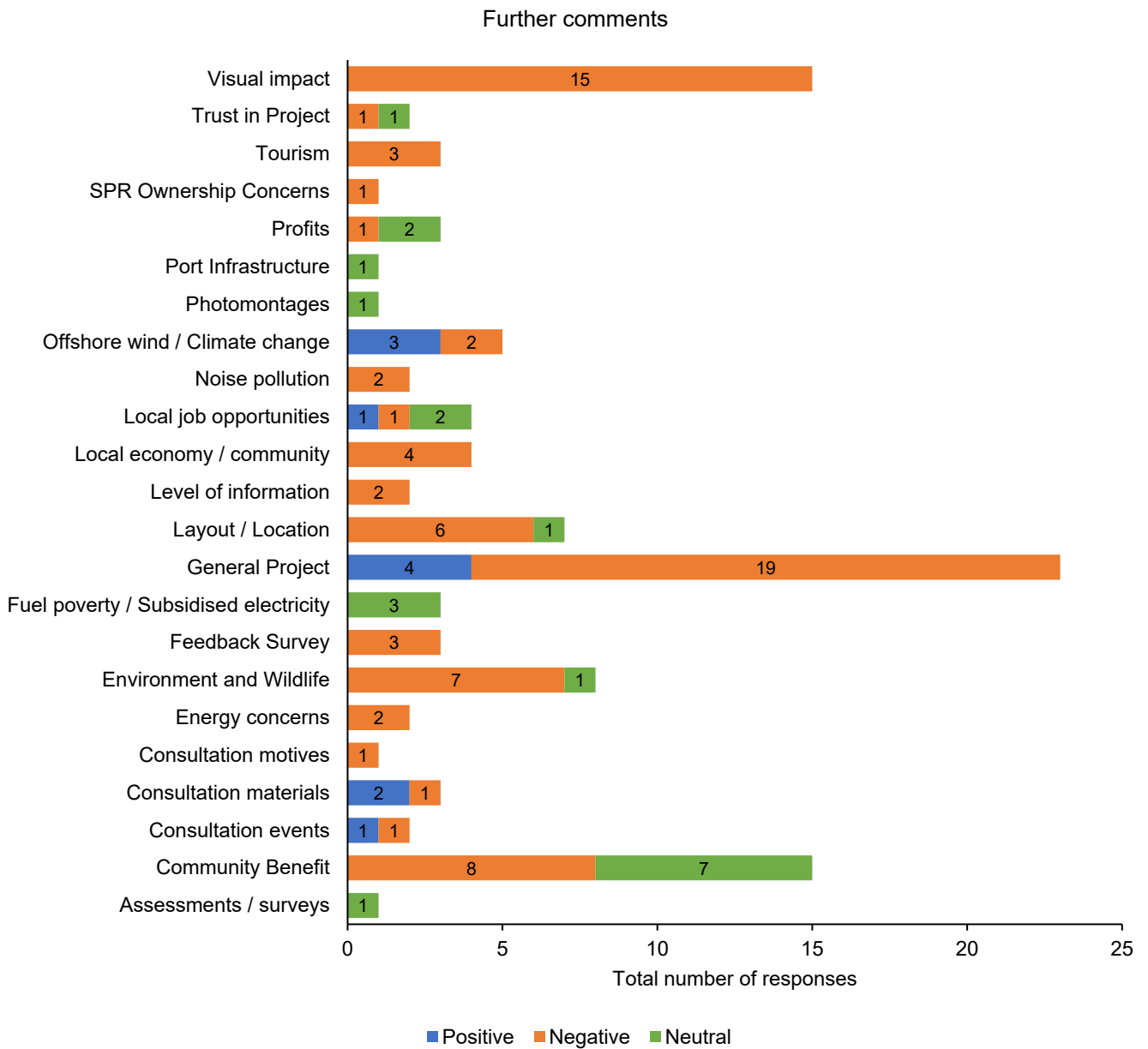


Plate 1.12 Statutory Consultation Round One – Question 9 Further comments



1.1.1.5 Summary

30. Throughout the feedback form responses, several consistent themes emerged from responses to Question 1 – Question 9. Feedback indicated a broad recognition of the importance of climate change (Question 1) and mixed views about the role of offshore wind in addressing it (Question 2).
31. Many respondents identified potential negative effects on the natural environment, wildlife, commercial fisheries, tourism, and seascape/landscape views (Question 3), with seascape and wildlife recording some of the highest negative response rates.
32. Views on the two layout options presented via photomontages (Question 4a – Question 4b) also showed a large majority of negative responses for both turbine layout scenarios.
33. Additional written comments (Question 5) frequently referenced visual impact, layout and location, environmental considerations, and requests for further information on community benefit and socio-economic matters. When asked about opportunities (Question 6), respondents most frequently selected community benefit funding, environmental enhancements, local employment and training, and investment in local infrastructure.
34. Responses to the consultation process itself (Question 7 – Question 9) demonstrated varied views on the clarity and level of information provided, with preferred communication channels including email, face-to-face events, and online materials.
35. Overall, the consultation highlighted recurring themes around visual impact, environmental effects, fisheries and marine use, tourism sensitivity, and expectations for community-focused opportunities and benefit funding.

1.1.2 Event Notes

36. This section contains the event notes recorded during the six face-to-face drop-in sessions held across the host islands during Statutory Consultation Round One. These notes summarise key discussions, questions, concerns, and suggestions raised by attendees. They provide an important record of issues highlighted during the first round and demonstrate how community input was captured to inform subsequent project development and the updates presented in later stages of engagement.

1.1.2.1 In-person Attendance

Table 1.1 Statutory Consultation Round One in-person attendance

Attendee No.		% of population
Islay (2)	39	1%
Jura	33	13%
Colonsay	31	25%
Ross of Mull	23	4%
Iona	22	13%
Total	148	



1.1.2.2 Key Themes

1.1.2.2.1 Energy Resilience and Affordability

- Expectation that communities who can see the windfarm should benefit from the windfarm through reduced energy bills.
- Beliefs that natural resources should be harnessed to address the cost-of-living crisis, particularly for islanders who experience higher costs of living than those living on mainland Scotland.
- Concerns about energy resilience on the islands – particularly on Islay, Jura, and Colonsay.
- Interest in whether the turbines could be connected directly into local grid infrastructure on the islands.

1.1.2.2.2 Community Benefit Funding

- Requests for clarity on the value of the Community Benefit Fund and some concern around whether there will be sufficient funding to support high-capital projects, such as infrastructure upgrades.
- Perception that islands most affected by the project (often cited in terms of visual impact and potential impact on the tourism economy) should receive a larger proportion of funding.
- Interest in the allocation and administration of the funding, with some apprehension about the potential dilution of funding if shared across multiple islands and/or further afield.
- Requests for examples of what SPR has committed to on other projects and how communities have used that money. Upon request, the SPR Community Benefit Report 2024 was emailed to community members.
- Questions on whether the Community Benefit Fund could be used towards housing (such as building affordable homes).
- Requests to see SPR's response to the Scottish Government Consultation on Community benefits from net zero energy developments. SPR's response to the consultation was emailed to those interested in this.
- Requests for funding in the immediate term, prior to consent, such as support towards swimming lessons, residential trips for pupils, and marine litter projects. The MachairWind Small Donations Fund was launched in August 2025, and those that requested funding were contacted to notify them about the fund being live until November 2025.

1.1.2.2.3 Local Opportunities

- Interest in whether the Applicant has engaged with local schools, and support for young people being trained up to work in the renewable energy space.
- Interest in whether local ports are being considered for use by the Project.
- Request for more information to be presented on employment of local people, investment in local port redevelopment and housing availability for any transient workers.
- Interest in the scope and timescales of the Supply Chain Stimulus Fund.

1.1.2.2.4 Visual / Seascape Impacts

- Some respondents expressed enthusiasm to see the turbines within their local setting ('gives me hope for the future', 'think it's an excellent idea'), and others concerned about how the windfarm will impact the feel/character of where they live and island life more generally particularly in terms of Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) and tourism and related economic impacts. Fulfilling requests from community members from Colonsay, the Colonsay and Oronsay photomontages were posted to Colonsay Village Hall during the Statutory Consultation period.



- Support in general for offshore windfarms, however some requesting the Project be moved further away from the shore and requests for the Project to be moved elsewhere, with some suggesting offshore windfarms should not be located on the west coast of Scotland.
- Questions raised on why some viewpoints were shown as wirelines instead of photomontages, as photomontages were created for 14 viewpoints for both the 88-turbine layout and the 147-turbine layout (28 photomontages were created in total). Requests for wirelines of viewpoints to be photomontages at the following consultation: there was particular interest in seeing viewpoint 3 as a photomontage.
- Interest in the ScotWind leasing round and option agreement areas across Scotland, with requests for more information on ScotWind in the following consultation.
- Concerns and speculations that tourists may not visit the islands (particularly Colonsay, Ross of Mull & Iona) if the Project is consented.

1.1.2.2.5 Consultation Materials and Events

- Ask to simplify consultation materials in places, such as removal of technical language.
- Some requests for initiatives that would support communities' energy literacy.
- Suggestion to utilise local social media pages more to advertise the consultation events more widely.

1.1.2.2.6 Impact Assessment

- Interest in the sustainability of the Project, such as the types of materials used and the carbon payback of offshore windfarms.
- Queries and concerns relating to surveys undertaken to identify bird and marine life / species.
- General eagerness to read about how the Project is approaching the impact assessment, including the level of information that will be available to read within the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), such as findings from surveys.
- Interest in whether airborne noise was being assessed and questions on whether islanders will hear the windfarm once operational.

1.1.2.2.7 Project Timescales

- Interest in what the consultation period is for section 36 applications, and when the Applicant will know whether the Project is consented or not.
- Questions around the consenting needs for the Offshore Export Cable Corridor.
- Interest in when the Project will apply for Final Investment Decision, if consented.

1.1.2.2.8 Engineering

- Questions around what windspeeds the turbines could potentially shut down at.
- Interest in the rationale behind presenting two turbine layouts as photomontages and wirelines, with questions around when the final parameters will be known. Interest in why the height range is large between the two options presented.
- Questions were raised in relation to the type of foundations that the Project will use.

1.1.3 Webinar Notes

37. This section contains a summary of the discussions held between the Applicant and webinar attendees during the webinar events held online via Microsoft Teams during Statutory Consultation Round One. The purpose of the webinars was for the Applicant to deliver a presentation on the Project ensuring that consultees unable or unwilling to attend in-person events could still access the consultation material and speak with the Project team directly; the webinar agendas included a dedicated section for questions and answers (Q&As).



38. The presentation delivered by the Applicant to webinar attendees has been provided below (**Table 1.2**). To view the presentation slides, please refer to **Appendix 8 PAC Round One Materials** of the **PAC Report**.
39. A summary of the discussions during the first webinar, held on 10 June 2025, is outlined in **Table 1.3**. The session was attended by three members of the public and several members of the Project team representing project management, engineering, environment, supply chain, landscape and visual assessment, and community engagement functions.
40. A summary of the discussions during the second webinar, held on 23 June 2025, is outlined in
41. **Table 1.4**. The session was attended by six members of the public and several members of the Project team representing project management, engineering, environment, supply chain, landscape and visual assessment, and community engagement functions.

Table 1.2 Statutory Consultation Round One – Applicant’s presentation to webinar attendees

Minutes
Agenda Item: Housekeeping The Project team highlighted that this is the first round of statutory consultation, and the Project will be further refined with opportunity to view and comment on these refinements in a second round of statutory consultation events.
Agenda Item: Project Overview The Project team provided a Project overview outlining the key Project characteristics and indicative Project development timeline. the Project team presented the WDA boundary, highlighting that the WDA boundary may change following the results of ongoing site investigations, stakeholder feedback and public consultation responses. The Project team outlined that the export cable corridor will have separate planning applications.
Agenda Item: Need for the Project & Project Origins The Project team presented existing policies and legislations that relate to the need for offshore wind developments, primarily to meet decarbonisation ambitions. The Project team outlined Scottish Government planning documents that identified sustainable plan options for the future development of commercial-scale offshore wind energy in Scotland.
Agenda Item: Community Engagement to Date The Project team presented the programme of community engagement the Project had undertaken whilst outlining the Project’s plan for further community engagement – both statutory and non-statutory.
Agenda Item: Windfarm Development Area - Summary The Project team outlined the Project’s WDA characteristics and how the Projects WDA boundary has been refined following site investigations and stakeholder engagement.
Agenda Item: How is the Impact being Assessed? The Project team outlined how the Project will assess potential impacts within the EIA, confirming that the Project will undertake the EIA based on the maximum engineering design parameters. The Project team discussed how the EIA is undertaken, including the key topics that will be assessed. The Project team demonstrated how the Project engages with stakeholders to inform the EIA. The Project team paid particular attention to the ornithology and marine mammal survey work that the Project has undertaken. The Project team presented a selection of photomontages from various local viewpoints across the islands, explaining that the Project has consulted with statutory and non-statutory bodies and communities to identify local viewpoints. The Project team highlighted that all the photomontages are available to view in the Project’s virtual consultation room and displayed at the in-person consultation events.

Minutes
Agenda Item: Benefits, Impacts & Opportunities The Project team presented the work the Project has undertaken to date in relation to understand community priorities. The Project team encouraged meeting attendees to indicate any community benefit initiatives that the Project should consider.
Agenda Item: Have Your Say The Project team outlined the ways community members and wider public can access the consultation materials and provide their feedback, encouraging attendees to complete the Project's feedback form and contact the Project team should they require further information. The Project team emailed the webinar presentation to all attendees following the webinar.

Table 1.3 10 June 2025 - Webinar Q&A Section Summary

Q&A Session
1. Installation Methods Attendees asked whether piling and drilling installation techniques will be assessed within the WDA EIAR. Applicant response: The Project Team confirmed that both piling and drilling installation methods are being considered and will be fully assessed within the WDA EIAR.
2. Environmental Impacts Concerns were raised that seismic seabed activity can cause lobsters to temporarily disperse from the area. Applicant response: The Project Team confirmed that potential impacts on lobster behaviour and distribution will be addressed within the Fish & Shellfish Ecology and Commercial Fisheries EIAR chapters. A Marine Mammal Mitigation Strategy will also be provided, outlining procedures to mitigate underwater noise impacts.
3. Assessment of Corncrake and Migratory Routes An attendee asked whether corncrakes and their migratory routes would be considered in the EIA. Applicant response: The Project Team confirmed they will review whether corncrakes should be included within the scope of the WDA EIA.
4. Offshore Substation Platform (OSP) Information Further detail was requested regarding the design and engineering parameters of the OSPs. Applicant response: The Project Team provided additional information on anticipated OSP engineering parameters.
5. Photomontages and Visibility from Colonsay Attendees noted that the photomontages shared during the webinar were helpful. However, it was highlighted that many houses on Colonsay are at sea level, and residents may require additional visual information demonstrating whether the WDA will be visible from their home. Applicant response: Comment noted for consideration.
6. Sharing of Consultation Information An attendee confirmed they would circulate information regarding the events to members of their community to ensure residents are aware of the opportunity to participate in the consultation.



Table 1.4 23 June 2025 - Webinar Q&A Section Summary

Q&A Session
1. Offshore Cable Burial and Onshore Cable Installation Attendees asked whether offshore electrical cables will be buried or placed on the seabed, and whether onshore cables will be underground or overground. Applicant response: The Project Team confirmed the preference is to bury offshore cables wherever possible. The Project Team clarified that export cable routing has not yet been determined yet. Consultation will be carried out for cable corridor and all onshore infrastructure once work progresses. A full engineering assessment of onshore cable routes will be undertaken and presented at future consultation stages. 2. Seabed Impacts, Installation Effects and Noise Mitigation Attendees sought information on seabed disturbance from Wind Turbine Generator (WTG) installation and associated noise mitigation. Applicant response: The Project Team outlined that detailed seabed surveys will be carried out prior to installation to avoid sensitive seabed features. Surveys will identify locations where infrastructure should not be placed, reducing potential ecological impacts. Marine mammal mitigation measures will be implemented to manage underwater noise from construction. Regarding airborne noise, the Project Team noted that offshore construction-related airborne noise had been scoped out in consultation with stakeholders. Attendees expressed some concerns about this, citing wind-dependent propagation. Action: The Project Team provided written clarification on the rationale for scoping out airborne noise following the webinar. 3. Lighting, Night-Time Visual Impact and Photomontages Concerns were raised regarding the visual impact of turbine lighting at night, with requests to see this represented in photomontages. Applicant response: The Project Team confirmed that night-time photomontages from viewpoints are being produced and will be shared at the second round of statutory consultation events. Lighting will be assessed as part of the SLVIA. The Project Team is consulting with stakeholders on lighting and marking arrangements and will submit an Outline Lighting and Marking Plan detailing the lighting requirements for infrastructure located within the WDA. 4. Community Benefit Fund and Funding Distribution Attendees asked about the scale of the Community Benefit Fund and how funding would be distributed. Applicant response: The Project Team confirmed that the Project is committed to delivering community benefit Funding which would be available for the Project's host communities. Future engagement will be held specifically on this funding, including its allocation and distribution. The team noted that the funding will only become available if the Project is consented and once the Project itself is operational. The team also highlighted that there are ongoing consultations on best practice guidance and recommendations in relation to community benefit funding for net zero projects. Action: For those interested, the Project Team shared SPR's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the Community benefits from net zero energy developments. 5. Local Energy Projects and Fuel Poverty Attendees highlighted fuel poverty on the islands and asked whether the Project could directly connect into the local grid infrastructure and/or alleviate high energy costs on the islands. Applicant response: The Project team noted that a direct connection from the windfarm to the islands is outwith the scope of the marine licence for the WDA, however noted that the Applicant has commissioned a study to assess the technical and environmental feasibility of a direction connection.



1.2 STATUTORY CONSULTATION ROUND TWO

1.2.1 Feedback Form Analysis

42. Statutory Consultation Round Two took place between 20 October and 30 November 2025, providing communities across Islay, Jura, Colonsay, Ross of Mull and Iona with a further opportunity to comment on the refined Project proposals. Across the six-week period, the Applicant held six in-person events, supported by two webinars and presented an updated virtual consultation room, resulting in 119 attendees and 23 feedback forms, plus one letter and one email submission. Feedback has been analysed to understand how perspectives have changed, and new issues have emerged following the first consultation in response to the updated information presented in consultation materials.

1.2.1.1 About You

43. The 'About You' questions captured the characteristics of respondents and helped the project team understand who engaged in the second round of statutory consultation. This provided important context for interpreting the feedback received and ensured that views were considered alongside the demographic and geographic profile of respondents.
44. The following questions were included in this section:
- Question 13: Please indicate what area you live in?
 - Question 14: What age bracket are you in?
 - Question 15: Are you responding as...?
45. Responses showed that the majority of participants were local residents from the Project's host islands, with representation from all five island communities. The largest proportion of respondents lived on the Ross of Mull (44%), followed by Colonsay (20%), Jura (16%), Islay (8%), Iona (4%), and other locations (8%). This distribution demonstrates broad geographic participation across the consultation area.
46. The most frequently reported age groups were 60-74 years (45%) and 45-59 years (32%), continuing the pattern observed in Statutory Consultation Round One which indicates strong engagement from long-established residents with deep local knowledge. Smaller proportions of respondents were aged 75+ (14%) and 30-44 (9%).
47. Respondents also identified their connection to the area through Question 15, with multiple selections permitted. As in Statutory Consultation Round One, local residents were the most commonly represented group (50%). Other frequently selected roles included landowners (13%), local business owners (11%), crofters (5%), tourists (5%), energy sector representatives (8%), and elected representatives (3%). A further 5% selected "other," including second-homeowners and individuals involved in community energy or local trust activity.
48. A number of respondents selected more than one role, for example, identifying as a resident, crofter and businessowner, illustrating the overlapping responsibilities within island communities. Respondents also highlighted the importance of recognising the islands as distinct from one another, emphasising that consultation, benefits and decision-making should avoid treating islands as a single group and instead reflect the unique needs and priorities of each community.



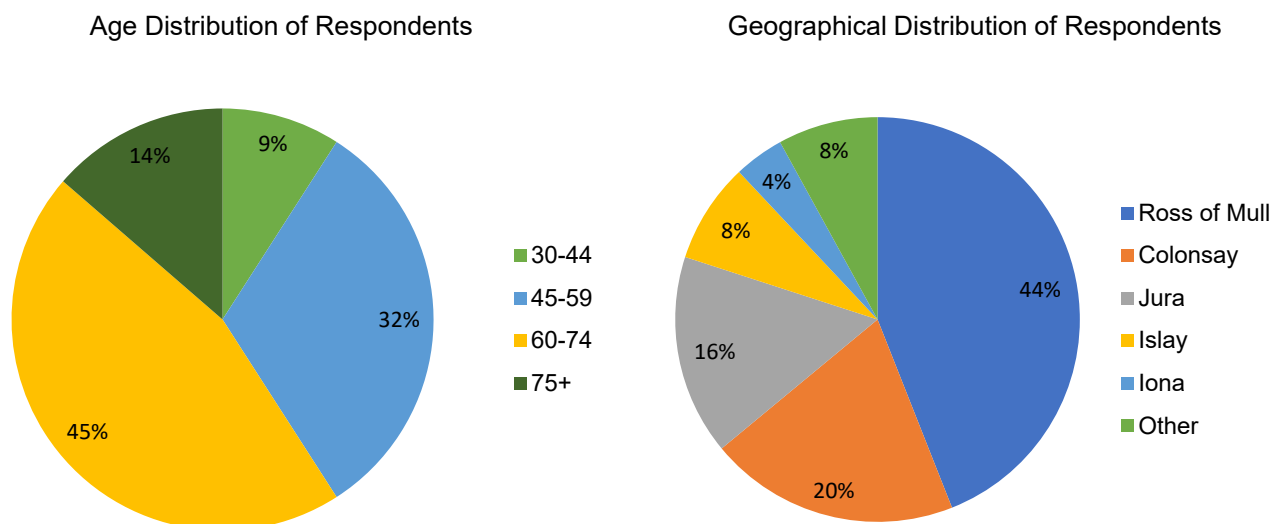


Plate 1.13 Statutory Consultation Round Two - Questions 13 and 14: Age and Geographical Demographics

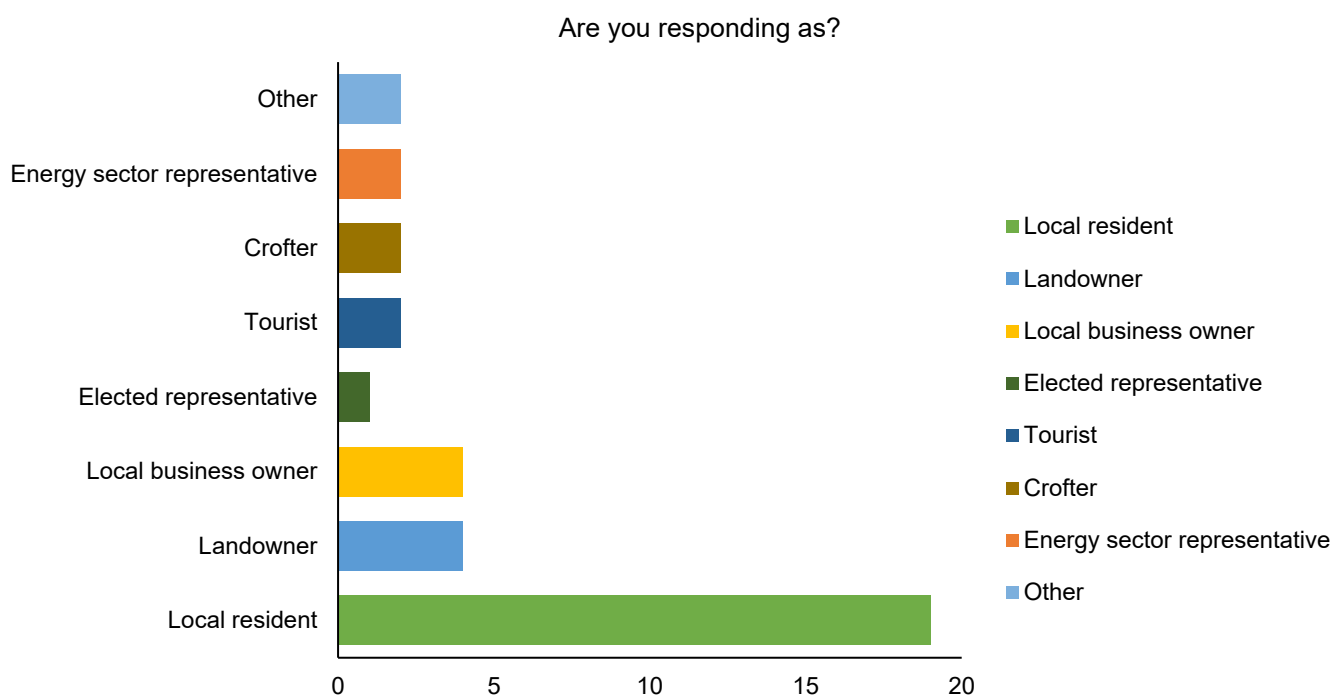


Plate 1.14 Statutory Consultation Round Two - Question 15 Demographics



1.2.1.2 *Benefits and Opportunities*

1.2.1.2.1 Question 1) During the last public consultation (May to July 2025), feedback from respondents told us that above all of the opportunities associated with MachairWind, they would most like to see community benefit and environmental enhancements be delivered. To what extent do you agree?

49. A clear majority of Statutory Consultation Round Two respondents indicated positive support. 69.6% selected “Yes - these are the most important to me”, while 17.4% indicated “Partly - other aspects are equally important”, and 13.0% responded “No - other opportunities are more important.”

50. These results reflect strong continuity with the first round of Statutory Consultation, in the importance placed on long-term benefit delivery, with respondents emphasising the need for opportunities that provide local value, address island-specific needs, and contribute to both community wellbeing and environmental enhancement.

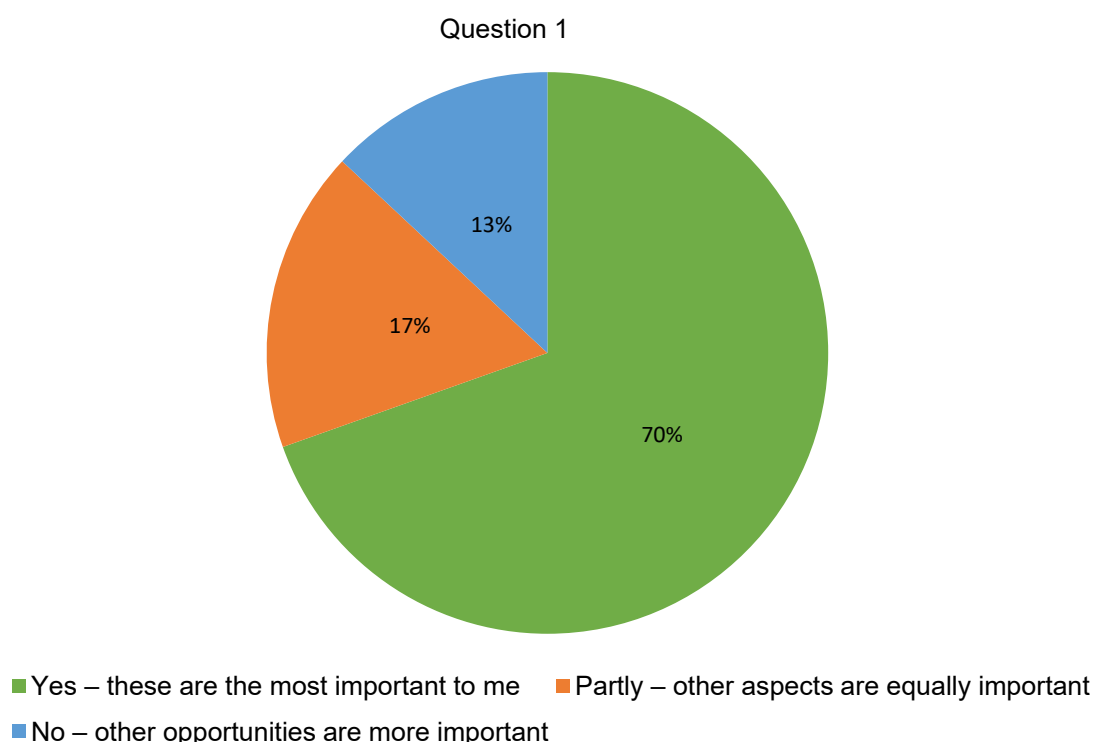


Plate 1.15 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Question 1 During the last public consultation (May to July 2025), feedback from respondents told us that above all of the opportunities associated with MachairWind, they would most like to see community benefit and environmental enhancements be delivered. To what extent do you agree?

51. Respondents who selected “partly” or “no” highlighted a range of views, which they expanded upon in the open text box provided for Question 2. Many noted that while they supported community benefit and environmental enhancements, they felt these should not overshadow other critical concerns, including:

- The need for proportionate benefits in relation to the level of impact on each island;
- Concerns about tourism impacts, light pollution, visual intrusion, and change to landscape character;
- The importance of clearer information on impacts, assessments and long-term Project commitments; and



- Requests for clarity on the scale and structure of the Community Benefit Fund, its governance, and its longevity.

52. Several respondents reiterated concerns about the potential for negative economic impacts to outweigh benefits if not carefully mitigated, while others stressed that certain benefits, particularly those related to fuel poverty, affordable energy, and local infrastructure, should be prioritised above generic funding categories.

If you selected 'partly' or 'no' to the above question, please explain your view in the box below.

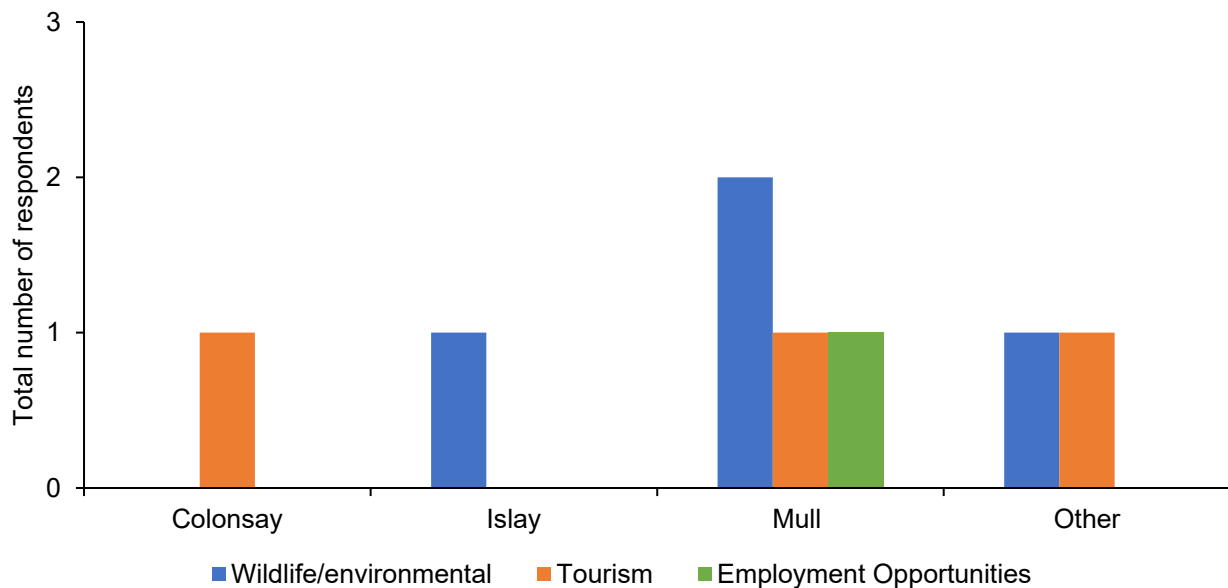


Plate 1.16 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Question 2 If you selected 'partly' or 'no' to the above question, please explain your view in the box below.

1.2.1.2.2 Question 3) Additional local groups the Project should engage with

53. Respondents provided a wide range of suggestions for additional community groups that should be engaged as part of the development and administration of Community Benefit Funding, as well as views on how engagement should be undertaken.

54. Key themes included:

- The importance of island-specific engagement, emphasising that Jura, Islay, Colonsay, Mull and Iona each have distinct needs and should not be “lumped together”;
- Engagement with local development trusts, community councils, environmental groups, heritage organisations, and local businesses;
- Involvement of groups focused on fuel poverty, maritime skills, renewable energy, and wildlife conservation; and
- Strong support for community-led approaches, in line with the Project’s commitment to co-designing funding structures with local stakeholders.

55. Several responses highlighted island-specific organisations such as the Community Councils and Development Trusts, reinforcing the appetite for trusted and local engagement.

1.2.1.2.3 Question 4 and 5) Community Benefit Funding

56. Respondents were asked to select their top three preferred uses of Community Benefit Funding. The results show a clear set of priorities, with the following proportions of total selections:



- 23% - Community buildings, halls or renewable heating upgrades;
- 19% - Local environmental projects (habitat restoration, biodiversity, beach cleans);
- 15% - Skills, apprenticeships and education programmes;
- 15% - Local heritage, culture or tourism initiatives;
- 9% - Community transport or mobility schemes; and
- 8% - Support for local charities and voluntary groups.

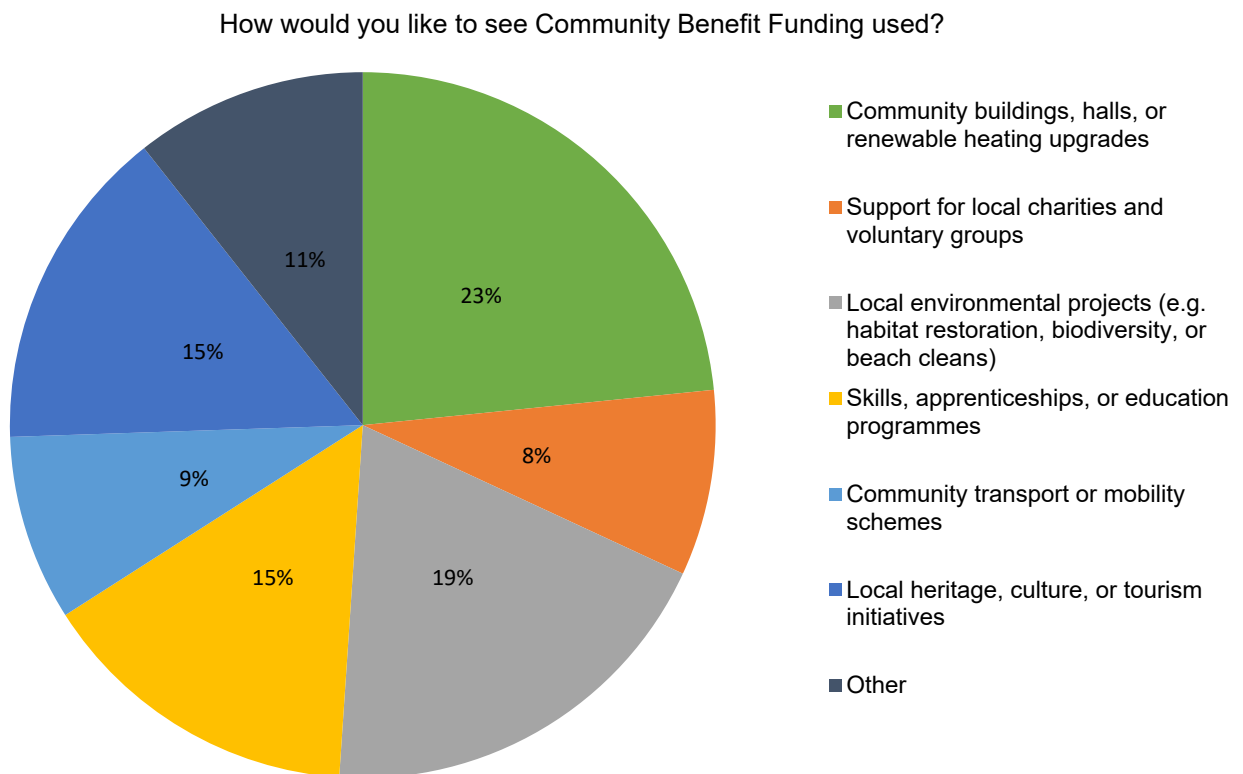


Plate 1.17 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Question 4/5 How would you like to see Community Benefit Funding used?

57. These results demonstrate that respondents continue to prioritise tangible, place-based investments that support local infrastructure, protect and enhance the natural environment, and develop skills and opportunities for future generations. Environmental stewardship, already a prominent theme in Statutory Consultation Round One, featured again as a strong priority.

1.2.1.3 Socio-Economic Commitments

1.2.1.3.1 Question 6) Importance of socio-economic commitments

58. Respondents were asked to indicate how important they considered a range of proposed socio-economic commitments from the Applicant. Across all eight commitments presented, levels of support were strong, with most respondents selecting 'Important' or 'Very Important'. The most important commitments to respondents were:

- Long-term Community Benefit Funding: 95% Important or Very Important.
- Supporting local innovation and enterprise challenges: 95% Important or Very Important
- Keeping open communication through newsletters and a local contact: 90% Important or Very Important.



- Supporting skills, training, and business growth in Argyll and Bute: 90% Important or Very Important.

59. These results demonstrate that respondents place greatest value on commitments that support transparency, long-term economic benefit, environmental stewardship, and clear communication between the Project and host communities. Several respondents noted that socio-economic commitments must be delivered in proportion to the scale of Project impact, with some emphasising that impacts (and therefore benefits) should not be uniform across islands.

Please tell us how important you feel each commitment is for your community.

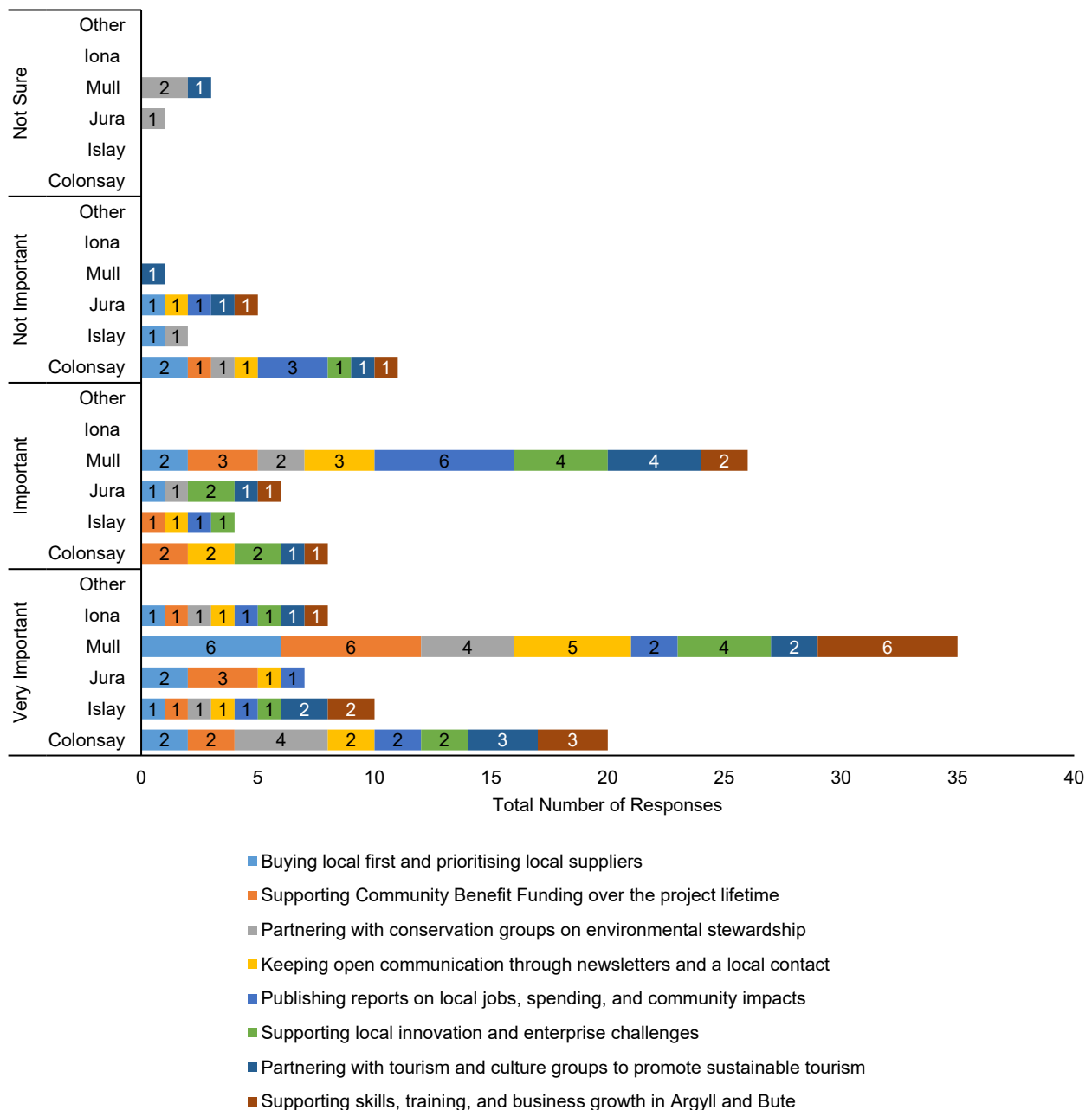


Plate 1.18 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Question 6 Please tell us how important you feel each commitment is for your community.

1.2.1.3.2 Question 7) Suggestions for supporting local jobs, tourism or marine ecology

60. Respondents provided a wide range of suggestions for how MachairWind could further support local jobs, tourism, and the marine economy.
61. Key themes included:
- Decarbonisation and maritime energy infrastructure, including shore-based charging, electric ferries, and renewable energy for maritime operations;
 - Local renewable energy generation and shared ownership, with several respondents referencing local energy clubs or island-scale renewables as models to explore;
 - Support for local employment, including training in marine skills, long-term staff residency, and support for local innovation;
 - Tourism mitigation measures, particularly in relation to light pollution and preserving night skies;
 - Fuel poverty reduction, including reduced local energy prices;
 - Wildlife protection and environmental conservation, including concerns about marine species, creeling, migratory birds and biodiversity; and
 - Infrastructure needs, such as ferry freight reduction and improvements to local roads.
62. Respondents also highlighted the importance of open community meetings, island-specific engagement, and greater transparency, reflecting a desire for direct involvement in shaping the economic and community legacy associated with the Project.

Suggestions on how MachairWind could further support local jobs, tourism, or the marine economy

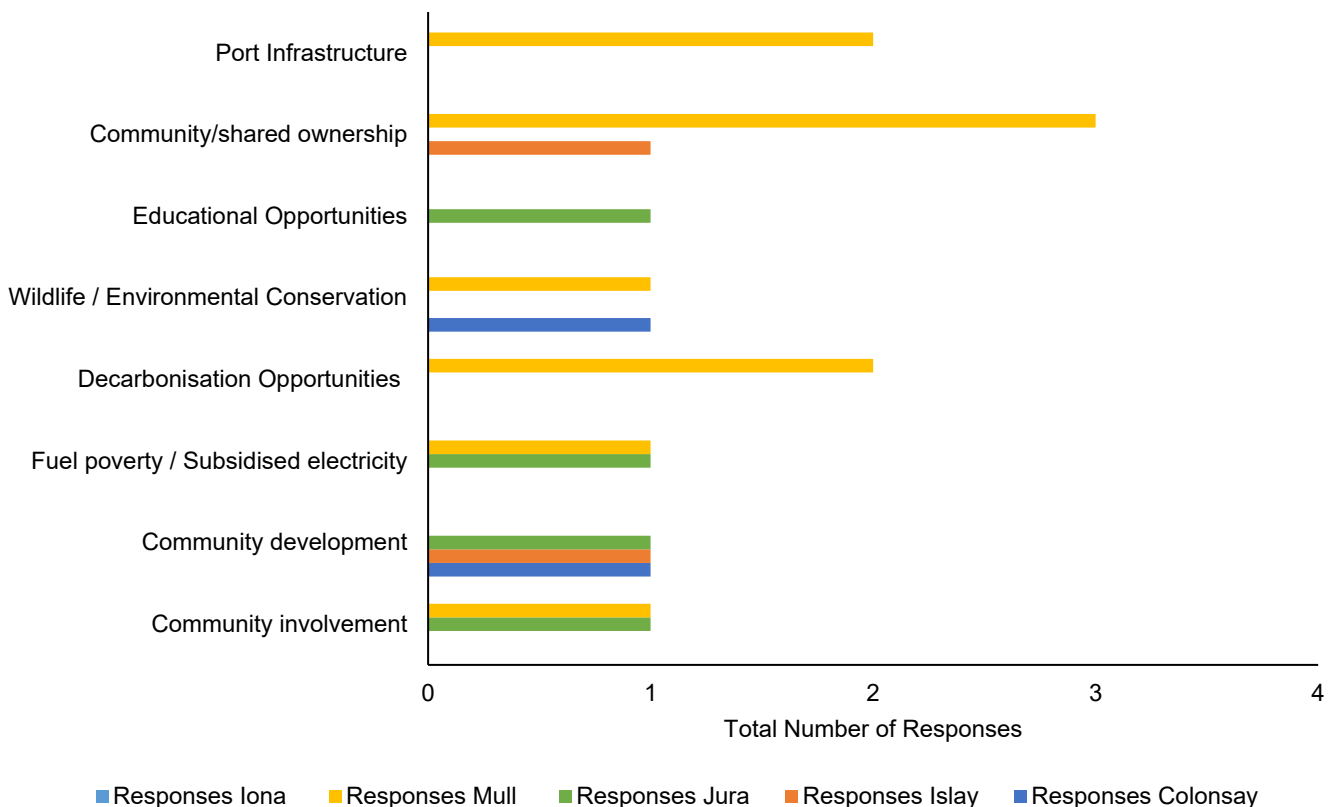


Plate 1.19 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Question 7 Do you have any suggestions on how MachairWind could further support local jobs, tourism, or the marine economy?



1.2.1.4 Renewable Energy

1.2.1.4.1 Question 8) Views on Climate Change

63. Respondents were asked how they feel about climate change. The majority indicated that climate change is a pressing issue, with:
- 61% stating that climate change is “the most important issue we face that must be addressed,”;
 - 30% stating it is important but other issues may take precedence; and
 - 9% selecting “no opinion.”
64. This demonstrates a strong awareness of the climate emergency among Statutory Consultation Round Two respondents, consistent with patterns observed in Statutory Consultation Round One.

In general, how do you feel about climate change?

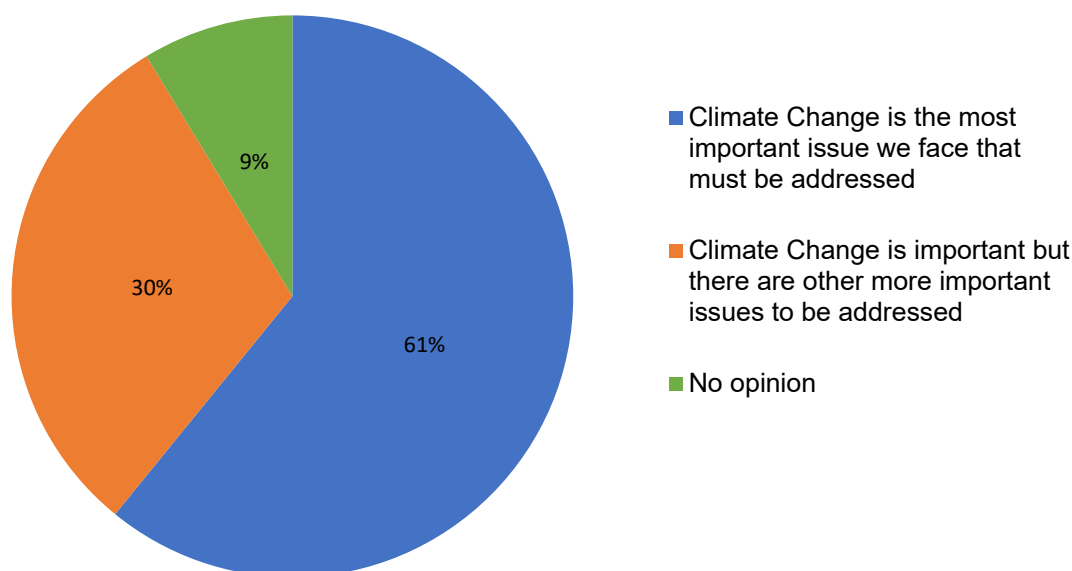


Plate 1.20 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Question 8 In general, how do you feel about climate change?

1.2.1.4.2 Question 9) Views on offshore wind’s role in climate economy and energy security

65. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with three statements on offshore wind’s contribution to climate action, economic benefit, and energy security. The results were broadly supportive:
- Offshore wind will play a crucial role in addressing climate change;
 - Offshore wind can bring a range of economic benefits to Scotland and the UK; and
 - Offshore wind has a significant role in future energy security and affordability.
66. Although overall sentiment was positive, a minority expressed concerns that national-level benefits may not translate into local affordability, energy bill reductions, or meaningful local economic benefit in island communities.



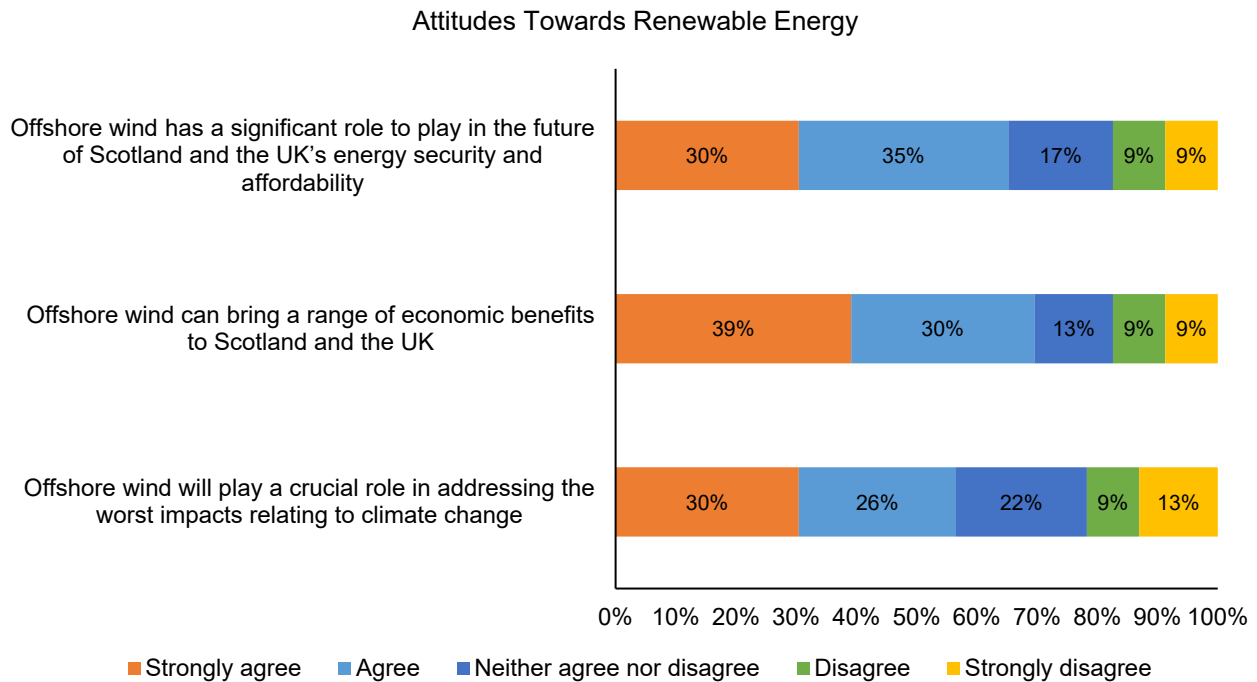


Plate 1.21 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Question 9 Attitudes towards renewable energy

1.2.1.5 Consultation

1.2.1.5.1 Question 10) Consultation experience

67. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with statements about the usefulness of the consultation. Key results included:
- Enhanced my knowledge of the Project;
 - Provided a good opportunity to share my views; and
 - Level of information was appropriate to my needs.
68. While many respondents felt informed and engaged, a sizeable minority felt that information could be clearer, more detailed or less technical. Several requested further details on environmental assessments, impacts, and timelines.



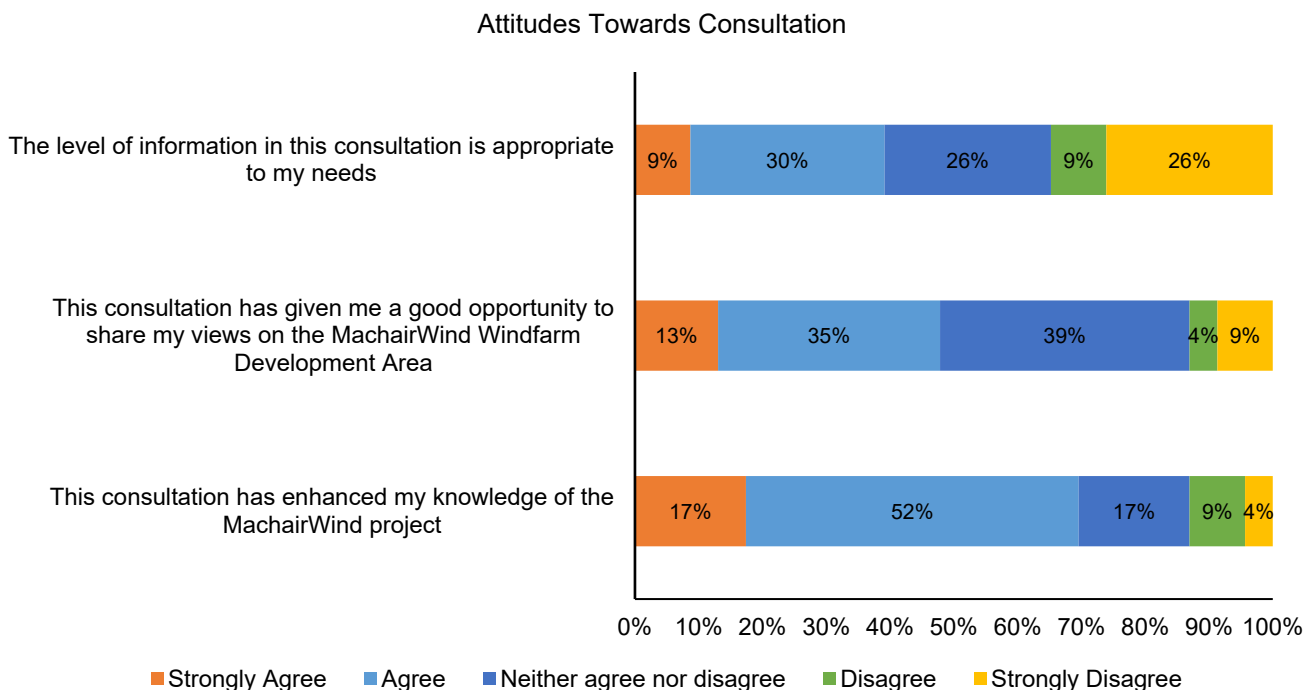


Plate 1.22 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Question 10 Attitudes towards consultation

1.2.1.5.2 Question 11) Methods of communication

69. Responses indicated that the preferred methods of communication are email (28%) and face-to-face events (25%), with the least preferred method being Post/leaflet through the door (7%).

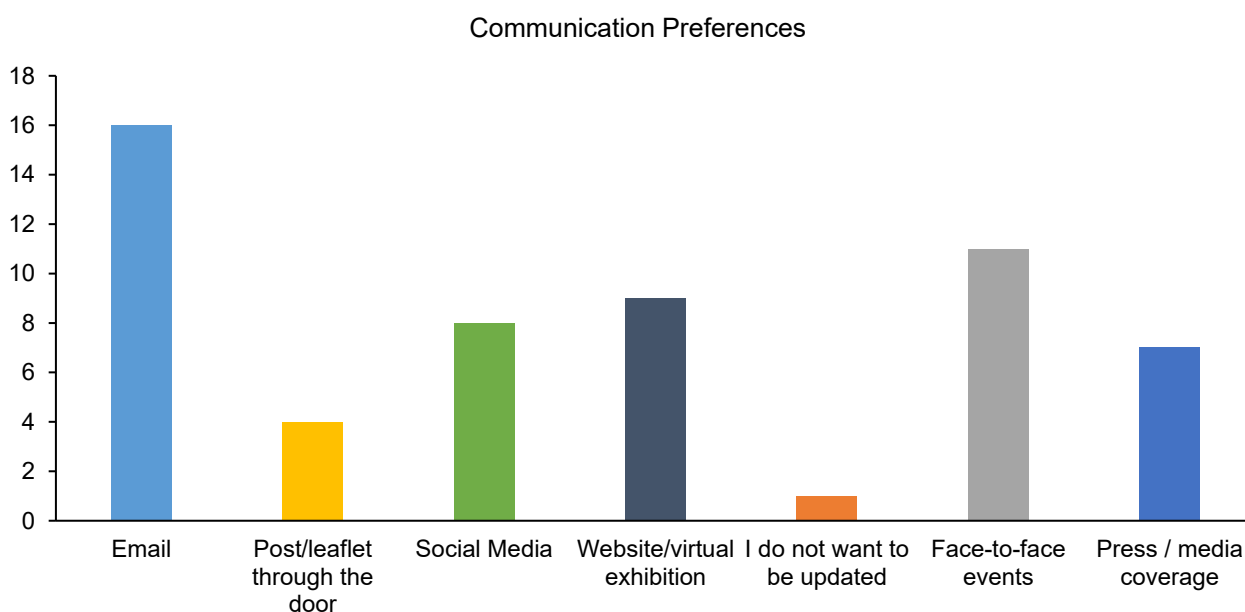


Plate 1.23 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Question 11 Communication Preferences



1.2.1.5.3 Question 12) Any further comments

70. Responses to the free-text question asking for further comments reflected a wide range of views. Of the total responses received, around 9% provided positive feedback relating to the Project's consultation materials, consultation events, offshore wind and climate change, and potential local job opportunities. The majority of responses (72%) provided negative feedback, with key themes including concerns about community benefit value, fuel poverty and subsidised energy, visual impact, wildlife and marine impacts, and the distribution of profits from the Project.



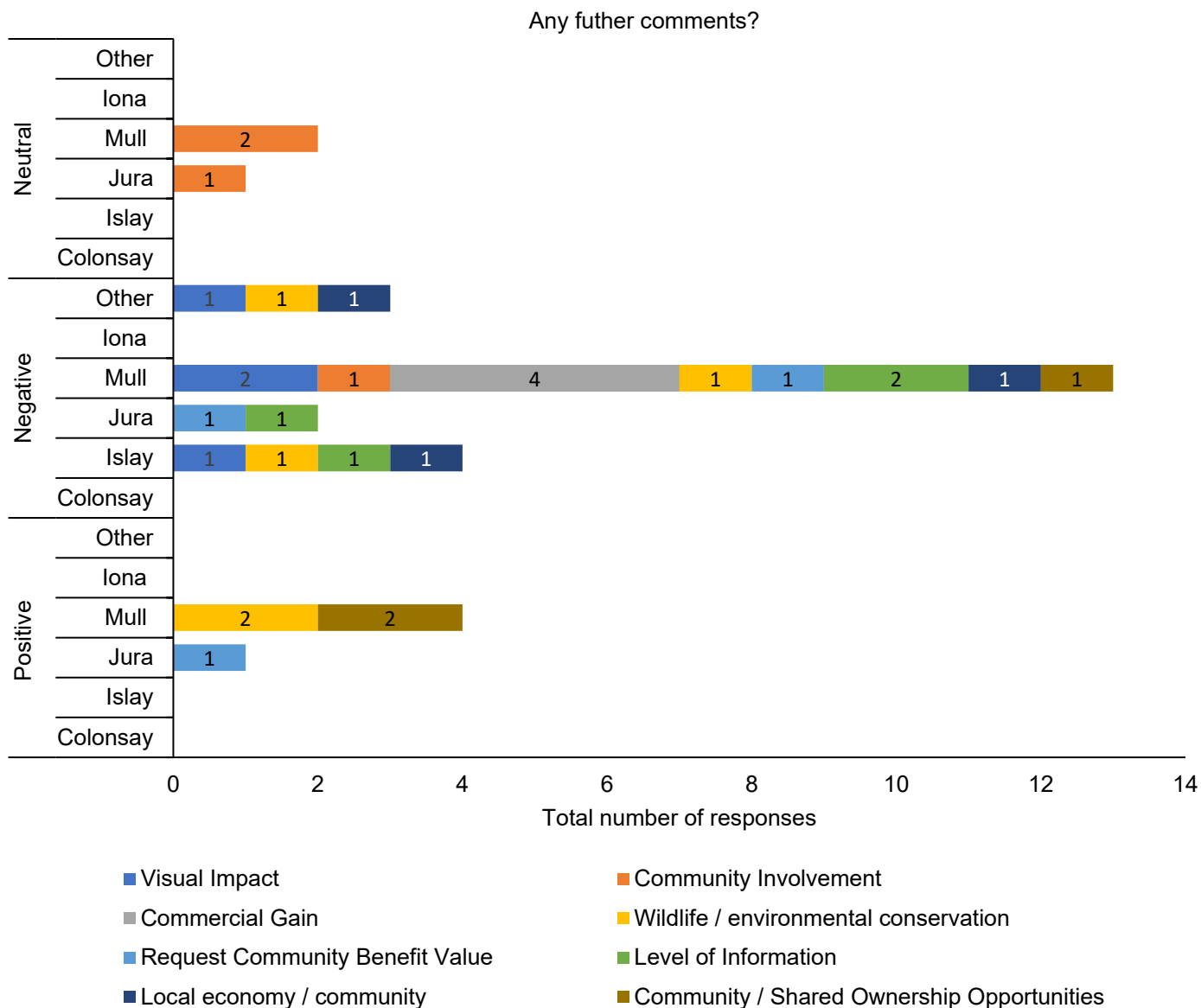


Plate 1.24 Statutory Consultation Round Two - Question 12 Any further comments?

1.2.2 Event Notes

71. This section contains the event notes recorded during the in-person exhibition sessions held as part of Statutory Consultation Round Two. The notes document the questions, comments, and themes raised by attendees, with a particular focus on responses to the updates presented since the first round of Statutory Consultation. They provide a transparent record of engagement during the second Statutory Consultation period and demonstrate how stakeholder feedback continued to inform the ongoing development of the Project and the Applicant's decision-making process.

1.2.2.1 In-person Attendance

Table 1.5 Statutory Consultation Round Two in-person attendance

Attendee No.		% of population
Islay (2)	27	1%
Jura	8	4%
Colonsay	30	25%
Ross of Mull	26	4%
Iona	14	8%
Total	105	

1.2.2.2 Key Themes

1.2.2.2.1 Community Benefit Funding

- Interest in SPR's response to Scottish Government's consultation on Community benefits from net zero energy developments; this response was shared with those who requested it.
- Continued interest in the value of the fund, with concerns around how the funds will be delivered and managed.
- Sense that attendees wanted Community Benefit Fund to go on improving infrastructure and opportunities for young people, such as transferable skills, affordable housing, diversifying the labour market.
- Requests that the funding is available in lump sum, if requested.
- Positive response to case studies from SPR's onshore projects (as shown in the information booklet). Islanders want to have agency over how the money is spent.

1.2.2.2.2 Visual / Seascape Impact

- Interest in nighttime visuals, particularly the 3D model. Some questions on whether Aircraft Detection Lighting Systems (ADLS) is being considered to minimise light pollution.
- Many stated photomontages were helpful and in line with expectations, and in some cases, better than expected.
- Many pointed out the significance of Dubh Artach Lighthouse, in terms of their views out to the Atlantic and its importance as a navigational aid for marine users.
- Positive response to interactive 3D model of the Project, some residents used this to navigate to viewpoints of importance and interest to them (such as their homes).



1.2.2.2.3 Environmental and Socio-economic Impacts

- Questions on the species that are being assessed, interest in whether specific species were being assessed e.g. Corncrake and migratory species (such as White-fronted geese) were commonly raised as well as basking sharks.
- Interest in marine mammal impact, and some concern that the windfarm may reduce biodiversity, impacting the physical environment and livelihoods (such as wildlife boat tourism).
- Interest in when the EIAR will be available.
- Questions on the port that will be used for the Project and whether local ports will be used, including interest in associated employment opportunities.
- Interest in whether the Project would impact commercial fishing with some concerns about recreational fishing too.
- Some concerns raised about the construction phase impact on the seabed, creels, shellfish & marine ecology. Interest in underwater noise impact and mitigation measures.
- Questions around how many jobs will be created and how many jobs will be for local people.

1.2.2.2.4 Engagement and Communication

- Most frequently cited means of hearing about the events were newspapers and social media.
- Suggestions for organising an island-by-island community advisory group, to ensure the voices of the community are being heard / represented to SPR (suggestion that community councils alone may not be the best way for this).
- Generally, at in-person events the attendees stayed talking to the Project team for longer than Statutory Consultation Round One.
- Suggestion social media should be used more for future engagement, particular community Facebook pages.

1.2.3 Webinar Notes

72. This section contains a summary of the discussions held between the Applicant and webinar attendees during the webinar events held online via Microsoft Teams during Statutory Consultation Round Two. The purpose of the webinar was to provide an accessible online opportunity for consultees to review the updated proposals presented during the second consultation round. This included refinements to the WDA, updated turbine parameters, new photomontages including night-time visualisations (based on the SLVIA worst case turbine layout of 91 turbines), and additional environmental and socio-economic assessment findings. The webinar agendas included a dedicated section for questions and answers (Q&As).
73. The presentation delivered by the Applicant to webinar attendees has been provided below (**Table 1.6**). To view the presentation slides, please refer to **Appendix 9 PAC Consultation Round Two Materials** of the **PAC Report**.
74. A summary of the discussions during the first webinar, held on 6 November 2025, is outlined in
- 75.
76. **Table 1.7.** The session was attended by three members of the public, alongside several members of the Project team representing project management, engineering, environment, landscape and visual assessment, supply chain and community engagement functions.
77. A summary of the discussions during the second webinar, held on 18 November 2025, is outlined in **Table 1.8**. The session was attended by 11 members of the public, together with representatives from the Project team covering disciplines including stakeholder engagement, engineering, environmental assessment, landscape and visual assessment and socio-economics.



Table 1.6 Statutory Consultation Round Two – Applicant's presentation to webinar attendees

Minutes
Housekeeping: The Project team provided welcome and outlined the agenda/housekeeping for the webinar.
Project Overview: The Project team provided a project update in terms of refined characteristics and changes to the Project timescales following the first round of consultation. The Project team described refinements to the site having reduced the area from the original Option Agreement Area of 754km² to 510km² for scoping, which was presented at Statutory Consultation 1, and to 448km² based on engineering considerations in addition to community and stakeholder feedback. The northern boundary has been refined, including increasing the buffer around Dubh Artach lighthouse (applying a 2nm buffer) to allow access for vessels and helicopters undertaking scheduled maintenance. The eastern boundary refinements were primarily driven to address SLVIA concerns raised by stakeholders and the public and to address Shipping and Navigation needs, responding to feedback from statutory and non-statutory bodies. The southern boundary refinements were made to reduce the spread of turbines across the horizons and were made in response to feedback based around marine user safety and navigation. The Project team confirmed that further geotechnical and engineering surveys will be undertaken if the Project is consented. The Project team also noted that what is presented within the application is a worst-case scenario and further refinement to area and design will come post consent.
Need for the Project: The Project team summarised the need for project based on increased demand for electricity, need to reduce emissions, and move towards energy security.
What is ScotWind? The Project team summarised why the windfarm is located where it is based on the Offshore Wind Sectoral Marine Plan and the W1 Plan Option (now known as 'MachairWind') specifically.
Community Engagement The Project team summarised the timeline for community engagement on the Project to date including the second round of Statutory Consultation. The Project team highlighted the importance of receiving feedback and urged participants to fill in feedback forms/email the MachairWind inbox. Taking your Feedback Forward The Project team summarised the response to the first round of consultation which saw 154 attendees across 8 events and received 143 feedback forms, which have helped better understand local priorities, concerns, and expectations and have helped inform the decision-making process. The Project team highlighted methods for analysing feedback and how feedback received has informed the decision-making process, for example narrowing the horizontal spread of the WDA.
How is the Impact being Assessed The Project team highlighted the overarching process of the EIA, which identifies, evaluates and assesses likely significant effects on the environment and local communities The Project team provided a summary of topics that are assessed and highlighted some key stakeholders that have been and will continue to be consulted. The Project team provided some examples of Environmental Impact Assessment topics, paying particular attention to birds, marine mammals and visual impact. The Project team introduced LUC's role as a sub-consultant in assessing visual impacts. The Project team reiterated that the assessment is based on a worst-case scenario and clarified that this is the tallest turbine with fewer numbers (91 turbines at 335m height). The team noted that if consent is granted the Project may comprise of a greater number of smaller turbines, but the impact will be less than what is being assessed through the EIA.

Minutes
The Project team highlighted a few slides with example photomontages, but recommended participants look on project website for higher resolution images. the Project team provided link in chat. The Project team highlighted for Viewpoint 14, this is a nighttime / dusk visuals which shows the WDA from night so you can see how the turbines are silhouetted. Confirmed that some turbines will be lit for marine user and aviation safety reasons, with the photomontages showing an indicative lighting scheme of 36 turbines having aviation lights located on the nacelle. Some will also have marine navigation safety lighting located on base of tower, which are less visible.
Ports The Project Team confirmed that a preliminary ports assessment has been undertaken to identify ports that may be suitable for construction and operation & maintenance activities to identify what currently exists and what enhancements needed to facilitate delivery of the Project. The Project Team confirmed that no formal decisions have been made at this stage in the Project, this will be selected at a later stage of development following further assessments, consultation with stakeholders and communities and detailed reviews of the potential options, however it has allowed for more informed decisions to maximise the use of local infrastructure.
Benefits, Impacts and Opportunities The Project Team highlighted that SPR are making significant efforts to ensure economic benefits are felt locally are looking to maximise local content. The Project Team summarised SPR's commitments as part of delivery. The Project Team provided examples of SPR delivering on these commitments and lessons learnt from experience with the SPR East Anglia offshore windfarm Projects and confirmed that SPR have demonstrated how local investment can drive economic growth. The Project Team highlighted that 550 young learners have been engaged so far, to help to inspire next generation and build their awareness on offshore wind to help inspire the next generation of the work force and learn about safety at sea. The Project Team also highlighted that SPR are sponsoring the first Fit 4 Offshore Renewables Islands and Coastal Communities programme run by the ORE Catapult focused, with 4 businesses from Argyll and Bute taking part in the 2025/2026 programme. The Project team highlighted that the Project are drafting a socio-economic action plan to confirm SPR's commitments and also address the priorities and opportunities of offshore wind for host communities, Argyll and Bute, and the wider West of Scotland region, which will be submitted alongside the EIAR. The Project team confirmed that whilst this is not a material aspect of the planning consent, SPR are aware of the importance of Community Benefit Funding to communities and are committed to providing funding. The Project team confirmed that they are unsure of value of this fund as yet. The Project team confirmed that within the SPR 2024 Community Benefit Fund Report, case studies demonstrate that the agency for how to spend the funding is with communities. The Project team highlighted that communities in Argyll and Bute hosting onshore windfarms have received community benefit funding in excess of £3.8million to date, choosing to spend the money on a range of initiatives. The Project team confirmed that despite being in pre-consent stage of the Project, SPR have launched the MachairWind Small Donations Fund, for communities across Islay, Jura, Colonsay, Ross of Mull and Iona, offering funding of up to £500 per initiative. The Project team also confirmed this is something SPR would like to make this available next year if possible.
Have your say The Project team highlighted that one of SPR's main objectives is to meaningfully consider all feedback received and demonstrate how your feedback has been incorporated into the decision-making process. This feedback is important as it helps to continue refinement of the development proposals for the project. The Project team closed out the presentation part of the webinar and opened the Q&A session.



Table 1.7 06 November 2025 - Webinar Q&A section summary

Q&A Session
1. Port Selection Attendees asked which ports are being considered for operation and maintenance (O&M), including whether Oban remained an option. Applicant response: The team confirmed that Oban was initially considered but is no longer under consideration for O&M, however it is being considered as a Marine Operations base. The current port options being explored for O&M include Hunterston, Campbeltown, and King George V Dock. 2. Project Duration Questions were raised about the difference between the ScotWind 25-year lease and the Projects proposed 35-year operational life. Applicant response: SPR explained that the lease length and operational life are not always identical. Projects may undergo life-extension assessments, repowering, or other asset management decisions that can support longer operational timelines. 3. Floating Wind Consideration & Site Boundary Attendees asked whether floating wind was considered and whether the shape of the W1 site could be altered. Further questions were raised about whether Crown Estate Scotland could amend the site in terms of the location. Applicant response: SPR confirmed that the site shape cannot be changed. Boundaries are fixed based on constraints such as shipping lanes and navigational safety. Floating technology was considered at an early stage but is not part of the design envelope; the Project is a fixed-bottom technology project. 4. Comparisons with Berwick Bank Some attendees asked whether Berwick Bank received consent due to potential legal pressure. Applicant response: SPR reiterated the site-specific nature of the MachairWind assessment and explained the constraints and rationale behind the site design. No suggestion was made that legal action forms part of SPR's consenting approach. 5. Economic Viability, Turbine Numbers & Wave Energy Questions were raised about the number of turbines needed for economic viability, as well as whether SPR is exploring wave energy in areas such as Iona or Islay. Applicant response: SPR noted that economic thresholds depend on several variables, including grid capacity and technical parameters. SPR also confirmed the scope of this Project is not wave energy development. 6. Consultation Events Some participants expressed frustration about the consultation process, noting difficulties attending in-person events and raising concerns about community impact. Applicant response: SPR acknowledged these feelings and reaffirmed the purpose of the consultation as an opportunity to understand concerns, highlighting that for those unable to attend the in-person events a virtual consultation room has been created and is available throughout the six-week period in addition to the webinars. Attendees were reassured that visual impact, and other key topics, would continue to be discussed throughout the process. 7. Visual Impact Attendees expressed strong views regarding the realism of photomontages, noting concerns about visibility, backlighting, and standards used. Some felt visuals under-represented impact. Applicant response: SPR explained that all visualisations follow NatureScot guidance and recognised national standards (e.g., TGN 06/19). Immersive 3D visualisations were also made available during drop-in events. SPR encouraged feedback on the photomontages.

Q&A Session
8. Turbine Numbers, Lighting & Marking Questions were raised about worst-case turbine numbers, lighting effects, and whether turbines could appear as dark silhouettes. Applicant response: SPR explained that the worst-case scenario uses fewer, larger turbines (i.e. 91 turbine layout at 335m height), which typically maximises visibility. Lighting requirements follow marine user and aviation regulations. Concerns about contrast and backlighting were noted and will be addressed through the SLVIA. 9. Community Wellbeing & Local Impacts Some attendees felt the project would significantly affect island life and their wellbeing, and questioned the acceptability of the development. Applicant response: SPR noted that attendees could submit formal representations to Scottish Ministers once the consent applications are submitted, and noted that topics such as seascape, and socio-economic effects are integral to the EIA process.

Table 1.8 18 November 2025 - Webinar Q&A section summary

Q&A Session
1. Supply Chain & Local Economic Benefits Attendees asked how Scottish suppliers will directly benefit from MachairWind and whether project components will be sourced locally. Applicant response: SPR is undertaking a supply chain assessment covering 300+ Scottish suppliers and working with Scottish and UK Governments to identify investment priorities. SPR noted its East Anglia offshore windfarm projects spent £1.6bn with UK companies and aims to regionalise similar benefits for ScotWind. 2. Marine Ecology, Data Adequacy & Methodology Concerns were raised about basking shark populations, spawning grounds, bird migration, and whether DAS surveys capture accurate data. Applicant response: DAS data will be incorporated with an understanding of limitations. Newer datasets and tagging studies from the last five years are now included. No additional basking shark surveys have been undertaken, but cumulative effects are being assessed, and further monitoring may be considered. 3. Collision Risk for Migratory Birds Attendees queried how collision risk for migratory geese and swans is being modelled and whether tagging studies could be used. Applicant response: MacArthur Green is undertaking the assessment. NatureScot's recommended collision risk tool will be used, and relevant tagging data (e.g. Whooper swans at West of Duddon Sands; Greenland white-fronted geese) will inform avoidance rates. Action: SPR to share publicly available reports and tools. 4. Engagement with Local Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Reserves Questions were raised about consultation with teams at local RSPB reserves, and about species of concern such as chough and corncrake. Response: SPR has met with local reserve staff and continues to engage with the RSPB at a regional and national level through subject matter expert workshops on offshore ornithology (known as 'expert topic group' meetings). Species scoping follows NatureScot and RSPB guidance. 5. Navigation & Lighting Concerns



Q&A Session

Point raised that The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) highlighted potential navigational “choke zones” and lighting confusion.

Applicant response: Hazard Navigational Risk Assessment Workshops were held locally on Islay and in Edinburgh, which addressed these issues. RYA remains an ongoing consultee.

6. Trust in the Consenting Process & Comparisons with Berwick Bank

Attendees expressed concern that Scottish Government would grant consent regardless of ecological impact, citing Berwick Bank.

Applicant Response: SPR clarified that MachairWind is a different project with site-specific assessments.

7. Airborne Noise & Vibration

Concerns raised about airborne noise and basalt-related vibration affecting nesting birds.

Applicant response: These topics have not yet been assessed.

Action: SPR provided a written response on airborne noise impacts following the webinar to the interested attendee.

8. Export Cable Corridor

Questions raised regarding when the export cable corridor will be narrowed and whether surveys have started.

Applicant response: The project is still at the desktop study stage, and no ground surveys nor engagement with stakeholders has been undertaken for the export cable corridor for MachairWind.

9. Carbon Footprint & Payback Period

Attendees asked about the construction carbon footprint and expected payback time.

Applicant response: The Greenhouse Gas Assessment will be detailed in the EIAR, including full lifecycle emissions. It was noted that typical payback for an offshore wind is between 5 months and 1 year generally, however this differs depending on design and generating capacity. The SPR–Carbon Trust carbon calculator is being used.

10. Gravity Base Structures (GBS)

Attendees queried why GBS was removed between consultation rounds.

Applicant response: Seabed depth and ground conditions make GBS unsuitable for turbines, with additional environmental considerations also influencing the decision. GBS may remain an option for substations.

11. Socio-Economic Assessment & Tourism Impacts

Concerns raised about how tourism-dependent communities, especially Iona, will be assessed.

Applicant response: BiGGAR Economics will lead the assessment; methodology will be provided in writing. The socio-economic action plan will involve ongoing community consultation.

Action: Written clarification on the socio-economic Impact assessment methodology was emailed following the webinar to the interested attendee.

12. Grid Connection

Attendees asked whether grid infrastructure would come ashore on the islands.

Applicant response: No, cables will connect onshore in the vicinity of Girvan, South Ayrshire; no island landfalls are planned.

13. Night-Sky Impacts & Aviation Lighting

Concerns raised about “night pollution,” and queries on whether ADLS could be used.

Applicant response: Red aviation lights do not cause sky glow. ADLS is used in Europe but are not currently permitted under UK regulations. SPR will continue to engage with key stakeholders, including the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) and Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB), in addition to NatureScot on the point of marine and aviation user safety and lighting. Final turbine layout will not exceed the worst-case layout shown.