



Earraghail Renewable Energy Development

Additional Information

February 2023

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1 Introduction

1. ScottishPower Renewables (UK) Ltd has applied to the Scottish Ministers for consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 to construct and operate the Earraghail Renewable Energy Development on land between the village of Tarbert, to the north east, and the village of Skipness, to the south, situated within the northern part of the Kintyre Peninsula in Argyll & Bute (Central Grid Reference NR 88732 63637). The installed capacity of the proposed generating station would be over 50MW, comprising up to 13 turbines with a maximum ground to blade tip height of 180 metres, and around 5 MW of ground mounted solar arrays. The proposed Development also includes around 25 MW of battery energy storage (BESS).
2. The proposed Development is subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report was produced to accompany the application for consent and received by the Scottish Ministers 21st February 2022 (Reference: ECU00003421).
3. Additional information was requested by NatureScot regarding landscape impacts, viewpoints and visualisation material from the Isle of Arran. This document has been produced to present this additional environmental information. During the course of post-submission evaluation of the application, there has also been correspondence with various key stakeholders for the purposes of clarifying matters within the EIA Report. This correspondence is included in Appendix A – D.

2 Landscape and Visuals

2.1 Background

1. Following submission of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and further correspondence with NatureScot, they have requested additional visualisations from five additional locations from Arran;
 - an additional hill summit in the National Scenic Area (NSA) and Wild Land Area (WLA) (VP23 Torr Head),
 - a view from the south eastern end of Lochranza with the Castle visible in the foreground (VP24),
 - and three representative viewpoints from the NSA coast (VP25, 26 and 27).
2. The visualisations for Viewpoints 23-27 accompany this document and a viewpoint analysis for these viewpoints is included below. The cumulative situation presented within these visualisations remains as it was within the EIAR.

2.2 Viewpoint Analysis

3. The format of this analysis follows the format of **Technical Appendix 7.5** of the EIAR. Panoramic photographs, wireline diagrams and photomontages are provided to illustrate the existing view and the likely extent of the proposed Development at each viewpoint location.
4. This viewpoint analysis considers the nature of the predicted view and the scale of change. The wider extent of the effect (beyond the individual viewpoint considered), and its duration, are not captured in the viewpoint analysis (as a single viewpoint cannot capture extent or duration). Extent and duration are factors in the overall judgement on magnitude of change, therefore, judgements on magnitude of change and overall level of effect and significance have been considered in the Landscape and Visual Assessment in **Chapter 7** of the EIAR and these additional viewpoints do not change that assessment.
5. The method of assessment used for the viewpoint analysis, which is described in **Technical Appendix 7.1** of the EIAR, accords with current best-practice guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management, 2013). Observations are made of the baseline landscape and visual characteristics at each of the representative viewpoints. Observations, computer modelling and professional judgement are applied to determine the scale of change attributable to the proposed Development (Large, Medium, Small and Negligible) upon landscape character and visual amenity at each individual viewpoint in order to determine the scale of effect.
6. The visual analysis takes into account the screening effect of intervening landform, vegetation and built form, however the full extent of felling (Phases 1-4) on the Site have been shown as felled within photomontages to illustrate the maximum visibility on Site. It assumes excellent clear weather conditions; although the influence of different seasons, weather, sunlight and visibility conditions have been considered, where relevant.
7. A description of cumulative sites in each cumulative scenario as seen at each viewpoint is also provided, whilst the cumulative landscape and visual effects are described fully within Landscape and Visual Assessment in **Chapter 7** of the EIAR. Operational windfarms form part of the existing landscape and visual baseline.

Viewpoint 23	Torr Nead
Location	Beside the cairn at the summit of Torr Nead
Distance/ Direction from the proposed Development	12.4 km south
Landscape Character Type / Area	LCT83: Rugged Upland - Ayrshire (NatureScot 2019) Also in the North Arran NSA, North Arran SLA (North Ayrshire) and North Arran WLA
Visual Receptors	Hill walkers
Existing View	<p>From this hilltop there are open seaward views over Lochranza to the Kintyre peninsula to the northwest. Adjacent sweeping moorland hills to the north screen the base of the northern end of the Kintyre peninsula. Views open slightly to the northeast toward Bute. Views to the south are to Arrans rugged interior, with Goatfell and associated peaks visible beside rising domed hills that screen views to the southwest.</p> <p>Operational turbines are visible at Deucheran Hill and Cour in the west, Freasdail in the west-northwest and Alt Dearg and Srondine Community in the northwest. Each of these developments form relatively distance features in the view.</p>
Predicted View & Scale of Visual Change	<p>The full turbine array of the proposed Development and meteorological mast would be visible from this location within the partially forested hills at the head of Kintyre peninsula. The proposed Development would add another distinct cluster within the Kintyre peninsula where wind farms are a common feature of this landscape. There would be some screening to the towers and bases of the turbines. Due to the elevation and angle of view, much of ground-level infrastructure (including the solar area beneath T6 and substation), the large extent of peatland restoration and some keyhole felling at the base of the turbines would also be visible.</p> <p>The scale of change during operation would be Medium.</p>
Scale of Change to Landscape Character	<p>Key characteristics of the LCT are seen in southern views towards the jagged peaks of Arrans interior, with other landscapes appearing separate and secondary, although clearly visible. The proposed Development would appear in an adjacent landscape which is separate from the Rugged Uplands LCT and would have very limited influence on key characteristics of the LCT at the viewpoint.</p> <p>The scale of change during operation would be Small.</p>
Cumulative	<p>Scenario 2: Consented turbines will be seen along the Kintyre peninsula from this viewpoint. High Constellation will be seen to join existing turbines at Cour to form a small cluster in the west, and Eascairt will appear near Freasdail. Airigh will be visible in the distance on the horizon behind Freasdail. The addition of the proposed Development would add a single cluster at the head of the Kintyre peninsula, well separated from the other clusters and result in the same scale of change as identified above.</p> <p>Scenario 3: Proposed turbines at Narachan would add density to the Cour/High Constellation cluster. Sheirdrim would fill the gap between Freasdail and Eascairt. The addition of the proposed Development would add a single cluster at the head of the Kintyre peninsula, well separated from the other clusters and result in the same scale of change as identified as Scenario 2.</p>

Viewpoint 24	Lochranza
Location	On the roadside at the southern end of Lochranza
Distance/ Direction from the proposed Development	11.0 km south
Landscape Character Type / Area	LCT 62: Coastal Headlands (NatureScot 2019) Also in the North Arran NSA and North Arran SLA (North Ayrshire)
Visual Receptors	Settlement, Road Users, National Cycle Route 77
Existing View	Views here are focused northwest down Loch Ranza towards the Kilbrannan Sound and the Kintyre peninsula forms the background of the view. This view is framed by rising landform and mature trees to the left where the Lochranza Castle remains are seen at the waterside in the foreground, and Newton Point to the right behind houses at the waterside. Visibility is shortened to the north and east by rising hills across the road, and to the south by settlement at the viewpoint.
Predicted View & Scale of Visual Change	Nine hubs and eight tips would be visible from this location with landform and vegetation screening T2, T3 & T11 and the hub of T4 to the north of the array. The meteorological mast would be visible to the south of the array. The felling/landuse changes would be visible for some of the western most turbines as well as some of the tracks. However, all other ground-level infrastructure including the solar array and substation would be screened by landform. The scale of change during operation would be Medium.
Scale of Change to Landscape Character	The proposed Development would be seen in a clearly different landscape type on the Kintyre peninsula rather than on Arran. Although it would be visible in the background, it would have little influence on the settled coastal character of the landscape at the viewpoint. The scale of change during operation would be Small.
Cumulative	There would be no cumulative effects at this viewpoint.

Viewpoint 25	Catacol
Location	On the minor road/ grass verge across from the cottages at Catacol
Distance/ Direction from the proposed Development	11.2 km south
Landscape Character Type / Area	LCT 59: Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (NatureScot 2019) Also in the North Arran NSA and North Arran SLA (North Ayrshire)
Visual Receptors	Road users, settlement, walkers on Arran Coastal Way
Existing View	<p>Broad, eastward views are available from this coastal viewpoint over the Kilbrannan Sound to the Kintyre peninsula, which forms a low, gently undulating partially forested horizon. Landform of Kintyre peninsula raises slightly to form the headland where the site is located before dropping into Loch Fyne in the north, with South Cowal visible in the distance. Operational wind farms are visible on Kintyre peninsula including Deucheran Hill, Cour and Freasdail located on the horizon.</p> <p>Steep, rising landform on the east of the road shortens views to the east with cottages and detached houses across forming the settlement of Catacol at the roadside. Views are similarly short to the southeast, opening back up again to the southwest.</p>
Predicted View & Scale of Visual Change	<p>All hubs and tips of the proposed development would be visible to the north on the horizon of the Kintyre headland. The proposed Development would add another distinct cluster within the Kintyre peninsula where wind farms are a common feature of this landscape.</p> <p>The meteorological mast would be theoretically visible beside T14, along with some additional ground level infrastructure/landuse changes but would only be noticeable in good weather conditions.</p> <p>The scale of change during operation would be Medium.</p>
Scale of Change to Landscape Character	<p>Long distance seaward views are key characteristics of this LCT. There would be a clear separation with the proposed Development, which would be associated with the upland landscape of the Kintyre peninsula rather than the Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs LCT at this location. The proposed turbines would be a notable feature in a neighbouring landscape but would have limited influence on this character type.</p> <p>The scale of change during operation would be Small.</p>
Cumulative	<p>Scenario 2: High Constellation will be visible in the west, forming a cluster with operational Cour turbines. Eascairt turbines will be seen in the northwest near Freasdail. The addition of Earraghail would add a single cluster at the head of the Kintyre peninsula, well separated from the other clusters. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline, the addition of the proposed Development would result in the same scale of change as identified above.</p> <p>Scenario 3: Narachan would be visible behind Cour and High Constellation, adding density to the western cluster. The Sheidrim turbines would fill the gap between Eascairt and Freasdail, forming a cluster. The addition of Earraghail would add a single cluster at the head of the Kintyre peninsula, well separated from the other clusters. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and other proposals, the addition of the proposed Development would result in the same scale of change as Scenario 2.</p>

Viewpoint 26	Thundergay
Location	At the roadside at Thundergay
Distance/ Direction from the proposed Development	14.3 km south
Landscape Character Type / Area	LCT 59: Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (NatureScot 2019) Also in the North Arran NSA and North Arran SLA (North Ayrshire)
Visual Receptors	Road users, settlement, walkers on Arran Coastal Way
Existing View	Existing views here are open to the west across the Kilbrannan Sound to the low, gently undulating partially forested, upland of the Kintyre peninsula. The end of the Kintyre headland is screened by foreground landform on Arran above the road. The rocky coastline extends north and south along the roadside from the viewpoint, with grassy landform on Arran rising to screen views to the east across the road. Operational turbines can be seen along the horizon with Deucheran Hill and Cour visible to the west
Predicted View & Scale of Visual Change	All hubs and tips of the proposed Development would be visible above the horizon on the Kintyre headland to the north. The proposed Development would add another distinct cluster within the Kintyre peninsula where wind farms are a common feature of this landscape. Theoretically some keyhole felling would be visible in the centre of the array, with the meteorological mast seen between the two southernmost turbine groups, but at this distance they may be difficult to discern. The scale of change during operation would be Medium/Small.
Scale of Change to Landscape Character	Long distance seaward views are key characteristics of this LCT. There would be a clear separation with the proposed Development, which would be associated with the upland landscape of the Kintyre peninsula rather than the Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs LCT at this location. The proposed turbines would be a notable feature in a neighbouring landscape but would have limited influence on the character type. The scale of change during operation would be Small.
Cumulative	Scenario 2: High Constellation will be visible to the right of Cour forming a cluster in the west. Eascairt will appear to the northwest near Freasdail (not noticeable). The addition of Earraghail would add a single cluster at the head of the Kintyre peninsula, well separated from the other clusters. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline, the addition of the proposed Development would result in the same scale of change as identified above. Scenario 3: Narachan would be seen behind operational turbines at Cour to the west, adding density to the cluster, whilst Sheirdrim would be seen behind Freasdail to the northwest. The addition of Earraghail would add a single cluster at the head of the Kintyre peninsula, well separated from the other clusters. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and proposals, the addition of the proposed Development would result in the same scale of change as identified for Scenario 2.

Viewpoint 27	Whitefarland
Location	At the roadside close to dwellings at Whitefarland
Distance/ Direction from the proposed Development	18.7 km south
Landscape Character Type / Area	LCT 59: Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs (NatureScot 2019) Also in the North Arran NSA and North Arran SLA (North Ayrshire)
Visual Receptors	Road users, settlement, walkers on Arran Coastal Way
Existing View	Views west include scattered settlement and coastal fields of improved grazing land in the foreground with the Kilbrannan Sound in the middle ground and the low horizon of the Kintyre peninsula forming the background. Operational wind farms can be seen on the Kintyre peninsula to the west where Deucheran Hill and Cour appear on the horizon. To the east, foreground landscape on Arran rises to shorten inland views. Views to the south are short, along the road which bends out of view in dense shrubby woodland.
Predicted View & Scale of Visual Change	All turbines of the proposed Development would be visible to the north on the Kintyre headland. Theoretically the meteorological mast would be visible beside T8 along with some ground level infrastructure and landuse changes discernible on a clear day. The scale of change during operation would be Small/Negligible.
Scale of Change to Landscape Character	The proposed Development would introduce another distinct cluster within the Kintyre peninsula where wind farms are a common feature of this landscape. They would appear more distant than operational turbines seen from here and would be associated with the upland landscape of the Kintyre peninsula rather than the Raised Beach Coast and Cliffs LCT at this location. The scale of change during operation would be Negligible.
Cumulative	Scenario 2: High Constellation will be visible to the west, appearing to join onto the northern end of Cour, forming a cluster on the Kintyre peninsula. Eascairt will appear in the distance to the north. The addition of Earraghail would add a single cluster at the head of the Kintyre peninsula, well separated from the other clusters. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline, the addition of the proposed Development would result in the same scale of change as identified above. Scenario 3: Narachan would appear in the west and would merge with Cour, adding to the density of the cluster on the Kintyre peninsula, while Sheirdrim would be seen behind Eascairt, adding density to the cluster. The addition of Earraghail would add a single cluster at the head of the Kintyre peninsula, well separated from the other clusters. Assuming the prior presence of the fully consented baseline and proposals, the addition of the proposed Development would result in the same scale of change as identified for Scenario 2. Scenario 4: A single tip of the Rowan scoping scheme would not be discernible.

2.3 Summary

8. The five additional viewpoints on the northern part of Arran have provided further illustrations of the effects for the receptors noted. The scale of change identified from these viewpoints remains consistent with the assessments set out within the Landscape and Visual Assessment in **Chapter 7** of the EIAR.

Appendix A: Transport Scotland Stage 1 Road Safety Audit correspondence

The submitted Transport Scotland Stage 1 Road Safety Audit can be accessed at the Energy Consents Unit's website at the following address: <https://www.energyconsents.scot/ApplicationDetails.aspx?cr=ECU00003421>, document titled "Applicant's response to Transport Scotland with Stage 1 audit report - dated 3 August 2022"

From: [McPhillips G \(Gerard\)](#)
To: [Flaherty D \(Debbie\)](#)
Cc: [LOGAN Lesley](#)
Subject: RE: Earraghail Wind Farm - Stage 1 Road Safety Audit
Date: 04 October 2022 15:03:50
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[Earraghail Wind Farm Connection TS Response Sept 22.pdf](#)

Debbie

Further to your emails below I do not appear to have been copied in to the one you sent on the 30th August requesting further comments. However, I have now found it on our system and can confirm that Transport Scotland has no further comments to make regarding the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit as this was reviewed and signed off by the Area Manager back in August..

Transport Scotland has however recently provided ECU with comments on the Earraghail Wind Farm OHL – see attached.

Regards.

Gerard



Gerard McPhillips
Transport Scotland
Development Management Quality Manager
Roads Directorate
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M: 07775 547 664
gerard.mcphillips@transport.gov.scot
transport.gov.scot

From: Flaherty D (Debbie) <Debbie.Flaherty@gov.scot>
Sent: 29 September 2022 13:28
To: Erskine A (Andrew) <Andrew.Erskine@transport.gov.scot>; McPhillips G (Gerard) <Gerard.McPhillips@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Earraghail Wind Farm - Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

Dear Gerard/Andrew

I refer to my email below and wondered if you can give me a timeline for Transport Scotland's further consultation comments on this wind farm project.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Debbie Flaherty | Consents Manager | Energy Consents Unit
☎ 07393 753458 | W: 0131 244 1258 | debbie.flaherty@gov.scot
Scottish Government | 4th Floor | 5 Atlantic Quay | 150 Broomielaw | Glasgow | G2 8LU

From: Flaherty D (Debbie)
Sent: 30 August 2022 18:02
To: Erskine A (Andrew) <Andrew.Erskine@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Earraghail - Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

Dear Transport Scotland

Thank you for your consultation response dated 4 April 2022 (attached for reference)

Please now find attached a response from the Applicant's agent enclosing the stage 1 safety audit as requested. I look forward to receiving TS further comments.

Regards

Debbie Flaherty | Consents Manager | Energy Consents Unit
☎ 07393 753458 | W: 0131 244 1258 | debbie.flaherty@gov.scot
Scottish Government | 4th Floor | 5 Atlantic Quay | 150 Broomielaw | Glasgow | G2 8LU

From: Sarah Sinclair <Sarah.Sinclair@stephenson-halliday.com>
Sent: 30 August 2022 14:59
To: Flaherty D (Debbie) <Debbie.Flaherty@gov.scot>
Cc: Joe Somerville <JSomerville@rsk.co.uk>; Rae, Kirsten <krae@scottishpower.com>; Samantha McHardy <Samantha.McHardy@stephenson-halliday.com>
Subject: RE: Earraghail - Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

Dear Debbie,

Hope you are well. We are following up on the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and whether you have had any contact with Transport Scotland?

Many thanks
Sarah

Sarah Sinclair
Associate Director (Planning)
+44(0)7909214168
[LinkedIn](#)
[My normal working days are Monday to Thursday](#)

stephenson-halliday.com

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From: Rae, Kirsten <krae@scottishpower.com>
Sent: 24 August 2022 11:58
To: debbie.flaherty@gov.scot
Cc: Joe Somerville <jsomerville@rsk.co.uk>; Sarah Sinclair <sarah.sinclair@stephenson-halliday.com>
Subject: FW: Earraghail - Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

Debbie,

Please see attached and below.

If you have not heard from Transport Scotland then it may be worth contacting them – they have reviewed and agreed with our responses in the attached and as such it is understood that this would not constitute FEI.

Thanks,

Kirsten

Kirsten Rae | Project Manager | Onshore Development
Mob: +44 7850 943 153 | Email: krae@scottishpower.com

Internal Use

From: Sarah Sinclair <Sarah.Sinclair@stephenson-halliday.com>
Sent: 09 August 2022 08:43
To: Pearson, Sean <s.pearson@scottishpower.com>; Rae, Kirsten <krae@scottishpower.com>
Cc: Joe Somerville <jsomerville@rsk.co.uk>; Samantha McHardy <Samantha.McHardy@stephenson-halliday.com>
Subject: Earraghail - Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

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Dear Sean and Kirsten,

Please see attached the countersigned RSA Stage 1 response. It is understood Transport Scotland will be responding to ECU and they will be looking for the issues identified in the Stage 1 RSA to be addressed by the Design Team which they anticipate will be resolved during the next design phase.

It is recommended we contact Debbie on her return from holiday (understand this is 17th August) to check if she has received Transport Scotland's response.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to get in contact to discuss.

Many thanks

Sarah

Sarah Sinclair

Associate Director (Planning)

+44(0)7909214168

[LinkedIn](#)

My normal working days are Monday to Thursday

Annual Leave notice: 10th August to 17th August



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Appendix B: Marine Scotland Questionnaire

Annex 1

MSS – EIA Checklist

The generic scoping guidelines should ensure that all matters relevant to freshwater and diadromous fish and fisheries have been addressed and presented in the appropriate chapters of the EIA report. Use of the checklist below should ensure that the EIA report contains the following information; the absence of such information ***may necessitate requesting additional information*** which could delay the process:

MSS Standard EIA Report Requirements	Provided in application YES/NO	If YES – please signpost to relevant chapter of EIA Report	If not provided or provided different to MSS advice, please set out reasons.
1. A map outlining the proposed development area and the proposed location of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ the turbines,○ associated crane hard standing areas,○ borrow pits,○ permanent meteorological masts,○ access tracks including watercourse crossings,○ all buildings including substation, battery storage;○ permanent and temporary construction compounds;○ all watercourses; and○ contour lines;	YES	Figure 3.1 Proposed Site Layout	

2. A description and results of the site characterisation surveys for fish (including fully quantitative electrofishing surveys) and water quality including the location of the electrofishing and fish habitat survey sites and water quality sampling sites on the map outlining the proposed turbines and associated infrastructure;	YES	Appendix 8.2 details the methodology and results of the fish habitat surveys. It provides the grid coordinates for each sample point (along with reference photograph). Figures 8.3a and 8.3b shows the watercourses and sample points surveyed, as well as the Site boundary (for ease of interpretation the proposed Development is not shown on the Figure, but can be cross-referenced to Figure 3.1 Proposed Site Layout which shows the proposed Development).	
3. An outline of the potential impacts on fish populations and water quality within and downstream of the proposed development area;	YES	Section 8.4.2.3 and Section 8.7 in the EIA Report (Chapter 8) outlines the potential impacts on fish populations within watercourses surveyed.	
4. Any potential cumulative impacts on the water quality and fish populations associated with adjacent (operational and consented) developments including wind farms, hydro schemes, aquaculture and mining;	YES	These would have been considered. Given the embedded mitigation proposed and good practice pollution control measures to be adopted impacts on fish	

		population/watercourses are scoped out (incl. cumulatively).	
5. Any proposed site specific mitigation measures as outlined in MSS generic scoping guidelines and the joint publication “Good Practice during Wind Farm Construction” (https://www.nature.scot/guidance-good-practice-during-wind-farm-construction);	YES	The number of watercourse crossings to be created are to be kept to a minimum and are designed to be sensitive to the movements of fish and other aquatic wildlife. Good practice pollution prevention measures will be detailed in the CEMP.	
6. Full details of proposed monitoring programmes using guidelines issued by MSS and accompanied by a map outlining the proposed sampling and control sites in addition to the location of all turbines and associated infrastructure	NO		The CEMP includes good practice construction measures, pollution prevention controls and monitoring to be implemented over the course of the construction and operation of the proposed Development. This includes monitoring of watercourse crossings to ensure movements of fish and other wildlife is maintained, and ensuring works are appropriately buffered from watercourses during the construction phase of the proposed Development. This is considered proportionate given the low risk to watercourses (and fish).
7. A decommissioning and restoration plan outlining proposed mitigation/monitoring for water quality and fish populations.	NO		Proposals during decommissioning will follow those adopted for construction phase given similar effects expected. This will include measures set out in the CEMP (pollution prevention controls and monitoring of watercourses etc). This is considered proportionate given the low risk to watercourses (and fish).

Developers should specifically discuss and assess potential impacts and appropriate mitigation measures associated with the following:	Provided in application YES/NO	If YES – please signpost to relevant chapter of EIA Report	If not provided or provided different to MSS advice, please set out reasons.
1. Any designated area, for which fish is a qualifying feature, within and/or downstream of the proposed development area;	YES	Potential impacts on all designated sites are considered (see Section 8.7.3.1 in the EIA Report, Chapter 8). There are no such designated sites with qualifying fish features within or downstream of the proposed Development within 10km.	
2. The presence of a large density of watercourses;	YES	See Volume 2 - Chapter 10 - Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils, and its supporting technical appendix Volume 4 - Chapter 10 - Technical Appendix 10.5 - Drainage Impact & Watercourse Crossing Assessment.	
3. The presence of large areas of deep peat deposits;	YES	See Volume 2 - Chapter 10 - Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils, and its supporting technical appendices Volume 4 - Chapter 10 - Technical	

		Appendix 10.1 - Peat Slide Risk Assessment - and Volume 4 - Chapter 10 - Technical Appendix 10.2 - Outline Peat Management Plan	
4. Known acidification problems and/or other existing pressures on fish populations in the area; and	YES	There are no known acidification problems to our knowledge associated with the Site. No major barriers to fish movements identified, although evidence that accumulation of brash is creating localised 'log jams' in some upper stretches of the Skipness River (and its tributaries) which are likely to restrict, at least, some fish movements.	
5. Proposed felling operations.	YES	The majority of the Site is a commercial forestry plantation operated by Forestry and Land Scotland. Proposed felling operations are identified in Volume 4 - Chapter 15 - Technical Appendix 15.1 - Forestry Assessment	

Appendix C: Letter to Woodland Trust Scotland



16th August 2022

Our reference: G/P/662817/04/14/02 Rev00

ECU Reference: ECU00003421

65 Sussex Street
Glasgow
G41 1DX
UK

Telephone: +44 (0)141 418 0471
www.rskgroup.com

Nicole Hillier
The Woodland Trust
Scotland
South Inch Business Centre
Shore Road
Perth
PH2 8BW

VIA EMAIL

RESPONSE TO THE REPRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF THE WOODLAND TRUST, IN RELATION TO THE APPLICATION FOR CONSENT FOR THE PROPOSED EARRAGHAIL RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT (RED) BY SCOTTISHPOWER RENEWABLES (SPR)

Dear Nicole,

This letter has been drafted to respond to the points raised in your representation to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) regarding the proposed Earraghail RED, dated 1st April 2022.

1. THE WOODLAND TRUST RESPONSE

The Woodland Trust's representation objected to the application on the basis of likely damage and loss to Bardaravine Wood (grid ref: NR 841 653), an area of 1a woodland of ancient semi-natural origin (ASNO) designated on NatureScot's Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI).

The representation expresses concern for this scheme relates to the felling and direct loss required for the proposed construction compound, plus potential clearances to facilitate widening of existing access tracks which are currently sited within ancient woodland areas.

The Woodland Trust's response under the title "Mitigation" states the following. *"The proposed construction compound should be re-located outside of the ancient woodland area and afforded a buffer zone of at least 15 metres. HERAS fencing fitted with acoustic and dust screening measures should also be put in place during construction to ensure that the buffer zone does not suffer from encroachment of construction vehicles/stockpiles, and to limit the effects of other indirect impacts.*

"With respect to the access track upgrade works proposed, no widening should occur within ancient woodland areas, as this will result in further degradation and loss of ancient woodland habitat and soils."



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2. OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE EXISTING BASELINE

The Woodland Trust is correct in stating that the proposed construction compound is located in an area identified in NatureScot's ancient woodland inventory (AWI). Satellite imagery and Ordnance Survey mapping also suggests woodland cover in the area.

However, at design stage surveys undertaken on behalf of SPR by design engineers and ecologists had established that the area included in the AWI where the project team chose to locate the proposed compound did not contain any woodland. The area is located within the Tarbert Holiday Park¹, an operational caravan and glamping site.

Following receipt of the Woodland Trust's representation, SPR appointed ecologists to confirm the observations made at design stage. Please see below two photos taken from NR 84260 65672 which show the current condition of the area identified as AWI in which the proposed compound is located. The ecologists observe that there is no evidence of ancient woodland at the locality, with small areas of relatively young broadleaf and scrub and older pine copses present between areas of road or gravel for the holiday park.

Our assumption is that any ancient woodland that was at that locality was cleared for the holiday park and infrastructure, with any remnant woodland/scrub more representative of younger/non-ancient habitat.

As such, the compound area is already located at least 15 m from any remaining ancient woodland areas, and no movement to the location of the compound is considered necessary.

3. ACCESS TRACK UPGRADE WORKS

The Woodland Trust has requested no widening of the existing access track to occur within ancient woodland areas.

3.1 Existing and proposed access track parameters

The existing access track is a timber haul road, suitable for timber lorries to use to access the forestry parcels of Skipness and Corranbuie. The existing timber haul road is typically between 3 m and 4.5 m wide. In order to deliver turbine components to the Site to construction the Earraghail RED, upgrades to the existing timber haul road will be necessary. An access track with a 4.5 m-wide running width, with a 0.5 m shoulder verge to either side is required, and there are limitations on the slope and bend radii of such tracks that are greater than for a timber haul road. Choosing to upgrade the existing timber haul road reduces the overall amount of ground disturbance.

3.2 Location of woodland habitats in relation to the existing access track

Areas identified on the AWI are located on both sides of the timber haul road. In terms of the habitat survey information, Figure 8.8 identifies areas of semi-natural broadleaved woodland (A1.1.1) on either side of the access track to the Site. Therefore, it will not be possible to entirely avoid impacts to areas of semi-natural broadleaved woodland, and this is acknowledged in Chapter 8 (Table 8.10) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report.

¹ <https://www.tarbertholidaypark.co.uk/>

3.3 Impacts on woodland habitat and committed mitigation

We agree that the loss of areas of semi-natural broadleaved woodland can lead to degradation and loss of ancient woodland habitat and soils. To mitigate against this, we propose two forms of mitigation as detailed below. The primary aim will be to reduce impacts as far as reasonably possible; the secondary will be to provide mitigation where impacts are unavoidable.

3.3.1 Role of the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW)

Section 8.7.2.3 of the EIA report commits that an ECoW will be appointed to the project, and states the following:

“A suitably qualified ECoW would be employed for the duration of the construction and reinstatement periods, to ensure ecological interests are safeguarded, although this may not necessarily be a full-time role throughout. The role of the ECoW would include the following tasks:

- *provide toolbox talks to all staff onsite, so staff are aware of the ecological sensitivities within the Site and the legal implications of not complying with agreed working practices;*
- *agree and monitor measures designed to minimise damage to retained habitats;*
- *undertake pre-construction surveys and advise on ecological issues and working restrictions where required; and*
- *complete site-supervision works as required, in relation to sensitive habitats and protected species.”*

One of the duties of the ECoW will be to seek to minimise as far as is practicable impacts on sensitive habitats such as areas of semi-natural woodland. This will be achieved by undertaking the following:

- At detailed design stage:
 - Surveying the areas of sensitive habitats their extent and condition.
 - Feeding back to the designers on how to minimise impacts to sensitive habitats.
 - Reviewing the detailed design to ensure that impacts on sensitive habitats are minimised.
 - Identifying suitable receptor site for translocation within the HMP area (see below).
- At construction stage:
 - Supervising construction activities in areas close to sensitive habitats so that impacts are minimised.
 - Supervising any translocation activities to the receptor site (see below) where impacts on woodland habitats are unavoidable.

3.3.2 Woodland translocation

Woodland translocation would be proposed to compensate for the loss of any ancient woodland. This is a process of moving woodland trees and soils from one location to another, allowing soil microbial communities, mycorrhizae and seed banks which have developed over hundreds of years to survive and to re-establish. Trees are removed, followed by soil on a layer-by-layer basis, the leaf layer is moved first, followed by topsoil, with each layer being kept separate and moved to a carefully prepared receptor site.

For the Earraghail RED, the receptor site would be the area identified for native woodland planting. An area for this is identified in Technical Appendix 8.5 Habitat Management Plan (HMP) accompanying the application: *Unit 3 New native woodland creation on mineral soils*. The actual location for translocation would be comparable to the original site from where the woodland soil was taken from, and will be within

an area identified for native woodland planting in the HMP. Such translocation would support the delivery of the HMP's *Aim 4: Establish and maintain native woodland habitat*.

In the event that the application for consent for the Earraghail RED is granted, delivery of this mitigation will be secured by condition of consent.

We trust that, while this response does not provide the design mitigation to the Earraghail RED that the Woodland Trust has requested in its representation to the ECU, it does provide some explanation on the design decisions undertaken, provide further reassurance that impacts on AWI and sensitive woodland habitats will be kept to a practicable minimum, and that – where impacts are unavoidable – opportunities for any impacts on such habitat can be offset through woodland translocation to the HMP area will be undertaken.

Yours sincerely

For RSK Environment Limited

[REDACTED]

Joe Somerville

Associate Director, RSK

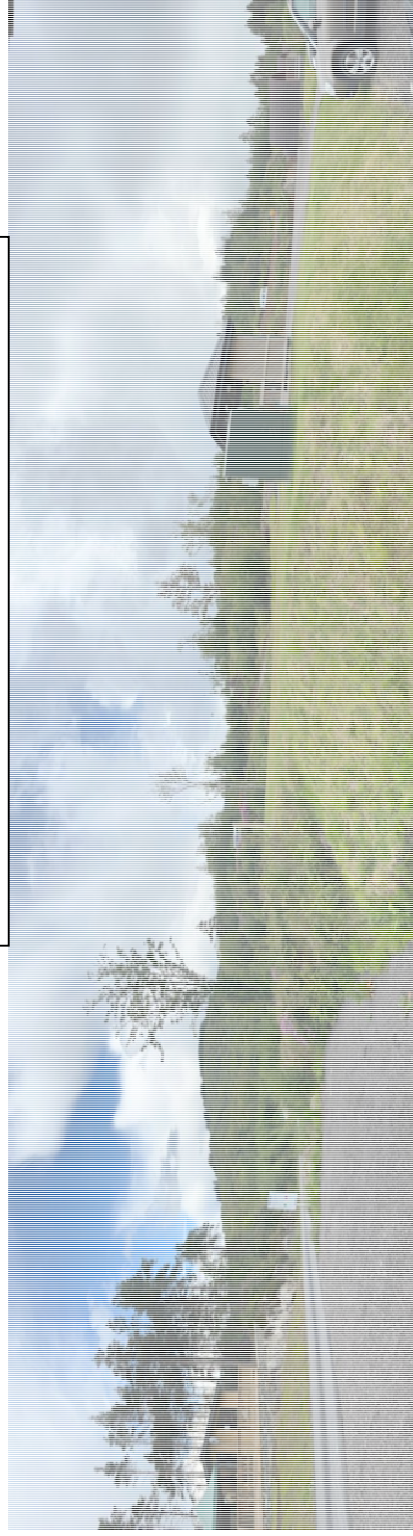
Enclosures:

Photographs showing current condition of area proposed for construction compound.

Panoramic photo looking W-N-E from NR 84260 65672



Panoramic photo looking E-S-W from NR 84260 65672



Appendix D: Letter to Scottish Forestry and response



16th September 2022

Our reference: G/P/662817/04/14/03 Rev02

ECU Reference: ECU00003421

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Elaine Jamieson
Operations and Development Officer
Scottish Forestry
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VIA EMAIL

**RESPONSE TO THE REPRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF SCOTTISH FORESTRY, IN RELATION TO
THE APPLICATION FOR CONSENT FOR THE PROPOSED EARRAGHAIL RENEWABLE ENERGY
DEVELOPMENT (RED) BY SCOTTISHPOWER RENEWABLES (SPR)**

Dear Elaine,

This letter has been drafted to respond to the points raised in your representation to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) regarding the proposed Earraghail RED, dated 31st March 2022, and subsequent discussions held with you by the project team.

Section 2a) of your letter states, "*We disagree with the Applicants proposal in section '15.8.1 Need for CP' that, subject to a restoration plan, there would be no requirement for CP. [Compensatory Planting]*". Based on our recent correspondence and discussions, we understand that:

- 1) In line with Control of Woodland Removal Policy, it is possible to fell an area and restore that same physical area to priority habitat peat land, without the need for CP.
- 2) It is not acceptable to fell an area and offer peat restoration on a different physical area as compensation.
- 3) All hard infrastructure which does not have a shared purpose with forestry would require CP. Where it can be demonstrated for instance that a road will also be used for a forestry purpose then it would not attract the need for CP.
- 4) Forestry removal which is also associated with enhancing priority habitats and their connectivity would not require CP.
- 5) CP can be measured against the agreed restock map rather than existing tree cover.



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In relation to item (3) above, we confirm that the access tracks which form part of the proposed Development will be accessible by the landowner and/or their appointed contractors for felling and forestry management activities for the duration of the operational phase of the proposed Development. Additionally, the Applicant engaged with the landowner during the design process and amended the design to take account of the landowner's felling and land management interests in the siting and designing of the access track network, including the reuse and upgrading of the existing forestry access track network where possible.

Table 15.1.4 of Technical Appendix 15.1 Forestry Assessment of the EIA Report identifies the total area of felling required to accommodate the proposed Development, as 110.79 Ha. During discussion with Scottish Forestry, the above points 1 – 5 were clarified, resulting in a net loss of woodland area for the construction of the proposed Development and a CP requirement of 56.284 Ha. We enclose a plan showing our understanding of the areas requiring CP (yellow and orange polygons), as highlighted to you during our meeting on 5th September 2022, which omit the areas of proposed peatland restoration around Turbine 9 and parts of Turbines 7 and 8.

The Applicant is committed to providing appropriate compensatory planting to comply with the criteria of the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy. As noted in Technical Appendix 15.1 Forestry Assessment, the extent, location and composition of such planting will be agreed with Scottish Forestry, taking into account any revision to the felling and restocking plans prior to the commencement of the operation of Earraghail RED.

Yours sincerely

For RSK Environment Limited

[REDACTED]

Joe Somerville
Associate Director, RSK

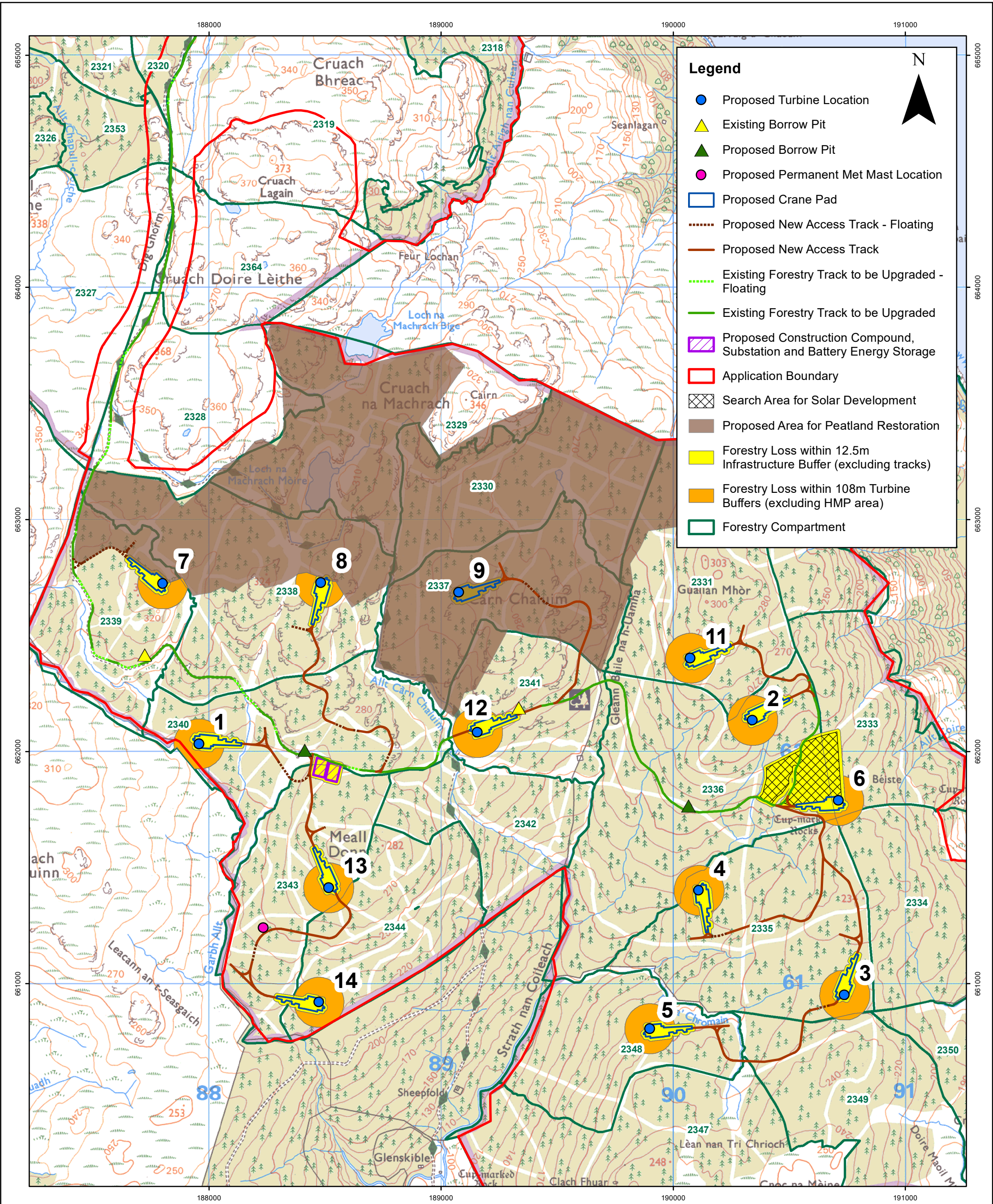
[REDACTED]


Reviewed by
Wayne Scurrah
Forester, ADAS

CC: Debbie Flaherty, Energy Consents Unit
Kirsten Rae, ScottishPower Renewables

Enclosures:

Figure 1 Forestry Loss Areas Resulting in Compensatory Planting



<div> SCOTTISHPOWER RENEWABLES</div>				<div>Earraghail Renewable Energy Development</div> <div>Forestry Loss Areas Resulting in Compensatory Planting</div>				
				1:15,000 Scale @ A3 <div><div></div><div>00.1250.250.5</div><div>Km</div></div>				
A	10/08/22	DL	Forestry Loss	Figure	Date	Rev	Dwg No.	Datum: OSGB36
Rev	Date	By	Comment	1	10/08/22	A	EHAIL-RSK-I-109	Projection: TM

Joe Somerville

From: Elaine.Jamieson@forestry.gov.scot
Sent: 20 September 2022 09:14
To: Joe Somerville; Debbie.Flaherty@gov.scot
Cc: Wayne Scurrah; Rae, Kirsten; Samantha McHardy; Sarah Sinclair
Subject: RE: Earraghail - response to query from Scottish Forestry

Dear Joe and Debbie,

I can confirm that the detail provided in RSK's letter of 16.9.22 addresses the concerns raised in our consultation response of 31.3.22.

Scottish Forestry recommend that the 56.3 hectares of compensatory planting described, are secured by a condition similar to that given in Appendix 1 my email consultation response of 31.3.22.

Thank you Joe and team, for taking the time to discuss this with me in advance.

Regards
Elaine

Elaine Jamieson
Operations and Development Officer
Scottish Forestry

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Mobile: 07909 893792
elaine.jamieson@forestry.gov.scot

Website: forestry.gov.scot



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Be professional, **R**espect others, **A**ct with honesty and integrity, **V**alue teamwork and collaboration and **E**ncourage innovation and creativity.

From: Joe Somerville <JSomerville@rsk.co.uk>
Sent: 16 September 2022 12:20
To: Jamieson E (Elaine) <Elaine.Jamieson@forestry.gov.scot>

Cc: Flaherty D (Debbie) <Debbie.Flaherty@gov.scot>; Wayne Scurrah <Wayne.Scurrah@adas.co.uk>; Rae, Kirsten <krae@scottishpower.com>; Samantha McHardy <Samantha.McHardy@stephenson-halliday.com>; Sarah Sinclair <sarah.sinclair@stephenson-halliday.com>

Subject: RE: Earraghail - response to query from Scottish Forestry

Good afternoon Elaine, and Debbie by copy,

Please find attached our letter in response to Scottish Forestry's representation on the Earraghail Renewable Energy Development S36 application, in line with our previous discussions.

I trust it provides sufficient clarification. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best wishes,

Joe Somerville MA(Hons) MSc FSA Scot MCIfA PIEMA
Associate Director
EIA, Planning & Design

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From: Elaine.Jamieson@forestry.gov.scot <Elaine.Jamieson@forestry.gov.scot>

Sent: 25 July 2022 10:15

To: Joe Somerville <JSomerville@rsk.co.uk>

Cc: Spyridonas Angeli <SAngeli@rsk.co.uk>; Wayne Scurrah <Wayne.Scurrah@adas.co.uk>; Rae, Kirsten <krae@scottishpower.com>; Pearson, Sean <s.pearson@scottishpower.com>; Samantha McHardy <Samantha.McHardy@stephenson-halliday.com>; Sarah Sinclair <sarah.sinclair@stephenson-halliday.com>

Subject: Earraghail - response to query from Scottish Forestry

Dear Joe,

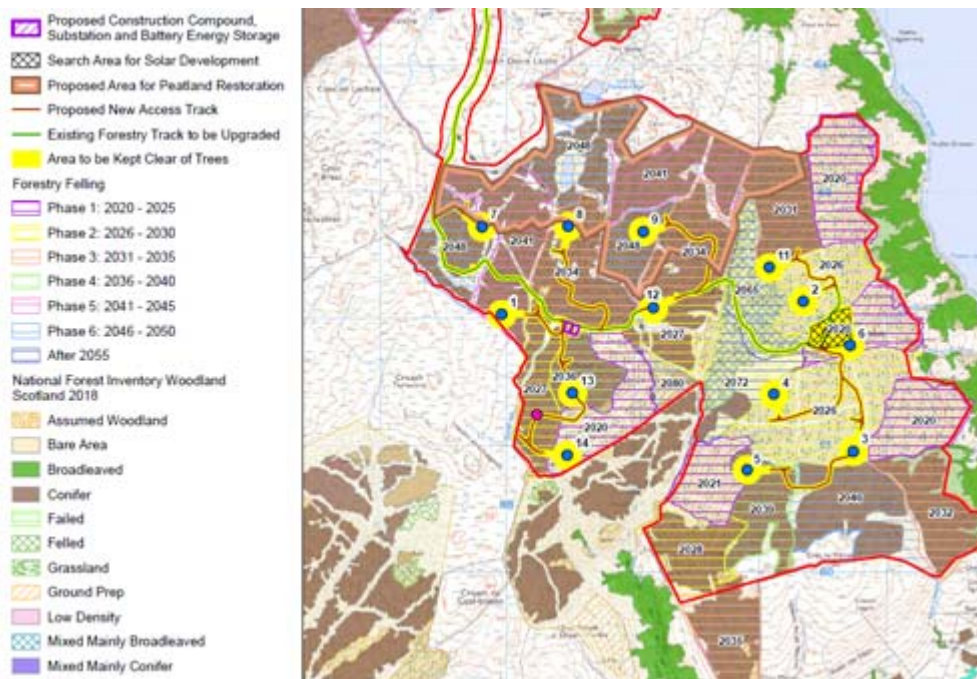
I will be happy to talk this through with you. I don't have any stored emails from Roy, although I am quite sure we talked at the time and I would have followed up with the email to ECU in June 2020.

The quote you provide below from my follow up email to ECU:

'if trees were being felled and the area restored to peatland there would be no CP requirement, providing this was all covered in a habitat management plan and approved by SF.'...

...is still the case, however, the confusion seems to relate to where the woodland removal and restoration is taking place. My comment refers to the physical area, there is no mention of restoration being proposed anywhere other than the site where the woodland removal is taking place.

- In line with Control of Woodland Removal Policy, it is possible to fell an area and restore that same physical area to priority habitat peat land, without the need for CP.
- It is not acceptable to fell an area and offer peat restoration on a different physical area as compensation.
- All hard infrastructure which does not have a shared purpose with forestry would require CP. Where it can be demonstrated for instance that a road will be used for a forestry purpose then it would not attract CP.
- For the HMP map below (assuming that the yellow areas are capable of restoration to priority habitat peat land) then only turbine 9 and part of 7 and 8 would not require CP.
- CP can be measured against the agreed restock map rather than existing tree cover.



I'll be happy to look at a revised CP assessment and proposal or to clarify any points.

Regards
Elaine

Elaine Jamieson

Operations and Development Officer
Scottish Forestry

Perth & Argyll Conservancy | Upper Battleby, Redgorton | Perth | PH1 3EN

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From: Joe Somerville <JSomerville@rsk.co.uk>
Sent: 18 July 2022 14:48
To: Jamieson E (Elaine) <Elaine.Jamieson@forestry.gov.scot>
Cc: Scottish Forestry Conservancy, Perth & Argyll <panda.cons@forestry.gov.scot>; Spyridonas Angeli <SAngeli@rsk.co.uk>; Wayne Scurrah <Wayne.Scurrah@adas.co.uk>; Rae, Kirsten <krae@scottishpower.com>; Pearson, Sean <s.pearson@scottishpower.com>; Samantha McHardy <Samantha.McHardy@stephenson-halliday.com>; Sarah Sinclair <sarah.sinclair@stephenson-halliday.com>
Subject: Earraghail - response to query from Scottish Forestry

Dear Elaine,

We are contacting you in relation to the Earraghail Renewable Energy Development (RED), for which you provided an initial response (letter dated 31st March 2022).

Part of your response stated as follows:

P11- para 58 says that 'Consultation with Scottish Forestry during the course of the project has confirmed that peatland restoration would be an acceptable substitute for compensation planting under the Control of Woodland Removal Policy (CWR).' We are unable to find a note of this consultation within our files, but will be happy to discuss further with the ECU and the applicant.

Reviewing our correspondence and files on this subject, the main reference we have to this is in the EIA scoping response provided by SF, item 7 in the attached [second attachment]. Our understanding is that you entered correspondence with our colleague Roy Dyer, forester for the project (roy.dyer@adas.co.uk, though the email is no longer active) around spring 2020 on this subject. Roy retired at the in April 2021, and does not have a copy of the correspondence, but has confirmed to us by email last month that he received a letter via email from you confirming that if trees were being felled and the area restored to peatland there would be no CP requirement, providing this was all covered in a habitat management plan and approved by SF.

We acknowledge the additional queries highlighted in your response to the application, and will work with our client to address them in an appropriate manner. We recognise that that any area felled that is to be restored to peatland would not need to be compensated for, but any forest land that is felled and not being restored to peatland would need to be compensated.

If you could come back to us on whether you have a record of correspondence with Roy, it would be much appreciated.

Best wishes,

Joe Somerville MA(Hons) MSc FSA Scot MCIfA PIEMA
Associate Director
EIA, Planning & Design

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