



# Corkey Windfarm Repowering

## Design and Access Statement

June 2019

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# Corkey Windfarm Repowering Design and Access Statement

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of the Design and Access Statement

1. This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared in order to accompany a full planning application under The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 for the Repowering of the Operational Corkey Windfarm (the 'Development').
2. A DAS is a report which accompanies and supports a planning application and enables the applicant to describe how a proposed development has been designed in order to suit the chosen site and surroundings while also demonstrating that the development can be accessed adequately by users. A DAS is required to accompany all applications classed as major developments in Northern Ireland.
3. This DAS has been prepared in accordance with the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, Section 6, Design and Access Statements. In addition, the structure has been informed by Development Management Practice Note 12: Design and Access Statements, published by the Department of Environment (DOE) for Northern Ireland in April 2015. This note is part of a series of guidance documents stemming from The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, and aims to guide interested users through the key requirements of a DAS, primarily dealing with key procedures in addition to encouraging good practice.
4. This DAS explains the background to the Development, its nature and surroundings, the detailed design iteration process that has taken place in order to reach the final proposed layout and any site specific access issues.
5. This DAS should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Statement (ES) prepared for the Development application.
6. A glossary of defined terms which are used consistently throughout the ES can be found in **Section 8: Glossary** of this DAS.

## 2 Application Background

### 2.1 The Applicant

7. ScottishPower Renewables is part of the ScottishPower group of companies operating in the UK under the Iberdrola Group, one of the world's largest integrated utility companies and a world leader in wind energy. ScottishPower now only produces 100% green electricity – focusing on wind energy, smart grids and driving the change to a cleaner, electric future. The company is investing over £4m every working day in 2019 to make this happen and is committed to speeding up the transition to cleaner electric transport, improving air quality and over time, driving down bills to deliver a better future, quicker for everyone.
8. ScottishPower Renewables is at the forefront of the development of the renewables industry through pioneering ideas, forward thinking and outstanding innovation. Its ambitious growth plans include expansion of its existing onshore wind portfolio, investment in new large-scale solar deployment and innovative grid storage systems including batteries. The

company is also delivering the Iberdrola Group's offshore windfarms in the Southern North Sea off East Anglia as part of an international pipeline of projects across Europe and the USA.

9. With over 40 operational windfarms, SPR manages all its sites through its world leading Control Centre at Whitelee Windfarm, near Glasgow.
10. The Applicant has an established interest in Northern Ireland and currently owns and operates five onshore windfarms in the Country (Corkey, Rigged Hill, Callagheen, Elliots Hill and Wolf Bog Windfarms) together with Barnesmore Windfarm in the Republic of Ireland.

## 2.2 Site History

11. The Operational Corkey Windfarm was developed and constructed by RES and B9 Energy Services in 1994, and then acquired by ScottishPower Renewables (the Applicant) who now own and operate the site in perpetuity. The Operational Corkey Windfarm is located approximately 18 kilometres (km) north of Ballymena in County Antrim, Northern Ireland and consists of ten Nordtank 500 kilowatt (kW) wind turbines, which can produce up to a total of five megawatts (5 MW) of clean renewable energy. To date, the Operational Corkey Windfarm has made an important contribution to Northern Ireland's Renewable Energy targets and low carbon objectives, and the Applicant is seeking to secure and build on this contribution by proposing to 'repower' the Operational Corkey Windfarm.

## 2.3 Need for the Development

12. The repowering of a windfarm involves the removal of existing wind turbines from a site and replacing them with new and more efficient turbines. This process normally results in an increased overall site generating capacity and output as well as generally reducing the total number of turbines within the Site.
13. Repowering a windfarm site supports an ongoing use of the land at the Operational Corkey Windfarm by a renewables asset, which is vital to Northern Ireland maintaining and building upon its renewable energy and climate change targets, as outlined in the Strategic Framework for Northern Ireland<sup>1</sup>.
14. Repowering also presents an opportunity to sustain and create additional jobs, and to encourage continued investment in the renewable energy industry in Northern Ireland. The repowering of a windfarm differs from that of developing a greenfield site as the area has previously been developed, has demonstrated its suitability for use as a windfarm site, and will continue to be used for the same activity.
15. As well as the inherent benefits of creating and expanding upon the existing mix of renewables in Northern Ireland's electricity system, repowering offers a number of major opportunities:
  - Increased site generation;
  - Reduces dependency on fossil fuels resulting in lower carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions and output;
  - Reduced number of turbines, utilising the latest turbine technology, whilst sustaining and growing the level of renewable energy in Northern Ireland;
  - Sustains existing development and construction jobs, and creates opportunities for new supply chain jobs;
  - Sustains existing operational and maintenance supply chain jobs;
  - With a supportive planning framework, it can help create a long-term, stable investment platform for a clear pipeline of repowering projects, easing pressure on consenting authorities; and
  - Utilises over two decades of industry knowledge to inform and improve the siting, design and construction techniques to create more efficient projects.
16. The Operational Corkey Windfarm is consented in perpetuity, and the repowering of the windfarm with more efficient machines will maximise the benefits of re-using an existing site whilst minimising new environmental effects. Operating for a longer period enables the Applicant to continue to drive down the overall cost of energy with benefits to the Northern Irish consumer, and provides opportunities to incorporate emerging technologies such as energy storage.

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<sup>1</sup> Department for the Economy (2010) Strategic Framework for Northern Ireland. [Online] Available at: <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/energy-strategic-framework-northern-ireland> (Accessed 30/05/2019)

17. **Table 2.3** below provides a comparison between the Operational Corkey Windfarm and the Development.
18. The proposed repowering project has the potential to result in an increase in the installed capacity of the Site from 5 MW to around 20 MW, approximately four times the existing installed capacity. The proposed larger generator size, coupled with greater wind yields from the use of taller turbines with bigger rotors, and the improved efficiency of the latest turbine models will result in a major increase to total power generated at the Site.

**Table 2.3 – Comparison of Operational Corkey Windfarm with the proposed Development**

Characteristic	Operational Corkey Windfarm	The Development
Number of Wind Turbines	10	5
Maximum Tip Height	57 m	137 m
Turbine Max Power	0.5 MW	C. 4MW
Overall Wind Farm Capacity	5 MW	C. 20 MW
Energy Storage	No	Yes

## 2.4 Overview of the Development

19. The Development is described in further detail in **Chapter 3: Development Description** of the Environmental Statement (ES). In summary however the Development will comprise of the following phases:
- Decommissioning of the Operational Corkey Windfarm (initial phase of the Development);
  - Construction of the Development (likely to occur in tandem with the above phase);
  - Operation of the Development; and
  - Decommissioning of the Development (final phase).
20. The Development will comprise of the following main components:
- Decommissioning of the existing 10 turbines;
  - Removal and restoration of the existing substation building and compound in accordance with the outline DCEMP and Draft HMP;
  - The erection of 5 three bladed horizontal axis wind turbines of up to 137 m tip height;
  - Turbine foundations;
  - Construction of approximately 1.955 km of new access tracks;
  - Upgrade of approximately 2.095 km of existing access tracks;
  - Construction of temporary and permanent hardstanding areas for each turbine to accommodate turbine component laydown areas, crane hardstanding areas and external transformers and/or switchgears;
  - 3 temporary construction compound/laydown areas (some areas may be reinstated temporarily if required for future operational and decommissioning purposes);
  - Turning heads and passing places incorporated within the site access infrastructure;
  - New road junction with Reservoir Road;
  - Three upgraded water crossings and five new water crossings;
  - Meteorological Mast;
  - Buried underground electrical and communication cables;
  - Substation, with roof mounted solar panels, and associated compound, including windfarm and grid connection operating equipment;
  - Energy Storage Unit;
  - Associated ancillary works; and
  - Micro siting allowance of 50m (in all directions) deviation from the indicative design footprint.

## 3 Site Location and Description

### 3.1 Description of the Development Site and Surrounding Land

21. The Site is located within the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (the Council) administrative area. The location of the Site is shown on **Figure 3.1** of the ES and is situated approximately 18 km north of Ballymena in County Antrim. The Operational Corkey Windfarm is located within the Site – as detailed in the following section and shown in **Figure 3.2** of the ES. A comparison with the Operational Corkey Windfarm layout is shown in **Figure 3.3** of the ES.
22. The Site is located on the western periphery of the Antrim Hills with the low-lying valley of the River Main to the west and the broader range of the Antrim Hills to the east. The Site is characterised by the steep upper slopes and distinctive ridgeline of Slievenahanaghan and its moorland land cover. The predominant land use, in conjunction with the Operational Corkey Windfarm, is agricultural. Elevations within the Site range from approximately 160 metres (m) above ordnance datum (AOD) in the southwest of the Site to approximately 410 m AOD at the east of the Site.
23. There are a number of small unnamed watercourses and man-made open field drains within the Site, the majority of which drain in a westerly direction although some drain northwards. There are no public roads within the Site, although Corkey Road runs adjacent to sections of the Site Boundary to the west and Reservoir Road runs adjacent to sections of the Site Boundary to the northwest.
24. The historical land ownership pattern of this area is based on the land being divided into small plots. This has led to a dispersed settlement pattern, whereby individual dwellings occur frequently across the landscape, accessed by the network of rural roads.
25. The closest settlements to the Development include the village of Corkey located approximately 1.56 km west of turbine 4, the village of Loughgiel located approximately 3.46 km northwest of turbine 3, and the village of Clough Mills located approximately 5.28 km southwest of turbine 4.
26. Domestic scale and single wind turbines are a frequent feature in the valley landscape, often associated with farmsteads or domestic dwellings. Larger commercial windfarms are also a feature, albeit typically seen set on the enclosing ridgelines of the upland areas to the west and east of the Site. Immediately adjacent to the Site lies Gruig Windfarm which consists of ten 2.5 MW turbines with tip heights of 100 m.

### 3.2 Site Selection Process

27. The Site was considered appropriate for the following reasons:
  - The Site already contains the Operational Corkey Windfarm which was constructed in 1994 and is one of the first windfarms developed in the UK. From the wind data collated to date, the Site has proven to have good average wind speeds and generation capacity;
  - The existing technology is no longer state-of-the-art, and modern wind turbines are capable of producing more power from a fewer number of turbines (e.g. the Operational Corkey Windfarm has 10 turbines with a total installed capacity of 5 MW, compared to the Development's proposed 5 turbines and a total installed capacity of around 20 MW);
  - Repowering the Operational Corkey Windfarm increases renewable energy generation capacity (by around 15 MW in this case), and with a focus on utilising as much of the existing infrastructure as possible. This results in a development with fewer environmental effects compared to a similar development on a new, greenfield site, particularly considering effects on landscape/visual receptors and peat;
  - There are no statutory nature conservation designations within, the Site Boundary, although the Site lies to the west of an area designated for its Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
  - It is a location in which a development can accord with the principles set out in Energy Policy in relation to the need for renewable energy.
  - The Applicant has collated an extensive database of information in relation to the Site and its environs through their experience of managing the Operational Corkey Windfarm. This existing information has been utilised during the Development design process. The information collected has allowed the Applicant to consider the use of alternative

compatible technologies to improve the overall power output of the Site, such as the energy storage aspect of the Development;

- Alongside the generation of renewable energy, agriculture, such as sheep farming is the other principal land use, the use of the Site as a windfarm is and will continue to be a compatible use;
- There is an existing access track serving the Operational Corkey Windfarm, with limited areas requiring realignment;
- Can positively contribute towards regional and national renewable energy targets; and
- Can provide a series of significant social and economic benefits for the local and regional area.

## 4 Design Principles

### 4.1 Landscape and Visual

28. The landscape and visual design objectives considered throughout the development process are as follows:

- To consider the latest wind turbine technology available, larger rotor sizes and turbine hub heights to arrive at a turbine tip height considered appropriate for the Site;
- To create a visually legible design, taking account of other environmental and technical issues and constraints where relevant, and create a simple, positive layout, viewed consistently from different positions;
- To ensure that the views of the Development from the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB, in particular those from Viewpoint 7: Slieveanorra, appear legible and the turbines relate well to the landform and each other;
- To create a compact scheme which relates to the underlying landform, with turbines laid out to extend along the ridgeline created by Slievenahanaghan Hill;
- To re-use sections of the existing access track into Operational Corkey Windfarm, minimising the need for additional tracks;
- To group turbines to create a balanced and coherent image, avoiding where possible 'stacking' or overlapping of turbine rotors in lines, favouring an evenly spaced and elevated group, that reflects the nature of the undulating landscape;
- To site buildings within low lying areas that are on the less visible south-west side of Slievenahanaghan Hill; and
- To group the infrastructure in order to limit the number of areas affected.

29. The main design parameter that has been applied to the Development relates to the considerations of the scale of the proposed turbines. The Development will be seen in relation to its landscape context and cumulative context, both of which will provide the basis for a comparison of scale. Slievenahanaghan is the hill upon which the Site sites and rises to a high point of 418 m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). This provides capacity for turbines of a larger scale than the current 57 m operational turbines. Gruig Windfarm lies to the immediate south and its ten turbines, each 100 m in height, could highlight any large disparities in scale. These features have therefore influenced the scale of the proposed turbines and led to a maximum proposed height of 137 m to blade tip.

30. The iterative design process has refined the original layout to achieve the optimum design and scale of turbine for the Development, helping avoid and mitigate effects on the landscape and visual receptors where ever possible. A key consideration has been potential effects on the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB, and the views from the nearby minor roads and rural settlements. Environmental constraints, relating to areas with special sensitivities in respect of hydrology and peat, as well as constraints of gradient and set back from the existing Gruig turbines, and residential properties have been taken into account in the design iterations, and this has resulted in the identification of areas where wind turbines and other associated site infrastructure should not be located.

### 4.2 Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology, Soils and Peat

31. As part of the EIA process, a desktop and site-based survey was carried out to inspect and identify all water features with the potential to be substantially affected. The aim of the design process was to achieve a layout that avoids effects on hydrological sensitive receptors. During design the following hydrological design principles were applied where possible:

- Avoid areas of peat;

- Minimise watercourse crossings;
- Aim to achieve a separation distance of 50 m between construction activity and watercourses (natural) mapped at a 1:50,000 scale, and a separation distance of 20 m for anthropogenic drains and smaller natural watercourses not featured on published mapping;
- Avoid more hydrologically sensitive parts of the Site; and
- Utilise existing infrastructure such as access tracks where possible.

#### 4.3 Peat Depth and Stability

32. Peat has been considered to be the key design constraint within the Site, both from an ecological and the closely linked hydrological design objectives. Peat is present at varying depths in various locations within the Site. Peat represents a store of carbon, and can support (and be supported by) bog vegetation on its surface; these are valued habitats, as described in **Section 4.6.4** of the ES. Where possible, areas of active peat have been avoided and where this has not been possible, the area has been minimised to for example focusing on the localised widening of the existing track and hard stands to enable the delivery and erection of the larger turbine components. There has been continuous engagement with NIEA, throughout the design process including a site visit.

#### 4.4 Ecology and Fisheries

33. In recognition of the high importance afforded to active peatland in the Department of the Environment's 'Planning Policy Statement 18: Renewable Energy' (2012) and the 'Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland: Planning for Sustainable Development' (2015, under review), additional assessments were undertaken for any habitats that may qualify as 'active peat'.
34. It is acknowledged that the classification of active peat habitats can be quite complex, particularly in disturbed habitats and around the margins of peatland bodies, so a bespoke classification system has been developed for this Development, in order to provide a systematic and transparent approach as described in **Chapter 8: Ecology and Fisheries**. As discussed in **Section 4.6.3** of the ES, the project team have worked closely with NIEA, including undertaking a site visit, to consider the various access track and hard standing options (e.g. the access track configuration to T2) and to discuss areas of the Site where previously degraded peat around infrastructure that would become redundant would have the potential to be regenerated, through habitat management. Avoidance of these sensitive habitats was a key influence on selecting turbine locations and the alignment of access tracks.

#### 4.5 Ornithology

35. Potential ornithological constraints to the design of the Development were identified from the baseline surveys and assessment and the objective in the design process was to avoid or minimise these effects:
- Disturbance and displacement to breeding birds; and
  - Collision risk during operation.
36. The key ornithological receptors are defined as species occurring within the zone of influence of the development upon which likely significant effects are anticipated and assessed. The zones of influence for individual ornithological receptors refers to the area within which potential effects are anticipated (500m / 800m / 2km / 5km). Baseline field surveys were carried out between March 2014 and March 2019 and consisted of site walkovers and vantage point surveys during both breeding and non-breeding seasons.
37. Key target breeding species, have been avoided by applying appropriate buffers. No priority raptor species occur within 500m of either the existing or the proposed turbines although both buzzard and peregrine were recorded within 500m of the existing and/or proposed access tracks. There are no potential significant displacement or disturbance effects predicted on any breeding raptor species. It should be noted that snipe and red grouse territories do occur within the existing Site Boundary currently with Operational Corkey Windfarm present. For all snipe recorded, the proposed turbines are on average further away from snipe territories than existing turbines
38. Key potential effects on birds that were specifically accounted for in the design of the Development relate to the route selection of the access track servicing T2. The presence of a snipe territory in close proximity to one of the options was a key consideration, which resulted in the alternative route being selected.



39. The proposed habitat management and restoration measures are outlined in **Technical Appendix A3.2: Draft HMP**, habitats will help maintain the snipe population and could also have potential beneficial effects on curlew, snipe and red grouse.

#### 4.6 Noise

40. A key factor in the initial selection of the Site was the distance that could be achieved between properties, turbines and the Energy Storage Units to minimise the effects of noise from the Development. The closest residential properties are the three properties located on Reservoir Road, while all other properties and the settlement of Corkey lie beyond the predicted 35 dB noise contour plot and are unlikely to be significantly affected by noise from the Development.
41. It is of critical importance that the layout of turbines, using a candidate turbine model which represents the range of turbine models, which are being considered for the Development, can meet the noise limit requirements of ETSU-R-97 and the Good Practice Guide, published by the Institute of Acoustics at every residential property. Noise was therefore an important consideration throughout each design iteration and the identified noise limits are met.

#### 4.7 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

42. A desk-based assessment and archaeological walkover was undertaken as part of the EIA. There are no known designated cultural heritage features within the Site and no significant indirect effects likely upon features in the surrounding historic environment from the Development. As such, cultural heritage features formed little constraint in terms of layout evolution.

## 5 Access

### 5.1 Access to the Development

43. The Site is located within a relatively remote setting with recreation opportunity based around the natural environment such as hills, lakes, rivers and forests. No recognised tourism or recreation resources are located within the Site Boundary. There is no provision for formal public access to the Operational Corkey Windfarm. Under The Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983, public access is restricted to:
- Areas of land which are in public ownership and to which the public are invited to use;
  - Public rights of way; or
  - Where the public have the landowner's permission to visit.
44. Many walking routes in the Causeway Coast and Glens are not formally designated public rights of way and access depends on the goodwill and tolerance of local landowners. There are no designated public rights of way or footpaths within 2 km of the Site. The closest footpath to the Development is the Moyle Way, located approximately 3 km east of the Site in Slieveanorra Forest
45. There would be no direct effects on the Moyle Way during the operational phase. Given the intervening distance between the Development and the receptor, and the surrounding Slieveanorra Forest for much of the path, views of the turbines and wind turbine noise are unlikely to occur for substantial sections of the path. The recreational amenity of users of these receptor locations is influenced by many factors in addition to visual amenity, however, including fresh air, a feeling of space, exercise, company, etc., and none of these factors would be affected in any way by the Development. Given the visual effects on parts of this path at a distance of c. 4 – 7 km (outside the forested area), and that no other aspects of the walking experience would be affected, the overall change in walking experience along the path is negligible.
46. During the operational phase, the land use at the Site would continue in terms of managing the land for active peat and upland agriculture, which will continue essentially as per the baseline scenario alongside the established principle of a windfarm in this location.

47. The Development will be accessed via the existing access track for the Operational Corkey Windfarm. The access route is considered largely suitable for the new turbines; however, two areas require re-alignment to facilitate the delivery of the larger turbines. The realigned route is shown in **Figure 3.2** of the ES.
48. A new junction to Reservoir Road is required to the west of the current operational access due to the geometry of larger turbine being unable to follow the initial section of the current access track. The new junction position provides suitable visibility splays for vehicles entering and leaving the Site and relocates the Site entrance away from residential properties to minimise disturbance. This is shown on **Figure 12.5** of the ES.
49. An overhead cable runs parallel with Reservoir Road and overhead electricity wires cross Reservoir Road in a perpendicular manner at the entrance to 15 Reservoir Road. Should the overhead infrastructure require alteration, and planned outages are necessary in order to re-locate the cables either by temporarily raising them or permanently burying them underground to facilitate the turbine delivery and ongoing maintenance, best practice measures will be followed. These measures include minimising the length of time any outages occur with residents notified of the planned works in order to minimise any disruption to those residents potentially affected.
50. A transport assessment has been undertaken in support of the application for the Development and this provides details on access route options for decommissioning/construction vehicles and provides an estimate of trip generation during this period. The transport assessment includes a routing study to establish the feasibility of the access route for turbine delivery from either Belfast or Larne to the Site entrance. Details of this and assessment of traffic impacts during the initial decommissioning/construction and operational phases of the Development are provided in **Chapter 12: Access, Traffic and Transport**.

## 6 Planning Policy

51. This section describes the legislative, planning, and policy background to the application. The legislative basis for a decision by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (the Council) is set out, and an overview of planning policy at a local level and at a regional level is provided.

### 6.1 Planning Legislation Context

52. The below **Table 6.1** outlines the Northern Ireland planning legislative context (primary legislation and subordinate legislation) for the Development. Subject to the provisions of Part 25(1)(b) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the 'Schedule'-Major Threshold Developments of 'The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015', the Development is considered a 'major development' but not 'regionally significant' since it falls below the 30MW 'regionally significant' threshold.

**Table 6.1 – Northern Ireland Planning Legislation Context**

Northern Ireland Planning Legislation	
Primary Legislation	
The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011	The Planning Act (NI) 2011 Act provides the legislative basis for the Northern Ireland planning system including the development management systems, development plan preparation, planning appeals and enforcement and the way in which these functions are delivered.
Subordinate Legislation	
The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017	The legislative framework for EIA is set out by the EIA Directive (European Directive 2014/52/EU <sup>2</sup> ). The requirements of the EIA Directive in NI are transposed by the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 2017 (the EIA Regulations). The EIA Directive aims to ensure that a planning authority granting planning permission for a development proposal makes its decision with the full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment by setting out a procedure known as environmental impact assessment to assess such effects.

Northern Ireland Planning Legislation	
The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended 2016)	The main purpose of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended 2016) is to transfer the necessary powers required to operate the planning system (previously contained within the Planning (General Development) Order 1993) to the councils in Northern Ireland. It also introduces some new provisions, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and Access Statements for major applications;</li> <li>• Non-material changes to a previous grant of planning permission;</li> <li>• Publicity of applications for planning permission; and</li> <li>• Changes to the statutory consultation process.</li> </ul>
The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015	The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015 sets out the details of key elements of the development management process in relation to the new hierarchy of development, pre-application community consultation, pre-determination hearings and schemes of delegation, while also making a transitional provision.
The Planning (Fees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (as amended)	The effect of the Planning (Fees) Regulations (NI) (as amended) is to provide for the charging of a fee for the processing of a planning application.

## 6.2 Northern Area Plan 2016

53. The Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP 2016) is the current statutory Local Development Plan (LDP) for the Council area. The NAP 2016 comprises Volume 1- the Plan Strategy & Framework and Volume 2- Proposals. Volume 1 Plan Strategy & Framework sets out the background to the preparation of the Plan, defines its Aim, Objectives and Plan Strategy, and, with reference to the regional policy context, sets out the Strategic Plan Framework comprising allocations, policies, and designations relating to the Plan Area as a whole. The NAP 2016 does not include specific renewable energy policy provision or planning policy relating to energy storage development, however **Table 6.2** below outlines the planning policy of relevance to the Development:

**Table 6.2 – Relevant Policies from the Northern Area Plan 2016**

The Northern Area Plan 2016	
Environment and Conservation	Policy ENV 2 - Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance
Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation	Policy OSR 1 - Public Rights of Way and Permissive Paths
Countryside and Coast	Policy COU 2 - The Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast World Heritage Site
Countryside and Coast	Policy COU 4 -The Distinctive Landscape Setting of the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast World Heritage Site

54. The NAP 2016 states that transport and traffic planning policy is provided for by Planning Policy Statement 3 – Access, Movement and Parking (PPS 3), and Planning Policy Statement 13 – Transportation and Land Use (PPS13). There is no dedicated transport and traffic planning policy in the LDP. Therefore, the SPPS, PPS3 and PPS13 should inform the planning application determination as material considerations.

### 6.3 Material Considerations – Regional Planning Policy and Guidance

#### 6.3.1 Regional Planning Policy and Guidance: Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS)

55. The SPPS is the regional planning policy document for Northern Ireland. It contains a suite of planning policy and is a material planning consideration in the assessment of all planning applications in NI.

56. Paragraph 4.23 of the SPPS states that:

*“Good design can change lives, communities and neighbourhoods for the better. It can create more successful plans to live, bring communities together, and attract business investment. It can further sustainable development and encourage healthier living, promote accessibility and inclusivity; and contribute to how safe places are and feel.”*

57. Paragraph 6.77 states:

*“In all circumstances proposals for development in the countryside must be sited and designed to integrate sympathetically with their surroundings, must not have an adverse impact on the rural character of the area, and meet other planning and environmental considerations including those for drainage, sewerage, access and road safety.”*

58. Paragraph 6.229 states:

*“...proposals will also be assessed in accordance with normal planning criteria, including such considerations as: access arrangements, road safety, good design, noise and shadow flicker, separation distance, cumulative impact, communications interference, and the inter-relationship between these considerations.”*

59. The pertinent SPPS planning policy is referenced in the relevant chapters in the ES. The Planning Statement submitted as part of this planning application provides an assessment of the Development against the relevant policy provision of the SPPS.

### 6.4 Planning Policy Statement 3 – Access, Movement and Parking

60. This PPS sets out the planning policies for vehicular and pedestrian access, transport, assessment, the protection of transport routes and parking. It forms an important element in the integration of transport and land use planning. It embodies the Government’s commitments to the provision of a modern, safe, sustainable transport system, the improvement of mobility for those who are socially excluded or whose mobility is impaired, and the promotion of healthier living and improved road safety.

61. The following PPS policies are considered to be of relevance to the Development:

**Table 6.3 Relevant PPS Policies**

Planning Policy Statement 3	
Policy AMP 1	Creating and Accessible Environment
Policy AMP 2	Access to Public Roads
Policy AMP 3	Access to Protected Routes (as updated in PPS 3 Clarification)
Policy AMP 6	Transport Assessment

62. The proposed Development is considered to comply with the relevant policies outlined with regards to design and access. A full assessment of relevant planning policy is available in the **Planning Statement** submitted as part of the Application.

## 7 Conclusion

63. This DAS has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, Section 6, Design and Access Statements. In addition, the structure has been informed by Development Management Practice Note 12: Design and Access Statements, published by the Department of Environment (DOE) for Northern Ireland in April 2015.
64. The DAS has established:
- The design principles and rationale that have been applied to the Development, including the various relevant environmental and technical criteria;
  - The steps taken to appraise the context of the Site, and how the design of the various relevant environmental and technical criteria, and each design component;
  - The relevant planning policies in respect of access; and
  - That all relevant issues which might affect access to the Development have been addressed.
65. The DAS has thus established that the Applicant can ably demonstrate an integrated approach that will deliver inclusive design, and address the full range of access requirements throughout the design process.

## 8 Glossary

66. To ensure clarity in the ES the following terms are used:

**Table 8.1: Defined Terms Used Within the ES**

Term	Definition
Repowering	This is the process of removal and replacement of older first-generation wind turbines with modern machines, which are generally quieter, and capable of producing more electricity, more efficiently.
The Site	Refers to all land that falls within the Site Boundary.
The Site Boundary	Refers to the red line boundary at the time of Scoping.
Operational Corkey Windfarm	Refers to the existing Corkey Windfarm at the Site, which has been operational since 1994.
The Development	Refers to all elements of the application for the repowering of the Operational Corkey Windfarm the details of which will be set out within <b>Chapter 3: Development Description</b> . These elements include the wind turbines, all site infrastructure, access tracks, energy storage etc.
Survey Areas	Refers to areas within which surveys are undertaken. These are specifically defined within each technical section.
Study Areas	Refers to areas which are considered as part of the assessment process. These are specific and defined within each technical section.
Indicative Developable Area	Refers to an indicative area within the Site Boundary where turbines may be located. This does not apply to other ancillary site infrastructure or the energy storage element. This area was defined for Scoping purposes.
The Council	Refers to the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.
The Applicant	Refers to ScottishPower Renewables.
EIA Regulations	Refers to The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.
Scoping / Scoping Opinion	This is the process to identify key environmental issues, and to determine which elements of the Development are likely to cause significant environmental impacts and to identify elements that can be removed from the assessment.

Term	Definition
Energy Storage / Energy Storage Unit	Refers to the Energy Storage Element, Energy Storage is defined as the capture of energy produced at one time for use at a later time.
The Onsite Substation and Control Building	Refers to the onsite substation and control building including the compound in which it is located.

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