



Chapter 6

Scoping and Consultation

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Chapter 6

Scoping and Consultation

6.1 Executive Summary

1. This Chapter sets out the consultation process that has been undertaken as part of the EIA for the proposed Development. It also details additional consultation that has been undertaken in respect of the proposed Development. A formal request for EIA scoping was submitted by SPR on 1st May 2020.
2. In addition to the EIA consultation and consultation forming part of the scoping process, consultation was undertaken with the local communities in the form of Public Information Events (PIEs), which were held in June to July 2020, and November 2020 to January 2021. Due to the Government guidance issued as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face consultation was unfortunately not possible. The Scottish Government has issued regulations during this period which replaces the requirement for a physical, face-to-face public event with an alternative, online version. SPR is committed to undertaking meaningful consultation during the COVID-19 pandemic. This involved utilising alternative methods of engagement such as mail and leaflet drops, use of this website and the project mailbox and the hosting of two online Public Information Events.
3. A Gatecheck Report was sent to the ECU on 2nd July 2021. The report provides detail on how consultee scoping responses have been addressed by the EIA process and the design of the proposed Development. Further responses to the Gatecheck Report were received from three consultees in August 2021. Of the three consultees that responded to the Gatecheck Report, A&BC and NAC were satisfied that their views had generally been considered and specified concerns addressed. NatureScot requested further time to consider fully the additional information provided to it on the approach to landscape impact assessment. SEPA acknowledged the gate check but advised that further time would be required to respond.

6.2 Introduction

4. This Chapter sets out the consultation process that has been undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed Development. It also details additional consultation that has been undertaken in respect of the proposed Development with consultees.
5. The purpose of scoping and consultation is to:
 - ensure that statutory consultees and other stakeholders with a particular interest in the environment, and the Site, are informed of the proposed Development and provided with an opportunity to comment at an early stage in the EIA process;
 - obtain baseline information regarding existing environmental conditions of the Site
 - establish key environmental issues and identify potential effects to be considered during the EIA;
 - identify those issues which are likely to require more detailed study and those which can be justifiably excluded from further assessment; and
 - provide a means of confirming the most appropriate methods of assessment.

6.3 Scoping

6. An underlying principle of the EIA process is that it should concentrate on environmental issues where effects associated with a development proposal are likely to be significant. The proposed Development was subject to a detailed scoping exercise on

May 2020, in order to determine issues that should be addressed in the EIA and the form individual assessments should take. The scoping exercise involved a review of available documentation related to the form and status of the existing environment; consultation with statutory and non-statutory stakeholders and other environmental bodies with knowledge of the Site and surrounding area; preliminary desk-based and site-based appraisals and surveys; and knowledge of the potential environmental implications of comparable schemes (based on direct past project experience and other published experience and guidance).

7. The following considerations were factored into the scoping process:
 - the nature of the receiving environment and the type of operations associated with the proposed Development are such that environmental effects could arise during construction and operation of the proposed Development.
 - a review of the Site revealed ecological habitats, areas of peat and peatland habitats, and species of potential interest.
 - early liaison with stakeholders and consultation bodies (e.g. the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and NatureScot (then SNH), as required, to provide input into the EIA and site design process.
 - consideration of cumulative effects that could potentially arise through interaction of the proposed Development with other existing or approved development projects nearby.
8. Following submission of the Scoping Report to the ECU, key consultees and stakeholders have been consulted and formed their Scoping Opinion.
9. The list of those organisations consulted, if they responded and the date of the response are shown in **Table 6.1**.

Table 6.1: Scoping Consultees

| Consultee | Response Received | Date of Response |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Argyll and Bute Council | Yes | 25 June 2020 |
| Historic Environment Scotland (HES) | Yes | 4 June 2020 |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) | Yes | 4 June 2020 |
| NatureScot | Yes | 2 July 2020 |
| Argyll District Salmon Fishery Board | Yes | 29 May 2020 |
| Arran Community Council | Yes | 31 May 2020 |
| Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Safeguarding | Yes | 27 May 2020 |
| Glasgow Prestwick Airport (GPA) | Yes | 25 June 2020 |
| Marine Scotland | Yes | 27 May 2020 |
| Met Office Safeguarding | Yes | 11 May 2020 |
| National Air Traffic Services (NATS) Safeguarding | Yes | 25 June 2020 |
| North Ayrshire Council | Yes | Undated, but on or before 30 June 2020 |
| Nuclear Safety Directorate (HSE) | Yes | 12 May 2020 |
| Royal Yachting Association (RYA) | Yes | 22 May 2020 |
| RSPB Scotland | Yes | 26 June 2020 |
| Scottish Forestry (SF) | Yes | 23 June 2020 |
| Scottish Water | Yes | 13 May 2020 |
| ScotWays | Yes | 16 June 2020 |
| Tarbert and Skipness Community Council (TSCC) | Yes | 04 September 2020 |
| The Coal Authority | Yes | 11 May 2020 |

| Consultee | Response Received | Date of Response |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| Transport Scotland | Yes | 16 June 2020 |
| Skipness Estate and Community | Yes | 01 September 2020 |
| The Kintyre Way | No response | |
| Ardriishaig Community Council | No response | |
| Atkins | No response | |
| BT (Openreach) | No response | |
| Bute and Cowal Community Council | No response | |
| Civil Aviation Authority - Airspace | No response | |
| Crown Estate Scotland | No response | |
| East Kintyre Community Council | No response | |
| Ericsson | No response | |
| Fisheries Management Scotland | No response | |
| Forestry Land Scotland | No response | |
| Gigha Community Council | No response | |
| John Muir Trust | No response | |
| Joint Radio Company | No response | |
| Kilfinnan Community Council | No response | |
| Mountaineering Council of Scotland | No response | |
| Mountaineering Scotland | No response | |
| Network Rail | No response | |
| O2 Telefonica | No response | |
| Ofcom (Spectrum Licensing) | No response | |
| Scottish Wild Land Group (SWLG) | No response | |
| Scottish Wildlife Trust | No response | |
| South Knapdale Community Council | No response | |
| The Woodland Trust Scotland | No response | |
| Transport Scotland | No response | |
| Visit Scotland | No response | |
| Vodafone | No response | |
| West Kintyre Community Council | No response | |
| West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WOSAS) | No response | |

10. A summary of the key issues raised during consultation is provided in **Technical Appendix 6.1**. The responses are detailed in the consultation tables contained within each relevant EIA Chapter (**Chapters 7 to 15**), with reference to how the comments have been addressed.

6.4 Further Consultation

11. Further consultation was undertaken throughout the EIA process with consultees in order to further inform the design, baseline data-gathering and assessment activities, and to refine the scope of the survey and assessment. Noteworthy activities included the following:

- Consultation with NatureScot regarding the scope of ornithological surveys (**Chapter 9**);
 - Consultation with NatureScot regarding the scope of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (**Chapter 7**);
 - Meetings with the ECU, Argyll and Bute Council (A&BC) and SEPA to introduce the proposed Development and provide updates on timescales;
 - Consultation with the ECU and A&BC on the proposed scope of PIEs planned for the proposed Development;
 - Meeting with the Kintyre Way SCIO to discuss opportunities for enhancements to the Kintyre Way within the Site as part of the proposed Development;
 - Consultation with SF regarding the acceptability of proposals to put forward habitat management improvements to contribute towards Compensatory Planting;
 - Consultation with HES regarding the impacts of the Proposed Development on setting.
12. Consultation with Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) was also undertaken on a continual basis throughout the development process regarding the evolving design of the proposed Development, including planned enhancements. FLS have been regularly updated by SPR throughout the design process, and agreed the suitability of each draft layout in consultation with SPR. This was done through regular meetings and updates with the FLS Forest Liaison Officer and the wider FLS team. FLS were also involved in the approval of any materials used in the Scoping exercise and PIEs.

6.5 Public Information Events (PIEs) and Community Consultation

13. Public consultation is a key element of the environmental assessment process and, as part of the wider consultation process, attention was given to community engagement, in cognisance of Planning Advice Note (PAN) 3/2010: Community Engagement (Scottish Government 2010). SPR are committed to developing renewable energy responsibly and strive to be good neighbours in all aspects of their work. SPR are committed to Kintyre and Argyll and Bute and to maximising the opportunities for local communities to benefit from their projects.
14. Local community councils that have an administrative boundary within or adjacent to the Site were contacted during the EIA process. SPR's project development team has a long standing, existing relationship with the local community councils and informed the following Community Councils of the proposed Development by email in June 2020:
- Ardrishaig Community Council;
 - Arran Community Council;
 - Bute and Cowal Community Council;
 - East Kintyre Community Council;
 - Gigha Community Council;
 - Kilfinnan Community Council;
 - South Knapdale Community Council;
 - Tarbert and Skipness Community Council; and
 - West Kintyre Community Council.
15. In addition to this consultation with Community Councils and consultation through the scoping process, consultation has been undertaken with the local communities in the form of PIEs and a leaflet that was distributed to all commercial and residential properties within 10 km of the Site. These consultation events were held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic following discussion and agreement with the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU)
16. SPR voluntarily held PIEs to continue dialogue with the local community regarding the proposed Development. Due to the restrictions on face-to-face meeting brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, alternative web-based consultation measures were utilised.
17. The first attempted public consultation took place in June 2020 This coincided with the distribution of a leaflet to all commercial and residential properties nearby, providing a link to further information available on the website and providing a

link to it; however the live virtual events (three proposed at the end of June 2020) were not held in response to feedback from the local community.

18. Nonetheless, a total of 27 responses (including four from Tarbert and Skipness Community Council) to the consultation event were received between June and November 2020. Responses came either via the website, the project email address, or in writing from the feedback forms returned to SPR.
19. A second round of public consultation, also in the form of an online PIE, was a three-week long online event hosted in November and December 2020 on the SPR Earraghail project website that was subsequently extended to January 2021, and included banners displaying information, figures and visualisations comparable to the information provision of a traditional Public Information Day (PID) such as work on peat, geology, hydrology, transport, archaeology, ecology, ornithology, landscape and visual and noise. A feedback form was provided for members of the local community to submit their comments. The PIE was advertised by a leaflet distributed to the same residential and commercial properties as the previous event, and an advert in the local newspapers, the Campbeltown Courier and Argyllshire Advertiser, in both their print and online editions. Posters were distributed to local groups and community organisations who offered to display them locally and share them with interested parties and on their social media accounts. The local community councils and local councillors were also notified in advance by email and provided with a poster for the event.
20. According to website traffic, there were over 200 “new visitors” over the period between the 25th November 2020 – 26th January 2021 who visited the Earraghail PIE website.
21. In addition, correspondence and a meeting was held with the Kintyre Way, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) interested in promoting sustainable use of the Kintyre Way, regarding enhancements to the Kintyre Way within the Site that could be included in the proposed Development.
22. The above measures have ensured that as many people as possible were contacted and consulted in relation to the proposed Development.
23. Further details of the PIEs can be found in the **Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report** submitted as part of the application for consent for the proposed Development.
24. The feedback provided by the Community Councils and local residents highlighted several points which this EIA Report addresses, including:
 - community benefits;
 - access into the Site for recreation;
 - tourism impact;
 - noise disturbance;
 - landscape and visual impacts;
 - population and human health;
 - support for renewables; and
 - need to tackle climate change.

6.6 Gatecheck

25. A Gatecheck Report was sent to the ECU on 2nd July 2021. The report provides detail on how consultee scoping responses have been addressed by the EIA process and the design of the proposed Development. Further responses to the Gatecheck Report were received from three consultees in August 2021. Of the three consultees that responded to the Gatecheck Report, A&BC and NAC were satisfied that their views had generally been considered and specified concerns addressed. NatureScot requested further time to consider fully the additional information provided to it on the approach to landscape impact assessment. SEPA acknowledged the gate check but advised that further time would be required to respond. Comments of note included the following:

- NatureScot advised that it appeared that further clarification of scope after advice from NatureScot provided on 14th July 2021 appeared to be addressed;
- A&BC and NAC agreed to the proposed scope of the landscape and visual impact assessment; and
- The ECU provided a detailed briefing on the next steps for the project leading up to submission.

6.7 References

Earraghail Renewable Energy Development Scoping Information Sheets. Available at https://www.scottishpowerrenewables.com/pages/earraghail_renewable_energy_development.aspx [Accessed in July 2021]

Planning Advice Note (PAN) 3/2010: Community Engagement: Scottish Government: 2010

The Electricity Act 1989

The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017

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