Other Considerations

Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation

Recreational activity on and in the vicinity of the Site is generally low, with the exception of the Southern Upland Way which runs through the southern part of the Site, passing through the glen of Polskeoch Burn and across higher ground west of Wether Hill. Informal access is highest at Cairnhead, where the Striding Arches attracts visitors.

The potential effects on visual amenity of the Southern Upland Way, the Striding Arches, core paths and rights of way will be fully assessed in the EIA Report as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). A number of studies have been undertaken in order to determine the potential impact upon the tourism and recreation industry due to the presence of a windfarm(s). These show that for most tourists, windfarms are not a major factor in their decision making, whilst amongst those who do take note of them, most regard them as having either a positive or a neutral effect on the landscape (Scottish Government, 2008)[1]. On the evidence presented in these studies, it is concluded that there is no evidence that windfarm proposals have a significant negative impact upon tourism. This conclusion is supported by the findings in the Scottish Parliaments Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee's (2012) 'Report on the Achievability of the Scottish Government's Renewable Energy Targets' which concluded that there is "no empirical evidence which demonstrates that the tourism industry in Scotland will be adversely affected by the wider deployment of renewable energy projects, particularly onshore and offshore wind." It is therefore proposed that impacts upon tourism be scoped out of the EIA process.

There is however acknowledged to be the potential for direct impacts to the Southern Upland Way, core paths and rights from the proposed Development during both construction and operation. To minimise these potential effects, the layout of the proposed Development will be designed to ensure an appropriate set back distance between turbines and all long distance promoted footpaths, core paths and rights of way. Where public access will be temporarily disrupted during construction and maintenance activities, it is proposed that the mitigation to be employed to minimise or avoid these impacts be clearly identified in the EIA Report.

SPR is also committed to the identification and implementation of access enhancement measures that will help to facilitate greater use and enjoyment of the Site and wider access network. Examples of such enhancement measures that have been adopted for other SPR sites include creating new circular access routes, providing new visitor interpretation facilities at key locations, improving signposting, upgrading parking facilities and provision of bird hides. SPR will seek to identify suitable opportunities for this Site through the public consultation and scoping exercise. It is considered that such enhancement opportunities have the potential for significant beneficial effects to the local community.

The proposed Development would also bring the potential for significant beneficial economic effects at a local level in relation to employment opportunities and the use of local services by construction workers. There will also be some potential local employment opportunities during operation. Other socio-economic benefits that would arise from the proposed Development will be the establishment of a community benefit fund and the opportunity for local community groups to invest directly in the project. It is expected that these income streams could be used to support community projects within the local area.

Although the above access, recreation and other socio-economic benefits are not expected to be significant at a national or regional level, given their potential importance at a local and community level it is considered that their impacts should be fully assessed and reported in the EIA Report.

Air Quality

Pollutants released from stationary plant and as a result of traffic movements associated with the proposed Development have the potential to impact air quality receptors. However, due to the scale of the proposed Development and the temporary nature of the construction works, any impacts are not likely to be significant.

Dust impacts are unlikely to occur due to the distances of receptors from areas where earthworks are proposed to be undertaken. In addition, best practice measures would be put in place during construction to minimise dust impacts. A site specific Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be prepared for the proposed

[1] Scottish Government (2008). Economic Impact of Wind Farms on Scottish Tourism.

Development which will incorporate these mitigation measures. Therefore, no significant dust effects are anticipated. It is therefore proposed that air quality is scoped out of the EIA process.

Shadow Flicker

Shadow flicker is the effect caused when the rotating blades of a wind turbine cause a shadow to be cast on neighbouring properties and receptors. As the blades rotate, shadows on the ground or nearby properties move. The effect occurs under certain combinations of factors, including geographical position and time of day and can occur inside buildings, where the moving shadow passing an aperture such as a window opening creates a flicker effect.

Scottish Government web-based advice on onshore wind turbines states that 'where separation is provided between wind turbines and nearby dwellings (as a general rule 10 rotor diameters), "shadow flicker" should not be a problem.' In addition, only properties within 130 degrees either side of north relative to the turbines can be affected at these latitudes in the UK as turbines do not cast long shadows on their southern side. This is referred to as the Zone of Potential Shadow Flicker.

The proposed Development will be designed where possible to avoid turbine placements within the Zone of Potential Shadow Flicker. Should this be achieved, it is proposed that shadow flicker be scoped out of the EIA process. If not feasible to avoid shadow flicker effects through turbine placement, then the dates, times and durations of shadow flicker events for each property within this distance will be calculated and an assessment of any effects at these properties undertaken and reported in the EIA Report.

Climate Change

The EIA Regulations require consideration of climate change. Although a separate climate change chapter is not proposed, climate change would be considered throughout the EIA Report. The proposed approach is set out below.

Climate Change: Changes to Future Environmental Conditions

Each topic chapter of the EIA Report will consider predicted changes in baseline environmental conditions, including changes resulting from climate change, where robust information regarding future climate change is available at the time of writing. The climate change information will cover the anticipated operational lifetime of the proposed Development. This will be based on the information available from the UK Climate Projections project (UKCP18), which provides information on plausible changes in the climate for the UK (Met Office, 2018) and on published documents such as the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 (Committee on Climate Change, 2016). The assessment of effects for each topic will take into account identified trends or changes predicted to arise as a result of climate change.

Effects of the Proposed Development on Climate Change

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions can occur throughout the lifecycle of a development, including during construction and operation of a development. This can be affected by factors such as material use and energy demand. The proposed Development will incorporate measures during its construction by reducing fuel, energy and raw material consumption, and waste generation.

Construction of the proposed Development would generate a limited amount of greenhouse gas emissions and the turbines and other development infrastructure would incorporate some embodied carbon. However, the contribution to overall greenhouse gas emissions is anticipated to be negligible given the nature and scale of the proposed Development.

The energy produced by the proposed Development would offset energy that would otherwise be produced by forms of generation that produce greenhouse gasses as a by-product. Therefore, as a result of the proposed Development there will be positive impact on climate change. The Scottish Governments Carbon Calculator Tool (Scottish Environment Protection Agency et al., 2018) will be used to produce a statement of the expected carbon savings over the lifetime of the proposed Development and will be included as a Technical Appendix to the EIA Report.

Consultee Questions

- Do consultees agree with the proposed scope of the socio-economic assessment, tourism and recreation assessment?
- Do consultees have any suggested access enhancement measures that they would wish to see implemented on the Site?
- Do consultees agree that air quality can be scoped out of the EIA?

- Do consultees agree with the proposed design mitigation approach to avoid potential shadow flicker effects?
- Do consultees agree with the proposed method and approach to assessment of climate change?
- Please confirm any additional requirements that you consider should be included in this element of the EIA, that have not been covered in this fact sheet.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Site Boundary 2km Buffer
- Indicative Turbine Location
- Local Authority Boundary

Residential Receptors within 2km of Site Boundary

- Residential
- Residential - Potenially Inhabited

East Ayrshire

Dumfries and Galloway

260000 265000 270000 275000 280000

610000 605000 600000

N

1:60,000 Scale @ A3

0 1 2 3 Km

Rev	Date	By	Comment
A	14/02/20	LM	First Issue.

Euchanhead Renewable Energy Development

Scoping Report

Residential Receptors

Drg No	00481.00052.0097.0	
Rev	A	Datum: OSGB36
Date	14/02/20	Projection: TM
Figure	1	