



Chapter 4

Renewable Energy and Planning Policy

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Chapter 4

Renewable energy and planning policy

4.1 Executive summary

1. The proposed Development comprises 19 three-bladed horizontal axis wind turbines, 16 up to 149.9 m tip height and 3 up to 135 m tip height, with a combined rated output of around 114 megawatts (MW) and around 20 MW of ground mounted solar arrays producing a combined output of around 134 MW or 360 to 380 GWh of electricity annually, together with associated infrastructure and as such an application for planning permission under Section 36 the Electricity 1989 Act is being made to the Scottish Governments Energy Consents Unit. The proposed Development will constitute a Schedule 2 development as provided for by the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations).
2. SPR is a licenced generator and has obligations under Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 which requires it to have regard to the environment by preserving its natural beauty and to protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural and historical interest when formulating development proposals. It must also do what it can to mitigate any effects of proposed development and it must not impact fisheries or fish stocks in any waters. Through the EIA process SPR has developed a scheme that has had full regard to the duties set out in Schedule 9 of the 1989 Act. The matters that are raised in Schedule 9 have been considered in the EIA process and the findings are presented in this EIA Report. Scottish Ministers are also required under Schedule 9 to consider these matters and also whether SPR has met its obligations to undertake reasonable mitigation.
3. In the case of Section 36 Applications the role of the Development Plan is not the same as in the case of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The test set out in Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 which sets out that development must accord with the terms of the Development Plan is not engaged in the case of a S36 application. The Development Plan is nonetheless material to the determination of the application.
4. The Site is located within the administrative area of A&BC. The Development Plan for the Site therefore comprises:
 - Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan (ABLDP)
5. The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan was adopted in March 2015 (the ABLDP). The key ABLDP policy for the proposed Development is Policy LDP 6 – Supporting the Sustainable Growth of Renewables. The following policies are also considered to be relevant to the proposed Development and will be considered during the design and development of the proposed Renewable Energy Development:
 - Policy LDP STRAT 1– Sustainable Development
 - Policy LDP 3 – Supporting the Protection, Conservation and Enhancement of our Environment
 - Policy LDP 9 – Development Setting, Layout and Design
 - Policy LDP10 – Maximising our Resources and Reducing Our Consumption
 - Policy LDP 11 – Improving our Connectivity and Infrastructure
 - Policy LDP5–Supporting the Sustainable Growth of Our Economy
6. Policy LDP 6 states that the Council will prepare a spatial framework for windfarms and wind turbine developments over 50 m high as supplementary guidance, in accordance with SPP. This guidance was adopted in December 2016 in the form Supplementary Guidance 2: Renewable Energy. The spatial framework identifies areas which have potential for windfarm development, and those which don't, including areas requiring significant protection in accordance with the criteria set out in Table 1 of SPP. According to the spatial framework map, the proposed Development lies partly in a Group 3 Area (area with potential for windfarm development subject to other policy considerations). The remainder of the Site is considered to be a Group 2 Area. This is due to the presence of peat on the Site.

4.2 Introduction

7. This Chapter outlines the renewable energy and planning policy that is considered to be relevant to the proposed Development. This has been done in order to set the proposed Development in the context of the adopted development plans, objectives and strategies at the international, national and local levels. Legislation, planning policy and guidance specific to each technical discipline is considered in the technical chapters (**Chapter 7 to 15**).
8. In line with the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA) guidelines (2004), the detailed analysis of the policies is provided separately to this EIA Report. A more detailed analysis of the policies is contained in the **Planning Statement**, which is included in the submission to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU).

4.3 Electricity Act 1989

9. This EIA Report has been prepared in respect of a development which will be applied for in the context of Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (the 1989 Act).
10. SPR holds a Generation Licence and it is required to have regard to matters set out in Schedule 9 of the 1989 Act in formulating relevant proposals (10 MW or above). Paragraph 3 (1)(a) of Schedule 9 requires SPR to consider the “*desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest*”. In addition, under Schedule 9, paragraph 3 (1)(b) SPR must “*do what he reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects*”. Through the EIA process SPR has sought to develop a scheme that takes account of the duties set out in Schedule 9 of the 1989 Act. The matters that are raised in Schedule 9 have been considered in the EIA process and the findings are presented in this EIA Report. Scottish Ministers are then required, under Schedule 9, paragraph 3 (2) to assess whether the applicant has fulfilled its duties as set out in Schedule 9, paragraph 3 (1).
11. Schedule 9 also sets out requirements for the protection of fisheries by generating licence holders whereby paragraph 3 (3) states that “*in exercising any relevant functions each of the following, namely, a licence holder, a person authorised by an exemption to generate or supply electricity and the Secretary of State shall avoid, so far as possible, causing injuries to fisheries or to the stock of fish in any waters.*” The assessment of impacts on fish have been considered and are addressed in **Chapter 8, Ecology and Technical Appendix 8.2 Fish Habitat Assessment**.
12. Furthermore, in the case of Section 36 Applications, the role of the Development Plan is not the same as in the case of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended (the 1997 Act). The test set out in Section 25 of the 1997 Act, which sets out that development must accord with the terms of the Development Plan, is not engaged in the case of a Section 36 application. The Development Plan is nonetheless material to the determination of the application.

4.4 International Context

13. In order to understand the need for renewable energy generation in the UK, it is important to consider the international drive towards addressing climate change. The policy framework for renewable energy development in the UK is largely motivated by international agreements on the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases.
 - 4.4.1 United Nations**
14. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) came into force on 21 March 1994 and sought to stabilise the atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at “safe levels”. The Convention provides an overall framework for international government efforts to address the challenge posed by climate change. Currently there are 194 parties signed up to the Convention. The Convention embodies a series of review mechanisms. The first of these, the Kyoto Protocol, was adopted in December 1997. As a result of this Protocol the European Union was obliged to secure an 8 % reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 2012.

15. The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Doha, Qatar, took place in 2012 when the Kyoto Protocol was amended so that it would continue as of 1 January 2013.
16. The 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 21) which was held in Paris in December 2015 resulting in a legally binding global climate change target agreed by all 196 member parties with the aim of capping climate change well below 2°C of warming.
17. The 22nd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 22), the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 12), and the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1) were held in Morocco in November 2016. The second part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1.2) took place from 6-17 November 2017 in Bonn, Germany. The Conferences successfully demonstrated to the world that the implementation of the Paris Agreement is underway and the constructive spirit of multilateral cooperation on climate change continues.

4.4.2 EU Renewable Energy Directives

18. The European Union (EU) reduction target was the subject of an EU Renewable Energy Directive (2001/77/EC). The UK's commitment to the protocol was a reduction of greenhouse gases to 12 % below the 1990 levels by 2012.
19. Directive 2009/28/EC created, at clause 13, mandatory national targets consistent with a 20 % share of energy from renewable sources by 2020. The Directive, clause 15, advises that it is necessary to translate the European Community target into individual targets for each Member State, with due regard to an equitable allocation, this takes into account the different starting points of the Member States and their potential, including the current level of energy from renewable sources and the existing energy mix. The UK target for its share of energy from renewable sources, in gross final consumption of energy, is 15 % by 2020.

4.4.3 A 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy Policies

20. In January 2014, the European Commission presented 'A 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy Policies' stating that the target of a 40 % emissions reduction below the 1990 level would be met through domestic measures alone. An EU-wide binding target for renewable energy of at least 27 % of energy consumption by 2030 was introduced which will be enforced through a new governance system based on national energy plans.

4.5 UK context

21. The main responsibilities for policy development in relation to energy production and regulation in Scotland are retained by Westminster. This section sets out in summary the UK Government's approach to renewable energy generation since 2008. This provides the framework for the development of renewable energy generation across the UK and provides a background for the emergence of Scottish renewable energy generation and wind energy policy.

4.5.1 Climate Change Act, 2008

22. The Climate Change Act (the 2008 Act) became law on 26 November 2008. Scotland is a partner in delivering the UK emissions reduction target set out in the 2008 Act.

23. Two key aims underpin the 2008 Act these are:

- to improve carbon management and help the transition towards a low carbon economy in the UK; and
- to demonstrate strong UK leadership internationally.

24. The 2008 Act introduced for the first time a legally binding framework to tackle the challenges of climate change. It sets legally binding targets for the UK to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by at least 80 % by 2050 relative to 1990 levels. Energy generated from renewable sources was identified as a key component for meeting the challenge of reducing carbon emissions and the fight against climate change.

4.5.2 National Renewable Energy Action Plan, 2010

25. The National Renewable Energy Action Plan for the UK was published in July 2010 by DECC and advises that the UK needs to radically increase its use of renewable energy. It states that:

"The UK Government believes that climate change is one of the gravest threats we face, and that urgent action at home and abroad is required...The development of renewable energy sources, alongside nuclear power and the development of carbon capture and storage, will also enable the UK to play its part in international efforts to reduce the production of harmful greenhouse gases."

4.5.3 2050 Pathways Analysis, 2010

26. The 2050 Pathways Analysis (published July 2010 and updated in 2013 by the Department of Business Energy Infrastructure and Strategy (BEIS) (BEIS, 2010; BEIS, 2013) presents a framework through which to consider some of the trade-offs and choices which will have to be made over the next 40 years. It is system wide and covers all parts of the economy and all greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. It demonstrates that it is possible for the 80 % emissions reduction target to be achieved in a range of ways. The document invited feedback on the choices that were to be made at the time.

4.5.4 UK Renewable Energy Roadmap, 2011

27. The UK Renewable Energy Roadmap (DECC, 2011a) sets out a comprehensive action plan to speed up the UK's deployment and use of renewable energy and to place the country on a path to achieving the targets for 2020, whilst reducing the cost of renewable energy over time. It identifies eight technologies, including onshore wind, that have the potential to assist the UK in meeting the targets in a cost effective way or that offer the greatest potential for the future.
28. The UK Renewable Energy Roadmap Update 2013 (published November 2013 by DECC) advised that the UK was at that time on track to meet the first interim target towards the ambitious target of 15 % renewable energy by 2020. The Executive Summary reaffirms the Coalition Government's commitment to increasing the deployment of renewable energy across the UK. The Executive Summary also noted that the UK Government projections of energy consumption in 2020 had been revised downwards, and the estimated amount of renewable energy required to meet the 15 % target of renewable energy production (for heat, transport and electricity) had also been revised downwards in line with this projection of energy consumption.

4.5.5 UK Carbon Plan, 2011

29. The UK Carbon Plan December 2011 (DECC, 2011b) set out how the then Government proposed to tackle climate change and build a green economy through specific, practical action across government, with clear targets and milestones. The UK Carbon Plan is set in the context of Scotland's role in leading the way to a low carbon society, explaining what is meant by a low carbon society and economy, and why Scotland is ideally placed to be at the forefront of this transition. The UK Carbon Plan set a target to generate 31 % of final electricity demand from renewables by the end of 2011.

4.5.6 The Fifth Carbon Budget, 2015

30. In November 2015, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) advised the Westminster Government to set the fifth carbon budget to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions in 2030 by 57 % relative to 1990 levels. In June 2016 that advice was accepted. At this time provisional figures showed that in 2015 UK emissions were 38 % below 1990 levels (Source CCC).
31. In June 2016 the CCC laid its annual progress report before Parliament. That report emphasised the need then to bring forward policies and proposals that would achieve the levels of reduction set out in the fifth carbon budget.

32. To meet these targets, the Government has set five-yearly carbon budgets which currently run until 2032. They restrict the amount of greenhouse gas the UK can legally emit in a five-year period. The UK is currently in the third carbon budget period (2018 to 2022). The need to bring forward policies and proposals that would achieve the levels of reduction is set out in the fifth carbon budget.

4.5.7 Reducing UK Emissions: 2018 Progress Report to Parliament

33. Reducing emissions and preparing for climate change Reducing UK Emissions 2018 Progress Report to Parliament produced by the Committee on Climate Change in 2018 (the 2018 Progress Report) is the ninth and most recent report to Parliament on progress in reducing emissions to meet carbon targets, as required under the Climate Change Act. In this report, the Committee sets out four key messages to Government to put emissions reductions on track, based on the lessons of the last decade. The Committee's four key messages to Government are:

- support the simple, low-cost options;
- commit to effective regulation and strict enforcement;
- end the chopping and changing of policy; and
- act now to keep long-term options open.

34. The 2018 Progress Report advises that overall, UK emissions are down 43 % compared to the 1990 baseline while the economy has grown significantly over the same period. It advises that most of this reduction is due to excellent progress in reducing emissions from electricity generation, noting that the reductions in other sectors have stalled.

35. The foreword of the 2018 Progress Report notes that since 2013 emissions outside the sectors of power and waste have plateaued. The Committee have chosen the 2018 Progress Report to send a strong message to the Government, the message is “*Act now, climate change will not pause while we consider our options. And act in the consumer interest: pursue the low-cost, low-risk options, like onshore wind, and enforce the standards that will reduce emissions from vehicles and buildings, where consumers have been cheated by misleading industry claims.*”

36. The Executive Summary of the 2018 Progress Report advises that the UK is entering a new decade of action to address climate change. It advises that thus far the “governance framework under the Climate Change Act has worked to deliver overall UK emissions reduction, but a much tougher challenge is presented by the fourth and fifth carbon budgets.” It further advises that the UK is not on course to meet the legally binding fourth and fifth carbon budgets.

4.5.8 Net Zero: The UK’s Contribution to Stopping Global Warming

37. Net Zero: The UK’s Contribution to stopping global warming was published by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) in May 2019. It was prepared at the request of the devolved governments of Scotland and Wales and also the UK Government, to reassess the UK’s long-term emissions targets.

38. The advice to the Scottish Government from the CCC, as highlighted in section 4.5, relates to this report: Net Zero – The UK’s contribution to stopping global warming (2019). The recommendations of this report, relating to Scotland, have been taken forward in the amendments to the Climate Change Bill and are summarised as follows:

- The UK should legislate as soon as possible to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The target can be legislated as a 100% reduction in greenhouse gases (GHGs) from 1990 and should cover all sectors of the economy, including international aviation and shipping;
- The aim should be to meet the target through UK domestic effort, without relying on international carbon units (or ‘credits’);
- This target is only credible if policy to reduce emissions ramps up significantly;
- HM Treasury should undertake a review of how the transition will be funded and where the costs will fall. It should develop a strategy to ensure this is, and is perceived to be, fair; and
- Scotland has proportionately greater potential for emissions removal than the UK overall and can credibly adopt a more ambitious target. It should aim for net-zero GHGs by 2045. Interim targets should be set for Scottish emissions reductions (relative to 1990) of 70% by 2030 and 90% by 2040.

39. The Net Zero report also has a number of related documents which go into detail on how the targets of the Next Zero report can be met. One such related document is the ‘Green Finance Strategy’.

4.5.9 Green Finance Strategy

40. The Green Finance Strategy (GFS) was published in July 2019 by HM Treasury and provides detail on how the way the UK invest needs to change so that all countries within the UK and all industry sectors can deliver emissions reductions.

41. The GFS refers to the promotion of low carbon growth, at home and abroad, through various means. It also highlights that the transition from the present situation to a resilient and environmentally sustainable economy will necessitate “the reallocation of tens of trillions of pounds of capital, presenting significant opportunities for the UK’s financial sector”. The GFS also acknowledges the key role that the UK’s financial regulators (The Bank of England, The Financial Conduct Authority, The Financial Reporting Council and The Pensions Regulator) play in facilitating this transition.

42. The GFS details that the decarbonisation of the UK economy requires substantial levels of investment in resilient low carbon infrastructure. Creating huge opportunities for UK business and financial institutions.

43. The key approaches put forward by the GFS in order to increase the flow of green finance are as follows:

- Establish robust, long-term policy frameworks;
- Improve access to finance for green investment;
- Address market barriers and build capability; and
- Develop innovative approaches and new ways of working.

44. The GFS details that the government is carrying out an Infrastructure Finance Review to explore how it can ensure that good infrastructure projects can raise the finance they need, in the light of such things as technological change.

45. The report reiterates that the government will look to move forward with the approaches outlined in this section and will work closely with the private sector to deliver the Green Finance Strategy.

4.6 Scottish context

46. Tackling climate change is a devolved matter and, therefore, the Scottish Government has a responsibility to set policy to ensure compliance with targets set at EU and UK level. The Scottish Government declared a ‘climate emergency’ in May 2019. As a result, it introduced a new Climate Change Bill to amend earlier targets legislated through the Climate Change Act 2009, which makes Scotland the first country to legislate a net zero emissions target by 2045. This Bill was passed by Scottish Government in September 2019. The following text identifies key Scottish renewable energy targets and policy that are relevant at the current time.

4.6.1 Energy Generation Policy Statement, 2013

47. The Scottish Government published the Electricity Generation Policy Statement (EGPS) in 2013. The EGPS set out the pathway to meeting the Scottish Government target of delivering the equivalent of at least 100 % of gross electricity consumption from renewables by 2020. It set out how Scotland generated electricity at that time, and the changes that were needed to meet Scottish Government targets and deliver a low carbon generating mix.

48. Paragraph 5 of the Executive Summary of the EPGS advised that the EPGS is constructed around a number of relevant targets and related requirements which include the following:

“delivering the equivalent of at least 100% of gross electricity consumption from renewables by 2020 as part of a wider, balanced electricity mix, with thermal generation playing an important role though a minimum of 2.5GW of thermal generation progressively fitted with Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS); and enabling local and community ownership of at least 500MW of renewable energy by 2020”.

4.6.2 2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy – Update 2015

49. In September 2015, the Scottish Government published the 2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy in Scotland Update 2015. The foreword of this document advises that provisional figures show that renewable sources generated 49.8 % of gross electricity consumption in 2014. While this suggests that Scotland was on target to meet the interim target of 50 % by 2015, it is clear that Scotland should not underestimate the challenge of meeting the 2020 target of 100 % renewable generation.

50. The document is clear that onshore wind has a pivotal role in delivering the 2020 renewable energy targets for Scotland. It confirms that the Scottish Government policy on windfarm applications strikes a careful balance between making the most of Scotland’s renewable energy potential and protecting environmental issues and residential amenity.

51. The document identified the potential for energy storage to enable the integration of renewables into the grid, and balance supply and demand thus enhancing the security of supply.

4.6.3 Reducing Emissions in Scotland 2018

52. The seventh report on Scotland’s progress towards meeting emission reduction targets, as requested by Scottish Ministers under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, was published in September 2018 by the Committee on Climate Change. The 2018 Report assessed latest emission trends across the economy and for energy supply; homes and communities; business and the public sector; transport; agriculture; rural land use and forestry and waste.

53. The report concluded that Scotland met its 'net' emissions annual target in 2016. The target was 44.9 MtCO_{2e}, while Scotland's actual emissions were 41.5 MtCO_{2e}. It advised that Scottish net emissions were 45 % below 1990 levels in 2016, and Scotland is currently outperforming the interim target for at least a 42 % reduction in net emissions by 2020.

54. The Report advised that many sectors have not seen significant reductions in CO₂ emissions in the last few years and more needs to be done out with electricity generation in order to continue meeting future targets.

4.6.4 Climate Change Plan: The Third report on Proposals and Policies 2018-2032

55. The Climate Change Plan (CCP) (Scottish Government, 2018b), is the third report on proposals and policies for meeting Scotland's annual greenhouse gas emissions targets that the Scottish Ministers must lay before the Scottish Parliament as required by the 2009 Act.

56. CCP 2018 outlines the Scottish Government revised target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 66 % by 2032. The reduction figure is to be measured against the 1990 baseline figures. The CCP 2018 envisages that by 2030 Scotland's electricity system will be wholly decarbonised and with electricity supplying a growing share of Scotland's energy needs, e.g. transport and heat.

4.6.5 Scottish Energy Strategy 2017

57. The Scottish Government published the Scottish Energy Strategy in December 2017 (the SES) (Scottish Government, 2017f). The Energy Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's vision for the future energy system in Scotland, for the period to 2050. The strategy is designed to provide a long term vision to guide detailed energy policy decisions over the coming decades. It articulates the priorities for an integrated system-wide approach that considers both the use and the supply of energy for heat, power and transport. The document focuses on a range of renewable sources including onshore wind, solar and energy storage. The main document was published alongside three policy statements. Those documents are:

- Onshore Wind Policy Statement;
- Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies and District Heating; and
- Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme (SEEP).

58. The main points from the SES and accompanying documents, as they are relevant to the proposed Development are summarised from Section 1a 2050 Vision for Energy in Scotland.

59. The SES sets out the 2050 vision for energy in Scotland is to have a "flourishing, competitive local and national energy sector, delivering secure, affordable, clean energy for Scotland's households, communities and businesses". The vision is centred around six priorities, including the following:

- "innovative local energy systems which empower communities; and
- exploiting Scotland's huge renewable energy resources".

60. The SES is clear that energy storage has an important role to play in the future of Scotland's energy system. It states:

"Changes in how we store energy across the system, and particularly in terms of electricity and heat, could have a profoundly important bearing on our low carbon economy".

61. The SES advises that for Scotland to meet the domestic and international climate change targets, the Government will set a new 2030 'all-energy' target for the equivalent of 50 % of Scotland's heat, transport and electricity consumption to be supplied from renewable sources.

62. The SES advises that onshore wind development is essential to Scotland's transformation to a fully decarbonised energy system by 2050 and brings opportunities which underpin our vision to grow a low carbon economy and build a fairer society.

63. The SES considers solar and advises that "solar PV can make an important contribution to Scotland energy needs." It advises that there is the potential to power the equivalent of 50,000 homes through solar power. The SES is clear that there is the potential for the combination of storage with wind and solar assets to be a valuable solution for the energy system as a whole, as it would offer the potential for demand to be locally managed.

64. The SES notes that the Scottish Government want to "see a significant increase in shared ownership of renewable energy projects in Scotland – putting energy into the hands of local communities and delivering a lasting economic asset to communities across Scotland".

65. The ambition is for at least half of newly consented renewable energy projects by 2020, to have an element of shared ownership. The Scottish Government believe that "Shared ownership will play a key part in helping to meet our targets of 1GW of community and locally-owned energy by 2020 and 2GW by 2030." The Scottish Government "expect community involvement in onshore wind developments to continue to play a vital role in reaching these targets."

66. The Onshore Wind Policy Statement (the OWPS) (Scottish Government, 2017e) is one of three policy statements accompanying the SES and was published in December 2017. The OWPS has been prepared to reaffirm the existing Scottish Government's onshore wind policy set out in previous publications. It includes separate sections on key priority areas as follows:

- route to market;
- repowering;
- developing a strategic approach to new development;
- barriers to deployment;
- protection for residents and the environment;
- community benefits; and
- shared ownership.

67. The OWPS states that Scotland will continue to need more onshore wind developments in order to meet renewable energy targets. Also highlighted in the OWPS is an acknowledgement by the Scottish Government that windfarm design is moving in the direction of bigger turbines and that larger turbines should be supported where appropriate.

68. The OWPS outlines the Scottish Government's position that new onshore wind projects should be developed at no additional subsidy cost to consumers, adding that some limited market intervention is required to protect projects against variations in the wholesale price of power.

69. Shared ownership is promoted in the OWPS, with developers encouraged to include elements of shared ownership within their proposals. The OWPS reiterates the Scottish Governments target for at least 50 % of newly consented renewable energy projects to have an element of shared ownership by 2020. The OWPS refers to the Scottish Governments 2015 'Good Practice Guidance for Shared Ownership of Onshore Renewable Energy Developments' indicating that this guidance should be used by developers when working with communities on this matter. Further to this the OWPS highlights the letter issued by the Chief Planner in 2015, to the Heads of Planning, which stresses the relationship between shared ownership and net economic benefit in the SPP.

4.6.6 Scottish Climate Change Bill (2018)

70. A new Scottish Climate Change Bill (2018) was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 25 September 2019, which will amend the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The Bill introduces legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 at the latest, with Scotland becoming carbon neutral by 2040. Scotland will not only have to meet the net-zero target for 2045, but also have to reduce emissions by 56% by 2020, 70% by 2030 and 90% by 2040. These are currently the most ambitious statutory targets in the world.

4.7 Climate emergency

71. In May 2019 the Scottish Government declared a climate emergency. At the same time, in Westminster the Environment Secretary acknowledged a climate change emergency. In a speech to the Scottish Parliament the Climate Change Secretary stated:

"The Climate Change Committee has been stark in saying that the proposed new targets will require "a fundamental change from the current piecemeal approach that focuses on specific actions in some sectors to an explicitly economy wide approach". To deliver the transformational change that is required, we need structural

changes across the board: to our planning, procurement, and financial policies, processes and assessments. And as I've already said, that is exactly what we will do."

72. The Climate Change Secretary went onto say that:

"subject to the passage of the Planning Bill at stage 3, the next National Planning Framework and review of the Scottish Planning Policy will include considerable focus on how the planning system can support our climate change goals."

73. The speech to parliament highlighted the advice received by the Scottish Government from the UK Committee on Climate Change, emphasising this advice was being taken forward via amendments to the Climate Change Bill.

74. Furthermore, on the 26 September 2019, the day after the Scottish Parliament approved the Climate Change Bill, Argyll and Bute Council established the Argyll and Bute Environmental Action Group. The purpose of the Group will be to support the ongoing national and international response to climate challenges and seek opportunities for strategic projects and activities, to enhance Argyll and Bute's contribution to addressing this global issue and delivering the Climate Change (Scotland) Act.

4.8 Progress Towards Targets

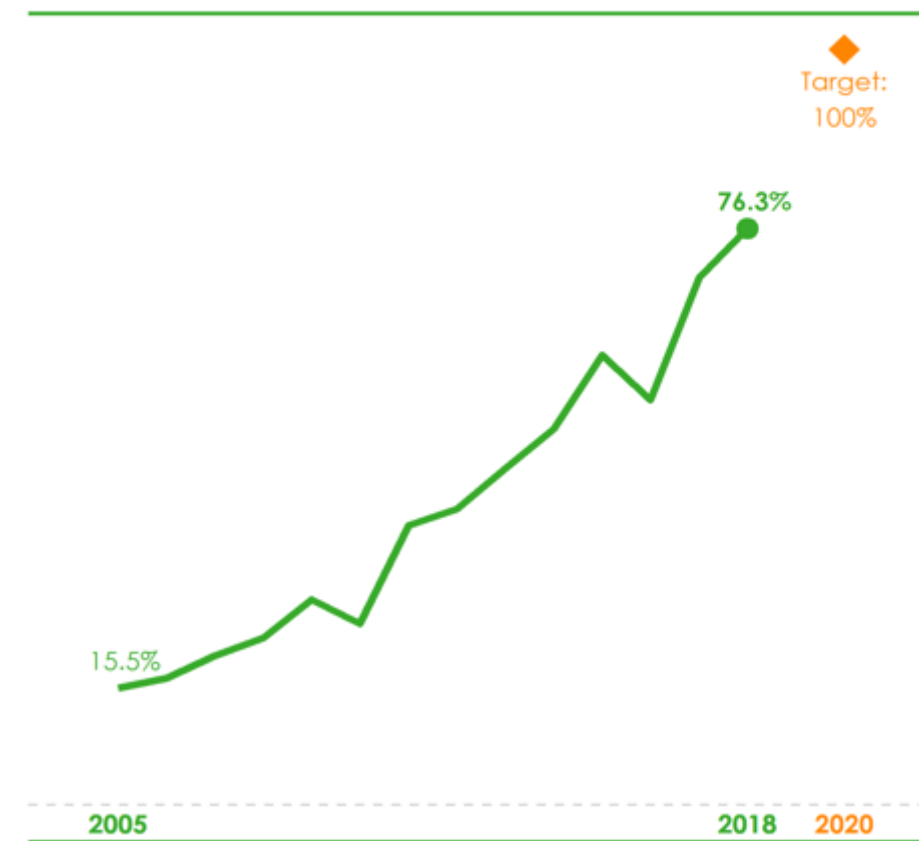
75. The 2020 equivalent 100 % gross electricity target is approximately 16 GW of installed renewables capacity. It is acknowledged that the proposed Development would not be operational at that time. However, for reasons set out in the Planning Statement, it is considered likely that the current targets will not be met. It is expected that the policies and targets will be updated in due course and are anticipated to further promote and build upon current renewable energy targets, reaffirming a commitment to the equivalent of 100 % of gross electricity demand to be produced by renewable means, all in a context where other sectors are expected to rely more heavily on electricity (e.g. transport and heat) thereby requiring a target which is likely to exceed 16 GW. For this reason, it is considered that the proposed Development would make a valuable contribution to the renewable energy targets.

76. Furthermore, renewable energy developments are becoming more cost effective, in particular wind, which is the cheapest form of renewable energy. The wind industry, including developers and the supply chain, is calling upon the government¹ to take the opportunity to set clearer policy with respect to modern windfarm developments, which are based upon more efficient turbines with higher turbine tips. These turbines are now the standard being used by the industry internationally. Industry leaders are now calling upon the government to provide support and recognise that modern day windfarms would produce low cost renewable energy and would significantly contribute to the UK 2050 net-zero emissions target. The proposed Development, which is proposing the use of modern-day taller turbines, would very much contribute to these net-zero commitments.

77. The Scottish Government figures show that, for 2018, renewable sources generated the equivalent of approximately 76.3 % of gross electricity consumption (Energy Statistics for Scotland Q4 (Scottish Government 2019)). **Graph 4.1** shows the position for the 2018 figures (latest available).

¹ In August 2019, the wind farm industry called upon the Secretary of State for Business, energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), to set a clear wind farm strategy for the UK in order to meet the net zero 2050 carbon emission targets. A letter sent to

Share of renewable electricity in gross electricity consumption Scotland, 2005 - 2018



Graph 4.1: Renewable Electricity in Scotland
Source: Energy Statistics for Scotland – Q4 Figures

4.9 Other material considerations

78. In addition to the material considerations set out in respect of renewable energy and the Development Plan there are a number of other matters which are material to the consideration of the application. These are considered in the following text.

4.9.1 National Planning Policy and guidance

79. National planning policy advice and guidance which are considerations relevant to the proposed Development include the following documents:

- The National Planning Framework 3 (June 2014 (NPF 3));
- Scottish Planning Policy (June 2014) (SPP);
- Onshore Wind Turbines Specific Advice Sheet (updated May 2014);
- PAN 1/2011 Planning and Noise (March 2011);
- PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology (July 2011);
- PAN 1/2013 Environmental Impact Assessment (August 2013);
- PAN 51 Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation (October 2006);
- PAN 60 Planning for Natural Heritage (January 2008);
- PAN 69 Planning and Building Standards Advice on Flooding (August 2004);

the Secretary was signed by Renewable UK, SPR, SSE, Innogy, EdF and leaders from the supply chain, trade unions and the RSPB.

- PAN 75 Planning for Transport (August 2005); and
- PAN 79 Water and Drainage (September 2006).

4.9.2 National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3)

80. There is high level support for the promotion of renewable energy developments throughout many parts of NPF3. Chapter 3 of NPF3, 'A low carbon place' identifies that planning will play a key role in delivering the Scottish Government commitments set out in Low Carbon Scotland: the Scottish Government's report on proposals and policies. The priorities which are set out in this strategy set a clear approach which is consistent with Scottish climate change legislation.

81. The introduction states the Scottish Government's ambition to achieve at least an 80 % reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases by 2020. Paragraph 3.1 states that *"the priorities identified in this spatial strategy set a clear direction of travel which is a consistent with our world leading climate change legislation."*

82. Paragraph 3.7 of NPF3 states that the planned approach to onshore wind energy development has ensured that the proposed development largely avoids internationally and nationally protected areas. It is also recognised that, whilst opinions about onshore wind in particular locations can vary, there is strong public support for wind energy as part of the energy mix.

83. Paragraph 3.9 of NPF3 makes it clear that the Scottish Government wants to continue to capitalise on the wind resource of Scotland.

84. NPF3, at paragraph 18 refers to the 2009 Climate Change Act which sets a target of reducing greenhouse emissions by at least 80 % by 2050 and an interim target of reducing emissions by at least 42 % by 2020. This target has now been met; however, the Scottish Government has announced further carbon emission targets in its new Climate Change Plan, Third Report on Proposals and Policies 2018-2032. This sets out the requirement, in section 44 of the 2009 Act, for all public bodies to act in the following ways:

- in the best way calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions targets in the 2009 Act;
- in the best way calculated to help deliver the Government's climate change adaption programme; and
- in a way that it considers is most sustainable.

4.9.3 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

85. SPP creates a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development. Sustainable development is focussed on throughout the SPP. Paragraph 28 advises that: *"the planning system should support economically, environmentally and socially sustainable places by enabling development that balances the costs and benefits of the proposal over the longer term. The aim is to achieve the right development in the right place; it is not to allow development at any cost."*

86. Paragraph 29 of SPP advises that planning policies and decisions should be guided by several principles, including:

- giving due weight to net economic benefit; and
- making efficient use of existing capacities of land.

87. The proposed Development is considered to be a sustainable development. The proposed Development makes efficient use of the existing land by maximising the use of the existing forestry tracks, some of the existing borrow pits and areas previously used for laydown for the Cour Windfarm. This minimises the creation of infrastructure and associated environmental impact. The issue of sustainable development is considered further in the **Planning Statement**.

88. Onshore wind is specifically considered in SPP starting at paragraph 161. SPP advises that Planning Authorities should set out in the Development Plan a spatial framework identifying areas likely to be most appropriate for onshore windfarms where there is the greatest potential for onshore wind development. Table 1 of SPP is as presented in **Table 4.1**.

<p>Group 1: Areas where wind farms will not be acceptable: National Parks and National Scenic Areas.</p>		
<p>Group 2: Areas of significant protection: Recognising the need for significant protection, in these areas wind farms may be appropriate in some circumstances. Further consideration will be required to demonstrate that any significant effects on the qualities of these areas can be substantially overcome by siting, design or other mitigation.</p>		
<p>National and international designations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Heritage Sites; • Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites; • Sites of Special Scientific Interest; • National Nature Reserves; • Sites identified in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes; • Sites identified in the Inventory of Historic Battlefields. 	<p>Other nationally important mapped environmental interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • areas of wild land as shown on the 2014 SNH map of wild land areas; • carbon rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat. 	<p>Community separation for consideration of visual impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an area not exceeding 2km around cities, towns and • villages identified on the local development plan with an identified settlement envelope or edge. The extent of the area will be determined by the planning authority based on landform and other features which restrict views out from the settlement.
<p>Group 3: Areas with potential for wind farm development: Beyond groups 1 and 2, wind farms are likely to be acceptable, subject to detailed consideration against identified policy criteria.</p>		

Table 4.1: SPP Spatial Frameworks

4.10 Development Plan

89. The Development Plan for the proposed Development comprises the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan (ABLDP) and its associated Supplementary Guidance.

4.10.1 Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015

90. Argyll and Bute Council adopted the ABLDP in March 2015, the LDP is accompanied by Supplementary Guidance adopted in March 2016. This provides further detail and guidance on the policies within the LDP, and where necessary supplements these with additional policy requirements. The key ABLDP policy for the proposed Development is Policy LDP 6 – Supporting the Sustainable Growth of Renewables, which states that *"The Council will support renewable energy developments where these are consistent with the principals of sustainable development and it can be adequately demonstrated that there is no unacceptable significant adverse effect, whether individual or cumulative, including on local communities, natural and historic environments landscape character, visual amenity and that proposals would be compatible with adjacent land uses"*

91. The policy states that the Council will prepare a spatial framework for windfarms and wind turbine developments over 50 m high as supplementary guidance, in accordance with SPP. This guidance was adopted in December 2016 in the form Supplementary Guidance 2: Renewable Energy. The spatial framework identifies areas which have potential for windfarm development, and those which don't, including areas requiring significant protection in accordance with the criteria set out in Table 1 of SPP. According to the spatial framework map, the proposed Development lies partly in a Group 3 Area (area with potential for windfarm development subject to other policy considerations).

92. Policy LDP 6 sets out the criteria against which new windfarm applications will be assessed, one of which is the ability to provide opportunities for incorporating energy storage.

93. **Table 4.2** lists the policies within the current LDP and supplementary guidance considered to be relevant to the proposed Development which have been considered during the design of the proposed Development and in the subsequent EIA.

LDP Policies	SG Policies
Policy LDP STRAT 1– Sustainable Development	SG LDP Sustainable - Sustainable Siting and Design Principles
Policy LDP 3 – Supporting the Protection, Conservation and Enhancement of our Environment	SG LDP ENV 9 – Development Impact on Areas of Wild Land
Policy LDP 9 – Development Setting, Layout and Design	SG LDP ENV 12 - Development Impact on National Scenic Areas (NSAs)
Policy LDP10 – Maximising our Resources and Reducing Our Consumption	SG LDP ENV 13 - Development Impact on Areas of Panoramic Quality (APQs)
Policy LDP 11 – Improving our Connectivity and Infrastructure	SG LDP ENV 14 – Landscape
Policy LDP5–Supporting the Sustainable Growth of Our Economy	SG LDP ENV7- Water Quality and the Environment

Table 4.2: Relevant LDP and SG Policies

4.10.2 Argyll and Bute Renewable Energy Action Plan

94. The Renewable Energy Action Plan (REAP) has been developed to assist Argyll and Bute in realising its vision for the development of the renewable energy sector. The vision states,

“Argyll and Bute will be at the heart of renewable energy development in Scotland by taking full advantage of its unique and significant mix of indigenous renewable resources and maximising the opportunities for sustainable economic growth for the benefit of its communities and Scotland”.

95. Key actions of the REAP fall into the following categories: Transport and Connectivity, Supply Chain, Business Land and Skills and Recruitment. Those of relevance to renewable energy developers mainly relate to enhancing supply chain opportunities and skills development to support the growth of the industry in Argyll and Bute.

96. With respect to renewables, the interactive document acknowledges that *“with over 1GW of operational and consented renewables, both onshore and offshore, renewable energy is an important economic sector within Argyll and Bute and plays an import role in delivering renewables nationally.”*

97. It advises that the *“existing supply chain businesses as well as key renewables sites, ... mean that Argyll is well placed to benefit from future renewables all supported by a continually improving infrastructure and a growing skills base.”*

98. The REAP recognises the community benefit that has been paid to the area from renewable energy developments. It advises: that currently in the A&BC area the community benefit funds providing around £200,000 of funding per annum to local communities.

99. The REAP advises that the key focus of work for ABRA over the next 12 months includes the following:

- Local supply chain events associated with renewable sector developments and online supplier portals;
- Work with developers and future investors to identify any skills shortages;
- Maintain suitable courses to support renewables and energy skills;
- Investigate opportunities for shared ownership of renewables;
- Support community benefits from renewables development; and
- Investigate opportunities for future local energy systems and innovative storage techniques

4.10.3 Argyll and Bute emerging Local Development Plan

100. A&BC are currently preparing a new Local Development Plan (LDP2), which will set out planning and development proposals for the next 10 years from 2020 and a vision for 20 years. A&BC have undertaken the Main Issues Report stage of the process and the next stage of the process will be the production and publication of the Proposed Local Development Plan for consultation. The A&BC Local Development Plan 2 is due for adoption in 2020.

4.11 Community benefit and investment

101. The principle of community benefit and investment is supported within the planning framework in National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy. National Planning Framework 3 advises that:

- *there is potential for renewable energy developments to bring new employment, reverse population decline, stimulate demand for development and services and make a significant contribution to the diversification of energy supplies.”*

102. Scottish Planning Policy advises that:

- *“where a proposal is acceptable in land use terms, and consent is being granted, local authorities may wish to engage in negotiations to secure community benefit in line with the Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments; and*
- *net economic benefits are considered to be a material planning consideration.”*

103. In addition to this the Scottish Government supports the principle of shared ownership as part of renewable energy developments. Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments (Scottish Government 2019) advises that *“Community benefits schemes are a well-established, integral part of renewable energy developments, and often represent a positive relationship between renewable energy businesses and communities.”* It is clear that community benefits are a renewable led voluntary initiative.

104. Good Practice Principles for Shared Ownership from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments (Scottish Government 2019) advises that if a development is to receive planning permission it would be acceptable in planning terms, without taking into consideration any shared ownership offering.

105. A Low Carbon Place sets out considerations which are to be taken into account when considering proposals for energy infrastructure development including windfarms – these include economic benefits and the scale of the contribution to renewable targets.

106. Details in relation to SPR’s plans for community benefit and investment are provided in **Chapter 3 Proposed Development** and **Chapter 14 Socio Economics, Recreation and Tourism**, of this EIA Report.

4.12 References

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