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# Sallachy Wind Farm

## Supporting Environmental Information Report

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Project/Proposal No: 6779  
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# Document Information

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# Abbreviations

Term	Definition
CO <sub>2</sub>	carbon dioxide
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
dB	Decibel
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FSC	Forestry Stewardship Council
GVA	Gross Value Added
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
MOD	Ministry of Defence
mph	Miles per hour
NPF3	National Planning Framework 3
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
NRS	Noise Sensitive Receptors
NTS	Non-technical Summary
NVC	National Vegetation Classification
OCEMP	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan
OHMP	Outline Habitat Management Plan
PMP	Peat Management Plan
PWS	Private Water Supply
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEIR	Supporting Environmental Information Report
SEPA	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SPA	Special Protected Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
THC	The Highland Council
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This Supporting Environmental Information Report (SEIR) has been prepared in support of an application under Section 42 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (the “1997 Act”), being submitted by WKN Sallachy Limited (hereafter referred to as ‘the Applicant’) to The Highland Council (hereafter referred to as THC) in relation to Sallachy Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as the ‘Development’). The Applicant is seeking permission to construct the Sallachy Wind Farm other than in accordance with planning conditions attached to the planning permission (Reference: 21/01615/FUL) issued by THC on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 (“PP”).

A full description of the proposed approach to the Section 42 application is provided in the Planning Statement. It is not the purpose or intention of this document to replicate that work.

This SEIR addresses environment issues arising as relevant to the proposed amendments. It should be noted that no physical changes are proposed to the wind farm as approved.

## 1.2 Structure to the SEIR

This document seeks to:

- Provide background to the application (Section 2);
- Provide confirmation of the proposed variations to planning conditions sought via this Section 42 application (Section 3);
- Introduction to the approach taken within the subsequent technical section (Section 4)
- Identify the relevant local, regional and national planning and renewable energy policy context and material considerations for determining the application, with an appraisal of the proposed condition variation undertaken in relation to this (Section 5);
- Provide a review and, where applicable, update to the technical assessments undertaken as part of the EIA for the planning application, and ensure the assessments meet the requirements of any new or revised policy and guidance, including National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (Sections 7 – 14);
- Provide a summary and conclusions (Section 15); and
- Provide associated figures and appendices.

A Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of this SEI Report is provided as a separate document

## 1.3 Availability of the SEIR

Electronic copies of the SEIR, including all figures, appendices and accompanying documents are available to view on the project website <https://sallachywindfarm.co.uk/> or via THC planning portal at <https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/>.

A physical copy of the SEIR is available for viewing at Lairg Community Centre, The Main Street, Lairg, IV27 4DD.

Hard copies of the NTS are available for free from the Applicant. Hard copies of the full SEI Report are available on request from the Applicant for £300, representing approximately the cost of printing and distribution. In addition, all documents are available on request (as a PDF for screen viewing only) on a USB for the cost of production and distribution.

## 1.4 Representations to the Application

Any representations to the application should be made directly to The Highland Council at the following email: [eplanning@highland.gov.uk](mailto:eplanning@highland.gov.uk)

# 2. Background to the Application

The Development application boundary (“the Site”) is located in Sutherland approximately 18.3 km north-west of Lairg on the shores of Loch Shin. The central grid reference for the site is British National Grid (BNG) 240730, 921063 and it occupies an area of approximately 1,044 hectares (ha). The site location and boundary are shown within **Figure 1**.

The Site sits within Sallachy Estate, which has two holiday cottages, one lodge and approximately 6,000 ha of Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certified woodland. The site itself comprises largely open moorland which slopes down to the south shore of Loch Shin and is intersected by several minor watercourses.

Access to the site is off the A838, along an existing access track which serves the Cassley Hydro Power scheme. The hydro power station sits on the edge of Loch Shin to the north-west of the main body of the Site.

The Site is located within the Reay – Cassley Wild Land Area and sits to the north of the Strath an Loin Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), part of the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Special Protected Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar Site.

This application does not seek to amend the Site boundary or any physical characteristics of the Development.

The application for planning permission, submitted by the Applicant in 2021, was accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report, prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 1997 (as amended).

In April 2022, THC granted planning permission for the Development, subject to 33 conditions, which are in the process of being discharged by the Applicant, working with THC. The Applicant wishes to propose amendments to five conditions attached to the planning permission and introduce a new condition relating to the deadline for implementation.

The Site location and Site boundary, and the Development layout are unchanged, and are shown in **Figure 1.1**, **Figure 1.2** and **Figure 4.1**, Volume 2 of the 2021 EIA Report. For ease of reference, these figures are also appended to this SEIR (August 2024) as **Figures 1** and **2**. The Development comprises 9 turbines up to 149.9m and a maximum output capacity of 49.9MW.

# 3. Proposed Variations to the Current Planning Permission

## 3.1 Proposed Variations

The proposed variations to Conditions 1, 3(i), 12, 15 and 25 attached to the Planning Permission with an additional, new condition requested to extend the time to implement the Planning Permission can be seen in the Planning Statement included with this application.

# 4. Supporting Technical Information

Overall, there is little impact on the information previously presented in the EIA Report, given that there is no change to the Development layout or design. However, with respect to the policy framework, it is noted

that the planning permission was granted in May 2022, prior to the adoption of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) in February 2023.

The legal requirements for information to be submitted with a Section 42 application are minimal. However, we understand it would assist THC to provide an update to and/or relevant commentary on the environmental assessments carried out in connection with the PP that are appropriate in the circumstances. The below sections summarise if and how this has impacted the technical assessments completed for the original EIA Report. This is provided as a general update to the previous assessment of the Development as a whole, including a review and, where appropriate, update to the baseline Site conditions. No changes to any assessed environmental impacts are predicted in relation to the condition amendments sought in the Section 42 application.

The only technical topic for which it was considered appropriate to update the original assessments, to allow appropriate appraisal of the Development's compliance with relevant NPF4 policies, is Landscape and Visual. **Section 6** and **Appendix 1** of this SEIR provide an updated assessment of landscape and visual impacts arising from the Development. Consideration of how the Development aligns with relevant planning policy, including NPF4, is covered in the accompanying Planning Statement.

Additionally, due to the time since the baseline surveys were completed for the 2021 assessments, an ecological site walkover and ornithology surveys have been undertaken to confirm the ecological and ornithological baseline has not materially changed.

For all other technical topics as presented in the 2021 EIA Report, a statement is provided below, confirming that there are no changes to the Development or to recent policy or guidance, which would result in any change to the significance of effects as previously assessed. The numbering of the sections below mirrors that of the 2021 EIA Report, and where any updated figures or appendices are provided, the numbering of those figures and appendices has been retained.

## 5. Policy Review

A stand-alone Planning Statement has been included as part of this application and includes an assessment of the relevant updated planning policy, refer to Section 3 of the Planning Statement.

## 6. Landscape and Visual

### 6.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the updated Landscape and Visual Assessment relevant to the original EIA Report (Chapter 6, Volume 1 and Appendix 6.1 and Appendix 6.2 of Volume 5). The full updated report is attached as **Appendix 1** with the updated Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology attached as **Appendix 2** and the updated Residential Visual Amenity Assessment attached as **Appendix 3**.

### 6.2 Summary of Updated Landscape and Visual Updated Assessment

The assessment, presented as **Appendix 1**, maintains the same methodology used as the 2021 EIA Report (Chapter 6, Volume 1), but it has been rewritten so that it is in line with the new policy and guidance, as discussed in the updated LVIA Chapter (**Appendix 1**). It draws the same conclusions as the 2021 assessment, namely that significant visual effects are likely to be contained within a maximum of approximately 12.2 km of the Development turbines, although they may, in unusual circumstances, arise beyond this. Significant effects on landscape character are likely to be contained within a maximum radius of approximately 8.2 km from the Development turbines (with this distance arising only in unusual circumstances; the maximum extent of a significant effect elsewhere is approximately 7 km).

The assessed significance of effects on landscape and visual receptors has not changed from that presented in the 2021 EIA Report.

As Sallachy Wind Farm was consented in the context of the April 2021 cumulative scenario, it is not considered relevant to update the cumulative assessment to reflect the current cumulative scenario (as of September 2024). The LVIAs for wind farms that have been submitted as applications subsequent to the approval of Sallachy will incorporate Sallachy into their cumulative assessment, and thus the implication of more up to date cumulative scenarios will anyway be considered.

## 7. Ecology

### 7.1 Introduction

While extensive surveys were completed to inform the baseline within the 2021 EIA Report Chapter (Chapter 7, Volume 1), updated surveys have been undertaken to confirm that the baseline has not materially changed between 2020 and 2024. This section reflects the results of updated ecological surveys completed in 2024.

### 7.2 Summary of Ecological Updated Surveys

Following discussion and agreement with NatureScot (David Patterson email correspondence of 02/05/24) on updated ecological surveys linked to pre-construction survey work required for Sallachy Wind Farm (PLANNING REF. 21/01615/FUL) and in particular Planning Condition 14, the following update is provided.

- Between April and July 2024, protected terrestrial mammal surveys were conducted on the development footprint and an appropriate survey buffer. The 2024 mammal survey results were broadly similar to previous surveys conducted in 2019-2020, as reported in the 2021 EIA Report. There was no evidence of any new protected mammal species of conservation importance recorded breeding in protected mammal study area.
- Walkover habitat surveys were undertaken in the summer season 2024. There were no perceivable differences in the habitat and communities present compared to those previously recorded in surveys undertaken in 2019-2021. No new habitat types were recorded within the Study Area.

In summary, the updated surveys have identified no material change to the baseline, and therefore no anticipated changes to the assessed significance of effects on ecological receptors, as presented in the 2021 EIA Report.

### 7.3 Biodiversity Enhancement

Within Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 of the 2021 EIA Report, no likely significant ecological or ornithological residual effects were predicted, associated with the construction and operation of the Development. Given that there is no change to the Development layout and design, and the updated surveys have identified no material change to the baseline, the assessment of no likely significant residual effects is unchanged.

Appendix 7.6 of the 2021 EIA Report provided an Outline Habitat Management Plan (OHMP), setting out proposals for reduction of grazing pressures, extensive peatland restoration, creation of low density native woodland, and fence marking. The implementation of the OHMP will provide significant biodiversity enhancement.

The OHMP includes for peatland restoration works, aiming to restore degraded blanket bog across an area of approximately 200 ha, with a further area of up to 270 ha of peatland restoration within the Grudie Peatlands. These restoration areas are well in excess of 10 times the predicted bog habitat loss (c.20.36 ha) as given in the 2021 EIA Report, therefore exceeding the recommended restoration area to be considered both 'compensation' and 'enhancement' as per recent NatureScot guidance on priority peatland habitat<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Advising on carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat in development management. NatureScot, 2018 (updated 2020).



## 8. Ornithology

### 8.1 Introduction

While extensive surveys were completed to inform the baseline within the 2021 EIA Report Chapter (Chapter 8, Volume 1), updated surveys have been undertaken to confirm that the baseline has not materially changed between 2019 and 2024. This section reflects the results of updated ornithological surveys completed in 2024.

### 8.2 Summary of Updated Ornithology Surveys

Following discussion and agreement with NatureScot (David Patterson email correspondence of 02/05/24) on updated ecological surveys linked to pre-construction survey work required for Sallachy Wind Farm (PLANNING REF. 21/01615/FUL) and in particular Planning Condition 14, the following update is provided.

- Between April and July 2024, breeding bird surveys were conducted on the development footprint and an appropriate survey buffer. The 2024 ornithological survey results were broadly similar to previous surveys conducted in 2017-2019, as reported in the 2021 EIA Report. There was no evidence recorded of any new bird species of conservation importance recorded breeding in ornithological study area.

In summary, the updated surveys identified no material change to the baseline, and therefore no anticipated changes to the assessed significance of effects on ornithological receptors, as presented in the 2021 EIA Report.

## 9. Noise

### 9.1 Introduction

The original 2021 EIA Report submitted as part of the planning application (Chapter 9, Volume 1) for the Development considered the ability of the Development to meet appropriate operational noise limits, including considering existing cumulative turbines of which there were none found.

The scope of the assessment comprised the following:

- scoping consultation with THC Environmental Health Department;
- evaluation of noise effects associated with construction of the Development;
- evaluation of noise effects associated with operation of the Development;
- specification of appropriate mitigation, where necessary; and
- evaluation of residual effects.

At the time of assessment there were no identified properties within the 35 dB contour, therefore the Applicant did not undertake a baseline noise survey. There were three Noise Sensitive Receptors (NRS) that were considered within the assessment and the predicted noise levels at all NSRs met the derived noise limits as recommended within THC's supplementary guidance.

The Chapter concluded that the predicted wind turbine noise levels associated with operation of the Development meet derived day and night-time noise limits at all the identified representative NSRs, for all wind speeds. Noise effects due to operation are therefore not significant. In addition, predicted noise levels associated with construction activities meet threshold noise levels set out in the relevant guidance at all identified representative NSRs, during weekday daytimes and Saturday mornings. Noise effects from construction activities are therefore not significant.

No cumulative effects were anticipated and therefore the cumulative effects were determined to be not significant.

## 9.2 Summary

The effects of the Development on these receptors are considered in Chapter 9 of the 2021 EIA Report. The assessment states that there are no NSRs within the 35 dB contour. The assessment considered noise arising from operation and construction of the wind turbines in line with ETSU-97. The assessment concluded that predicted wind turbine noise levels associated with operation of the Development meet the daytime noise limit of 35 dBL, and the nighttime limit of 38 dBL as per THC's supplementary guidance.

It is concluded that the assessment of anticipated noise impacts from the Development have been appropriately assessed and considered the nearby potential NSRs. Given that there is no proposed change to the Development layout, design or candidate turbine model, there is no change to the assessment of noise effects.

# 10. Cultural Heritage

## 10.1 Introduction

The original 2021 EIA Report submitted as part of the planning application (Chapter 10, Volume 1) for the Development considered the potential direct effects on assets within the Development Site boundary and identified assets within 1 km of the Site boundary, sufficient to inform the character of the archaeological landscape. The assessment also considered the indirect effects of the Development on the settings of heritage assets in the wider landscape.

The scope of the assessment comprised the following:

- consultation with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and THC's Historic Environment Team (HET);
- walkover reconnaissance field survey;
- evaluation of potential direct effects on assets within the Site boundary;
- evaluation of indirect effects on the settings of heritage assets in the wider landscape; and
- evaluation of appropriate mitigation, where necessary; and
- evaluation of residual effects.

The layout of the Development was designed to avoid direct effects on the identified heritage assets within the site and no direct effects have been predicted. No mitigation was deemed required to potential direct effects from construction, operation or decommissioning of the Development. Overall, no significant adverse effects were identified as affecting the setting of any designated heritage assets within the landscape area and no cumulative effects were identified. This assessment considered the impacts of the Development on designations and with regard to cumulative impacts.

## 10.2 Summary

The assessment presented in the EIA Report (Chapter 10, Volume 1) found that there were no identified assets likely to experience direct impacts. In part due to the approach adopted in formulating the design and layout of the Development, the overall effects on cultural heritage were found to be not significant and therefore no mitigation was proposed.

The assessment identified that the Development has the potential to result in adverse effects on the setting of designated heritage assets within the Outer Study Area, however, this would diminish with increasing distance from the Site and it was considered that beyond 10 km the Development would not appreciably alter features of the settings of designated heritage assets that continue to their cultural significance. There

is only one designated heritage asset within the Outer Study Area (Dail Langwell, broch 1675m north-west of Croich (SM1852), which sits 8.4 km from the nearest proposed turbine. The Zone of Theoretical Visibility models (ZTVs) show that there would be no predicted visibility from the broch, and therefore it was assessed that there would be no adverse effect on the setting of the broch.

The assessment presented in EIA Report Chapter 10 concludes that the integrity of the setting of the one identified Scheduled Monument in the area would not be significantly adversely affected as a result of the Development. Given that there is no proposed change to the Development layout or design, there is no change to the assessment of cultural heritage effects.

## 11. Transport

### 11.1 Introduction

The original 2021 EIA Report undertaken as part of the planning application (Chapter 11, Volume 1) for the Development considered the effects in regard to traffic during construction, operation and decommission of the Development.

The scope of the assessment comprised the following:

- consultation with the THC Transport Department and Transport Scotland;
- description of the existing access network and transport baseline;
- assessment of potential effects including direct, indirect and cumulative effects;
- evaluation of significance of effects on receptors;
- description of the mitigation measures proposed to address likely significant effects; and
- assessment of the residual effects remaining following implementation of mitigation.

During construction, access to the Development will be through an upgraded junction on the A838, currently serving the existing Cassley Hydro Power Station. Bulk materials, including cement, sand, and aggregate, will be sourced from local suppliers and delivered via the A838 and A836 from the south. Specialist loads, such as turbine components, will be transported to the site from the selected Port of Entry, using specialized vehicles, traveling along the A9, A839, A836, and A838.

The traffic assessment (Appendix 11.1, Volume 5 of the 2021 EIA Report) finds that the maximum traffic impact associated with the construction phase is predicted to occur in Month 10. During this month, an average of 52 Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) movements is predicted per day and it is estimated that there will be a further 48 car and light van movements per day to transport construction workers to and from site. Table 11.8 of Chapter 11 of the 2021 EIA Report provides a summary of the projected total number of vehicles that will arise during the construction phase and Table 11.9 shows the percentage increases at various locations along the road network also identified.

The assessment concluded that there are minor, non-significant effects that could be expected along the A838 and A836 between the Site access junction and Ardgay during construction, relating to the increase in HGV traffic operating on route. No cumulative effects were anticipated. The traffic effects during the operational phase of the Development were assessed as likely to be insignificant.

Mitigation proposed included a Wear and Tear Agreement, Site Access Traffic Management Plan, as well as additional Site-specific measures including a voluntary 15 mph speed limit for HGV traffic associated with the Site when passing through Ardgay, Bonar Bridge and Lairg to reduce fear and amenity issues, as well as greater use of on-site borrow pits to help reduce the number of HGV movements. Further details of these measurements will be found in the Construction Traffic Management Plan (Condition 15).

## 11.2 Summary

Given that there is no proposed change to the Development layout or design, there is no change to the assessment of traffic and transport effects. Whilst the Development would lead to a temporary increase in traffic volumes during the construction phase, traffic volumes would decrease considerably outside peak periods of construction. Overall, the construction period would be transitory in nature and all impacts would be short lived and temporary.

With the implementation of appropriate mitigation, such as a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), no significant residual effects are anticipated in respect of traffic and transport issues.

# 12. Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils

## 12.1 Introduction

The 2021 EIA Report submitted as part of the planning application (Chapter 12, Volume 1) for the Development considered the potential effects of the Development on hydrology, hydrogeology, groundwater and the local geology and soil resources.

The scope of the assessment comprised the following:

- consultation with SSE (Scottish and Southern Electricity), Scottish Ministers, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH<sup>2</sup>), Marine Scotland, Scottish Water, THC and Halcrow;
- description of the environmental setting (baseline);
- peat, National Vegetation Classification (NVC), surface watercourses and waterbodies surveys;
- assessment of potential effects including direct, indirect and cumulative effects;
- evaluation of significance of effects on receptors;
- description of the mitigation measures proposed to address likely significant effects; and
- assessment of the residual effects remaining following implementation of mitigation.

The Chapter considers the potential impacts of the Development upon these receptors, including peat. It is accompanied by associated appendices addressing peat landslide risk, peat management and water crossing schedule.

A comprehensive suite of embedded mitigation and best practice measures has been incorporated into the design of the Development, referred to as 'embedded mitigation' and summarised in Section 12.6 of the 2021 EIA Report Chapter 12. In addition, it is proposed that a range of good practice measures will be adopted during construction to further minimise the potential for significant effects upon hydrology and the water environment. These measures are set out in an Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP), submitted as Appendix 4.2 to the 2021 EIA Report.

While the SEPA Flood Maps show that the Development is not considered to be at risk from river, surface, or coastal flooding. However, there is a localized flood risk near Loch Shin and where the existing access track crosses Abhainn a Choire and the Merkland River. The upgraded water crossings will be designed to handle a 1-in-200-year flood event, with adjustments made for climate change impacts. The assessment considers that the sensitivity of the Site with respect to flooding is considered to be low and a separate Flood Risk Assessment is not considered necessary.

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<sup>2</sup> SNH is now known as NatureScot.

The supply pipe for one private water supply (PWS), located at Corriekinloch, has been identified as potentially impacted by the development. This supply is situated east of the Development site access, with piping running downhill and crossing the A838 to serve a cluster of residential properties near the access point. The pipe may be affected by works to widen the road and reshape the lower slope for abnormal load deliveries, should such modifications be confirmed during detailed design. However, the water source itself is located uphill from the proposed works and would remain unaffected.

Peat depth surveys have revealed the presence of peat across most of the Site, with localised areas exceeding 3 meters in thickness, though it is often thinner or absent in some locations. The Site design has aimed to avoid areas of deep peat wherever possible for turbine placement and infrastructure. While this has not been entirely feasible due to other environmental and technical constraints, the majority of turbines, hardstandings, and all infrastructure are located in areas where the average peat depth is less than 1.0 meter. For any sections of the proposed new access track that cross deeper peat, a floating design will be used to avoid the need for peat excavation.

Additional targeted mitigation measures have been proposed to further minimise impacts. These include proper peat management and on-site reuse, as well as the establishment and clear marking of working areas and corridors. Furthermore, a Habitat Management Plan will be implemented to restore degraded peatland habitats in the local area.

The significance of residual effects on hydrological, geological and hydrogeological receptors is considered to be not significant. No cumulative effects on hydrology, hydrogeology and geology are predicted.

## 12.2 Summary

The assessment outlines several committed mitigation measures to ensure the protection of peatland and watercourses. With these design-integrated and embedded mitigation strategies in place, no significant potential effects on hydrological, geological, or peat receptors are anticipated. Consequently, all residual effects on these receptors are considered not significant in terms of the EIA.

Mitigation measures will be incorporated into a CEMP prior to the start of construction. These measures are deemed effective and feasible, aiming to reduce potential impacts on peat resources, watercourses, and groundwater. Additionally, a Peat Management Plan (PMP) is proposed.

Overall Chapter 12 of the 2021 EIA Report concludes that the likely effects on hydrological, geological and hydrogeological receptors, taking account of the standard mitigation measures, have been assessed as not significant, except for the effect of peat excavation and associated impacts on peat soils. Given that there is no proposed change to the Development layout or design, there is no change to the assessment of effects on hydrology, hydrogeology, geology and soils.

# 13. Socio-economic and Tourism Assessment

## 13.1 Introduction

The 2021 EIA Report submitted as part of the planning application (Chapter 13, Volume 1) for the Development considered the socio-economic benefits from the Development.

The scope of the assessment comprised the following:

- consultation with local community groups;
- assessment of the potential effects from the Development;
- consideration of any residual effects; and
- consideration of any cumulative effects on supply chains and tourism activity.

The socio-economic benefits associated with the Development are set out within Chapter 13 of the 2021 EIA Report. During the development and construction phase, it is estimated that the Development could generate up to:

- £6.5 million Gross Value Added (GVA, a measure of economic activity) and support 89 job years (a job year being equivalent to one person employed for a year) in the Highlands; and
- £18.3 million GVA and 267 job years in Scotland.

During each year of the Development's operation, expenditure in operation and maintenance could result in:

- £0.4 million GVA and five jobs in Highland; and
- £0.7 million GVA and 13 jobs in Scotland.

In line with Scottish Government's Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Developments (Scottish Government, 2019), the Development is set to provide £5,000 per MW in annual community benefits. This is equal to around £250,000 annually, or £7.4 million over the Development's 30-years lifetime. How this funding is spent will reflect the priorities of these communities. Therefore, at this stage it is not possible to estimate the impact of this spending as this will be dependent on what the money is spent on.

The Applicant has undertaken extensive conversations with local stakeholders about community needs and aspirations of the local area. Should consent be granted, the Applicant would work with local communities to ensure the most appropriate structures are set up to ensure that the community benefits fund can be used in a way that meets with local community expectations and ultimately helps to facilitate community wealth building (relevant to NPF4 Policy 25).

Based on the presence of existing onshore wind developments in the area, the potential for cumulative effects was considered within the assessment. The analysis found that given existing and approved onshore developments in the area, there could be additional benefits towards the strengthening of the local onshore wind supply chain.

## 13.2 Summary

Over and above the community benefits, it is important to recognise the strategic importance of the Development (as a defined National Development) to the provision of a more secure supply of energy for the UK, which in itself will have important economic benefits for society by reducing our exposure to fluctuating energy supplies on the global market.

Given that there is no proposed change to the Development layout or design, there is no change to the assessment of socio-economic and tourism effects.

# 14. Other Issues

## 14.1 Aviation and Radar

### 14.1.1 Introduction

The original 2021 EIA Report undertaken as part of the planning application (Chapter 14, Volume 1) for the Development considered the impacts from the Development on aviation and radar.

The scope of the assessment comprised the following:

- consultation with the Ministry of Defence (MOD);
- assesses the potential effects on aviation from the Development;
- assesses the potential effects on radar systems from the Development;

- considers any residual effects; and
- considers any cumulative effects.

The aviation and radar assessment undertaken within Chapter 14 of the 2021 EIA Report considers impacts of the Development upon these interests. As the assessment confirms, consultation was undertaken with the MOD which supported the design evolution. Radar modelling demonstrates that none of the turbines are visible to any air traffic control, air defence or Met Office radars. There are no licensed radar equipment aerodromes within 30 km, and the closest is Inverness Airport, 76 km to the south-east. The results were found to be very clear and none are marginal. The assessment shows that the Development will have no effect on any aviation receptors or operations. As there are no aviation effects to consider, there are no cumulative effects to assess.

The turbine tip heights are proposed to be 149.9 m (as per the consented development) and therefore no aviation lighting has been proposed. However, there is a requirement for Infra-Red lights to satisfy MOD requirements, these are not visible to the naked eye.

#### 14.1.2 Summary

Given that there is no proposed change to the Development layout, design or candidate turbine model, there is no change to the assessment of aviation and radar effects. As described above, the assessment has considered effects on military Air Traffic Control (ATC) radar at RAF Lossiemouth, Air Defence Radar at Buchan, Low Flying Area (LFA) 14(T), NATS En Route Ltd (NERL) communications, navigation and surveillance infrastructure (CNS) at Alanshill and Perwinnes, and Inverness Airport, and the potential mitigation measures identified to address these. It was found that there are no residual effects upon aviation and defence interests and therefore the impacts have been fully assessed as per Policy(e)(iv).

## 14.2 Telecommunications

### 14.2.1 Introduction

The original 2021 EIA Report undertaken as part of the planning application (Chapter 14, Volume 1) for the Development considered the likely effects of the Development on telecommunication infrastructure.

The scope of the assessment comprised the following:

- consultation with relevant stakeholders;
- assesses the potential effects from the Development;
- considers any residual effects; and
- considers any cumulative effects.

Chapter 14 of the 2021 EIA Report confirms that through implemented design changes and embedded mitigation, the Development will have no residual effects on telecommunications.

Table 14.4 of the 2021 EIA Report provides a summary of the consultation responses from identified operators. As such, no impacts upon any telecommunications or broadcasting installations are predicted.

### 14.2.2 Summary

Given that there is no proposed change to the Development layout or design, there is no change to the assessment of effects on telecommunications infrastructure. No impacts on telecommunications or broadcasting installations are predicted.

## 14.3 Climate Change and Carbon Balance

### 14.3.1 Introduction

The original 2021 EIA Report undertaken as part of the planning application (Chapter 14, Volume 1) for the Development considered the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from the Development.

The scope of the assessment comprised the following:

- emissions associated with the manufacture and construction of the Development;
- the contribution the Development would make to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions; and
- the Scottish Government's web-based Carbon Calculator tool V1.6.1.

The assessment found that the potential savings in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions due to the Development replacing other electricity sources over the 30 year lifetime of the Development are approximately;

- 106,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year over coal-fired electricity (3.18 million tonnes over a 30 year lifespan);
- 29,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year over grid-mix of electricity (0.87 million tonnes over a 30 year lifespan); or
- 52,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year over a fossil fuel mix of electricity (1.56 million tonnes over a 30 year lifespan).

#### 14.3.2 Summary

Given that there is no proposed change to the Development layout or design, there is no change to the assessment climate change effects or the carbon balance analysis. The calculations of total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions saving and payback time for the Development is expected to take 2.2 years to repay the carbon exchange to the atmosphere (the CO<sub>2</sub> debt) through construction of the wind farm.

## 14.4 Shadow Flicker

### 14.4.1 Introduction

The original 2021 EIA Report undertaken as part of the planning application (Chapter 14, Volume 1) for the Development considered the potential for shadow flicker effects on residual receptors.

The scope of the assessment comprised the following:

- consultation with THC; and
- assessment of the study area.

The shadow flicker assessment as described in Chapter 14 of the 2021 EIA Report identified that there are no potential receptors located within the shadow flicker study area of 11 rotor diameters in line with THC supplementary guidance, and therefore no significant shadow flicker effects are anticipated, and no further assessment is required. This position was agreed with THC.

### 14.4.2 Summary

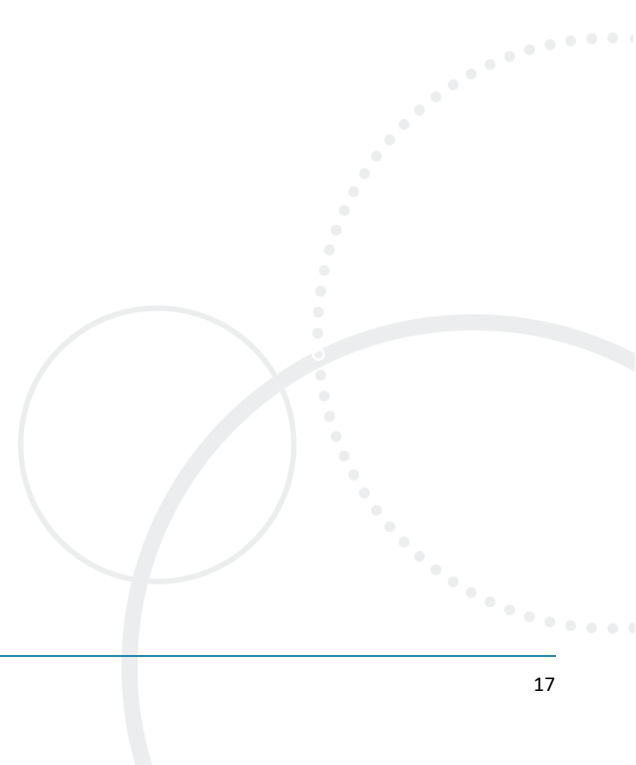
The impacts of shadow flicker area addressed within Chapter 14 of the 2021 EIA Report. Given that there is no proposed change to the Development layout or design, there is no change to the assessment of shadow flicker effects. Any complaints received during operation can be investigated and mitigation measures can be implemented if necessary. Mitigation measures include the planting of tree belts or the shutting down of individual turbines during periods when shadow flicker could theoretically occur. However, no effects are anticipated.

## 15. Conclusion

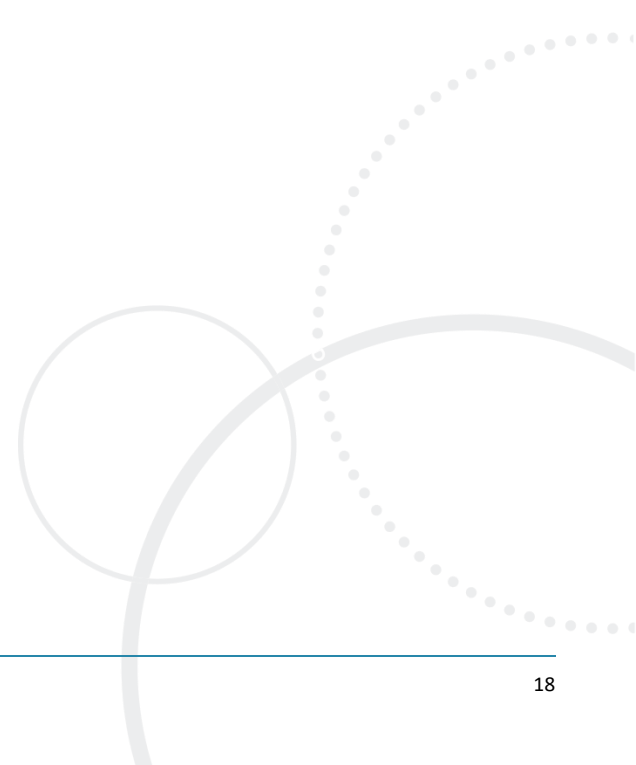
This document has provided a summary of the relevant environmental and technical assessments undertaken for the planning application relevant to Sallachy Wind Farm. An updated summary of residual effects (Chapter 16, Volume 1 of the 2021 EIA Report) is provided within **Appendix 3**.



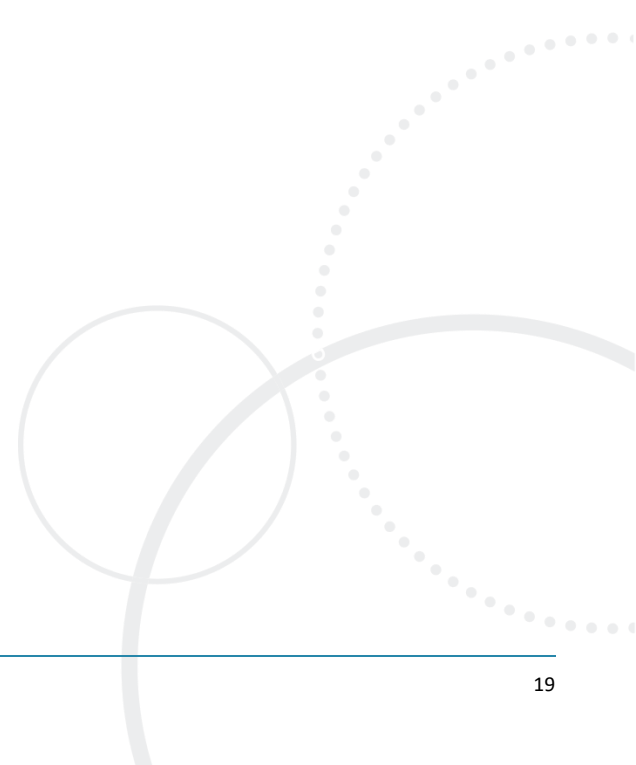
# Appendix 1 – Update Landscape and Visual Chapter



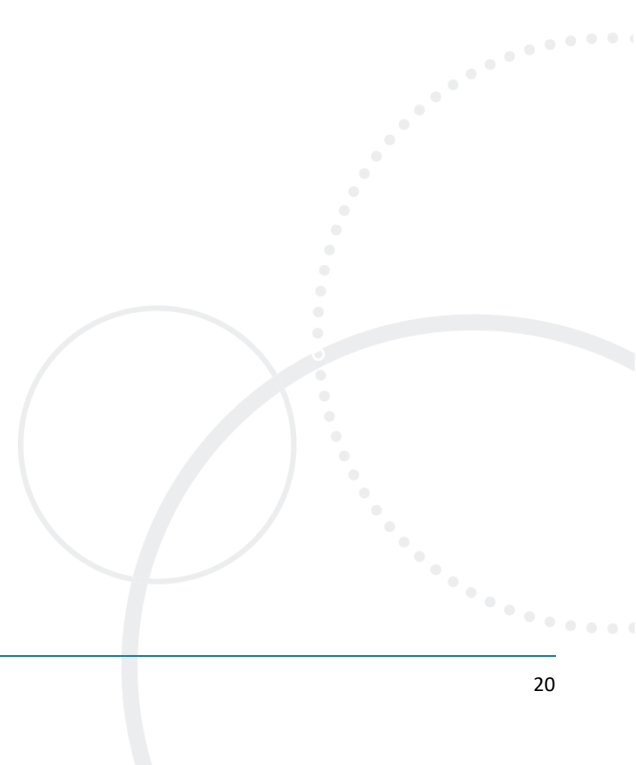
# Appendix 2: Updated Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment Methodology



# Appendix 3: Summary of Residual Effects Chapter



# Figures





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