Farr Wind Farm Extension Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report

Request for Scoping Opinion under The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017

nadara

GLOSSARY

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AOD	Above ordnance datum
A9	A9 road
AIL	Abnormal Indivisible Load
AWI	Ancient Woodland Inventory
BS	British Standard
BGS	British Geological Survey
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
CAFE	Clean Air for Europe
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
CNP	Cairngorms National Park
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
DTM	Digital Terrain Mapping
ECoW	Ecological Clerk of Works
EHO	Environmental Health Officer
ECU	Energy Consents Unit
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report

EHSNI	Environment and Heritage Service Northern Ireland
EMI	Electromagnetic Interference
ETSU-R-97	Wind turbine noise assessment framework
FWPM	Freshwater Pearl Mussel
GB	Great Britain
GDL	Gardens and Designated Landscapes
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GLVIA3	Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition
GPP1	General guide to the prevention of pollution
GPP2	Above ground oil storage tanks
GPP4	Treatment and disposal of sewage where no foul sewer is available
GPP5	Works and maintenance in or near water
GPP6	Working at construction and demolition sites
GPP8	Safe storage and disposal of used oils
GPP21	Pollution incidence response planning
GSP	Grid Supply Point
GVA	Gross Value Added
GW	Gigawatt
GWDTE	Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HRA	Habitat Regulations Assessment
HwLDP	Highland-wide Local Development Plan
IEFs	Important Ecological Features
IGDL	Inventory Garden and Designated Landscape
IMFLDP	Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan
INNS	Invasive Non-Native Species

IOA	Institute of Acoustics
IOF	Important Ornithological Feature
ISEP	Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
JRC	Joint Radio Company
km	kilometres
LCT	Landscape Character Type
LGV	Light Goods Vehicles
LI	Landscape Institute
LLA	Local Landscape Areas
LNCS	Local Nature Conservation Sites
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
m	metres
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MW	Megawatt
NATS	National Air Traffic Services
NCI	Nature Conservation Importance
NERL	National Air Traffic Services En Route Ltd
NCA	Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
NPF4	Fourth National Planning Framework
NSA	National Scenic Areas
NSR	Noise Sensitive Receptors
NTS	Non-Technical Summary
NVC	National Vegetation Classification
oCEMP	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan
oCTMP	Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan

oHMP	Outline Habitat Management Plan
OHLs	Overhead Lines
OS	Ordnance Survey
OWESG	Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance
PAN	Planning Advice Note
PLHRA	Peat Landscape Hazard Risk Assessment
PMP	Peat Management Plan
PPG	Pollution Prevention Guidance
PWS	Private Water Supplies
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SBL	Scottish Biodiversity List
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPP	Species Protection Plan
SPPs	Species Protection Plans
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
THC	The Highland Council
UKBAP	UK Biodiversity Action Plan
VP	Viewpoint
WANE	Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WCA	Wildlife and Countryside Act
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility
ZoI	Zone of Influence

1. INTRODUCTION

Renatis UK a subsidiary of Nadara Limited (the Applicant) intends to submit an application for consent to Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 for the construction, operation and decommissioning of an extension to Farr Wind Farm. Farr Wind Farm extension (the Proposed Development) is located in The Highland Council (THC) administrative area, on Land adjacent to Farr Wind Farm, Moy, Tomatin, Inverness, IV13 7ZA (the Site).

Whilst the final project design will emerge further to ongoing environmental survey, associated analysis and a consultation process involving stakeholders and the local community, the Proposed Development currently comprises a wind farm extension of up to 10 turbines, with a Maximum Export Capacity (MEC) of 67 megawatts (MW).

As a generating station, the Proposed Development falls under Schedule 2 of The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations). The Applicant has not sought a Screening Opinion from Scottish Ministers as to whether the Proposed Development is one to which Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) applies. Rather, the Applicant intends to submit an EIA Report (EIAR) in support of the forthcoming application.

1.1 Purpose of this Document

EIA is the process of identifying and assessing the significant effects likely to arise from a proposed development. This requires consideration of the likely changes to the environment, where these arise as a consequence of the proposed development, through comparison with the existing and likely future baseline conditions in the absence of the proposed development.

This document comprises a Scoping Report. Scoping is not a mandatory requirement under the EIA Regulations. However, it is recognised as a useful part of the assessment process which helps to identify the main effects that a project is likely to have on the environment and sets the context for the study.

In summary scoping forms a key stage in the EIA process providing a framework to:

- identify the likely significant environmental effects arising from a proposed development; and,
- identify the environmental topics to be included within the EIAR (scoped in) and those to exclude (scoped out).

This Scoping Report has been informed by:

- desk top analysis and review of online databases;
- site visits and baseline environmental survey;
- legislation, policy and guidance;
- EIA methods of good practice;
- an initial pre-application meeting with THC, and
- experience of other similar developments, including those in Scotland and THC area.

Following receipt of the Scoping Opinion an EIAR will be prepared taking into consideration the Scoping Opinion.

1.2 The Applicant and EIA Team

Renatis UK a subsidiary of Nadara Limited is a renewable energy company and one of Europe's largest independent power producers, focused on generating electricity from wind, solar, biomass and energy storage assets. The business was created through the combination of Ventient Energy and Renantis, with the merger announced in 2023, the businesses legally combined in early 2024, and the new Nadara brand launched later that year.

In Scotland, Nadara is particularly significant because of its strong legacy wind portfolio and Scottish operating base. The company is active in extending and upgrading its onshore wind assets, including repowering older wind farms to produce more clean electricity with newer technology.

Nadara's Scottish work is therefore not just about running existing sites, but also about maintaining long-term generation, supporting energy security, and bringing forward new investment tied to local communities and the wider net-zero transition.

Tetra Tech has been contracted to provide this EIA Scoping Report. Tetra Tech is a registrant of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Quality Mark in recognition of the standard of the EIAs produced for numerous large scale infrastructure projects. This means Tetra Tech adheres to the IEMA quality

mark commitments. Specialist consultants MKA Economics and Pager Power also form part of the EIA project team.

2. SITE LOCATION

Comprised of lands adjoining the operational Farr Wind Farm to the north and south (northern parcel and southern parcel), the Site is located approximately 15 km to the south-east of Inverness, c.5 km west of the A9 and 4km south-east of the B851. The nearest settlements are Tomatin and Farr, located c.5 km to the south-east and c.4 km to the north-west, respectively.

Owned and operated by Nadara, the existing Farr Wind Farm was granted consent in 2004 for 40 turbines not exceeding 102m in height. The application for an extension to the operational life of the wind farm from 25 to 35 years was granted in March 2021, the new expiry of the consent being 2039.

The Site extends over the northeastern fringes of the Monadhliath Mountains (Monadh Liath) to the west of the Cairngorms and to the southeast of Loch Ness. The River Findhorn valley (Strathdearn) bounds the hills to the east/south-east, with the River Nair valley (Strathnairn) to the northwest and west.

Landform within the northern parcel at its highest point is approximately 531 m above ordnance datum (AOD) and at its lowest 470 m AOD. The Uisge Dubh watercourse traverses the Site.

The total site area is 853.7ha. The southern parcel extends to 207.8 ha whilst the northern parcel and access route extend to 645.9 ha.

A site location plan is provided as Figure 2.1.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Proposed Development is an extension to the existing Farr Wind Farm. 10 wind turbine generators (WTG) are proposed in the northern parcel. The southern parcel is intended to be used for habitat and biodiversity enhancement subject to suitability.

3.1 Key Project Components

The main elements of the Proposed Development are:

- 10 three bladed WTG, each with a maximum blade tip height of up to 200m;
- permanent foundations supporting each WTG;
- associated crane hardstanding at each turbine location;
- turbine transformers accommodated within external kiosks beside proposed turbines;
- a series of new onsite access tracks and associated watercourse crossings;
- borrow pits for construction aggregate;
- underground cabling linking each turbine to the substation control building;
- temporary construction compound(s) and laydown area; and
- a permanent anemometer mast.

The Applicant is exploring opportunities to use the existing Farr Wind Farm substation in the west of the Site.

3.2 Access

A port to site abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) access study will be undertaken in support of the forthcoming application. AIL access is anticipated off the A9 either via the existing A9 access to the east or the intended A9 dualling junction further west, being developed as part of the A9 dualling works. Figure 2.1 shows both access routes from the A9. Construction of the A9 dualling junction is anticipated in 2027 with completion by 2028. Swept path analysis (SPA) will inform the AIL route selection further and any associated upgrades required.

An access is shown off the minor road connecting the B851 and the minor road to Corrievorrie. This may be used for staff and construction material delivery rather than turbine components. Off the same road is an access to the southern parcel which would be used for habitat enhancement/management only.

3.3 Wind Turbine Generators

Whilst the layout remains subject to change, to inform considerations, indicative turbine coordinates are provided in Table 3-1 below. The Scoping Layout is provided as Figure 3.1.

Table 3-1: Indicative WTG coordinates - scoping stage

WTG No.	Easting	Northing
1	270795	829216
2	271234	829827
3	271379	830492
4	272488	830750
5	272444	831722
6	273272	831708
7	273743	831180
8	273836	830359
9	274588	830884
10	274990	830141

A range of wind turbine models may be suitable for the Site, and the WTG model for the Proposed Development is dependent on a number of factors including wind analysis, the findings of the relevant technical and environmental assessments, and commercial availability at the time of procurement.

To inform the EIA process, a candidate turbine has been selected. The candidate turbine characteristics are as follows:

- blade length – 81.5m
- hub Height – 118m
- rotor Diameter –163m
- blade tip height – 200m
- individual turbine capacity – up to 6.7MW
- no. of turbines - 10

- total generating capacity – 67MW

Based on current information, it is considered that the Site can accommodate in the region of 10 turbines. The final number will be determined by technical, environmental constraints identified during the EIA and iterative design process.

3.4 Micrositing

A micrositing allowance of 100m in any direction is proposed to facilitate minor changes to turbine locations and associated infrastructure necessitated by unforeseen circumstances encountered at construction stage.

3.5 Internal tracks and watercourse crossings

Water crossing designs will follow best practice to prevent impact on the integrity of the banking of watercourses and mitigate against increased downstream flood risk. Detailed design will be included within a final Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be agreed with THC and SEPA prior to the commencement of construction.

All detailed watercourse crossing designs and site discharges will be regulated under The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations (2011) (as amended) (CAR) licensing regime.

3.6 Borrow Pits

The Proposed Development requires material to construct new tracks, create hard standing areas for cranes and lay turbine foundations.

Assessment will be made as to the availability and use of borrow pits throughout the EIA process and will be informed by geological mapping, site investigations, topography, hydrology, peat depth and other environmental constraints.

3.7 Cabling and substation control building

All onsite cables from the turbines to the substation compound are likely to be laid adjacent to internal access tracks to minimise the requirement for standalone groundworks.

3.8 Construction Compound

An onsite temporary construction compound will facilitate the construction process. Compounds are typically surrounded by a 3m high chain link fence to secure the contents including:

- a site office with kitchen/ welfare facilities;
- storage containers;
- staff parking;
- chemical and oil storage area;
- concrete batching plant;
- aggregate storage; and
- adequate HGV turning space.

3.9 Permanent Anemometer Mast

It is expected that one permanent anemometer mast will be located within the Site to monitor wind conditions after commissioning. The selection of the mast will take account of the ease of construction and ability to reduce visual impact. Access to the mast would be intended to spur off the onsite track network.

3.10 Grid Connection

As this early stage, it is anticipated that the Proposed Development will connect to the existing Farr Wind Farm substation (south of the western access) on site then via existing overhead lines to the substation at Tomatin via the Farr -Tomatin 2 circuit. It is not anticipated that the overhead lines will be upgraded.

3.11 Construction

It is anticipated that the construction programme will last 18-24 months.
Typical construction activities, work methods and an outline construction programme will be set out in the EIAR. This will include details of programme phasing as well as construction traffic movements.

3.12 Operation and Maintenance

The application for consent will be based on an operational lifespan of 35-years. This excludes construction and decommissioning timeframes. The potential effects on sensitive receptors during this phase of the lifecycle of the Proposed Development will be considered in the EIAR.

3.13 Decommissioning

At the end of the Proposed Development's operational life the Proposed Development will be decommissioned. It is anticipated that decommissioning will take approximately 12 months during which it is anticipated that the associated environmental effects will be no greater than those experienced during construction, taking effect across a shorter period.

3.14 Scoping Layout

The scoping layout is shown on Figure 3.1. There are several components of the design which are under review, with various options being investigated. These include, but are not limited to, the following. Please note only turbine locations, as set out in Section 3.3, are shown on the scoping layout at this stage.

- Turbine locations
- Peat depth
- Access for AIL
- Internal track network
- Crane hardstandings
- Borrow pit locations
- Watercourse crossings

Further iterations of the design will occur as part of the EIA process. The principles guiding the design aim to maximise renewable energy generation whilst observing hard constraints and buffers, minimising peat and habitat disturbance, reducing potential impacts on sensitive receptors; minimising watercourse crossings and identifying opportunities for environmental enhancement. The evolution of the design will be discussed in the EIAR, as will the various alternatives that will be considered during the design process. The Applicant welcomes comments from consultees on the scoping layout and alternative options.

4. LEGISLATION AND SCOPING

Within the EIA Regulations, EIA development is described as:

- Schedule 1 development – meaning EIA is mandatory for any projects listed therein; or
- Schedule 2 development likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such the nature, size or location.

The Proposed Development is categorised as a 'generating station' under Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations. The Applicant is satisfied that the project has the potential for likely significant effects, and therefore intends to submit an EIA Report. Accordingly, the proposal will constitute 'EIA development'.

4.1 Information Required

Regulation 4 (2) sets out that, 'The environmental impact assessment must identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner…the direct and indirect significant effects of the proposed development (including …operational effects) on the factors specified in paragraph (3) and the interaction between those factors.' Regulation 4 paragraph (3), sets out that those factors are:

- population and human health;
- biodiversity;
- land, soil, water, air and climate; and
- material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape.

As a minimum, the EIA process should consider the above factors unless agreed by the authorities that they can be scoped out of the EIA. Regulation 4 paragraph (4) also includes a requirement to consider, if relevant to the development, vulnerability to major accidents and disasters. The above matters must be presented within the EIAR together with the requirements of Regulation 5 paragraph (2) as follows:

- a description of the development comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features;
- a description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment;
- a description of any measures undertaken to avoid, prevent, reduce or offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment;

- a description of reasonable alternatives studied by the developer;
- a non-technical summary of the information in the EIA; and
- any other information specified in Schedule 4 to the EIA Regulations relevant to the specific characteristics of the development and to the environmental features likely to be affected.

Schedule 4 to the EIA Regulations '*Information for Inclusion in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*', at paragraph (4) lists environmental factors likely to be significantly affected by a development as '*population, human health, biodiversity (for example fauna and flora), land (for example land take), soil (for example organic matter, erosion, compaction, sealing), water (for example hydromorphological changes, quantity and quality), air, climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation), material assets, cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological aspects, and landscape.*'

The factors (topics) in the EIA regulations will be considered by the Applicant at this scoping stage to inform the content of the EIAR.

4.2 EIA Scoping

Although not a mandatory process, Part 4 of the EIA Regulations allows developers to request Scottish Ministers adopt a scoping opinion regarding a proposed development. This Scoping Report is provided in line with Part 4, Regulation 12 of the EIA Regulations and includes:

- a description of the location of the development, including a plan sufficient to identify the area in which the works are proposed to be sited;
- a brief description of the nature and purpose of the development and of its likely significant effects on the environment; and
- such other information or representations.

This Scoping Report considers environmental topics, in accordance with the information required set out in Section 4.1, and sets out:

- a brief assessment of the existing environmental baseline;
- the identification of potential effects and key issues which may be associated with both the construction and operation of the Proposed Development;
- an indication of any mitigation measures likely to be proposed; and
- an indication of the approach to be adopted towards a detailed assessment of potential effects (as appropriate).

It is acknowledged and accepted that the resultant EIAR must be based on the scoping opinion provided by the Scottish Ministers.

5. APPROACH TO EIA

5.1 Overview

This section considers the approach to EIA including the assessment methodology. The EIA process can be summarised as consisting of the following stages.

- EIA Screening: Applicants submit a screening request to the relevant consenting authority to consider whether EIA is required. Or undertake EIA for the Proposed Development.
- EIA Scoping: The Applicant produces an EIA Scoping Report and requests a formal Scoping Opinion.
- Pre-application consultation: Community and stakeholder consultation and engagement during the pre-application period. This includes community consultation and technical engagement with stakeholders throughout the EIA process.
- Preparation of the EIAR: Taking into account the scoping opinion, ongoing feedback from consultees, and technical and environmental information the findings are used to update the design and assessment is presented in the EIAR.
- Determination: Scottish Ministers are required to examine all the environmental information, including the EIAR, as well as any comments and representations received from consultation bodies and the public, to enable them to reach a reasoned conclusion with regard to the likely significant effects of the project and whether or not consent should be granted.

5.2 Consultation

Stakeholder engagement is a key part of the EIA process and will be undertaken throughout the EIA process to agree assessment methodologies as well as to address concerns consultees have. Relevant stakeholders consulted will be agreed with the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) and vary according to topic. An initial stakeholder list is provided as Appendix B.

Public consultation will also be undertaken by the Applicant following ECU guidance[1] and the advice to hold public consultation events. The Applicant will hold at least two rounds of public consultation events following the submission of this Scoping Report in order to inform its final proposals. The first round events are scheduled to take place on:

- Tuesday 16th June 2026 , 9:30 am - 5 pm in Farr Community Hall; and
- Wednesday 17th June 2026 11:30 am - 6:30 pm in Strathdearn Hub.

The dates and locations of further events are to be confirmed but will be held prior to the Proposed Development's design freeze.

5.3 Project Design Envelope

The Project Design Envelope (PDE) approach (also known as the Rochdale Envelope approach) will be adopted for the Proposed Development assessment. This approach is common practice to assist with a need for flexibility, in accordance with Scottish Government guidance[2] and Planning Advice Note 1/2013[3]. This approach provides flexibility in project design and allows for assessment of a likely maximum design scenario within the maximum (or minimum) parameters identified.

5.4 Assessment Methodology

The methodology for undertaking the EIA process provides for a staged approach, and is summarised as follows:

- scoping / consultation exercise;
- baseline surveys;
- impact assessment (including cumulative effects);
- mitigation and monitoring;
- residual effects; and
- reporting.

[1] Energy Consents Unit

[2] Scottish Government (2022a). *Guidance for applicants on using the design envelope for applications under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989*. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-applicants-using-design-envelope-applications-under-section-36-electricity-act-1989/.

[3] Scottish Government (2013). *Planning Advice Note 1/2013: Environmental Impact Assessment*. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-advice-note-1-2013-environmental-impact-assessment/

5.5 Impact Assessment

The assessment of whether the Proposed Development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment will be undertaken through the following:

- professional judgement and experience;
- assessment of both temporary and permanent effects;
- assessment of interaction and cumulative effects;
- assessment of duration and reversibility of these effects;
- assessment against legislation, policy and guidance; and
- consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees.

Each topic chapter, unless otherwise specified, will take into account both the sensitivity of receptors affected and the magnitude of the likely impact in determining the significance of the effect.

5.6 Sensitivity of Receptors

Receptors are defined as the physical resource or user group that would be affected by the Proposed Development. Baseline studies will identify potential receptors and evaluate their sensitivity to the Proposed Development. The nature and type of receptors will vary depending upon the topic as will their sensitivity.

Table 5-1 sets out the typical set of descriptors that will be used within the EIA process to define the sensitivity of a receptor.

Table 5-1: Environmental Value (Sensitivity) and Typical Descriptors

Sensitivity	Typical Descriptors
Very High	Very high importance and rarity, international scale and very limited potential for substitution
High	High importance and rarity, national scale, and limited potential for substitution
Medium	High or medium importance and rarity, regional scale, limited potential for substitution
Low	Low or medium importance and rarity, local scale
Negligible	Very low importance and rarity, local scale

5.7 Magnitude of Impact

Defining the magnitude of an impact may take into account the following:

- extent and scale – for example the proportion of a feature impacted by the Proposed Development;
- duration;
- timing and frequency; and
- permanence/reversibility.

The magnitude of impact can be assessed as beneficial or adverse. Table 5-2 sets out the typical set of descriptors that will be used in the EIA process to define the magnitude of impact.

Table 5-2: Magnitude of Impact Typical Descriptors

Magnitude of Impact	Typical Criteria Descriptors
Major	Loss of resource and/or quality and integrity of resource; severe damage to key characteristics, features or elements (Adverse).
	Large scale or major improvement of resource quality; extensive restoration or enhancement; major Improvement of attribute quality (Beneficial).
Moderate	Loss of resource but not adversely affecting the integrity; partial loss of/damage to key characteristics, features or elements (Adverse).
	Benefit to, or addition of, key characteristics, features or elements; improvement of an attribute quality (Beneficial).
Minor	Some measurable change in attributes, quality or vulnerability; minor loss of, or alteration to, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements (Adverse).
	Minor benefit to, or addition of, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements; some Beneficial impact on attribute or a reduced risk of negative impact occurring (Beneficial).
Negligible	Very minor loss or detrimental alteration to one or more characteristics, features or elements (Adverse).
	Very minor benefit to or positive addition of one or more characteristics, features or elements (Beneficial).
No Change	No loss or alteration of characteristics, features or elements; no observable impact in either direction.

5.8 Significance of Effects

The matrix provided in Table 5-3 will then be used to identify how the sensitivity and magnitude of impact combine to result in a predicted significance of effect.

Table 5-3: Significance of Effect Matrix

Sensitivity of Receptors	Magnitude of Impact Degree of Change				
	No Change	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major
Very High	Neutral	Slight	Moderate or Large	Large or Very Large	Very Large
High	Neutral	Slight	Slight or Moderate	Moderate or Large	Large or Very Large
Medium	Neutral	Neutral or Slight	Slight or Moderate	Moderate	Moderate or Large
Low	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral or Slight	Slight	Slight or Moderate
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral or Slight	Neutral or Slight	Slight

5.9 Cumulative Development

The initial cumulative search area or Zone of Influence (ZOI) is 45km with a 20km study area proposed, wherein likely significant effects may occur. The EIAR will assess developments which are operational and under construction; consented; and those in planning under the Electricity Act.

Table 5-4 identifies all known wind farms within 20km of the Site based on THC interactive map of onshore wind development. Currently there are 16 wind farms within the 20km study area at varying stages of their operational lifetime and the consenting process.

Table 5-4: Cumulative wind farm development list

Status	Name	Application Reference	Blade Tip Height	Proximity to Proposed Development
Operational and/or Under Construction	Farr	20/03263/S36 - Variation	102m and 40 turbines	0km
	Glen Kyllachy	13/01441/Ful	110m and 20 turbines	0km
	Aberarder	15/00737/FUL	130m and 12 turbines	10km to the southwest
	Moy	13/01180/S36	125m and 20 turbines	11km to the north
	Tom Nan Clach	15/03286/FUL	110m and 13 turbines	13km to the northeast
	Dunmaglass	05/00217/S36IN	120m and 33 turbines	11km to the southwest

Consented	Tom nan Clach Extension	22/01732/S36	149.9m and 7 turbines	13km to the northeast
In Planning	Corriegarth 2 Wind Farm	21/00101/S36	149.9M blade tip	15km south west
	Lynemore Wind Farm	25/01748/S36	200m blade tip	0km north
	Kyllachy Wind Farm	25/03511/S36	180m blade tip	0km south east
	Clune Wind Farm	25/00847/S36	200m blade tip	6km south east
	Highland Wind Farm	25/01355/S36	200m blade tip	6km south
	Balnespick Wind Farm	25/00629/S36	200m blade tip	10km east
	Glenkirk Wind Farm	25/04677/SCOP	230m blade tip	6km north east
Scoping	Carn Na Saobhaidh Wind Farm	24/03625/SCOP	200m blade tip	15km southwest
	Balmore Wind Farm	23/02340/SCOP	220m blade tip	20km north east

The cumulative list will be updated periodically throughout the EIA process and prior to completion of the assessment. We propose a cumulative cut-off date of 12 weeks prior to the planned application submission for the potential change in the cumulative situation.

5.10 Other Assessment Approaches

Generally, assessments undertaken as part of the EIAR will adhere to the approach set out in Section 5. Where they do not, this will be due to specific tailored approaches to assessment of significance that are required by professional institutions of which competent experts are members, and/or approaches that have been refined and agreed through previous experience. In all instances, each topic chapter will contain an assessment of significance that is clearly set out and rationalized, together with an explanation of any assumptions and limitations that may have impacted predicted significance of effects and further an assessment of cumulative impacts.

In line with the Guidelines on Streamlining Environmental Impact Assessment for Onshore Wind Farms (Scottish Renewables, September 2025[4]), the EIAR is not

[4] Guidelines on Streamlining Environmental Impact Assessment

proposed to contain 'generic EIA methodology and topic specific assessment methods or approach where this is 'standard' and in accordance with good practice guidance except by brief cross reference and/or links.' The guidelines further state the 'EIA Report can rely on agreements on method made through the Scoping process and make brief cross reference to key terms of reference without repeating the content of such guidance.'

6. PROPOSED EIA SCOPE

6.1 EIAR Report Format

The findings of the EIA, together with information and data collected during the assessment will be presented in the EIAR. It is proposed that the EIAR will comprise up to 5 Volumes as follows:

- Volume 1 – Non-Technical Summary;
- Volume 2 – Main Report;
- Volume 3a – Figures / Drawings;
- Volume 3b – Visualisations;
- Volume 4 – Technical Appendices; and
- Volume 5 – Confidential Appendices (if required).

Volume 2 will be streamlined to follow the Scoping Opinion and will include the following chapters listed in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1: Volume 2, Chapters of the EIAR

Proposed Chapter Number	Chapter Title
1	Introduction
2	Project Description
3	Design Evolution and Alternatives
4	Landscape and Visual
5	Ecology
6	Ornithology
7	Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Peat
8	Noise and Vibration
9	Access, Traffic and Transport
10	Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
11	Schedule of Environmental Commitments

Further analysis in respect of each of the proposed EIAR chapters and associated Technical Appendices is provided in the Scoping Report from Section 7 onwards.

6.2 Matters Proposed to be Scoped Out

Topics to be scoped out of the EIAR include:

- Legislation and Planning Policy
- Socio-economic Impacts
- Human Health
- Major Accidents and Disasters
- Material Assets
- Waste
- Agricultural Land Classification and Land Use
- Climate Change
- Other considerations - Air Quality, Aviation and EMI, Ice Throw, Contamination, Shadow Flicker, TV and Radio, Telecommunications and Forestry

6.3 Ancillary Documents

In addition to the EIAR and technical appendices it is intended to provide the following ancillary documents:

- Planning, Design and Access Statement;
- Pre-Application Consultation Report;
- Habitat Regulations Assessment (Stage 1); and
- Socio-Economic Impact Assessment.

6.4 Questions to Consultees

- The access route will be considered in the EIA. Oversail areas may require minor areas of tree clearance. Are consultees content these impacts can be assessed under other environmental topics, namely Landscape and Visual, Ecology and Ornithology as required, and do not warrant a standalone forestry chapter?
- Grid connection is anticipated to be via underground cable to Farr substation within the application boundary. Transmission between Farr and Tomatin grid supply point (GSP) will be via existing OHLs. No upgrades to these are

anticipated. In light of the Raeshaw judgement[5], the Applicant is of the view the Proposed Development incorporates grid connection and can be viewed as a single project for the purposes of EIA. Do consultees agree with this view?

- Do consultees have any initial comments regarding the scoping layout?
- Are consultees agreeable to the 20km cumulative study area?
- Are there any other cumulative developments that should be included?
- The cumulative list will be periodically updated but a cumulative cut-off date of 12 weeks prior to application's submission for the potential change in the cumulative situation is proposed. Is this acceptable?
- Do consultees agree with the standard assessment methodology?
- Do consultees agree with the proposed EIAR content?
- Are consultees in agreement with topics proposed to be scoped out?
- Is the proposed suite of ancillary documents acceptable?
- Are there any other chapters, documents or comments consultees would like to see or make?

[5] Raeshaw Farms Ltd v Scottish Ministers [2026] CSIH 10

7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

This section of the Scoping Report considers the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) of the Proposed Development.

The LVIA of the Farr Extension Wind Farm will be undertaken to establish potential significant effects on the fabric of the landscape, landscapes character and visual amenity as a result of the Proposed Development. The assessment will involve desk study, field work, data processing and analysis as well as interpretation using professional judgement. The assessment will also address cumulative effects and include Night-time Lighting Assessment.

The LVIA will:

- Be carried out in accordance with established current methodology and guidance;
- Focus on valued landscape resource and visual receptors (at national, regional, and local levels); and
- Present the findings supported by appropriate figures and illustrations.

This section is supported by the following baseline figures:

- Figure 7.1 Comparative Blade Tip and Hub Height ZTV within 45km with Cumulative Context;
- Figure 7.2 Comparative Blade Tip and Hub Height ZTV within 20km;
- Figure 7.3 Balde Tip ZTV with Forestry Excluded within 20km;
- Figure 7.4 Topography Map within 20km with Cumulative Context;
- Figure 7.5 Landscape Designations and Long Distance Recreational Routes within 45km;
- Figure 7.6 Landscape Character Types within 20km;
- Figure 7.7 Landscape Designations and Long Distance recreational Routes within 20km.

7.1 Study Area

It is accepted practice within landscape and visual assessment work that the extent of the study area for a development proposal is broadly defined by the visual envelope of the Site and the anticipated extent of visibility arising from the Proposed Development itself. This would be based on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

study and through field survey verifications of the ZTV, as the latter does not take into account the effect of distance.
The Visual Representation of Wind Farms: Good Practice Guidance [6] (para 48) recommends an initial ZTV distance of 45km from the nearest turbine or from the outer circle of the wind farm, based on turbine tip heights of 150m or above. Therefore, the baseline data, including figures, will be produced for the 45km LVIA search area.

Considering the limitations of the bare-earth ZTV, which does not take into account the distance factor and intervening vegetation, and given the purpose of the LVIA to consider 'likely significant' effects, a 20 km LVIA study area is proposed for detailed assessment.

Although the Proposed Development would be visible at 20 km, due to the eye's visual acuity, the air humidity, the number of wind turbines, and the underlying large-scale landform, the visible prominence of the Proposed Development would decrease at greater distances.

Figure 7.1 shows the comparative blade tip and hub height ZTV within the 45 km LVIA search area, Figure 7.2 shows the comparative blade tip and hub height ZTV within the 20 km proposed LVIA study area, and Figure 7.3 presents the ZTV, which takes into account the main forestry and woodland within the 20km LVIA study area.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

The ZTV pattern shown in Figures 7.1 and 7.2, reflects the topography of the study area. The blade tip ZTV indicates a predominantly homogeneous visibility pattern in the vicinity of the Site. A more fragmented visibility pattern extends to the east of the Strathearn and is even more fragmented to the west of Strathnairn. Beyond 10 km the visibility extends to the north-west, on the high shoulder above Loch Ness and at the mouth of the River Ness at Inverness. To the north the ZTV pattern then stretches over the Moray Firth and spreads over the higher terrain of the Black Isle. Sporadic visibility is identified beyond a radius of 10 km along the western side of Loch Ness, on the south-east facing slopes of the landmass which overlooks the loch and forms its western shore and accommodates the Great Glen Way. To the south visibility occurs over the summits of the Monadhliath Mountains, and on the

[6] Visual Representation of Wind Farms: Good Practice Guidance (Version 2.2, page 12) (2017)

high peaks of the Cairngorm Mountains to the south-east. Visibility from the east and south east of the Site is restricted by the range of hills which rise above the River Findhorn/ Strathdearn. Therefore, the ZTV pattern beyond 20km becomes sporadic and fragmented, only comprising higher summits.

The ZTV (Figure 7.3), which takes into account the main forestry and woodland, shows reduced visibility across Drummossie Muir, to the south of the urban sprawl of Inverness. Also reduced visibility pattern appears across the River Nairn valley, to the north west of the Site, which accommodates the scattered villages, residential receptors. The same applies to the Strathnairn area, to the north, which accommodates the villages of Daviot, Craggiemore and Auchnahillin, along with Sustran NCR (B9154). However, visibility from the A9 is mainly restricted by the topography.

7.2 Baseline Environment

Landscape Designations

No international or national landscape designations occur within the Site or in its proximity (see Figure 7.5).

National Level Designations

Cairngorms National Park and National Scenic Areas

The Cairngorms National Park (CNP) extends in a south-easterly direction across the study area. Its closest point to the Proposed Development lies at a distance of 10 km to the south-east at Slochd.

The ZTV pattern within the CNP is sporadic and limited , mainly covering the high peaks at a distance beyond 18 km.

The special qualities of the CNP are identified in 'The Special Landscape Qualities' of the CNP, Report No.375 (2010) and the CNP Authority's CNP Partnership Plan: 2022-2027 (2022).

On this basis, Nature Scot (NS), and the CNP Authority will be consulted on viewpoint selection and on exclusion of the assessment of the SLQs of the National Scenic Areas (NSAs), due to the distance, limited ZTV and intervening cumulative wind energy developments between the Proposed Development and NSA. Also,

Cairngorms Dark Sky Park lies beyond the 30 km radius of the Site, which, due to the distance, will not be included in the assessment as suggested by the 'Guidance on Aviation Lighting Impact Assessment, which NS has published (2024).

Local Level Designations

Special Landscape Areas

The "Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas (June 2011)" contains maps and citations for the (Special Landscape Areas) SLAs within the Highland Council area. The landscape designations are shown on Figure 7.5.

Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA

Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA (20) extends at a distance of 4 km to the west of the Site. The western shore of Loch Ness and Drummossie Muir fall within the ZTV in the SLA.

The Great Glen Way (GGW) extends along the western shoulder of Loch Ness and ends in Inverness. Several sections of the route fall within the ZTV, the closest being at a distance of 15 km from the Proposed Development.

Drynachan, Lochindorb and Dava Moors SLA

Drynachan, Lochindorb and Dava Moors SLA (22) covers most of the higher moorland to the north of Strathspey and extends at a distance of 8 km to the north east of the Site. The ZTV pattern is limited to a few summits within the SLA.

The assessment of the SLQs of the SLAs beyond 20 km distance (see Figure 7.7) from the Proposed Development would be excluded from the assessment due to the distance, limited ZTV and intervening cumulative wind energy developments between the Proposed Development and each SLA.

Monadhliath Wild Land Area

Monadhliath Wild Land Area[7] (WLA) (20) extends at a distance of 8 km to the south east of the Site. With four Munros and two Corbetts the area is therefore popular with hillwalkers and skiers, as well as for mountain biking and bird-watching.
The ZTV pattern across the Monadhliath WLA is sporadic, comprising the highest peaks.

The National Planning Framework 4 Policy 4: Natural places states in relation to the NS WLAs that buffer zones around wild land will not be applied, and effects of development outwith wild land areas will not be a significant consideration.
Based on that, the rest of the WLAs will not be covered in the LVIA. The LVIA will cover the Monadhliath WLA due to its overlap with the Rolling Uplands of Inverness LCT, the host LCT of the Proposed Development.

With regard to the designated landscapes, the Proposed Development would not take the wind farm development closer to Loch Ness and the Drynachan, Lochindorb and Dava Moors SLAs, Monadliath WLA, or to the Cairngorms National Park.

However, the proposed Lynemore Wind Farm (WF), immediately to the north of the Proposed Development, and the proposed Kyllachy WF, to the south east, will both take turbines closer to the designated landscapes. The Balnespick Wind Farm is proposed within the Drynachan, Lochindorb, and Dava Moors SLA, adjacent to the CNP boundary. This SLA already accommodates two wind farms (Moy and Tom nan Clach). The extension to the Tom nan Clach WF has been consented, and Glenkirk WF is at scoping stage, and is located next to the SLA's boundary. The Highland WF is proposed within the Monadhliath WLA, and the Clune WF is proposed next to the boundaries of the Monadhliath WLA and the CNP.

Landscape and Visual Context

Rolling Uplands of Inverness LCT

The Proposed Development is located within the Rolling Uplands of Inverness LCT, which consists of large-scale, smooth, rounded hills with summits of similar height, and spaced far apart. This area forms an upland backdrop to much of the eastern

[7] https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscapepolicy-and-guidance/wild-land/wild-land-area-descriptions-andassessment-guidance

part of the Inverness district and links with the higher ground further to the southeast within the CNP.

The Rolling Uplands LCT already accommodates a number of wind farms, and several development applications have recently been submitted in this LCT (see Figures 7.6). The Site is located adjacent to the existing turbines of Farr/ Glen Kyllachy Wind Farm and the proposed Lynemore Wind Farm, immediately to the north, and the proposed Kyllachy Wind Farm, to the south east. With reference to the siting of these wind farms, Figure 7.4 shows the Proposed Development on a lower elevation than the proposed Lynemore Wind Farm, which is also sited closer to the Strath of Rolling Uplands landscape.

Strath in Rolling Uplands

In order to protect the most sensitive landscapes, the Dava Moor, Nairn and Monadhliath Area Wind Energy Landscape Sensitivity Pilot Study (Pilot Study 2021) distinguished the Strath in Rolling Uplands from the Rolling Uplands Inverness LCT (see Figures 7.6). This is a more sensitive valley landscape, which comprises the valley landscape of Loch Moy, the River Findhorn, and Strathdearn.

The Proposed Development is located further away from the Strath in Rolling Uplands LCT, than are the proposed Lynemore and Kyllachy Wind Farms, which are located closer to the sensitive strath.

Visual Receptors

With regard to the visual receptors, the settlements are predominantly concentrated on the lower-lying straths and along the main arterial routes (including the A9, the Inverness to Perth railway line , B851, B861).

National Cycle Route (NCR) 7 falls within the ZTV to the east of the Site, where it follows the A9 and the railway line, with predicted visibility over the same sections of this route.
The city of Inverness is approximately 15 km north of the Proposed Development. Other settlements comprise a mixture of isolated and small clusters of buildings, hamlets, and villages (including Tomatin, Daviot and Farr).

There are no residential properties within a 2 km radius of the Proposed Development.

7.3 Initial Site Capacity Statement and Design Objectives

Although the site constraints surveys are ongoing and have not yet been completed and the layout design is in its initial stage. Based on the initial field survey and constraints analysis, the following factors indicate the landscape's capacity to accommodate the Proposed Development.

- Distance from the designated landscapes
- Suitable large-scale topography
- Existing context with wind farms
- Appropriate distance from residential receptors
- Appropriate setback from sensitive small-scale LCT such as the Strath in Rolling Uplands
- THC Development Plan SPG evaluates the Rolling Uplands/ the host landscape as able to accommodate large turbines in terms of scale, although key constraints include potential effects on the Loch Ness area

The Proposed Development and cumulative developments, both existing and proposed, are predominantly located within the Rolling Uplands Inverness LCT.

The following studies provide capacity, sensitivity, and design guidance for LCTs.

The Highland Council's Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance

The Highland Council's Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG) (Nov 2016, with addendum, December 2017) sets out key landscape and visual aspects that THC will use as a framework and focus for assessing proposals.

The OWESG identifies that any remaining capacity for wind farm development should be focused around existing clusters that are generally found in rolling uplands, rugged massif and rocky moorland LCTs, but only where these are well designed, integrated into the existing pattern of development and do not undo the landscape and visual mitigation agreed for existing schemes (para 5.34, page 37, OWESG).

The Proposed Development is located within the Monadhliath ridge and tops, Rolling Uplands LCA (LN6) (Loch Ness LCAs Map, page 38, OWESG), which has been assessed as having lower sensitivity, than the Rolling Uplands LCA, which is rated

higher in recognition of existing density of development (Table 5.2.8, page 49, OWESG).

The Highland Strategic Capacity Study suggests that proposed turbines should:

- Not breach skyline when viewed from north side of Loch Ness;
- Be set back from Key Routes;
- Preserve mitigation established by current schemes;
- Maintain the landscape setting of each existing scheme;
- Avoid coalescence with current positioning;
- Respect spacing and scale of existing development pattern; and
- Development of turbines (all scales) in other locations within the LCA should be avoided to ensure that the scale of the landform is maintained and that perspective – when viewed across the loch in particular – is not adversely affected.

Landscape Sensitivity Pilot Study 2021 Dava Moor, Nairn and Monadhliath Wind Energy Landscape Sensitivity Study

The Dava Moor, Nairn and Monadhliath Area Wind Energy Landscape Sensitivity Pilot Study (Pilot Study 2021) identifies constraints and opportunities at a strategic scale and considers landscape and visual sensitivities and a range of other factors to be considered in determining the acceptability of specific developments.

The study suggests that the expansive Rolling Uplands (the Monadhliath) would be better able to accommodate turbines >150m in terms of scale although key constraints include potential effects of additional (and larger) turbines on the WLAs (within and close to the Rolling Uplands), on the Cairngorms National Park and the Loch Ness area.

The Pilot Study concludes that the Rolling Uplands LCT has High-medium sensitivity from turbines higher than 150m tip height (Pilot Study, Figure 5: Sensitivity to Wind Turbines >150m High). Which means that “Development would conflict with some of the landscape and visual criteria but may be able to be accommodated in small parts of some assessment units”.

The Pilot Study (para 18.2.1) suggests that ‘extensions’ to existing developments, comprising larger turbines, would potentially appear within the area.

Design Objectives

General Windfarm Good Design Principles, as suggested in the 'Siting and Designing of Windfarms in the Landscape: Version 3a' (NatureScot, 2017), have been considered in forming the initial layout of the Proposed Development. In addition, the following design considerations are relevant in relation to the local landscape and visual context.

- Location within the interior of Rolling Uplands, Inverness LCT, thereby setting the scheme back from the prominent edge of the Uplands that forms an important backdrop to the Loch Ness and marks the transition into adjacent small-scale LCTs.
- Avoidance of diminishing of prominent foci, including pronounced summits and complex (craggy) landforms, such as in views from B851.
- Minimisation of effects on smaller enclosed straths/valley landscapes and local settlements.
- Minimisation of effects on prominent skylines of hills which contain the valley, for example in views from the A9 and NCR7.
- Visual compatibility with existing wind farm schemes such as Glen Kyllachy and Farr Wind Farms.

7.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

The LVIA process will take account of national and local planning policy in relation to wind farm development, as follows:

- National Planning Framework (NPF) 4 (2023);
- Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) (2012);
- The Highland Council's Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG) (adopted in November 2016 and its Addendum in 2017); and
- Dava Moor, Nairn and Monadhliath Area Wind Energy Landscape Sensitivity Pilot Study (December 2021).

As a matter of best practice, the LVIA methodology is based on the industry-relevant guidance described in the following documents:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013) (GLVIA3).

- Technical Guidance Note-2024-01: Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (Landscape Institute, 2024).
- Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Guidance (NatureScot, April 2022).
- Technical Guidance Note 02/21: Assessing landscape value outside national designations (Landscape Institute, May 2021).
- Assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of onshore wind energy developments (Landscape Institute, May 2021).
- Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland (The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).

Effects Evaluation Methodology

The emphasis in LVIA is on identification and reporting of potentially significant environmental effects. The determination of levels of significance requires the application of professional judgement and experience to gauge the balance of variables which, in every instance, are given different weight according to the site and its surroundings in terms of specific considerations.

As set out in GLVIA3, paragraph 2.21, landscape and visual effects are assessed separately, although the procedure for assessing each is closely linked.

- Landscape effects relate to the effects of the Proposed Development on the physical and perceptual characteristics of the landscape and its resulting character and quality.
- Visual effects relate to the effects on views experienced by visual receptors (e.g. local residents, visitors, footpath users, road users etc) and on the change in views experienced by people.

The LVIA implements a staged approach, combining the individual judgements made under the different contributing criteria. Sensitivity of the receptors has to be determined first, which means defining and selecting sensitive receptors upon which the magnitude of change is to be assessed.

The LVIA would not include any landscape and visual receptors of negligible sensitivity.

Levels of Significance

Each effect is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The matrix in Table 7-1 provides general guidance on the relationship between magnitude of change and sensitivity

of receptor. The landscape or visual effects above 'moderate' are considered to be equivalent to a "significant effect", and everything below not significant.

"Moderate effects may or may not be significant, and justification would be needed in the methodology or receptor assessment as to whether a moderate effect is significant or not." (LI TGN 2024/01). Moderate effects may or may not be significant, depending on the particular circumstances arising and professional judgement. In this instance, justification will be provided in the receptor assessment.

Table 7-1: Framework for Assessment of the Significance of Effects (Landscape and Visual)

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change/ Impact			
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
Very High	**Major (significant)**	**Major (significant)**	Moderate (potentially significant)	Minor (not significant)
High	**Major (significant)**	**Major/ Moderate** (significant)	Moderate (potentially significant)	Minor (not significant)
Medium	**Major/ Moderate (significant)**	Moderate (potentially significant)	Moderate/ Minor (not significant)	Minor/ Negligible (not significant)
Low	Moderate/ Minor (not significant)	Minor (not significant)	Minor/ Negligible (not significant)	Negligible (not significant)
Negligible	Negligible (not significant)	Negligible (not significant)	Negligible (not significant)	Negligible (not significant)

Levels of Effects Matrix

LVIA is a means of documenting professional judgement, rather than a formulaic process. The 'Level of Effects Matrix' is not used as a prescriptive tool, and the

methodology and analysis of potential effects at any particular location must allow for the exercise of professional judgement. Thus, in some instances, a particular parameter may be considered as having a determining effect on the analysis.

Although it is still general practice to show the significance matrix, linking judgements on the sensitivity of the receptor, and about the magnitude of the effects, to reach conclusions on the level/significance of effects, GLVIA3 does not endorse a matrix-bound approach. The sensitivity and magnitude, which have to be combined for the significance criteria, are very different categories, and which are defined by combining specific criteria.

In order to form a judgement regarding the overall significance of effects, this determination requires the application of professional judgement and experience to take on board the many different variables which need to be considered, and which are given different weight according to site-specific, development-specific and location-specific considerations in every instance.

It should be noted that whilst an effect may be significant, that does not necessarily mean that such an impact would be unacceptable or should necessarily be regarded as an “undue consequence” (GLVIA3, para 5.40). What is important is that the likely effects of any proposal are transparently assessed and understood so that the determining authority can bring a balanced and well-informed judgement to bear when making any decision. This judgement should be based upon weighing up the proposal's benefits against the anticipated positive and negative effects.

Cumulative Assessment

An all-encompassing list of cumulative projects is provided within Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report and shown on all baseline figures, including Figure 7.1.

Cumulative effects are assessed on the same landscape and visual receptors as the assessment for the Proposed Development against the baseline.

The assessment of cumulative effects describes the effects arising from the addition of the Proposed Development to a cumulative baseline of operational, under construction and consented wind farms or other large-scale energy developments. This assessment will include supporting graphics such as cumulative ZTVs and cumulative wirelines.

The cumulative effects will be assessed as the ‘additional’ effects of the Proposed Development on top of the cumulative baseline (GLVIA, para 7.18). A ‘combined’

cumulative assessment considers the addition of all unbuilt schemes, including the Proposed Development, over and above the existing baseline.

Both 'additional' and 'combined' cumulative effects are considered; however, as the assessor has not assessed the other schemes and cannot therefore make a fully informed judgement on combined effects (LI TGN 2024/01 Clarification 7(3)). Therefore, those effects related to existing wind energy development and those under construction are considered as certain; effects related to development with planning consent are considered as likely. Wind energy development sites for which there is a submitted planning application are considered as uncertain.

Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) would apply a three 'tier' approach, which employs the following stages:

- Stage 1: the Proposed Development, in addition to the operational / under construction and consented developments;
- Stage 2: the Proposed Development, in addition to the operational / under construction / consented and application stage developments; and
- Stage 3: the Proposed Development, in addition to the operational / under construction / consented/ application stage developments and scoping stage developments.

"The aim of the cumulative assessment is to identify the magnitude of additional cumulative change which would be brought about by the Proposed Development when considered in conjunction with other wind farms." (NatureScot, 2021)
A range of parameters will be considered, including:

- the number of other wind farm projects which would be visible in the landscape in each of the different scenarios (existing, consented or application stage);
- the distance to each of the visible developments from the receptor location;
- the direction of each development in relation to the receptor;
- the extent of the view occupied by each development;
- the cumulative effect of development upon the fabric or key landscape components; and
- in the case of landscape character area, residential areas, and transportation/recreational routes: the proportion of the area or route subject to cumulative views.

7.5 Scope of Assessment

Effects Evaluation

The landscape assessment will be carried out in accordance with the GLVIA3.

The assessment will include the effects during construction, operation and decommissioning.

The LVIA will describe the predicted visibility of the Proposed Development within the 45km radius study area and assess the residual impacts arising from the optimised design on landscape and visual receptors.

The selection of receptors to include in the assessment will be based on the requirement for EIA to consider the likely significant effects. Effects that are not likely to be significant do not require assessment under the EIA Regulations.

The selection of receptors for assessment will be validated through baseline analysis, including field surveys.

Key issues to be considered in the LVIA include:

- Potential effects on the landscape character, both in the Rolling Upland Inverness (221), within which the Proposed Development would be situated, and the adjoining sensitive straths landscape types.
- The emergent pattern of wind farm developments in the vicinity of the Proposed Development and the capacity of the landscape to accommodate new developments.
- The potential effects on landscape designations including the CNP and Drynachan, Lochindorb and Dava Moors Special Landscape Area (SLA), and Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA;
- Potential effects of the Proposed Development on Wild Land characteristics of the Monadhliaths;
- Potential setting issues relating to heritage assets, which are tourism attractions including Culloden Battlefield;
- Possible effects on residents of nearby villages and properties; and
- Potential effects (including sequential cumulative effects) on key recreational receptors, including the Great Glen Way, Sustrans NCR 7, and key roads such as the A9, B851, and B862.

Design Iterations and Layout Optimisation

A key method of providing mitigation for the effects attributable to the Proposed Development on landscape and visual terms would be through the embedded mitigation in the layout design of the Proposed Development. The design and layout of the proposed turbines and associated infrastructure is a vital part of the EIA process and is the stage where the biggest contribution can be made to mitigate potential landscape and visual effects.

The design of the Proposed Development will evolve as part of an iterative process which aims to provide an optimal design in environmental, as well as technical and economic terms and the mitigation of landscape and visual effects will be a central consideration in this process.

The scoping wind farm layout at Figure 3.1 will be subject to further design reviews aiming to minimise landscape and visual impact.

Design analysis from the key design viewpoints will be based on amalgamated constraints. The design iteration process will be recorded and included in the LVIA.

The following wireline views have been produced and presented on A3 to illustrate the scoping layout with modeled turbines alongside its cumulative context:

- Figure 7.8 - Viewpoint 3 - Balnafoich to the south of B861, Strathnairn 5.2km NW;
- Figure 7.9 - Viewpoint 5 - A9, Daviot 7.8km North;
- Figure 7.10 - Viewpoint 11 - Culloden Visitor Centre 13.1km North;
- Figure 7.11 - Viewpoint 13 - Great Glen Way on the NE slope of Meall nah-Eilrig 16.5km West;
- Figure 7.12 - Viewpoint 16 – North Kessock Viewpoint 17km NW; and
- Figure 7.13 - Viewpoint 17 Great Glen Way north of Blackfold 17km NW.

Viewpoint Selection

The LVIA will undertake an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects from the Proposed Development through a consideration of the specific visual effects at a selection of representative viewpoints.

A preliminary viewpoint list is shown in Table 7-2 below. The locations of the viewpoints are shown on several baseline Figures, including Figures 7.1 to 7.3. The final list will be established through the scoping process and in agreement with THC

and NS. The selected viewpoints were also selected to represent landscape receptors and with consideration of the potential for cumulative effects to arise.

With regard to the viewpoints' selection, cognisance has been taken of the Farr and Glen Kyllachy Wind Farm LVIAs, as well as of the submitted LVIAs of the proposed Lynemore, Kyllachy and Clune wind farms. Also, the OWESG Table 5.2.1 Key Views and 5.2.2 Key Routes were reviewed. This is a general practice which aims to allow THC to compare the appearance of different proposals from key viewpoints.

The lists of representative viewpoints for the recent LVIAs include up to 21 viewpoints. On this basis, we seek to agree on an optimal number of viewpoints, which would cover the main sensitive receptors.

Table 7-2: Preliminary Representative Viewpoint Locations

ID	Viewpoint name	Approx Distance/ Direction from Farr Ex	Receptors represented
1.	A9, General Wades Road – Moy to Inverness	3.5km SW	LCT Rolling Upland Inverness (221) Road users (A9 tourism route)
2.	Glen Kyllachy	1.9km South	LCT Rolling Upland Inverness (221) Local road users
3.	B861 between Balnafoich and Inverarnie, Strathnairn	5.2km SE	LCT Farmed Strath Inverness (227) Residents and local road users of B86
4.	Sustrans NCR 7, Tomatin	5.3km SE	LCT Rolling Upland Inverness (221) Residents, road users and recreational users of Sustrans NCR 7
5.	A9, Daviot	7.4km North	LCT Farmed Strath Inverness (227) Road users (A9 tourism route)
6.	Carn a Choire Mhoir	9.2km SE	Drynachan, Lochindorb and Dava Moors SLA LCT Rolling Upland Inverness (221) Recreational users – hill walkers.
7.	B851, Croachy	6.1km SW	LCT Farmed Strath Inverness (227) Residents and local road users; Night-time lighting Assessment viewpoint
8.	Carn nan Tri-tighearnan	11.7km NE	Drynachan, Lochindorb and Dava Moors SLA LCT Open Rolling Upland (291) Recreational users – hill walkers
9.	General Wade's Military Road near Loch Ashie	10.6km NW	Loch ness and Duntelchaig SLA

			LCT Flat Moorland Plateau with Woodland (223) Local road users; Night-time lighting Assessment viewpoint
10	Carn na Lair, northern boundary of CNP	10.2km SE	Cairngorms NP LCT Rolling Uplands Cairngorms (125) Recreational users – hill walkers
11.	Culloden Visitor Centre	13.1km North	LCT Farmed Strath Inverness (227) Cultural Heritage Tourists/visitors
12.	Carn Dubh (Ic an Deoir)	10.6km SE	Monadhliath WLA LCT Rolling Upland Inverness (221) Recreational users – hill walkers
13.	Great Glen Way (on the NE slope of Meall nah-Eilrig)	16.5km West	Loch ness and Duntelchaig SLA LCT Rocky Moorland Plateau (222) Great Glen Way Recreational users – hill walkers
14.	B862 Ashie Moor, west of Loch Duntelchaig	11km West	Loch ness and Duntelchaig SLA LCT Farmed and Wooded Foothills (224) Local road users
15.	Leachkin, Inverness GGW	15.5km NW	Urban Inverness GGW Great Glen Way Recreational users of the GGW and local residents
16.	North Kessock East Pier Viewpoint	18km NW	LCT Farmed and Forested Slopes – Ross & Cromarty (345) Specific Viewpoint, Kessock settlement, also the A9 road users and recreational users of Sustrans NCR 7, as the VP is close to the Kessock Bridge
17.	Great Glen Way north of Blackfold CNP	16km NW	LCT Rocky Moorland plateau (222) Great Glen Way Recreational users – hill walkers
18.	Meall a' Bhuachaille CNP	29.3km SE	Cairngorms NP, NSA Recreational users – hill walkers
19	General Wade's Military Road, Slochd Summit	8.5km SE	LCT Rolling Upland Inverness (221) Recreational users, road users (A9 tourism route); Night-time lighting Assessment viewpoint

Viewpoint Visualisations

Visualisations and figures will be produced in accordance with:

- THC's standards as set out in 'Visualisation Standards for Wind Energy Developments' (THC, July 2016); and

- 'Visual Representation of Wind farms: Version 2.2' (SNH, February 2017).

We propose that each viewpoint visualisation should be presented as follows:

- A3 Viewpoint location map;
- 90˚ Baseline photograph (cylindrical projection) and 90˚ Wireline image (cylindrical projection) below. Wireline image shows the Proposed Development and cumulative developments in successive views (up to four x 90˚ sections presented in this format)
- 53.5˚ Wireline image (planar projection);
- 53.5˚ Photomontage (planar projection);
- 39.6˚ Photomontage, 50mm single frame image; and
- 27˚ Photomontage, 75mm single frame image.

In case THC would prefer and insist 65.5° (planar projection) images, then these will be produced instead of 53.5˚ images.

We propose a cumulative cut-off date of 12 weeks prior to the planned application submission for the potential change in the cumulative situation within the 20 km LVIA study area. For example, if Lynemore Wind Farm is to be consented, then the visualisations of the Proposed Development will not be reproduced in order to reflect this change in the status of the wind farm by changing the colour of turbines on the wirelines. However, the change of the planning status of the closest cumulative developments to the Proposed Development will have to be reflected in the revised assessment.

Cumulative Assessment

On reflecting on the spread of cumulative sites shown on all baseline figures, including Figure 7.1, the key landscape and visual receptors and theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development, it is considered that the most relevant cumulative effects will be those that may occur as a result of other wind energy development on or close to the Rolling Upland Inverness (221) LCT . Taking this into account, it is proposed that the detailed cumulative assessment is carried out for sites within a focused 20km study area.

The timing of the existing Farr Wind Farm decomissoning or repowering in 14 years' time and the significance of these impacts is proposed to be determined within the LVIA by an assessment of a cumulative scenario without the existing Farr Wind Farm and production of visualisations, which exclude the existing Farr Wind Farm. As the existing Farr consent will expire in 14 years, therefore effects with the existing

Farr can be considered temporary medium-term effects. Although the scenario with the potentially repowered Farr Wind Farm can be considered as too speculative at present, the potential effects attributable to the repowered Farr Wind Farm will be described under one of the 'future cumulative scenario.'

Cumulative sequential effects will be assessed in relation to the main routes, including the A9, the GGW and local road B51 when travelling along a route within the LVIA Study Area.

Night-time Lighting Assessment

The Night-time Lighting Assessment identifies the factors that impact on night-time vision, defines the existing night-time characteristics of the study area at times of lower natural light levels (i.e.at dusk, night and dawn periods); describes the key aviation lighting aspects of the Proposed Development as they relate to landscape and visual matters; describes the nature of the anticipated change upon the night time environment and visual receptors; and, assesses the magnitude and significance of the changes for the operational stage of the Proposed Development.

The assessment will be in line with the 'Guidance on Aviation Lighting Impact Assessment, which NS has published (2024).

The hub height ZTV will be used to identify where there would be a direct line of sight of the lights from the surrounding area.

In order to inform this assessment, photography will be taken from three of the readily accessible viewpoints at dusk and visualisations will be prepared to illustrate these effects of lighting on the selected views.

Nature Scot recognise that the illustration of technically accurate lighting proposals is difficult to achieve and that the photomontages rely on professional judgement and an 'artistic impression' due to the limitations in being able to model light intensity over distance in variable atmospheric conditions of light / darkness. There is no one simple visualisation technique that can capture the full effect.

The following three viewpoints are proposed for the night-time assessment:

- VP7 B851, Croachy;
- VP9 General Wade's Military Road near Loch Ashie; and
- VP 19 General Wade's Military Road, Slochd Summit.

Matters to be Scoped Out

The receptors scoped out of the assessment following initial desk-based review and site visit include:

- Designated Landscapes and Landscape Character Types with limited or no visibility; and
- Principal visual receptors with limited or no visibility.

Justification of the exclusion will be provided in the LVIA Baseline Analysis.

Due to the absence of residential properties within a 2 km radius of the proposed wind turbines, it is proposed to scope out RVAA as a standalone study in line with the Residential Visual Amenity Assessment Technical Guidance Note 02/2019 (LI, 2019). The scattered villages within 20 km radius of the Proposed Development would be assessed as part of the LVIA.

With regard to the cumulative assessment, we proposed to exclude all turbines less than 50m in height and all single or pair turbines beyond a 10 km radius of the Proposed Development.

Decommissioning effects of the wind farm would not generally be subject to a detailed assessment as the details of the decommissioning works are not known at this stage, although they would be included in the EIAR. The landscape and visual effects are considered to be similar in nature to construction effects.

7.6 Scoping Questions to Consultees

Consultation with stakeholders is an important part of the EIA process. Following a Pre-Application Advice Meeting, held between The Highland Council and the Applicant, on 30th April 2026, verbal comments made by THC have helped inform this Scoping Report and will be considered in the LVIA. It would be helpful if THC would address the following questions:

- Do the THC and Consultees agree with the proposed general methodology/ approach and scope of the LVIA (including cumulative and Night time Lighting Assessment), including proposed omissions/matters to be scoped out?
- Are the THC and Consultees content with the proposed 20km detailed LVIA study area?

- Are there any comments or suggestions in relation to the Preliminary Representative Viewpoint Locations shown in Table 7.2, Figure 7.1?
- Are there any comments or suggestions in relation to the proposed Viewpoint Locations for night-time assessments?
- Do you agree with OWESG that in relation to the Rolling uplands LCT the remaining capacity for wind farm development should be focused around existing clusters?
- Do you agree with the Pilot Study that the Strath in Rolling Uplands is a more sensitive landscape unit than the Rolling Uplands of Inverness LCT, where the Proposed Development is located?
- Are there any further consultees, apart from THC and NS that should be consulted on LVIA matters?
- Are there any specific cumulative development(s) in planning which need to be considered as part of the cumulative assessment?

8. ORNITHOLOGY

8.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential ornithological impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning.

The Proposed Development is made up of two land parcels. The larger 'northern parcel' holds all the proposed infrastructure, including tracks, borrow pits, areas of hardstanding, and the 10-turbine layout. The smaller 'southern parcel' has been set aside for habitat enhancement; no infrastructure is proposed for this area, and no human or vehicular presence relating to the Proposed Development is expected to take place here. Full details are set out in Sections 2 and 3 of this Scoping Report. An scoping layout is provided as Figure 3-1.

As such, for the purpose of this section of the Scoping Report, the Site boundary of the northern parcel is referred as the 'core area' of the Proposed Development. All ornithological study, baseline and assessment presented below refer to this core area only.

Meanwhile, the Site boundary of the southern parcel is not discussed further. This is because no changes or activities are proposed for this area, so no effects are predicted, and no ornithological study, baseline or assessment are required.

8.2 Study Area

The Ornithology Study Area is made up of the following six desk study and field survey search areas (Figures 8.1 Desk Study Search for Designated Sites for Ornithology, 8.2 VP Survey Area and 8.3 Walkover Survey Areas):

- Desk study search area: 20km buffer of the core area of the Proposed Development, for a search for statutory designated sites of ornithological importance (Figure 8.1).
- VP survey area: Five vantage point (VP) viewsheds covering the proposed 10-turbine layout with a 500m buffer of each turbine (Figure 8.2).
- Breeding eagle survey area: 6km buffer of the core area of the Proposed Development (Figure 8.3).

- Breeding raptor survey area: 2km buffer of the core area of the Proposed Development (Figure 8.3).
- Black grouse lek survey: 1.5km buffer of the core area of the Proposed Development (Figure 8.3).
- Moorland breeding bird survey (MBBS): 500m buffer of the core area of the Proposed Development (Figure 8.3).

Desk Study Search for Designated Sites for Ornithology

The Ornithology Study Area includes a desk study search area for statutory designated sites of ornithological importance within 20km of the core area of the Proposed Development[8] (Figure 8.1). This search area was based on standard NatureScot guidance[9] which gives 20km as the largest foraging distance among a range of bird species frequently encountered when considering onshore plans or projects. By searching for designated sites of ornithological importance within 20km, any connectivity between the Proposed Development core area, and designated sites, via the qualifying species, can be identified.

VP Survey

The Ornithology Study Area also includes the VP survey area. The VP survey area and methods were based on standard NatureScot guidance[10]. A 500m buffer was applied to each turbine in the proposed 10-turbine layout. A convex hull, which is a polygon formed around the outermost turbine buffers, was then added. Using Geographical Information Systems (GIS), viewshed analysis generated five VPs to provide viewshed coverage of the convex hull (Figure 8.2). The parameters used for the five viewsheds were as follows: the scanning arc was 180°, the lateral extent was 2km, the height of the seated observer height was set to 1m, and the lower extent of the visible airspace was set to 20m (the minimum possible distance between the ground and the lowest sweep of the proposed turbine blades).

[8] https://sitelink.nature.scot/home
[9] NatureScot. 2016. Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) Guidance. Version 3.
[10] NatureScot. 2025. Recommended Bird Survey Methods to Inform Impact Assessment of Onshore Wind Farms.

Walkover Survey Areas

Finally, the Ornithology Study Area includes four walkover survey areas to record breeding eagles, breeding raptors, black grouse leks, and moorland breeding birds (Figure 8.3). These survey areas and methods were all based on established and recommended guidance[11],[12],[13],[14]. The survey area and methods for the breeding eagle survey were discussed with NatureScot in a consultation meeting on 28 October 2025.

8.3 Baseline Environment

The Ornithology baseline at the Proposed Development will be established through a combination of desk study and two years of field survey. The desk study will follow two lines of enquiry: a search for designated sites of ornithological importance within a 20km search area, and ornithological datasets to be purchased from third party organisations (such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Highland Raptor Study Group (HRSG)).

Desk Study Search for Designated Sites for Ornithology

All designated sites within a 20km buffer of the core area of the Proposed Development were checked for their ornithological importance 1. Sites comprised: Qualifying Features of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Interest Features of Ramsar wetland sites, or Notified Natural Features of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Ultimately, seven sites were identified (Table 8.1, Figure 8.4 Desk Study Search for Designated Sites for Ornithology).

[11] Hardey, J., Crick, H., Wernham, C., Riley, H., Etheridge, B. and Thompson, D. 2013. Raptors: A Field Guide for Surveys and Monitoring. 3rd Edition. Edinburgh: The Stationery Office.

[12] Gilbert, G., Gibbons, D. W. and Evans J. 1998. Bird Monitoring Methods: A Manual of Techniques for UK Species. RSPB. Sandy, Bedfordshire.

[13] Brown, A. F. and Shepherd, K. B., 1993. A method for censusing upland breeding waders. Bird Study. Volume 40: 189-195.

[14] Calladine, J., Garner, G., Wernham, C. and Thiel, A., 2009. The influence of survey frequency on population estimates of moorland breeding birds. Bird Study. Volume 56: 381-388.

Table 8-1: Sites Designated for Ornithological Importance within 20km of the core area of the Proposed Development

Site name	Designation(s)	Distance from core area of Proposed Development	Habitat summary and designated ornithological importance
Loch Ruthven	SPA, Ramsar and SSSI	6.9km	A freshwater loch designated for the Annex I species breeding **Slavonian grebe**, also its **breeding bird assemblage**.
Loch Ashie	SPA and SSSI	8.9km	A freshwater loch designated for the Annex I species **Slavonian grebe** during the autumn moult.
Kinveachy Forest	SSSI SPA	11.3km 12.2km	A Caledonian pine forest designated for the Annex I species **capercaillie** and **Scottish crossbill**.
Inner Moray Firth	SPA and Ramsar	14.4km	An estuarine habitat designated for the Annex I species: breeding **osprey**, **common tern** and **bar-tailed godwit**; the migratory species: **greylag goose**, **red-breasted merganser** and **redshank**; and its **excess of 20,000 wintering waterfowl**.
Longman and Caste Stuart Bays	SSSI	14.4km	An estuarine habitat designated for wintering **cormorant**, **goldeneye**, **red-breasted merganser**, **redshank** and **wigeon**.
Moray Firth	SPA	15.1km	A coastal marine area designated for the Annex I species: breeding **great northern diver**, **red-throated diver** and **Slavonian grebe**; and the migratory species **greater scaup**, **common eider**, **long-tailed duck**, **common scoter**, **velvet scoter**, **goldeneye**, **red-breaster merganser** and **shag**.
Beauly Firth	SSSI	16.8km	An estuarine habitat designated for **goosander**, **greylag goose** and **red-breasted merganser**.

Desk Study Third Party Datasets

In March 2025, the RSPB and the HRSG were contacted to request bird data for the area around the core area of the Proposed Development, recorded within the last 10 years. The RSPB was asked for all bird records within 2km of the Proposed Development, and the HRSG was asked for all raptor records within 10km. The RSPB returned no bird records, while the HRSG replied that they must decline due to

concern for raptor persecution in the area. As such, no third party datasets were acquired.

Field Surveys

Five types of field survey are currently being carried out over two years from September 2024 to August 2026. To date, field surveys have been completed and processed up to and including March 2026. This provides 19 months of data out of an eventual 24 months to inform the ornithological baseline environment at this Scoping stage. Results show that 15 target species have been recorded during field surveys so far (Table 8-2). Target species are: geese, swans, wildfowl, waders, divers, and raptors listed on Annex I of the Birds Directive, Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and/or the Red List of the Birds of Conservation Concern[15]; and black grouse. To date, field surveys have revealed that the six species: golden plover, curlew, dunlin, golden eagle, red kite and white-tailed eagle, are the most at risk of effects from the Proposed Development, as they occur in the greatest numbers/have the greatest activity.

Table 8-2 Field Survey Results September 2024 to April 2026

Target species (conservation listing[16], [17])	Field survey	Results summary
Pink-footed goose	VP	2 records peak count of 10 birds Sep 2024 and Oct 2025
	MBBS	1 record peak count of 4 birds
Whooper swan (Annex I, Schedule 1)	VP	1 record peak count of 43 birds Mar 2026
Golden plover (Annex I)	VP	5 records peak count of 2 birds Apr and Aug 2025, Jan and Mar 2026
	Breeding raptor	8 records peak count of 2 birds

[15] Stanbury, A. J., Eaton, M. A., Aebischer, N. J., Balmer, D., Brown, A. F., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D. G. and Win, I. 2021. Birds of Conservation Concern 5. British Birds Volume 114: 723-747.

[16] Schedule 1A birds receive an extra level of protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), whereby it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly harass these species year-round.

[17] Schedule A1 birds receive an extra level of protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), whereby it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly take, damage, destroy, or otherwise interfere with any nest habitually used by these species.

Target species (conservation listing[16], [17])	Field survey	Results summary
	MBBS	12 records
Curlew (BoCC Red List)	MBBS	6 records
Dunlin (BoCC Red List)	MBBS	6 records
Woodcock (BoCC Red List)	MBBS	1 record
Herring gull (BoCC Red List)	VP	1 record peak count of 8 birds Mar 2026
Osprey (Annex I, Schedule 1)	VP	2 records peak count of 1 bird Sep and Oct 2024
Golden eagle (Annex I, Schedule 1A, A1)	VP	19 records peak count of 2 birds recorded in most months
	Breeding eagle	22 records Several records of male-female display/synchronised flights adult, sub-adult and immatures recorded recorded in most months
Goshawk (Schedule 1)	Breeding eagle	4 records Displaying pair recorded in 2025 and 2026 breeding seasons
Hen harrier (Annex I, Schedule 1A, BoCC Red List)	VP	1 record peak count of 1 bird Aug 2025
Red kite (Annex I, Schedule 1A)	VP	155 records peak count of 13 birds recorded in most months
	Breeding eagle	1 record 1 bird Apr 2025
	Breeding raptor	3 records Peak count of 2 birds All recorded in May 2025
	MBBS	3 records peak count of 1 bird
White-tailed eagle (Schedule 1A, A1)	VP	16 records peak count of 1 bird Mar, Apr, May, Jun and Aug 2025
	Breeding eagle	10 records peak count of 1 bird adult and immature recorded
Merlin (Annex I, Schedule 1, BoCC Red List)	VP	4 records peak count of 1 bird Apr, May and Jul 2025
	Breeding eagle	1 record 3 birds Recorded in 2025 only
Peregrine (Annex I, Schedule 1)	Breeding eagle	2 records 1 bird

Target species (conservation listing [16], [17])	Field survey	Results summary
		Jul 2025 and Mar 2026

8.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

The Ornithology Chapter of the EIAR will follow the methodology set out in Section 5 of this Scoping Report.

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the Birds Directive).
- Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (the Habitats Directive).
- Environmental Impact Assessment Directive 2014/52/EU.
- European Commission (2010) Natura 2000 Guidance Document 'Wind Energy Developments and Natura 2000'. European Commission, Brussels.
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended).
- Policy Advice Note PAN 1/2013 – Environmental Impact Assessment (Scottish Government 2013).
- Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland, Version 1.3. 2024. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.
- NatureScot. 2016. Environmental Statements and Annexes of Environmentally Sensitive Bird Information. Guidance for Developers, Consultants and Consultees. Version 2.
- NatureScot. 2016. Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Version 3.
- NatureScot 2025. Guidance Note – Assessing the significance of impacts on bird populations from onshore wind farms that do not affect protected areas.
- NatureScot. 2022. Disturbance distances in selected Scottish bird species – NatureScot Guidance.
- NatureScot. 2024. Guidance on using an updated collision risk model to assess bird collision risk at onshore wind farms (with update 16 April 2025).
- NatureScot. 2025. Identifying Natural Heritage Issues of National Interest in Development Proposals.
- NatureScot. 2025. Recommended Bird Survey Methods to Inform Impact Assessment of Onshore Wind Farms.

- Stanbury, A. J., Eaton, M. A., Aebischer, N. J., Balmer, D., Brown, A. F., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D. G. and Win, I. 2021. Birds of Conservation Concern 5. British Birds Volume 114.

Assessment of Effects

The ornithological assessment of effects will follow Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidance[18] CIEEM guidance no longer recommends use of a matrix approach in EIA. Rather, the significance of effects will be identified in consideration of the magnitude of impact and the sensitivity/value of receptor. The outcome will be either significant or not significant.

The assessment will consider effects during construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning phases. Further, each assessment will consider the potential for cumulative effects.

An all-encompassing list of cumulative plans or projects is provided in Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report. This list was scrutinised to identify which plans or projects should be brought forward to inform the ornithological Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) of the Proposed Development. The parameter used to define the list brought forward was drawn from the ornithological baseline environment. The baseline revealed that golden eagle, red kite and white-tailed eagle were the species most at risk of effects from the Proposed Development. Of these three species, white-tailed eagle has the greatest maximum foraging range of 13km from the nest site during the breeding season[19]. Therefore, the list brought forward to inform the ornithological CEA comprises all plans or projects within 13km of the Proposed Development. This distance will capture all plans or projects that the white-tailed eagles (and golden eagles and red kites) recorded at the Proposed Development may encounter. The following 13 plans or projects will inform the ornithological CEA:

- Farr Wind Farm
- Glen Kyllachy Wind Farm
- Aberarder Wind Farm
- Moy Wind Farm
- Tom nan Clach Wind Farm
- Dunmaglass Wind Farm

[18] CIEEM. 2024. Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland. Version 1.3.
[19] NatureScot. 2016. Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) Guidance. Version 3.

- Tom nan Clach Extension
- Lynemore Wind Farm
- Kyllachy Wind Farm
- Clune Wind Farm
- Highland Wind Farm
- Balnespick Wind Farm
- Glenkirk Wind Farm

8.5 Scope of Assessment

The proposed scope of assessment based on preliminary findings and relevant project experience is as follows:

- Potential collision risk impact to golden eagle, red kite and white-tailed eagle during operation and maintenance.
- Potential barrier effect impact to golden eagle, red kite and white-tailed eagle during operation and maintenance.
- Potential habitat loss impact to golden plover, curlew, dunlin, golden eagle, red kite and white-tailed eagle during operation and maintenance.
- Disturbance/displacement impact to golden plover, curlew, dunlin, golden eagle and white-tailed eagle during construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning.

Matters to be Scoped Out

All seven designated sites of ornithological importance identified as part of the baseline environment can be scoped out of the assessment. This is because there is unlikely to be connectivity between the Proposed Development and the designated sites via their ornithological importance, due to lack of suitable habitat at the Proposed Development. Specifically, the ornithological features require aquatic habitat (freshwater loch, estuarine or marine) or pine forest habitat, yet the Proposed Development is made up of entirely open country moorland and grassland habitat.

All target species other than golden eagle, red kite and white-tailed eagle can likely be scoped out of the assessment due to occurring in low numbers, as shown in the baseline environment established so far. If, during the final breeding season months of field surveys still to be carried out (April to August 2026), other target species are found to be breeding within potential disturbance distance from the Proposed

Development, or high levels of flight activity are recorded, then these species will be scoped into the assessment.

8.6 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree that the data sources are sufficient to inform a robust assessment of potential effects of the Proposed Development on Ornithology? for the assessment of Ornithology?
- Do you agree with the designated sites and species that are proposed to be scoped out?
- Do you agree with the proposed assessment methodology for Ornithology?
- Do you agree with the proposed list of 13 plans or projects to be scoped into the ornithological CEA?

9. ECOLOGY

9.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential ecological impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation and maintenance and during decommissioning. The Ecology Study Areas have been defined to help identify the ecological features that require consideration within the EIAR and may be subject to significant effects.

9.2 Ecology Study Area

The Ecology Study Areas have been separated into three Zones of Influence (ZoI) in relation to the potential sensitivity of the associated receptors on the basis of established guidance:

- European level designated sites (20km): Includes Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated for otters;
- European level designated sites and national designated sites (10km): Includes RAMSAR sites and SACs designated for other ecological interests i.e. freshwater fish and habitats and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated for bats;
- National and local level designated sites (2km): Includes SSSIs not designated for bats, Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and ancient woodland.

9.3 Baseline Environment

Designated Sites

The Site is not located within a statutory designated site for nature conservation. Within the wider 20km ZoI eleven European level designated sites were identified, six of which had features relevant to ecology[20] . These include three SACs which are designated for otter (Lutra lutra), either as a sole or qualifying feature in combination

[20] NatureScot (2026). NatureScot: SiteLink. Available at: https://sitelink.nature.scot/home (Accessed May 2026).

with other interests. The closest of these sites was Loch Ruthven SAC (7.20km), designated for otter and clear-water lochs with aquatic vegetation. Several discrete Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI)[21] parcels were identified within the 2km ZoI, with the nearest located approximately 1.86km from the Proposed Development.

Details of the Designated Sites within the relevant Ecology Study Areas are detailed below in Table 9-1 and shown in Figure 9.1.

Table 9-1: Designated Sites with Non Avian Ecology and Habitat Features within the Ecology Study Area

Designated Site Name	Designated Site Type	Features	Distance from Ecology Study Area (km)
Statutory Sites			
Loch Ruthven	Ramsar	Bog orchid (*Hammarbya paludosa*)	6.3
Loch Ruthven	SAC	Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels	6.3
Slochd	SAC	Dry heaths	6.8
Carn nan Tri-tighearnan	SAC	Blanket bog	5.3
River Spey	SAC	Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), Freshwater pearl mussel (Margaritifera margaritifera), Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)	11.0
Ness Woods	SAC	Otter (*Lutra lutra*), mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes	16.7
Non Statutory Sites			
Sixty-one areas of Ancient Woodland inventory within 2km, the closest being Farnack Wood and another unnamed woodland.	AWI	Ancient Woodland Inventory (Long-Established (of plantation origin)	0.0

[21] Scottish Government, n.d. Scotland's Environment Web Map. Available at: map.environment.gov.scot (Accessed May 2026).

Terrestrial Habitats and Flora (including Freshwater)

The Site comprises upland habitats typical of the Monadhliath uplands, including blanket mire, wet heath and dry heath communities. These habitats are underlain by areas of deep peat and may support Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTEs). Peat is widespread across the Site and represents a key ecological and environmental constraint.

The surrounding landscape includes extensive areas of peatland restoration, with restored areas located both within and adjacent to the Site boundary. These restored areas represent previously modified peatland habitats now undergoing recovery and therefore form an important component of the ecological baseline. The presence of restored peatland indicates both sensitivity to disturbance and opportunities for ecological enhancement in the wider area.

The Proposed Development lies within the upper catchment of the Uisge Dubh and is intersected by a network of small headwaters within the Site boundary. These include sections of the Caochan na Caillich, Caochan na Cloiche Glaise, Caochan na Buidheig and Caochan nam Breac, in addition to a series of unnamed minor tributaries. Caochan nam Breac forms a more discrete tributary which drains westwards to the Uisge Dubh. All watercourses within the Proposed Development feed into the wider River Farnack catchment.

Fauna

Based on available information, including existing data from Farr Wind Farm and nearby developments, the potential for significant constraints from protected species is currently considered to be largely constrained to bats, otter and water vole within the northern parcel. The access track is largely within coniferous plantation and as such there is potential for badgers, pine marten and red squirrel to be present. However, this will be confirmed through ongoing survey work.

9.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Specific to the Ecology EIA Chapter, the following key pieces of legislation and policy will be taken into consideration:

- Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended);

- Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (WANE);
- Electricity Act 1989;
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (EU Exit) (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 2019;
- Directive 92/43/EEC on Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) ('Habitats Directive');
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA);
- The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) (NCA);
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended);
- Environmental Impact Assessment Directive 2014/52/EU;
- Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017;
- Highland Nature Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026;
- Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP);
- Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP) 2015;
- Scottish Government (2022) Onshore Wind Policy Statement;
- The Water Environment (Miscellaneous) (Scotland) Regulations 2017;
- Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 (as amended; and
- The Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4).

Assessment will include both a desk-top search and field surveys. The following sources will be consulted during the desk-based assessment.

- NatureScot SiteLink[22] : To identify designated sites within 20km of the Site;
- Scotland's Environment Web to identify Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) sites[23] ;
- Aerial Imagery;
- Local Biological Records Centre: To obtain records of protected and notable species within 2km (all species) and 10km (bats only) of the Site;
- Council and Energy Consents Unit (ECU) planning portals: To obtain relevant EIARs or technical (including monitoring) reports from other developments or proposed developments in the local area;

Field surveys will follow standard methodology for onshore wind farms, such as:

[22] NatureScot (2026). NatureScot: SiteLink. Available at: https://sitelink.nature.scot/home (Accessed May 2026).

[23] Scottish Government, n.d. Scotland's Environment Web Map. Available at: map.environment.gov.scot (Accessed May 2026).

- Planning and Development: Standing Advice and Guidance Documents;
- Guidance on Assessing the Impacts of Developments on Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems; and
- Bats and onshore wind turbines - survey, assessment and mitigation.

9.5 Assessment of Effects

The following guidance documents will be used when undertaking the ecological impact assessment:

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment[24];
- NatureScot pre-application guidance for onshore wind farms[25];
- Advising on Peatland, Carbon-rich Soils and Priority Peatland Habitats in Development Management[26];
- Good Practice during Wind Farm Construction[27];
- Monitoring watercourses in relation to onshore wind farm developments: generic monitoring programme[28];
- Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL)[29]; and
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)[30].

Having defined the relevant baseline conditions within the ZoI of the Ecology Scoping Areas, ecological features therein will be valued, before commencing the assessment of potential effects.

[24] CIEEM (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment. Available at: https://cieem.net/resource/guidelines-for-ecological-impact-assessment-ecia/

[25] NatureScot (2025). NatureScot pre-application guidance for onshore wind farms. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/doc/naturescot-pre-application-guidance-onshore-wind-farms

[26] NatureScot (2026). Advising on peatland habitats and carbon-rich soils in development management. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/doc/advising-peatland-habitats-and-carbon-rich-soils-development-management

[27] NatureScot (2024). Good Practice During Wind Farm Construction. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/doc/good-practice-during-wind-farm-construction

[28] Scottish Government (2021). Monitoring watercourses in relation to onshore wind farm developments: generic monitoring programme. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/monitoring-watercourses-in-relation-to-onshore-wind-farm-developments-generic-monitoring-programme/

[29] NatureScot (2026). Scottish Biodiversity List. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/scotlands-biodiversity/scottish-biodiversity-strategy/scottish-biodiversity-list

[30] UK Government (1994). Biodiversity: the UK Action Plan.

The methodology used to value ecological features will take cognisance of the relevant principles underpinning impact assessment under the CIEEM guidelines. The term 'Important Ecological Features' (IEFs) will be used for those species and habitats identified in the assessment. For each impact with the potential to affect the relevant IEFs, the assessment will consider the following parameters:

- The value and importance of the IEF considering its national and regional conservation status;
- The extent of the impact and whether this is positive or negative in its influence;
- The magnitude, duration, and timing of the impact; and
- The impact's frequency and ease of reversibility.

The assessment will similarly include consideration of any proposed mitigation to avoid or minimise the effect of any potential impact to the relevant IEFs. The CIEEM guidelines also require the identification of potential cumulative impacts from other developments, be this negligible, minor, moderate or major. Effects can be either adverse or beneficial.

The impact assessment process, as described by CIEEM (2018), will involve:

- identifying and characterising impacts and their likely significant effects;
- incorporating measures to avoid and mitigate negative impacts and effects;
- assessing the significance of any residual effects after mitigation;
- identifying appropriate compensation measures to offset significant residual effects; and
- identifying opportunities for ecological enhancement.

The assessment comprises the review of the baseline data gathered and the identification of IEFs with features valued on the basis of available information/ guidance and using professional ecological judgement.

Effects will be assessed during the construction, operation and maintenance, and the decommissioning phases.

Cumulative effects will also be assessed. An all-encompassing list of cumulative developments within 20km is provided in Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report. Of these projects, those developments considered relevant to the ecological cumulative assessment of the Proposed Development are detailed below in Table 9-2:

Table 9-2: Projects Relevant to the Ecological Cumulative Assessment of the Proposed Development

Status	Name	Application Reference	Blade Tip Height	Proximity to Proposed Development
Operational and/or Under Construction	Farr	20/03263/S36 - Variation	102m and 40 turbines	0km
	Glen Kyllachy	13/01441/Ful	110m and 20 turbines	0km
In Planning	Lynemore Wind Farm	25/01748/S36	200m blade tip	0km north
	Kyllachy Wind Farm	25/03511/S36	180m blade tip	0km south east
	Clune Wind Farm	25/00847/S36	200m blade tip	6km south east
	Highland Wind Farm	25/01355/S36	200m blade tip	6km south
	Balnespick Wind Farm	25/00629/S36	200m blade tip	10km east
Scoping	Glenkirk Wind Farm	25/04677/SCOP	230m blade tip	6km north east

The cumulative assessment will be structured to reflect the landscape context of the project and protected species reliant on habitats with functional connectivity to the Site.

The Proposed Development has a total of four wind farm developments within 1km of the northern parcel that share direct surface water connectivity. These projects are scoped in to assess additional hydrological drawdown, fragmentation of blanket bog/GWDTE habitats and cumulative impacts on water quality within the shared upland catchment. Similarly for protected species including, but not only otter and water vole, these four wind farms will be assessed for their cumulative impacts on relevant IEFs.

For bats, in accordance with NatureScot guidance, all operational, consented and application-stage wind developments within a 10km radius of the Site will be scoped in to assess regional cumulative collision and barotrauma risk.

9.6 Scope of Assessment

Designated Sites

All statutory and non-statutory nature conservation designations will be identified through desk study, and their qualifying interests will be considered in the

assessment. Potential effects on designated sites and their qualifying features, as well as protected species and habitats within the wider environs, will be evaluated.

Habitats

Baseline ecological information will be established through a combination of desk study and targeted field surveys and data analysis proposed in 2026. Habitat surveys of the Site plus a 250 m buffer will be presented in the EIA, including UKHab classification and National Vegetation Classification (NVC) mapping where required. This will inform the assessment of GWDTE. These surveys will be updated where necessary to inform the EIA, with detailed target notes used to identify features of ecological importance.

Areas of ancient woodland will be included. Access to the northern parcel runs through parcels of ancient woodland. Although this is an existing track, limited vegetation or land clearance may be required to accommodate oversail associated with Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) vehicles with potential for direct impacts. Indirect impacts may include dust-drift, however in line with IAQM guidance, potential dust effects will be considered for ecological receptors within 50m of the Proposed Development only. Beyond these distances, dust effects are generally not considered significant due to rapid attenuation with distance.

In recognition of the extent of peatland within the Site and its importance as a carbon store and ecological resource, a peatland restoration feasibility study will be undertaken. This will build on the existing habitat survey, including NVC and GWDTE assessment, to identify areas of degraded peatland and evaluate opportunities for restoration and enhancement. The feasibility study will inform the outline Habitat Management Plan (oHMP) and will consider measures such as drain blocking, reprofiling and revegetation, taking account of existing site conditions, hydrology and peat stability constraints.

Protected and Notable Species

Baseline information available from previous survey work undertaken in the surrounding area including for the Kyllachy Wind Farm (Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc, 2019) has been reviewed to inform the list of expected target species. Due to the difference in habitats encountered on the northern parcel versus the proposed access track, these have presented separately.

When considered alongside a review of habitat suitability within the Site, the following species are scoped into assessment for the northern parcel to inform an assessment of potential disturbance and habitat impacts:

- Bats will be scoped into assessment. Bat activity surveys were undertaken in line with NatureScot guidance[31] between May and September 2025 and are considered sufficiently robust to inform the baseline; however, additional analysis and reporting will be completed as required. The need for any further bat survey effort, such as activity or roost surveys, will be informed by the findings of site surveys and habitat suitability assessment, to be undertaken as per best practice bat survey guidelines[32].
- Otter (Lutra lutra) is known to be present within the wider area, with evidence including spraints and footprints recorded along watercourses including the Caochan Breac and Allt Chaillich during previous surveys. Suitable habitat is present within the Site, including the Uisge Dubh and associated tributaries, and therefore otter will be scoped into the assessment. Targeted surveys within 220 m of the Site boundary will be undertaken to identify holts, couches and resting places.
- Water vole (Arvicola amphibius) has been recorded within the wider area, with burrows and latrines observed along local watercourses during the Kyllachy Wind Farm surveys in 2011. Suitable habitat is present within the Site and water vole will be scoped into the assessment. Surveys will be undertaken within 100m to confirm presence/absence. If presence is confirmed during the first survey visit, then a second visit will not be undertaken to confirm likely presence/absence. Should the initial walkover not prove sufficient to prove likely presence/absence then a second survey will be undertaken in line with current guidance[33].
- Due to the presence of extensive watercourses across the Proposed Development Site, fish population and aquatic invertebrate surveys will be undertaken at watercourses within 100m of the proposed turbines and infrastructure, with survey extents extended beyond this where appropriate, depending on the potential for downstream or indirect effects associated with the Proposed Development.

[31] NatureScot (2021). Bats and onshore wind turbines – survey, assessment and mitigation. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/doc/bats-and-onshore-wind-turbines-survey-assessment-and-mitigation

[32] Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-978-7395126-0-6.

[33] Dean, M., Strachan, R., Gow, D., and Andrews, R., (2016). The Water Vole Mitigation handbook (The Mammal Society Mitigation Guidance Series). Eds Fiona Mathews and Paul Chanin. The Mammal Society, London.

- Reptiles are considered likely to be present within suitable habitats across the Site. However, in line with standard practice[34] for upland wind farm developments, potential impacts will be addressed through the implementation of best practice construction measures[35], including sensitive vegetation clearance. Reptiles are therefore not anticipated to represent a significant constraint to the Proposed Development and will not be subject to detailed survey.

The access track to the north runs largely through conifer plantation and as such there is potential for further species to be present here. As such, in addition to the above species the following species will also be scoped into assessment:

- Species associated with woodland and scrub, including badger (Meles meles) pine marten (Martes martes), red squirrel (Sciurus vulgaris) and wildcat (Felis silvestris), have potential to be present in habitats adjacent to the access track area due to the presence of woodland and adjoining open habitat. The potential for effects along access routes and within adjacent plantation woodland will be considered where relevant. It is noted that a Wildcat Priority Area lies to the east within Strathspey, although this does not overlap with the Site.
- Deer will be considered within the assessment in accordance with current guidance for upland developments[36],[37]. Red deer (Cervus elaphus) are known to be present within the Proposed Development area and the surrounding landscape. Potential impacts of the Proposed Development on deer welfare, habitats, road safety and other interests, including nearby designated sites, will be considered as part of the assessment.
- In addition, mountain hare (Lepus timidus) will be scoped into the assessment due to the presence of suitable upland heath and peatland habitats. A proportionate, habitat-based assessment will consider the potential for effects on mountain hare, including disturbance during construction and changes in habitat condition associated with the Proposed Development.

[34] NatureScot (2024). Good practice during wind farm construction. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/doc/good-practice-during-wind-farm-construction (Accessed 18 May 2026).

[35] NatureScot (2024). Standing advice for protected species: reptiles. NatureScot. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/doc/standing-advice-planning-consultations-reptiles-adder-slow-worm-common-lizard (Accessed 18 May 2026).

[36] NatureScot (2020). General pre-application and scoping advice for onshore wind farms. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2020-10/General%20pre-application%20and%20scoping%20advice%20for%20onshore%20wind%20farms.pdf (Accessed: 22 May 2026).

[37] NatureScot (2016). What to consider and include in deer assessment and management at development sites. Inverness: NatureScot. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/doc/what-consider-and-include-deer-assessment-and-management-development-sites (Accessed:17 May 2026).

Matters to be Scoped Out

Based on current baseline understanding and professional judgement, the following matters are proposed to be scoped out of detailed assessment:

- Beaver (Castor fibre): The Site is located outside of the understood distribution of beavers in Scotland, and therefore this species is not expected to be present.
- Great crested newt (Triturus cristatus) (GCN) due to the Site being outwith the known distribution of this species.
- Common, widespread and/ or low conservation value species and habitats: This includes species not included in any statutory or non-statutory lists of species of conservation concern (e.g., species not included in the Scottish Biodiversity List, not identified on the relevant local biodiversity action plans).
- Habitats outwith the Site and 250m survey area: Given their distance away from the Proposed Development, it is considered unlikely that the Proposed Development will result in direct or indirect impacts on such habitats, although a full assessment will be undertaken during the EIA and some habitats may be included (e.g., watercourses more than 300m downstream of the Site with a direct fluvial connection).
- Freshwater pearl mussel (Margaritifera margaritifera): Given the high altitude of the Site, this species is scoped out of detailed assessment. The headwater watercourses within and downstream of the Site are not considered suitable to support freshwater pearl mussel populations, and no direct or indirect impacts on known or potential freshwater pearl mussel interests are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development. Should fisheries surveys identify conditions that indicate a plausible risk pathway to downstream freshwater pearl mussels or the presence of this species, freshwater pearl mussel will be scoped back into the assessment at the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) stage.
- Marine features: Although the Ecology Study Area encompasses marine habitats and designated marine sites, these will be scoped out of the ecology assessment and considered within the relevant marine chapter.

Potentially Significant Effects

A range of potential impacts on Ecology have been identified which may occur during the construction, and operation and maintenance of the Proposed Development.

The impacts that have been scoped into the assessment are outlined Table 9-3 (below) together with justification, a description of any additional data collection

(e.g. site-specific surveys) and supporting analyses (e.g. modelling) that will be required to enable a full assessment of the impacts.

Table 9-3: Impacts Proposed To Be Scoped In (✓) / out (x) of the Project Assessment for Ecology

Potential Effect and receptor	Project Phase* C	O	D	Justification	Data collection and analysis required to characterise the baseline environment	Summary of the proposed approach to assessment
Habitat loss, deterioration and fragmentation (including peatland and GWDTE)	✓		✓	Construction and decommissioning activities may result in permanent and temporary loss, degradation and fragmentation of habitats, including peatland and habitats supporting GWDTE. There is also potential for indirect effects through hydrological change.	Assessment of habitat survey data within the Site boundary and the 250m buffer. Analysis will include calculations to identify which habitats are subject to loss / change. Data in relation to peatland restoration undertaken within the Site will be obtained.	Mapped terrestrial habitats will be digitised, and these files will be used in conjunction with the Proposed Development layout design which will allow for calculations to be undertaken. These calculations will identify the total area of terrestrial habitats subject to loss or change, with the sensitivity of each habitat subject to change being taken into consideration.
		X		No potential for operation & maintenance activities to result in terrestrial habitat loss or fragmentation. Activities associated with the operation and maintenance of the Development are unlikely to result in the loss of habitat due to the infrequent occurrence and limited extent of such activities.	N/A	N/A
Temporary and permanent deterioration, loss and/ or fragmentation of qualifying features associated with designated sites	✓		✓	There is potential for both temporary and permanent deterioration of habitats associated with designated sites. This is due largely to pollution from construction works in the form of things like dust drift and hydrocarbon spills.	A desk study identifying designated sites, their distances and qualifying features in regard to terrestrial biodiversity will be undertaken. Potential impacts from the Proposed Development will be identified which may impact habitats.	Potential impacts on terrestrial habitats associated with designated sites due to the Proposed Development include deterioration. The assessment will evaluate the likelihood and severity of each identified potential impact in terms of temporary and

Potential Effect and receptor	Project Phase* C	O	D	Justification	Data collection and analysis required to characterise the baseline environment	Summary of the proposed approach to assessment
						permanent impacts. Factors such as the sensitivity of habitats, the scale of the Proposed Development, and mitigation measures will be considered and assessed using professional judgement and experience. Published guidance will also be used to make assessment of the overall effects the Proposed Development may have on qualifying features associated with designated sites.
		X		Activities associated with the operation and maintenance of the Proposed Development are unlikely to result in the loss of habitat associated with designated sites due to the infrequent occurrence and limited extent of such activities.	N/A	N/A
Spread of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)	✓		✓	There is potential for accidental spread of INNS as a result of Construction and Decommissioning activities. As such an outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) is required.	Habitat surveys undertaken as part of the data collection, will record any INNS recording the species and grid reference to identify location.	Any invasive species identified during the surveys will be assessed for potential pathways they may be spread due to the Proposed Development works. Consideration to the legal status of the INNS, i.e., Schedule 9 listed species will be taken to assess the impacts of the species and their potential effects using professional judgement and

Potential Effect and receptor	Project Phase* C	O	D	Justification	Data collection and analysis required to characterise the baseline environment	Summary of the proposed approach to assessment
						experience based on published guidance. Assessment will include reviewing both potential temporary and permanent impacts from assessment of the reversibility of the impact. Assessment will be undertaken against local, regional and national planning policy.
		x		No potential for operation & maintenance activities to give rise to spread of INNS. Activities associated with the operation and maintenance of the Proposed Development are unlikely to result in the spread of INNS and will be managed though an Operational Management Plan (OMP) if required.	N/A	N/A
Disturbance and displacement of protected species or loss of their foraging habitats	✓	✓	✓	Construction and Decommissioning activities have the potential to directly affect populations of protected species (e.g. otter, water vole) through habitat loss to the footprint of the site and indirectly through visual and noise disturbance, leading to displacement. During operational phase, there is potential for localised visual / noise disturbance through repair work should faults occur. Maintenance works are expected to be less frequent and restricted in extent, so will	Protected species surveys will be undertaken to identify the presence of protected species through observation of field signs such as prints or droppings within the Proposed Development footprint plus a 100m buffer for all species other than otter. This survey will also include assessment of trees and structures which may hold potential for roosting bats.	Where the presence of protected species is identified through field signs, an assessment will be undertaken on the potential impacts from the Proposed Development on this species using professional judgement and experience based on published guidance criteria. Assessment will include reviewing both potential temporary impacts (i.e., construction pollution) and potential permanent impacts (i.e.,

Potential Effect and receptor	Project Phase* C	O	D	Justification	Data collection and analysis required to characterise the baseline environment	Summary of the proposed approach to assessment
				result in a lesser effect when compared to construction.	An otter survey of all suitable and accessible watercourses and waterbodies within the footprint of the development and a 220m buffer will be undertaken. A fish habitat suitability assessment will be undertaken within watercourses shown at the 1:50k scale and electro fishing will be undertaken along the Uisge Dubh. Any protected features related to protected species such as otter resting sites which attract protection from disturbance will be identified during the survey.	habitat loss/fragmentation) and the effects these will have on the species being assessed. Assessment will be undertaken against local, regional, and national planning policy.
Surface and sub-surface water run-off carrying suspended sediment or contaminants into local waterbodies	✓	✓	✓	Construction and Decommissioning activities have the potential to result in pollution being accidentally released from sources including disturbed ground, vehicles, and equipment/ machinery. There is a risk of pollution being accidentally released during the operational phase from sources including disturbed ground, vehicles, and equipment/ machinery. Operational works are expected to be restricted in extent, so will result in a lesser effect when compared to construction.	Potential runoff sources will be identified including the Proposed Development footprint and laydown areas in relation to the scope of works for the Proposed Development.	A prediction of the potential temporary and permanent impacts and effects of runoff or pollution on terrestrial receptors will be assessed. The potential impacts from run-off on terrestrial receptors will be assessed using professional judgement and experience. Receptors will be assessed using their sensitivity and the magnitude of the impacts

Potential Effect and receptor	Project Phase* C	O	D	Justification	Data collection and analysis required to characterise the baseline environment	Summary of the proposed approach to assessment
						on the receptor to identify the significance of effects.
Permanent or temporary loss, disturbance or re-disturbance of restored peatland, including reversal of restoration gains where turbines, hardstanding, access tracks, cabling or temporary compounds are sited within restored peat areas	✓		✓	Construction and Decommissioning activities could result in direct loss of restored peat, disturbance or re-disturbance, and potential reversal of restoration gains where works alter peat hydrology, drainage integrity or surface condition.	Review of available peatland restoration records and mapping within the Site; confirmation of the extent, type and condition of restored peat areas; peatland condition data; assessment of the final infrastructure layout against restored peat polygons; and, where necessary, peat condition verification to confirm whether any infrastructure overlaps with restored peat.	The assessment will compare the proposed layout with mapped restored peat areas to identify direct overlap and potential indirect effects. The significance of effects will be assessed by considering the sensitivity of restored peatland, the magnitude and duration of disturbance, and the potential for loss of restoration function. The assessment will also consider whether embedded design measures, micrositing, and habitat restoration and aftercare can avoid or reduce effects. Residual effects will be considered in relation to peat stability, hydrology, carbon protection and the integrity of restoration gains.
		X		Operational and maintenance effects are scoped out for this receptor because no new ground disturbance, excavation or habitat alteration is proposed during the operational life of the Proposed Development. Any operational inspection or		

Potential Effect and receptor	Project Phase* C	O	D	Justification	Data collection and analysis required to characterise the baseline environment	Summary of the proposed approach to assessment
				maintenance activity will be limited to existing hardstanding and established access routes and will not require works within restored peatland areas. As a result, the operational phase is not anticipated to result in loss, disturbance, re-disturbance, hydrological change or deterioration of restored peatland, and no significant effects are expected.		

* (project phase refers to construction (C), operation and maintenance (O) and Decommissioning (D).

9.7 Mitigation and Enhancement

Mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or offset significant ecological effects will be developed through the design process and EIA, in consultation with NatureScot, the THC, and other relevant stakeholders. An Outline Habitat Management Plan (oHMP) will be prepared to support the development proposals and will incorporate habitat restoration and enhancement measures, including peatland restoration where feasible.

Embedded Measures and Mitigation

The following embedded measures are relevant to terrestrial biodiversity. The embedded measures will evolve over the development process as the EIA progresses.

The requirement for and feasibility of any mitigation measures will be consulted upon with statutory consultees throughout the EIA process.

Construction Phase

An oCEMP will be developed which will include site-specific pollution prevention measures and procedures to be adopted during construction. Similarly, where specific species are identified which might be adversely disturbed through construction related activities, specific Species Protection Plans (SPPs) would be developed. Toolbox talks would be provided during construction to provide the construction team with relevant information regarding the ecological sensitivities of the area and an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) would be employed for the duration of the construction phase to oversee compliance with all relevant documents and wildlife legislation.

Operation and Maintenance Phase

Mitigation measures will be proposed during the operational phase if necessary once significance of effects has been established. Updated Pollution Incident Response Plans will be produced to take account of the presence of vehicles on Site for maintenance purposes.

9.8 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree with the data sources which are suggested for the assessment of ecology?
- Do you agree that the range of, and approach to, the ecology surveys that have been/ will be carried out is sufficient and appropriate?
- Do you agree that the key ecological receptors and impact pathways have been identified, including designated sites, habitats, protected and notable species, GWDTE and restored peatland?
- Do you agree with the proposed approach to the assessment of ecology?
- Do you agree that impacts on statutory designated sites other than Loch Ruthven and Ness Woods can be scoped out?
- Do you agree with the proposed survey programme?
- Do you agree matters proposed to be scoped out are appropriate on the basis of the baseline information available?
- Are there any other relevant consultees who should be contacted, or other sources of information that should be referenced with respect to the ecology assessment?

10. HYDROLOGY, HYDROGEOLOGY, GEOLOGY, AND PEAT

10.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning.

The impacts of any flooding, drainage considerations and potentially contaminated land will also be considered as required.

10.2 Study Area

For scoping the study area for the purposes of hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat comprises the area within the Red Line Boundary (RLB) of the turbine area only (hereafter named as the Northern Parcel) with the following buffers applied:

- 2km for hydrology (surface water) receptors; and
- 250m for private water supplies (PWS) and Potential Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE).

See Figure 3.1 for location of Northern Parcel relative to scoping layout.

10.3 Baseline Environment

In order to identify the baseline hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat the following publicly available mapping was reviewed:

- British Geological Survey (BGS) Geoindex (https://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html) mapping for geology, hydrogeology, boreholes and mines and quarries;
- Scottish Soils (https://map.environment.gov.scot/Soil_maps/?layer=10) mapping for peat and land capability for agriculture;
- Nature Scot Site Link (https://sitelink.nature.scot/map) mapping for geological designated sites;

- SEPA Water Classification Hub (https://informatics.sepa.org.uk/WaterClassificationHub/) mapping for surface waters and groundwater;
- The Highland Council (Private Water Supplies | Private Water Supplies | Highland Council Open Map Data (arcgis.com) mapping for private water supplies;
- The Scottish Government, Drinking Water Protected Areas (Surface Water) in the Scotland River Basin District (Map 9 Surface Water and Map 20 Groundwater);
- SEPA Future Flood Maps v2.1 (SEPA Flood Maps (arcgis.com)); and
- National Library of Scotland Series maps 1795-1961 (https://maps.nls.uk/series/) for historical Ordnance Survey maps.

The hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area extends over the northeastern fringes of the Monadhliath Mountains (Monadh Liath), an extensive tract of open uplands on the western side of Strathspey comprising upland habitats including blanket mire, wet heath and dry heath communities.

Superficial Geology

Peat predominates across the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area with localised areas of Till in the vicinity of watercourses.

Bedrock Geology

Various igneous formations predominate across the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area with the Beinn Bhreac Psammite and Creag Buidhe Semipelite formations prevalent.

Historical Boreholes

There are no borehole records available for review within the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area.

Soils & Peat

Class 1 peat (nationally important carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat likely to be of high conservation value) is mapped across the majority of the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area with localised pockets of Class

2, 3 and 5 peat (depth/quality of peat usually reduces from Class 1 to Class 5) mapped elsewhere except on summits where no soil is mapped.

Land capability for agriculture is mapped as mainly class 7 (land of very limited agricultural value) with some 5 and 6 towards the periphery of the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area (therefore no Prime agricultural land ie classes 1-3.1).

Geologically Designated Sites

None within the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area or immediate vicinity.

Mineral Resources

The hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area is not located in a coal mining area. The nearest quarry, Garbole Borrow Pit, is approximately 2km south of the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area.

The Highland Council Local Development Plan 2012 has a minerals policy (53) which states 'the Council will safeguard all existing economically significant, workable minerals reserves/operations from incompatible development which is likely to sterilise it unless there is no alternative site for the development and the extraction of mineral resources will be completed before the development commences'. However, no minerals safeguarding mapping appears to be available. None of superficial or bedrock geology mapped is likely to be safeguarded although it is expected that THC would provide details of any mineral safeguarding sites nearby in their scoping response.

Hydrogeology

The various igneous intrusions mapped within the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area are classed as a low productivity aquifer. The geology and peat study area is within the Strathnairn, Speyside and Cairngorms groundwater body which has a classification of good condition.

One private water supply (rainwater for Farr substation) exists approximately 1km west of the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area (outside the 250m PWS buffer). There are no surface water or groundwater Drinking Water Protected Areas within the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area however there

are surface water protected areas to the south east and west and possibly within the 2km hydrology buffer. Scottish Water have confirmed that the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area is not located within a Drinking Water Protected Area. It is understood that a historic drinking water source was formerly located within the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area but that this is no longer in use and is therefore of no concern from a Scottish Water drinking water catchment or water abstraction source perspective. Scottish Water have however recommended that a check (to be undertaken post-scoping) for live assets should be made to confirm absence from the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area.

The separate ecology NVC survey (to be undertaken post scoping) will identify whether there are likely to be any GWDTE's present within the 250m GWDTE buffer of the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area. Within Section 9 Ecology, it is noted that the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area comprises upland habitats typical of the Monadhliath uplands, including blanket mire, wet heath and dry heath communities which are underlain by areas of deep peat and may support GWDTEs.

Hydrology, Flooding and Drainage

The hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area is drained by a number of tributaries of the River Farnack (classified as moderate condition) which then flows into the River Nairn (classified as good condition) approximately 2km northwest.

There is a 10% chance of river and surface flooding in places along the River Farnack and its tributaries within the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area.

Impermeable areas within the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area are likely to be negligible.

Contaminated Land

There is no artificial ground mapped within the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area.

1875-1891 mapping shows the study area to be undeveloped except for a track trending north-south in western portion of hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area.
1899-1905 mapping – as above.
1911-1932 mapping – as above.

1945 mapping – as above.

Historical mapping after 1945 is not publicly available. Current google imagery from 2026 shows some tracks within the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area and development to the immediate south comprising Farr Wind Farm and Glen Kyllachy Wind Farm.

It is expected that THC will provide details of any current and historical potentially contaminated land nearby in any pre-application advice/scoping responses.

10.4 Baseline Surveys

Given the potential presence of peat (including Class 1 Peat) Phase 1 Peat Probing was undertaken across the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area in accordance with The Scottish Government, NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) (2017) Peatland Survey Guidance on Developments on Peatland to map the depth of peat. Peatland condition observations were also made in accordance with NatureScot (NS) guidance to allow consideration of peatland restoration areas at a future date (if required). The peat depth survey was undertaken during three mobilisations (between November 2024 and April 2026) at approximately 600 locations, as shown in Figure 10.1 (note this also includes a separate area to the south of the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area). Probed depths were obtained by manual insertion of a metal probe to a refusal depth (maximum depth of 3.9m below ground level (bgl)).

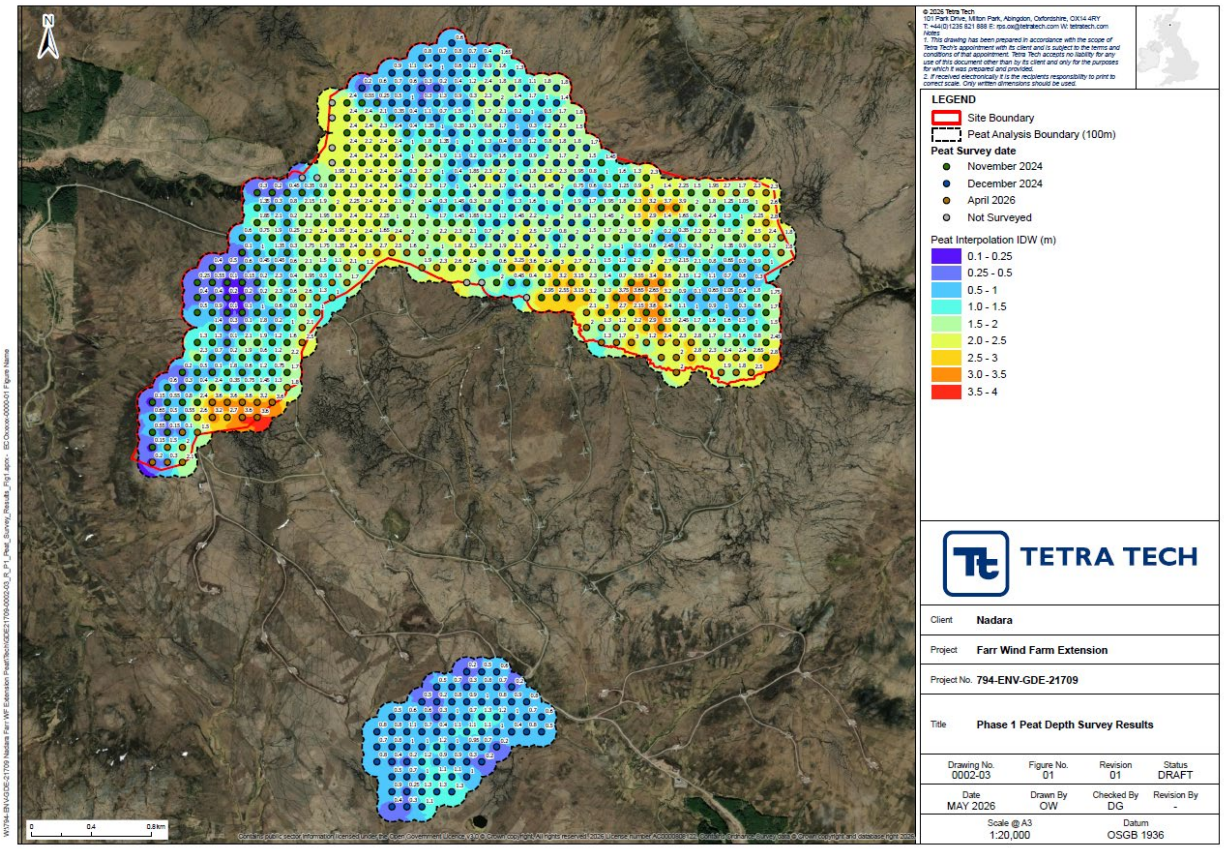

Figure 10-1: Phase 1 Peat Depth Survey Results

In summary despite Class 1 peat being mapped across the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area deep (>1m) peat, which SEPA will generally expect to be avoided by all permanent infrastructure (except tracks which can be floated subject to justification being provided), it is not extensive (and is largely absent in the Southern Parcel located outside the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat study area). These findings will inform development of the layout and positioning of the turbines further as part of the iterative design process.

10.5 Proposed Assessment Methodology

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Relevant legislation, policy and guidance informing the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat assessment is as follows:

Legislation

- Scottish Government (2003). Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act (WEWS Act) 2003
- Scottish Government (2011). The Waste Management Licensing (Scotland) Regulations 2011
- Scottish Government (2011). Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended in 2018 (CAR)
- Scottish Government (2015). The Environmental Liability (Scotland) Regulations 2015
- Scottish Government (2017). The Public Water Supplies (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2017
- Scottish Government (2017). The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017
- Scottish Government (2017). The Water Intended for Human Consumption (Private Supplies) (Scotland) Regulations 2017
- UK Government (1974). Control of Pollution Act 1974
- UK Government (1990). Environmental Protection Act 1990
- UK Government (1994). Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994.
- UK Government (2021). Environment Act 2021
- UK Government (1998). Groundwater Regulations 1998
- UK Technical Advisory Group on the WFD (2013). UK Environmental Standards and Conditions Final Report, November 2013

Policy

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)
- Highland Wide Local Development Plan (LDP)
- Scottish Government (2023). National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) February 2023
- SEPA (2009/2015/2018). The River Basin Planning Strategy for the Scotland River Basin District

Guidance

- CIRIA (2001). Control of water pollution from constructions sites. Guidance for consultants and contractors C532
- CIRIA (2006). Control of water pollution from linear construction projects: technical guidance C648
- CIRIA (2015). SUDS Manual C753
- CIRIA (2010). Environmental good practice on site C650
- CIRIA (2016). Groundwater Control – design and practice C515

- DEFRA (2011). Code of Practice for the sustainable use of soils on construction sites
- DEFRA (2009). UK (UKCP09) climate projections
- EA, SEPA & EHSNI (2011): PPG26: Storage and handling of drums and intermediate bulk containers
- EA, SEPA & EHSNI (2012). PPG6: Working at construction and demolition sites
- EA, SEPA & EHSNI (2013). PPG1: General guide to the prevention of pollution
- EA, SEPA & EHSNI (2017). GPP21: Pollution incidence response planning
- EA, SEPA & EHSNI (January 2017). GPP5: Works and maintenance in or near water
- EA, SEPA & EHSNI (January 2018). GPP2: Above ground oil storage tanks
- EA, SEPA & EHSNI (July 2017). GPP8: Safe storage and disposal of used oils
- EA, SEPA & EHSNI (November 2017). GPP4: Treatment and disposal of sewage where no foul sewer is available
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee. (2011). Towards an Assessment of the State of UK Peatlands. JNCC, Peterborough
- MAFF (2000). Good practice guide for handling soil
- NatureScot (2025) SiteLink (www.sitelink.nature.scot/map)
- NERC. (2012). Geology of Britain
- Ordnance survey (2023) OS Open Data Supply
- Scottish Executive (2000). Design Guidance on River Crossings and Migratory Fish
- Scottish Executive (2006). Private Water Supplies: Technical Manual
- Scottish Water (no date) List of Precautions for Drinking Water and Assets – Wind Farms EdE
- SEPA (2010). River Crossings, Engineering in the water environment: good practice guide
- SEPA (2010): Regulatory Position Statement – Developments on peat
- SEPA (2011 as amended in 2018). The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 as amended in 2018 - A practical guide
- SEPA (January 2014, updated April 2018). Indicative River & Coastal Flood Map (Scotland)
- SEPA (2018). Supporting Guidance (WAT-SG-75) – Sector Specific Guidance: Construction Sites
- SEPA (2017). Land Use Planning System SEPA Guidance Note 4: Planning advice on windfarm developments (LUPS-GU4)
- SEPA (2017). Developments on Peat and Off-Site Uses of Waste Peat
- SEPA. (2018). Supporting Guidance (WAT-SG-75) – Sector Specific Guidance: Construction Sites
- SEPA (2014). Online Water Environment Hub

- SEPA (2024) Guidance on Assessing the Impacts of Developments on Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems
- SEPA (2024) Guidance on Assessing the Impacts of Development on Groundwater Abstractions.
- SNH & SEPA, (2015). Good practice during wind farm construction, 3rd edition
- Scottish Government, SNH and SEPA (2014). Guidance on Developments on Peatland - Site Surveys
- SNH (2016). Carbon and Peatland Map (2016)

10.6 Assessment of Effects

A qualitative risk assessment methodology will be used to assess the significance of the potential effects during construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning phases. Further, each assessment will consider the potential for cumulative effects. Two factors will be considered: the sensitivity of the receiving environment and the potential magnitude should that potential impact occur.

This approach provides a mechanism for identifying mitigation measures appropriate to the risk presented by the Proposed Development. This approach also allows effort to be focused on reducing risk where the greatest benefit may result.

The sensitivity of the receiving environment (i.e. the baseline quality of the receiving environment as well as its ability to absorb effects without perceptible change) and the magnitude of impacts will each be considered through a set of pre-defined criteria.

The sensitivity of the receiving environment together with the magnitude of the effects defines the significance of the effect, which will be categorised into level of significance (generally as per Table 10-1).

Table 10-1: Assessment of Significance Matrix

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact				
	No Change	Negligible	Low	Medium	High
Negligible	No Change	Negligible	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor
Low	-	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Minor or Moderate
Medium	-	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate or Major

High	-	Minor	Minor or Moderate	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial
Very High	-	Minor	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial	Substantial

An all-encompassing list of cumulative projects is provided within 5.9 of this Scoping Report.

Of these projects, those relevant to inform the cumulative hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat assessment of the Proposed Development (due to proximity) are:

- Farr Wind Farm (operational, 0km south);
- Glen Kyllachy Wind Fram (operational, 0km south);
- Lynemore Wind Farm (in planning, 0km north); and,
- Kyllachy Wind Farm (in planning, 0km south east).

10.7 Scope of Assessment

The potential effects from the Proposed Development on hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat will be assessed by completing a detailed desk study (including consultation), further peat surveys and an impact assessment (detailed in 10.6 above), the process of which is summarised below.

Desk Study

A detailed desk study will be undertaken to confirm the baseline characteristics identified above by reviewing available information relating to hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat.

The desk study will include review of published mapping, OS maps, aerial photographs, digital terrain models (slope plans) and geological literature.

Further Peat Surveys

Further peat surveys will:

- Include a Phase 2 peat survey to provide more detailed information on peat depth and condition around proposed infrastructure and access track routes. This information will inform the final EIA layout. Further peat surveys may be required;
- Verify the information collected during the desk study;
- Observe existing and proposed water crossings;

- Record any evidence of historical and/or current peat landslide activity or indicators of instability; and
- Confirm substrate beneath areas of peat based on the type of refusal of peat depth probe.

The desk study and further peat surveys will be used to identify potential development opportunities and constraints and will be used to inform the final EIA layout.

It is considered the following Technical Appendices (TAs) will be required to support the hydrology, hydrogeology, geology & peat EIA chapter.

Outline Peat Management Plan

Given the design will be unable to completely avoid areas of peat, an outline Peat Management Plan (PMP) will be prepared to assess the potential volumes of peat requiring excavation and identify opportunities for re-use.

Outline Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment

Given the design will be unable to completely avoid areas of peat an outline Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment (PLHRA) will be required using the site survey data and slope analysis (using Digital Terrain Mapping data), highlighting areas that may be impacted by a peat slide so that appropriate mitigation measures can be identified and included in the final EIA layout.

Outline Water Crossing Schedule

If existing water crossings are required to be upgraded and/or if new water crossings are proposed then an outline Water Crossing Schedule will be required.

Carbon Balance Assessment

Given the design will be unable to completely avoid areas of peat then a carbon balance assessment (in the form of SEPA's carbon calculator (or similar)) will be required.

Borrow Pit Assessment

If borrow pits are required then a Borrow Pit Assessment will be required.

10.8 Consultation

Following receipt of scoping opinion, environmental data and views on the Proposed Development will be sought from:

- SEPA;
- NatureScot;
- The Highland Council; and
- Ironside Farrar (Advisors to the Scottish Government with regard to peat landslide risk).

Once the desk study, further peat surveys, TAs and consultations are complete, the impact assessment will be undertaken and an EIAR chapter prepared.

10.9 Matters to be Scoped Out

Based on the findings of the initial desk-top consideration, the Phase 1 peat survey and project experience, the following matters can be scoped out:

- Geologically designated sites;
- Drainage; and
- Contaminated Land.

10.10 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree with the data sources which are suggested for the assessment of hydrology, hydrogeology, geology and peat?
- Do you agree that all sensitive receptors and impact pathways have been identified for hydrology, hydrogeology, geology and peat?
- Do you agree with the proposed approach to the assessment of hydrology, hydrogeology, geology and peat?

11. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

11.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential Transport impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation and maintenance and during decommissioning.

11.2 Study Area

The transport study area will focus on the A9 which forms part of the trunk road network in Scotland. The A9 connects a number of trunk roads throughout Scotland, linking Inverness to Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow, as well as the main ports.

The trunk road and motorway network includes major A roads and motorways that connects Scotland's major cities, towns, airports and ports enabling the movement of people, goods and services. The trunk road and motorway network is 3,507km, makes up 6% of Scotland's roads and carries over one third of all traffic in Scotland and 60% of heavy goods vehicles.

From the A9 the construction traffic will utilise General Wade's Military Road and forestry track.

The study area of the Proposed Development will comprise of the effects of construction and operational vehicle movements on the local road network and the Trunk Road network (where necessary) during the proposed construction phase and operational lifespan of the Proposed Development.

The construction period is where the greatest potential for impact lies, as there are very limited vehicle movements required during the operational phase. Considerations of the Proposed Development's impacts, particularly along the Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) route which will be used to facilitate the transport of turbine components, including swept path analysis of the defined route and passing bay requirements and considerations (AIL assessment will be provided under separate cover).

11.3 Baseline Environment

Given the nature of the Proposed Development it is unlikely that there will be any trips to the Site by walking, cycling or public transport, with the main mode of transport to the Site during construction, operation (maintenance) and decommissioning being HGVs, transit vans and cars associated with general construction site traffic (outside of the Abnormal Load Assessment which will be submitted under separate cover).

The Department for Transport (DfT) provides Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) data on motorways and 'A' Roads in Great Britain. Count Point 20726 is located on the A9 adjacent to the junction with General Wade's Military Road. The most recent data for this counter location is 2024 and the following data was recorded:

- Average Annual Daily Flow;
  - All Motor Vehicles 10,810;
  - Cars & Taxis 7,474
  - LGVs 2,083
  - HGVs 976
  - Pedal Cycles 0
  - Motorcycles 174
  - Buses & Coaches 103

It would be proposed to undertake updated Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) data on the A9 to determine hourly traffic flows for the baseline environment.

Future Baseline

The transport baseline will consider the future baseline scenario of the new A9 dualling junction, currently under construction, being in operation and serving the Site. The construction timescale of the new junction and the Proposed Development are not expected to overlap.

11.4 Abnormal Load Route Options

This section will discuss the potential routes which can accommodate the Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) vehicles carrying the wind turbine blades from a delivery port onto the A9 trunk road.

The section of access track on General Wade's Military Road leading up to the Site will also be assessed.

There are currently three route options which are considered for their suitability to accommodate the wind turbine blade AIL vehicle from a delivery port to the A9 trunk road. These options and associated routes are shown in Figure 11.1 and include:

- From the Port of Nigg to the A9 trunk road;
- From the Port of Cromarty to the A9 trunk road; and
- From the Port of Inverness to the A9 trunk road.

The three routes above will be assessed through a desk-based study using OS map data to carry out a Swept Path Analysis (SPA) of the AIL vehicle on the route to check that the vehicle can navigate the roads leading up to the A9. Site surveys will also be carried out to identify and record any obstacles present on the routes. Using a combination of the desk-based surveys and the site visits, a comprehensive analysis of the routes will be undertaken to assess which of the three routes above is the most suitable for the delivery of the wind turbine blades.

There are pinch points on the A9 trunk road which will also be assessed using the method outlined above to verify that the AIL vehicle can navigate them, as following:

- Ardullie Roundabout
- Tore Roundabout
- Longman Roundabout

The access track leading from the A9 trunk road to the Site will be assessed, also using the methods outlined above. This is an access track used for the original Farr Wind Farm. Since the turbines for the Proposed Development are larger than the turbines used for the original Farr Wind Farm project, the impact of driving a vehicle designed to accommodate a larger wind turbine blade needs to be assessed. The swept path of the larger vehicle and the oversail of the larger turbine blade will likely interact with the surrounding land, and this impact will be assessed through a desk based survey and a site visit as outlined above.

11.5 Proposed Assessment Methodology

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

In undertaking an assessment of the potential traffic and transport impacts associated with the Proposed Development, all relevant local and national policy and guidance will be taken into account, with specific reference to the following documents:

- National Planning Framework 4;
- Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic;
- Transport Assessment Guidance (Transport Scotland, 2012); and,
- Design Manual for Roads & Bridges.

Assessment of Effects

The following environmental impacts will be considered within the Traffic and Transport chapter.

- Severance;
- Driver Delay;
- Pedestrian delay and amenity; and
- Accidents and Safety.

Where relevant, consideration of noise effects of traffic would be included within the Noise EIAR Chapter. In addition to the list of impacts identified above, the overall carrying capacity of the identified access routes will be considered, although it is not anticipated that road carrying capacity will be a significant issue.

A cumulative assessment will also be considered within the Traffic and Transport chapter. The developments to be considered within the cumulative assessment will be determined during the study.

11.6 Scope of Assessment

The main transport constraints relating to the Proposed Development relate to the transportation of abnormal loads and the impact of general construction traffic on any sensitive receptors such as schools, hospitals and settlements, along the proposed construction route. The abnormal load study will identify any pinch points on the road network which require measures to ensure the safe passage of AIL's.

Overall traffic volumes will be provided for the Proposed Development throughout the anticipated construction period, which will allow a consideration of daily changes in traffic flows against the previously established baseline. In order to

quantify the significance of any changes in traffic flows, the following criteria will be used to establish a screening process (from IEMA Guidelines).

- *Include highway links where traffic flows will increase by more than 30% (or the number of heavy goods vehicles will increase by more than 30%) and*
- *Include any other specifically sensitive areas where traffic flows will increase by 10% or more.*

Where existing traffic levels are exceptionally low (e.g. on some unclassified roads), any increase in traffic flow is likely to result in a predicted increase in traffic levels which could in normal circumstances be considered a major impact. Where this situation is identified it is important to consider any increase both in terms of its relative increase in respect of existing traffic flows, as well as the overall total flow in respect of the available capacity of the section of road being considered.

Following the identification of road links where there is a potential for a significant impact, this will be reviewed against the impact on sensitive receptors such as schools, hospitals, settlements etc. This will be formally presented in the Traffic and Transport EIAR chapter alongside any mitigation measures required to reduce the severity of identified impacts.

Any potential environmental impacts including accidents / collisions, driver delay, pedestrian amenity, pedestrian delay and severance are considered on a case-by-case basis using professional judgement and reasoned argument. The significance of any impacts assessed on the basis of the magnitude of the impact and the likelihood of the impact occurring.

It is proposed that the chapter will be supported by an Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) which will provide a palette of measures to manage temporary traffic increases in a safe and controlled manner along the selected access route. The priority of the OCTMP will be to ensure safe vehicle access to and from the Site with health and safety as well as the welfare of the general public at the forefront of the document. Measures contained within the OCTMP will be tailored to the specifics of the proposal but are likely to include those intended to:

- Inform residents along haul routes of traffic movement and construction phases;
- Avoid periods of the day or certain scheduled calendar events to mitigate the potential for transport impacts – before and after school times for example;
- Protect against damage to public roads;
- Ensure rigorous health and safety procedures; and

- Confirm procedures for site vehicles along haul routes including traffic control measures limiting reversing and turning movements.

The contents of the OCTMP will be adopted, worked up and confirmed by the appointed contractor prior to construction. It is likely that the requirement for a detailed CTMP that confirms arrangements and relevant safeguards will be conditioned as part of any emerging consent for the project. This is a standard and accepted approach in EIA processes.

11.7 Matters to be Scoped Out

There are no existing pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of the Site, and no likelihood of pedestrian movements that would be impacted by the Proposed Development. The effects on pedestrian delay and amenity can therefore be scoped out of the assessment.

National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 7 (forms part of the famous Sea to Sea (C2C) cycle route) operates on the B9154 and along a section of the A9 to the east of the access to the Site. It is unlikely that there will be any road closures associated with the Proposed Development and therefore the cycle route is unlikely to be affected by the construction or operational phase. Therefore, effects on the cycle path during the construction / operational phases are proposed to be scoped out of the EIA process in respect of Traffic and Transport.

Operational traffic movements associated with the Proposed Development are anticipated to be low and wind farm operations only require visits for monitoring and maintenance. Therefore, operational traffic is proposed to be scoped out of the EIA process in respect of Traffic and Transport.

At the end of the operational phase the wind farm will be decommissioned, and the Site will be reinstated. Traffic associated with the decommissioning phase will be the same as the construction phase (Abnormal loads, HGVs, LGVs & Cars). It is anticipated that the number of vehicles associated with decommissioning will be less than during construction. At this stage of the process, it is not yet possible to quantify the volume of traffic that would be associated with decommissioning as the precedent for commissioning has not yet been fully established. It is not possible to forecast the effect of decommissioning traffic as over time the baseline will change. Therefore, effects associated with decommissioning are proposed to be scoped out of the EIA process.

11.8 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree with the data sources which are suggested for the assessment of Average Annual Daily Traffic along key haulage routes through the provision of Transport Scotland Trunk Road counts?
- Do you agree with the proposed approach to the assessment of the key traffic generating phase, namely the construction phase is likely to generate significantly more trips than the operational phase?
- Do you agree with the proposed approach to the assessment of Traffic and Transport.

12. HERITAGE

12.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential cultural heritage impacts of the Proposed Development arising during its construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning.

12.2 Study Area

It is proposed to apply three cultural heritage study areas (Figure 12.1):

- 1km cultural heritage study area. This will extend 1km from the red line boundary. Data will be gathered for the Site and 1km study area to identify heritage assets within the Site, and to inform the assessment of the Site's archaeological potential and impacts relating to physical change.
- 5km cultural heritage study area. This will extend 5km from the northern parcel, where the proposed wind turbines will be located. Within this area, the potential impact of the Proposed Development upon all designated heritage assets will be considered.
- 10km cultural heritage study area. This will extend 10km from the northern parcel. Data will be gathered for this area to identify and assess potential impacts upon nationally important designated heritage assets resulting from change in their setting.

Relevant guidance does not contain fixed cultural heritage study areas. The 1km cultural heritage study area is considered to provide sufficient background information regarding the history of the area, without drawing in extraneous data, and is generally accepted as being appropriate in rural areas.

In the context of terrestrial wind farms, a study area extending 10km from the proposed turbines is generally considered sufficient to identify most nationally important assets where a significant effect may occur, with a smaller study area being used in respect of other designated heritage assets. This follows experience that on-shore wind turbines at distances of over 10km generally result in change that does not affect the cultural significance of the asset or the experience, appreciation or understanding thereof. However, in rare instances heritage assets are sensitive to change occurring at greater distances, most frequently, but not exclusively, where there are specific designed visual relationships with other

heritage assets or landscape features. Therefore, an initial review of nationally important designated heritage assets has been undertaken informed by a bare earth Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) to identify such assets where significant effects may occur. The results of this are presented in Section 12.8. In the interests of proportionality, it is not proposed to present a formal review of designated heritage assets beyond the 10km cultural heritage study area as this would involve approximately 272 Scheduled Monuments, 147 Category A Listed Buildings, 25 Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes and three Inventory Battlefields.

12.3 Data Sources

Data will be gathered from the following sources:

- Historic Environment Scotland (HES) datasets;
- Highland Council Historic Environment Record (HER);
- National Library of Scotland historic mapping;
- British Geological Survey; and
- Readily available published sources.

Scottish Government Lidar data are not available for the Site and surrounding area. The above desk-based work will be augmented and verified through visits to the Site and selected designated heritage assets in the 10km cultural heritage study area.

12.4 Baseline Environment

Initial baseline studies have been undertaken to inform the proposed scope of the cultural heritage assessment. This has drawn upon HES datasets, HER data, historic mapping and documents relating to the existing wind farm.

There are no designated heritage assets within the Site or adjacent.

There are 46 Scheduled Monuments in the 10km cultural heritage study area (Table 12-1, Figure 12.2). These comprise a wide range of site types, including Prehistoric forts, settlements, and ritual and funerary monuments, Medieval and Post-Medieval castles and settlements and Post-Medieval infrastructure. The Scheduled Monuments are predominantly located in Strathnairn and Strathdearn. This reflects their greater suitability for agriculture and hence settlement than the higher surrounding ground and importance as communication corridors.

Table 12-1: Scheduled Monuments in the 10km Cultural Heritage Study Area

Reference	Name	Category	Distance from Northern Parcel
SM11556	Milton of Farr, cupmarks 110m SE of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cupmarks or cup-and-ring marks and similar rock art	3.48
SM11544	Glen Nairn, hut circle 270m ENE of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: hut circle, roundhouse	3.79
SM11548	Stonehenge House, chambered cairn 20m WNW of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: chambered cairn	3.86
SM11525	Mid Lairgs, bridge and military road 200m SSE of	Secular: bridge	4.01
SM11493	Creagan an Tuirc, fort	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: fort (includes hill and promontory fort)	4.04
SM11549	Depopulated township, 400m SE of Balloan	Secular: settlement, including deserted, depopulated and townships	4.10
SM11447	Eilean nan Clach, crannog	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: crannog; Secular: crannog (with post-prehistoric use)	4.14
SM11446	Isle of Moy, fortified island and laird's house	Secular: castle	4.18
SM11559	Tordarroch, ring cairn 250m E of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: ring cairn	4.30
SM11495	Brin Nursery, barrow cemetery 70m NNW of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: barrow	4.38
SM11558	Tordarroch, cupmarks 220m NE of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cupmarks or cup-and-ring marks and similar rock art	4.47
SM11739	Woodend, cairn 760m NW of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cairn (type uncertain)	4.60
SM11550	Milton of Tordarroch, fort 800m S of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: fort (includes hill and promontory fort); Secular: shieling	4.66
SM11557	Balnafoich, cupmarks 320m SSW of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cupmarks or cup-and-ring marks and similar rock art	5.07
SM11434	Shenval, settlement	Secular: settlement, including deserted, depopulated and townships	5.33

Reference	Name	Category	Distance from Northern Parcel
SM11433	West Croachy House, cairns 1000m ESE of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: field clearance cairn, cairnfield; Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cairn (type uncertain)	5.69
SM11815	Dalarossie Cottage, cairn 375m SSE of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: ring cairn	5.83
SM4651	Mains of Gask, ring cairn and standing stones 130m SSW of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: ring cairn	5.95
SM11814	Banchor, cairn 315m SE of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cairn (type uncertain)	6.08
SM4712	Craggie Cottage, settlement cairns and field system 600m SW of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: field or field system; Prehistoric ritual and funerary: kerb cairn	6.09
SM11613	Tullich, settlements 760m NNE of	Secular: settlement, including deserted, depopulated and townships	6.40
SM11901	Ruthven, depopulated township 600m S of	Secular: settlement, including deserted, depopulated and townships	6.43
SM11734	Edinchat, cairn 415m NNW of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cairn (type uncertain)	6.55
SM11806	Soilsean, deserted township and hut circle 745m ESE of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: hut circle, roundhouse; Secular: settlement, including deserted, depopulated and townships	6.60
SM11468	Dhuallow, cairn 195m E of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cairn (type uncertain)	6.63
SM11552	Baile na Creige, cairns 185m SSW and 175m SSE of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cairn (type uncertain)	6.77
SM11417	Mid Craggie, cairn 90m E of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: kerb cairn	7.18
SM11673	Drumbain Cottage, hut circles 725m, 845m and 975m ESE of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: hut circle, roundhouse	7.22
SM11490	Loch Ruthven, crannog 490m SSW of Tullich	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: crannog	7.27
SM3301	Dun Davie, fort	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: fort (includes hill and promontory fort)	7.37

Reference	Name	Category	Distance from Northern Parcel
SM11543	Clachandruim, three hut circles 540m, 680m and 750m WSW of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: hut circle, roundhouse	7.50
SM11796	Braeval Farm, cupmarks 260m NNW of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: cupmarks or cup-and-ring marks and similar rock art	7.62
SM11879	An Bathach, promontory fort 300m ENE of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: fort (includes hill and promontory fort)	7.68
SM11542	Mains of Aberarder, hut circle 1145m ESE of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: hut circle, roundhouse	8.49
SM5486	Daviot Castle	Secular: castle	8.71
SM11553	Midtown, burnt mounds 850m NNE of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: burnt mound	8.88
SM11431	Ballachar, settlement, hut circles and field systems 275m NNW of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: field or field system; Secular: settlement, including deserted, depopulated and townships	8.93
SM11551	West Town, ring cairn 240m SW of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: ring cairn	9.11
SM3085	Mains of Daviot Farm, ring cairn and stone circle 600m NNE of	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: ring cairn	9.23
SM11541	Mains of Aberarder, fort 270m S of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: fort (includes hill and promontory fort)	9.30
SM11813	West Town, five hut circles 480m WSW of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: hut circle, roundhouse	9.35
SM4698	Bogbain Wood, hut circle and field system 400m SSW of Bogbain Farm	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: field or field system	9.46
SM11436	Dalcrombie, hut circles, settlement & field system 300m NNW of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: field or field system; Secular: settlement, including deserted, depopulated and townships	9.61
SM11561	Achvraid, hut circles 1030m SSE of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: hut circle, roundhouse	9.72
SM2392	Carn Glas, chambered cairns 815m SE of Achvraid	Prehistoric ritual and funerary: chambered cairn	9.77

Reference	Name	Category	Distance from Northern Parcel
SM11786	Achvraid, hut circles 800m SE of	Prehistoric domestic and defensive: hut circle, roundhouse	9.84

There is one Category A Listed Buillding within the 10km cultural heritage study area: Faillie Bridge over Nairn River (LB1683). This is approximately 4km to the north-east of the northern parcel.

There is one Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape (IGDL) within the 10km cultural heritage study area: Leys Castle (GDL00264). This is approximately 9.6km to the north-west of the northern parcel.

There are no Inventory Battlefields within the 10km Cultural Heritage Study Area. However, Culloden (BTL6) is located approximately 12km to the north of the northern parcel.

There are nine Category B Listed Buildings and six Category C Listed Buildings in the 5km Cultural Heritage study area (Table 12-2, Figure 12.3). Most of these are associated with the Moy Estate and clustered around Loch Moy.

Table 12-2: Category B and C Listed Buildings in the 5km Cultural Heritage Study Area

Reference	Name	Category	Distance from Northern Parcel
LB1684	Flichity House	B	3.24
LB1685	Farr, The Old Inn	B	3.58
LB14892	Former Moy Parish Manse (Church of Scotland), Near Tomatin	B	3.94
LB14891	Moy Church of Scotland, Watch-House and Burial Ground	B	3.98
LB19216	Moy Hall Estate Porter's Lodge (South Lodge) including Gatepiers, Gates and Boundary Walls	B	3.98
LB14889	Moy Obelisk (on island in Loch Moy)	B	4.30
LB1707	Tordarroch Bridge over the Nairn River	B	4.66
LB1698	Croachy, Tomintoul House	B	4.71

LB19220	Moy Hall Estate Forestry Cottages and Stables	B	4.84
LB19219	Moy Hall Estate Gardener's Cottage	C	4.69
LB14888	Moy, Bridge Over Funlack Burn by Milton of Moy	C	4.80
LB19217	Moy Hall Estate Cottage Next to Kennels	C	4.95
LB14890	Moy Hall Mains, Hen House	C	4.96
LB19218	Moy Hall Estate Kennels	C	4.96
LB19205	Moy Hall Estate, Game Larder	C	4.97

There are no Conservation Areas within the 5km cultural heritage study area. However, Culloden Battlefield (BTL6) is also a Conservation Area (Culloden Muir CA667).

The Highland HER holds no entries for the northern and southern parcels. Roy's Military Survey (1747-52) and the First and Second Edition Ordnance Survey maps show the northern and southern Parcels as open moorland; the only structure depicted here is a square sheepfold by the Uisge Dubh in the northern parcel, which is visible on satellite imagery.

The existing Farr Wind Farm Access (West) Track, passes through a farmstead (MHG48895) and a township (MHG30888) depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map, and in part follows the line of a Military Road (MHG48892 & 48893). In addition, the site of the Rout of Moy (MHG14252), a skirmish fought in 1746, lies in the existing access. Given the altitude of the northern parcel, it is likely to have seen only relatively low intensity activity such as transhumance and hunting through most periods. Palaeoenvironmental work undertaken in relation to the Farr Wind Farm charted environmental change from c. 3000 BC to present. This charted the development of blanket mire under increasingly wet conditions and the corresponding reduction in woodland cover. There was minimal evidence of human activity until c. 400 BC, after which there was an increase in management of the moorland to encourage suitable conditions for grazing.

12.5 Proposed Assessment Methodology

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

The cultural heritage impact assessment will be informed by the following legislation, policy and guidance:

- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011
- National Planning Framework 4 Policy 7
- Highland wide Local Development Plan Policy 57 (Natural Built and Cultural Heritage)
- HES (2020) Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting;
- HES and SNH (now NatureScot) (2018) EIA Handbook;
- Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (now Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals) (2021) Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK; and
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) (2020) Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment.

12.6 Assessment of Effects

Sensitivity of Cultural Heritage assets will be determined with reference to their relative importance. In the first instance, this will reflect their designation, though assets may be assigned greater sensitivity where the assessor considers this appropriate. Where assets are not designated, their importance will be determined through professional judgement guided by designation criteria and where available the relevant research frameworks and designation criteria. Table 12-3 provides guideline criteria for determining the sensitivity of heritage assets relevant to the Proposed Development using professional judgement.

Table 12-3: Guideline Criteria for Determining Sensitivity

Sensitivity of Receptor	Guideline Criteria
Very High	Assets valued at an international level, ie World Heritage Sites and other assets of similar importance.
High	Assets valued at a national level, e.g. Scheduled Monuments, Category A Listed Buildings, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Inventory Battlefields,

	some Conservation Areas and non-designated assets that meet the relevant criteria for designation in the opinion of the assessor.
Medium	Assets valued at a regional level, e.g. Category B Listed Buildings, some Conservation Areas and non-designated assets of similar value in the opinion of the assessor.
Low	Assets valued at a local level, e.g. Category C Listed Buildings, some Conservation Areas and non-designated assets of similar value in the opinion of the assessor.

Magnitude of impact will be assessed using professional judgement and the guideline criteria provided in Table 12-4. Magnitude of impact will be considered in terms of change in cultural significance:

- Adverse impacts are those that detract from or reduce cultural significance or special interest of heritage assets; and
- Beneficial impacts are those that preserve, enhance or better reveal the cultural significance or special interest of heritage assets.

It should be noted that change in the fabric or setting of a heritage asset may leave its cultural significance unchanged. Such neutral change will be considered to represent no impact.

The assessment of impacts relating to setting will be informed by the use of Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and appropriate visualisations. Viewpoints will be agreed with consultees. The approach to the assessment of impacts on integrity of setting will likewise be agreed with consultees.

Table 12-4: Guideline Criteria for Determining Magnitude of Impact

Magnitude	Guideline Criteria
High Beneficial	Preservation of the asset in situ where it would be completely or almost completely lost in the do-nothing scenario or removal of elements of the setting that prevent the appreciation of the asset's cultural significance.
Medium Beneficial	Changes to key elements of the asset's fabric or setting that result in its cultural significance being preserved, where they would otherwise be lost, or better revealed, facilitating the appreciation or experience the asset's cultural significance.
Low Beneficial	Changes that result in elements of the asset's fabric or setting that detract from its cultural significance being removed.
Low Adverse	Changes to the elements of the fabric or setting of the heritage asset that contribute to its cultural significance such that this is slightly diminished or appreciable change in the setting that will affect overall experience of visiting the asset

	without adversely affecting its cultural significance or the appreciation and understanding of the asset.
Medium Adverse	Changes to the elements of the fabric or setting of the heritage asset that contribute to its cultural significance such that this is substantially reduced.
High Adverse	Changes to the fabric or setting of a heritage asset resulting in the complete or near complete loss of its cultural significance, such that it may no longer be considered a heritage asset or loss of elements/ characteristics of the asset's fabric or setting that make a key contribution to its cultural significance.

The predicted significance of the effect will be determined through a standard method of assessment based on professional judgement, considering both sensitivity and magnitude of impact (Table 12-5). Effects of moderate and greater significance are considered significant in the context of the EIA Regulations.

Table 12-5: Assessment of Significance Matrix

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact			
	No Change	Low	Medium	High
Low	-	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Minor or Moderate
Medium	-	Minor	Moderate	Moderate or Major
High	-	Minor or Moderate	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial
Very High	-	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial	Substantial

12.7 Cumulative Effects

An all-encompassing list of cumulative projects is provided within 5.9 of this Scoping Report.

Schemes that are operational or under construction are considered to form a part of the baseline environment. Schemes to be considered by the Cultural Heritage cumulative assessment are identified in Table 12-6.

Table 12-6: Schemes to be Considered by the Cultural Heritage Cumulative Assessment

Status	Name	Application Reference	Blade tip height and number of turbines	Location relative to Proposed Development
Consented	Tom nan Clach Extension	22/01732/S36	149.9m and 7 turbines	13km to the northeast
	Corriegarth 2 Wind Farm	21/00101/S36	149.9M blade tip	15km south west
In planning	Lynemore Wind Farm	25/01748/S36	200m blade tip	0km north
	Kyllachy Wind Farm	25/03511/S36	180m blade tip	0km south east
	Clune Wind Farm	25/00847/S36	200m blade tip	6km south east
	Highland Wind Farm	25/01355/S36	200m blade tip	6km south
	Balnespick Wind Farm	25/00629/S36	200m blade tip	10km east
Scoping	Glenkirk Wind Farm	25/04677/SCOP	230m blade tip	6km north east
	Carn Na Saobhaidh Wind Farm SCOP	24/03625/SCOP	200m blade tip	15km southwest
	Balmore Wind Farm SCOP	23/02340/SCOP	220m blade tip	20km north east

12.8 Scope of Assessment

Matters to be Scoped In

This section provides an overview of the identified potential impacts of the Proposed Development. The potential impacts proposed to be scoped in are identified in Table 12-7.

Review of the initial ZTV, based on a bare earth model, indicates that the Proposed Development is likely to be visible from Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings in Strathnairn at distances of 4-10km. However, visibility from Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings in Strathdearn, including around Loch Moy, is likely to be very limited.

Nationally important designated heritage assets beyond the 10km cultural heritage study area have been the subject of a high-level review to identify those where change as a result of the Proposed Development might result in a significant effect. This established that the Proposed Development is likely to be theoretically visible

from Culloden battlefield at a distance of approximately 12km. As such, the Proposed Development may adversely affect the battlefield's setting and it is proposed to scope Culloden into the assessment. Aside from Culloden, Castle Urquhart (SM90309, 17km west of the northern parcel), Clava cairns (SM90074, 13km north of the northern parcel) and Corrimony cairn (SM90081, 32km west of the northern parcel) were identified as potentially sensitive to distant change in views in the approximate direction of the Proposed Development. However, the bare earth ZTV indicates the Proposed Development will not be visible from Castle Urquhart and the Clava cairns or the surrounding areas. Trees adjacent to Corrimony cairn curtail views in the direction of the Proposed Development. As such, there is no potential for impacts upon these assets.

Table 12-7: Potential Impacts Scoped In

Impact	Phase			Justification and summary of proposed approach
	C	O	D	
Change in the setting of designated heritage assets in the 5km and 10km cultural heritage study areas during the operational phase		✓		The Proposed Development will result in change in the setting of designated heritage assets that may affect their cultural significance. Given the distance of designated heritage assets from the Proposed Development this is most likely to relate to the appearance of wind turbines, impacts relating to noise or other pathways are not likely to occur. Assessment to be undertaken in accordance with the approach outlined in Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting (HES 2020), informed by Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs) and visualisations where appropriate. In addition to the designated heritage assets in the relevant cultural heritage study areas, it is proposed to scope in potential impacts upon Culloden battlefield.
Loss of physical fabric of hitherto unrecorded archaeology	✓			Ground disturbance, e.g. topsoil stripping and excavation of cable trenches, may remove hitherto unrecorded archaeology, which in the absence of mitigation might result in significant effects. Desk-based research and targeted walkover will be undertaken to establish archaeological potential and inform design.
Changes in hydrology resulting in loss of palaeoenvironmental data	✓	✓		There is extensive peat within the northern parcel, which has potential as a source of palaeoenvironmental data. Changes in hydrology has potential to affect preservation and result in the loss of data. The results of the Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Peat surveys and assessment will inform the assessment of potential impacts upon palaeoenvironmental deposits.

12.9 Matters to be Scoped Out

Potential impacts that are proposed to be scoped out are identified in Table 12-8.

Table 12-8: Potential Impacts Scoped Out

Impact	Justification
Construction phase effects relating to setting.	Effects relating specifically to the construction phase will be temporary, ceasing at the end of the construction phase and are likely to be transitory, potentially varying on a weekly basis through the construction programme. Consequently, they are unlikely to be significant.
Decommissioning phase effects relating to setting.	Effects relating specifically to the decommissioning phase will be temporary and are likely to be transitory, varying on a weekly basis. Consequently, they are unlikely to be significant.
Operational phase impacts relating to the setting of heritage assets outwith the 5km and 10km cultural heritage study areas	With the exception of Culloden Inventory Battlefield, it is considered that there is no potential for significant effects relating to change in the setting of heritage assets outwith the relevant study areas.
Operational phase impacts relating to physical fabric of heritage assets.	Any ground disturbance that may occur during the operational phase will be restricted to previously disturbed ground. There is therefore no potential for physical impacts during the operation phase.
Decommissioning phase impacts relating to physical fabric of heritage assets.	Any ground disturbance that may occur during the decommissioning phase will be restricted to previously disturbed ground. There is therefore no potential for physical impacts during the operation phase.

12.10 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree with the data sources which are suggested for the assessment of cultural heritage?
- Do you agree with the proposed cultural heritage study areas?
- Aside from Culloden Battlefield, which is scoped in, are there any specific heritage assets outwith the cultural heritage study areas that should be considered by the assessment?
- Do you agree with the proposed approach to the assessment of cultural heritage?
- Are there specific assets where you consider that photomontages will be necessary?

13. NOISE AND VIBRATION

13.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential Noise and Vibration impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation and maintenance and during decommissioning.

13.2 Study Area

The noise and vibration assessment comprises several aspects, each with a specific study area, as detailed below.

Operational Noise

The operational noise study area is not defined solely on distance from the Proposed Development. As per ETSU-R-97, which is the framework for the assessment of wind turbine noise in the UK, the study area for assessment of wind turbine noise should include, as a minimum, the area within which noise levels from the proposed, consented and existing wind turbine(s) may exceed 35 dB LA90 at up to 10m/s wind speed (at 10m height).

A noise model has been developed in CadnaA noise propagation software to define the study area for the Proposed Development in isolation. The model was built using the methodology set out in the Institute of Acoustics Good Practice Guide (IOA GPG)to ETSU-R-97 (see Section 13.4) and assumes a candidate turbine as follows:

- Maximum sound power level: 109.4 dB LWA
- Hub height: 118m

Figure 13.1 Operational Noise Study Area, shows the extent of the 35 dB LA90 and shows that there are no noise-sensitive receptors located within the 35 dB LA90 contour for the Proposed Development in isolation. For the purposes of operation noise assessment, noise-sensitive receptors primarily comprise dwellings (existing and proposed) and any building used for long-term residential purposes.

Cumulative Operational Noise

Cumulative operational noise effects may occur at distances of several kilometres (typically around 6km), however the larger turbine types which are in operation (and proposed operation) in this area of the highlands, along with the numerous existing developments, would indicate the need for a larger search area to ensure all cumulative operational noise impacts are accounted for. As such, the Noise and Vibration study area will initially consider all wind farm developments within 20km of the Proposed Development, as per Table 5.4.

At EIA stage, a noise propagation model will be produced which includes the Proposed Development in conjunction with all existing and proposed wind turbine developments within 20km. As guided by the IOA GPG, the final study area will include any existing, proposed or consented wind farms that "the proposed wind farm produces noise levels within 10 dB of any existing wind farm/s" but not "where noise from the proposed wind farm is predicted to be 10 dB greater than that from the existing wind farm".

Construction and Decommissioning Noise

The construction noise study area will include a 300m buffer from the red line boundary of the Proposed Development. The definition of the construction noise study area is informed by Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA111, which recommends 300m as the limit of reliable or meaningful construction noise predictions using the methods within BS5228:2009+A1:2014 - Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites - Part 1 Noise (BS5228-Part 1). The study area may be refined at EIA stage when more information on the site layout and construction methodologies are available.

As per DMRB LA111, the EIA construction traffic noise study area will include a 50m width from the kerb line of public roads with the potential for an increase in baseline noise level (BNL) of 1dB(A) or more as a result of the addition of construction traffic to existing traffic levels. This is approximately equivalent to an increase in traffic flows due to construction traffic of 25% or more.

Construction Vibration

An appropriate construction vibration study area is not specifically defined within British Standard BS5228:2009+A1:2014- Part 2 Vibration, however on calculating magnitude of impacts using the methodologies within this standard for high-

vibration activities (i.e. piling), show that any significant vibration effects occur at relatively close range. Aligning with this, a construction vibration study area of 100m is suggested in the DMRB LA111, which is specific to road developments, but provides some guidance on the assessment of construction noise and vibration which may be relevant to other types of construction project. The construction vibration study area for the Proposed Development is defined as 100m from the red line boundary to take into account any potential construction works which may give rise to elevated levels of vibration.

13.3 Baseline Environment

A desktop review of the baseline environment has been undertaken using satellite imagery and recorded receptors from previous cumulative EIAs.

It is proposed that, should background noise data be required to set noise limits for the Proposed Development (i.e. should the '35 dB(A) condition' not be met), that the 2005 background noise monitoring data captured prior to the erection of (and in the EIA process) for Farr Wind Farm. The Farr Wind Farm EIAR did not include background noise measurements, as they were deemed unnecessary due to the large separation distance between turbines and dwellings. However, measurements were undertaken in July and August 2005 at neighbouring dwellings following the consent of the development. The results of these surveys were included in the assessment of the Glen Kyllachy Wind Farm. This data has been used to inform other wind farm noise assessments, as it represents a true background scenario in the absence of the recent wind farm developments in the area.

To supplement the 2005 survey data, reference will also be made to additional background noise monitoring undertaken in relation to Lynemore Wind Farm in 2024 at Lynemore Cottage, approximately 3.3km northeast of the red line boundary of the Proposed Development. The details of this noise monitoring survey is included in the Lynemore Wind Farm EIAR[38]. The analysis of noise data gathered in the Lynemore survey took into account contributions from surrounding noise sources which would give rise to atypical noise levels. The contributions from the A9 road were removed (based on wind direction). On review of noise levels measured when downwind of Farr/Glen Kyllachy Wind Farms, the consultant determined that exclusion of this data would have resulted in a higher background. As such, the data was retained.

[38] Hoare Lea - Lynemore Wind Farm EIAR Appendix 11.1: Environmental Noise Assessment (25 Feb 2025)

Table 13-1: Baseline Noise Monitoring Survey Data from Previous Wind Development EIA Application

Survey Dates	Data Source	Noise Monitoring Locations	Guidance Followed
4th July to 3rd August 2005	RWE npower Glen Kyllachy WF Environmental Assessment	1. Asgard 2. Dalmagarry 3. Easter Woodend 4. Gaich 5. Kennels House 6. Moy More House 7. Tomatin 8. Wester Lairgs	ETSU-R-97
18th April to 2nd May 2024	Hoare Lea Lynemore Wind Farm EIA Report Appendix 11.1	Lynemore Cottage	ETSU-R-97

13.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

National Planning Framework 4 (Scottish Government, 2023)

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) establishes the national planning policy context for development proposals in Scotland, including renewable energy development such as onshore wind farms. It sets out the overarching policy framework within which the acceptability of such proposals is considered, including matters relating to environmental effects and sustainable development.

Onshore Wind Policy Statement (Scottish Government, 2022)

The Onshore Wind Policy Statement provides specific national policy support for onshore wind development. In respect of noise assessment, Section 3.7 advises that the ETSU-R-97 framework should be applied to the assessment of noise from wind energy developments, with the Institute of Acoustics' Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise (IOA GPG) used as supporting guidance alongside ETSU-R-97.

Planning Advice Note PAN 1/2011 (Scottish Government, 2011)

PAN 1/2011 provides general planning advice on the role of the planning system in preventing and limiting the adverse effects of noise, while avoiding undue constraint on development and investment. The guidance addresses a range of noise-related planning matters, including construction noise and operational noise from wind

farms including specifying appropriate assessment methodologies for 'potentially noisy developments'.

In the context of wind energy, it is relevant because it confirms that wind turbine and wind farm proposals should be considered through the planning process with proper attention to potential noise impacts on nearby noise-sensitive receptors, and that noise impact assessment should be informed by the accompanying Technical Advice Note (TAN).

For wind energy developments specifically, PAN 1/2011 points applicants and planning authorities to the Scottish Government's separate Onshore Wind Policy Statement which confirms that ETSU-R-97 should be followed when assessing and rating noise from wind energy developments.

Assessment of Noise: Technical Advice Note (Scottish Government, 2011)

This Technical Advice Note (TAN) supplements the guidance within PAN 1/2011 and provides guidance which may assist in the technical evaluation of noise assessment. The TAN includes the suitable methodologies for various development types, including the use of ETSU-R-97 for the assessment and rating of wind turbine noise, and BS5228 for the control of construction noise and vibration.

Control of Pollution Act 1974

PAN 1/2011 and the associated TAN indicate that construction noise may be controlled through planning conditions limiting noise emissions from temporary construction sites, or through the Control of Pollution Act 1974. Section 60 provides the Local Authority with the power to impose conditions to control noise from construction activities, while Section 61 allows the developer to seek prior consent from the Local Authority for a proposed method of working before commencement of site works.

The Highland-wide Local Development Plan

The Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) forms the relevant strategic development plan for THC outwith the Cairngorms National Park and establishes the principal local planning policy framework against which the proposal will be assessed.

In relation to noise, HwLDP Policy 67 states that renewable energy proposals, including wind energy proposals, will be assessed having regard to the safety and

amenity of regularly occupied buildings, including the likely effect of noise generation. Policy 72 further requires that proposals that may result in significant pollution, including noise, are supported by a detailed assessment of the levels, character, transmission and receiving environment of the potential pollution, and that appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are identified. These policies indicate that wind turbine or wind farm development would be expected to include a robust noise assessment and, where necessary, mitigation and monitoring measures.

ETSU-R-97 The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms (report from working group) is used throughout the UK to assess wind farm noise in planning applications. It was prepared by a Noise Working Group established in 1995 by the Department of Trade and Industry through the Energy Technology Support Unit (ETSU), with membership including developers, noise consultants, environmental health officers and other relevant stakeholders. The report was intended to provide developers and planners with guidance on the environmental assessment of wind turbine noise.

Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 (Institute of Acoustics, 2013)

The IOA GPG provides detailed guidance on the application of ETSU-R-97 to wind turbine noise assessments. The Scottish Government has endorsed this guidance and states that it should be used by IOA members and others undertaking assessments in accordance with ETSU-R-97. The GPG is a practical guide to the assessment of wind turbine noise which will form the basis of both the operational noise scoping report and the future EIA Noise and Vibration chapter.

BS 5228: Noise and vibration control on construction and open sites

For detailed guidance on construction noise, the TAN accompanying PAN 1/2011 refers to BS 5228. The updated 2014 version is the relevant edition for use in the planning context and provides guidance on the control of noise and vibration during construction activities.

Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA111

The purpose of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA111 is to provide a methodology for identifying likely significant effects due to noise and vibration relating to the construction and operation of roads. Although specific to road schemes, the DMRB LA111 sets out some useful methodologies that can be applied to the construction phase of other schemes; specifically the assessment of

construction traffic noise and the definition of construction noise and vibration study areas.

13.5 Assessment of Effects

For each aspect scoped into the Noise and Vibration assessment, the magnitude of impact will be determined with reference to the appropriate assessment methodologies/guidance documents as set out in Table 13-2 below.

Significance of effect will be determined using the matrix shown in Table 13-3 which takes into account both the magnitude of impact and the sensitivity of receptor. For noise impacts, receptors will primarily comprise residential dwellings which are considered to be highly sensitive.

Table 13-2: Magnitude of Impact Reference Documents

Aspect	Methodology/Criteria Used	Comments
Operational Noise	ETSU-R-97 EH Engagement/Approved wind farm decision notices	Significant impact if limits exceeded
Construction and Decommissioning Noise	BS5228 Part 1	Magnitude of impact based on predicted levels relative to thresholds linked to baseline
Construction and Operational Traffic Noise	DMRB LA111	Magnitude of impact based on % increase of traffic relative to baseline
Construction Vibration	BS5228 Part 2	Magnitude of impact based on predicted levels relative to fixed PPV thresholds for frequency ranges

Table 13-3: Assessment of Significance Matrix

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact				
	No Change	Negligible	Low	Medium	High
Negligible	No Change	Negligible	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor
Low	-	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Minor or Moderate
Medium	-	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate or Major
High	-	Minor	Minor or Moderate	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial
Very High	-	Minor	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial	Substantial

Cumulative Operational Noise Assessment

There is potential for cumulative operational noise effects from the Proposed Development operating concurrently with other wind farm developments.

An all-encompassing list of cumulative projects is provided within Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report. As described in Section 13.2, all of the operational, proposed and consented wind farm developments within 20km of the Proposed Development will be considered within the cumulative noise study area. This will be refined with operational noise modelling carried out to identify where potential cumulative noise impacts may occur.

The cumulative noise impact assessment will draw upon submitted EIAR Noise and Vibration chapters and technical appendices of existing or proposed wind energy projects to create a cumulative operational noise model. Cognisance will also be taken of any operational noise conditions (or proposed conditions) associated with each project included in the cumulative noise assessment.

Operational Noise Limits

The assessment of operational wind turbine noise is carried out by comparison of predicted LA90 sound pressure levels to noise limits for quiet day and night-time periods as set out in ETSU-R-97. Fixed limits are provided in ETSU-R-97 for quiet daytime and night-time periods which apply at all wind speeds. Should noise from wind turbines (including any existing turbines) exceed the fixed limit at any wind

speed, noise limits are derived from the existing background noise levels (LA90), measured across a range of wind speeds.

On the collection of background noise survey data, the IOA GPG states that "particular care should be taken with planning surveys where there are other wind turbines in the area. The contribution to background noise levels of existing wind turbines has to be discounted in determining the background noise levels".

Any background noise monitoring undertaken today would include contributions from existing wind energy developments in the area (see Section 13.3). As such, the receptors in the area surrounding the Proposed Development are subject to noise limits associated with the original background noise survey in 2005. This was prior to any wind farm development. As such, the noise limit must now be apportioned to all wind turbine developments contributing to noise levels at receptors, with priority to those existing developments or further along in the planning process. To ensure that the cumulative noise impact is robust and sensitive to the planning history of the area, ongoing engagement with the Environmental Health Department of the THC will be vital throughout the EIA process.

Appropriate operational noise limits will be determined in accordance with ETSU-R-97 and the IOA GPG, with reference to all relevant cumulative applications and planning conditions, and through liaison with the Environmental Health Department of THC.

13.6 Scope of Assessment

Following review of the Site baseline, all relevant policy and guidance and the scoping layout of the Proposed Development, it is proposed that it is appropriate for the scope of the EIA Noise and Vibration Assessment to consider Operational Wind Turbine Noise only.

Matters to be Scoped Out

The elements scoped out of the Noise and Vibration Assessment are summarised in Table 13-4.

Table 13-4: Elements Scoped Out of the Noise and Vibration Assessment

Impact	Justification
Construction	
Construction Noise	There are no noise-sensitive receptors located within the 300m construction noise study area, with the closest receptor(s) located at a distance of 390m from the red line boundary and >2.3km from any proposed turbine.
Vibration	There are no receptors located within the construction vibration study area of 100m. Notwithstanding this in the event that stone is required to be extracted from borrow pits by blasting, such effects will be managed through a Scheme of Blasting.
Operation and Maintenance	
Transformers noise	Turbine transformers will be accommodated within external kiosks beside proposed turbines. Given the substantial separation distance (>2.3km) between the turbines and nearest noise-sensitive receptor, transformer noise is to be scoped out of assessment.
Operational Traffic	Operational traffic is likely to be negligible and therefore is scoped out of the assessment.
Vibration effects	Operational vibration from turbines will be negligible at receptors due to the substantial separation distance (>2.3km) between the turbines and nearest vibration-sensitive receptor
Blade swish (Amplitude Modulation), Low frequency noise and infrasound	On the basis of current published evidence and the present ETSU-R-97 framework, low frequency noise, amplitude modulation and blade swish are not considered likely to give rise to significant effects requiring separate assessment for the Proposed Development; however, this position should remain under review in the event that updated wind-turbine noise guidance is issued, as current Scottish policy indicates that ETSU-R-97 should continue to be applied until such time as new guidance is produced
Decommissioning	
Decommissioning	Noise and vibration effects, including piling activities will generate decommissioning noise that may impact receptors. This would be similar in nature to those of construction but would be more limited in geographical extent and timescale. There are no noise-sensitive receptors located wtihin the decommissioning/construction noise study area. Any legislation, guidance or best practice relevant at the time of decommissioning would be complied with.

13.7 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree with the proposed scope of the assessment and the elements that we have proposed to scope out?
- Do you agree with the proposed study area for assessment of operational noise?
- Do you agree with the proposed approach to the assessment of cumulative operational noise?
- Do you agree with the proposed approach to setting operational noise limits for the Proposed Development based on background data collected for the Farr Wind Farm in 2005 and Lynemore Wind Farm in 2024?

14. CLIMATE CHANGE

14.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential climate impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation/maintenance and during decommissioning.

This section considers aspects associated with the Proposed Development in relation to climate and details the key receptors associated with climate and how that assessment is to be conducted.

Climate change is related to emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) into the atmosphere. It is considered appropriate to assess the impact of the Proposed Development on climate (for example GHG emissions) and also its vulnerability to climate change.

14.2 Study Area

The ZoI for climate includes the national environment (Scotland), where the receptor is the climate and the global atmosphere. Effects arising from the potential impacts on climate are considered to impact on a national level. National, regional, and local data has been considered where relevant and available.

Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions have a global climate warming effect. This is regardless of their rate of release, location, or the weather when released into the atmosphere. This is unlike pollutants that affect local air quality where the rate of release, location, and prevailing weather, as well as the amount of pollutant, determines the local concentrations and the impact. Any amount of CO2 released into the atmosphere will contribute to climate warming, the extent of which is determined by the magnitude of the release.

The Climate Study Area has been defined as both Scotland (National) and the Highland Council administrative boundary (Local), which encompasses the Site and reflects the relevant administrative boundary for climate data and subsequent assessment. This approach aligns with the availability of regional climate datasets and enables a consistent evaluation of baseline conditions and projected climate trends. The Climate Study Area is illustrated in Figure 14-1.

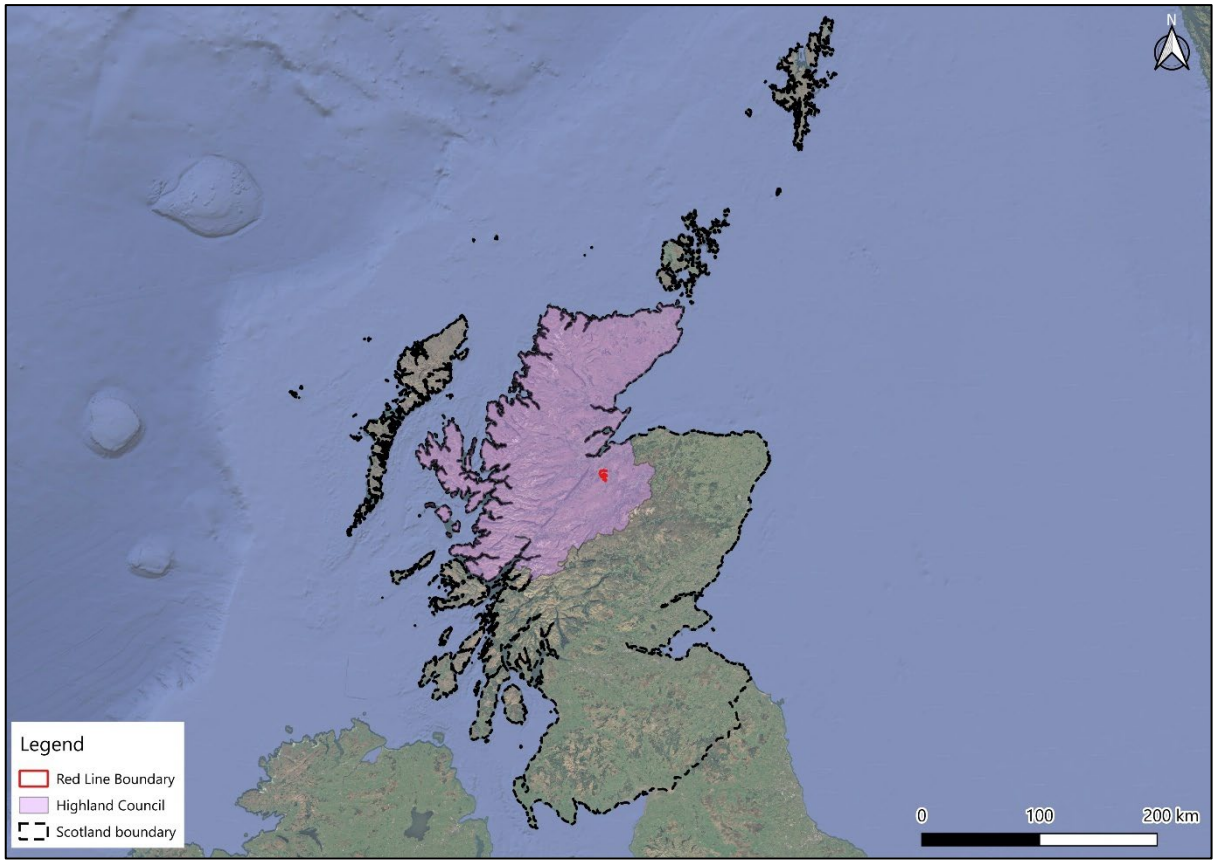

Figure 14-1: Climate Study Area

14.3 Baseline Environment

Scotland typically experiences cool summers, mild winters, and consistent rainfall throughout the year. However, the climate is undergoing significant changes. In recent decades, there has been a noticeable warming trend and alterations in rainfall patterns. Projections indicate future conditions will include warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers accompanied by more frequent extreme weather events. These shifts are expected to have substantial impacts on daily life and societal practices (Scotland Environment, January 2024).

The Proposed Development is located within THC. Estimated GHG Emissions associated with the respective administrative area obtained from the most recent UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) dataset for local authorities (i.e. for the year 2023) (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), 2024)), is presented in Table 14-1 compared with relevant emission totals for Scotland as a whole.

Scotland

MtCO2e refers to million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, which provides a consistent basis for assessing the contribution of greenhouse gases to global warming. The baseline period uses 1990 for carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, and 1995 for hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride and nitrogen trifluoride. As part of the release, the figures have been revised to reflect methodological improvements and new data. As a result, comparisons with figures published in earlier releases should not be used, as they may produce incorrect year-on-year percentage changes.

In 2023, Scottish net emissions of the basket of seven greenhouse gases were estimated to be 39.6 MtCO2e. Emissions reduced by 0.8 MtCO2e compared to 2022; a 1.9 % reduction (Figure 14-2).

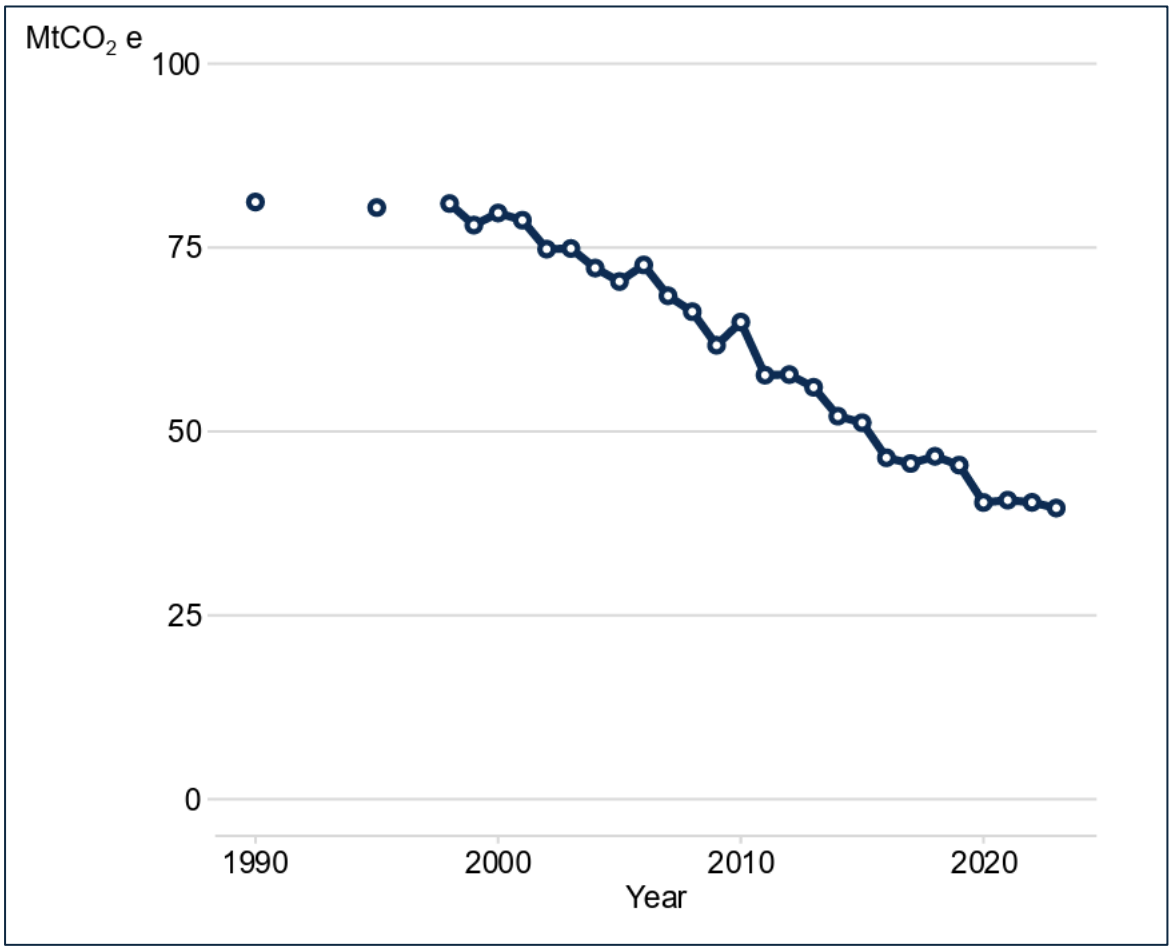

Figure 14-2: Scotland GHG Emissions 1990-2023

There was a very large reduction in emissions in the electricity generation sector of 0.8 MtCO2e in 2023, with a large reduction in gas-fired electricity generation being

principally responsible for this drop. More modest reductions were seen in Fuel Supply (-0.4 MtCO2e); and Buildings and Product Uses, Domestic Transport, Industry and waste; which all reduced emissions by 0.1 MtCO2e when compared to 2022.

There was a substantial reduction in emissions from the electricity generation sector in 2023, primarily driven by a marked decrease in gas-fired electricity generation. More moderate reductions were also recorded in fuel supply, and in buildings and product use, domestic transport, industry and waste, each of which fell by 0.1 MtCO2e compared with 2022. Agricultural emissions remained broadly stable between 2022 and 2023, decreasing only marginally by 0.1 %.

These reductions were partly offset by increases in emissions from international aviation and shipping, which rose by 0.3 MtCO2e and returned to levels seen before the COVID-19 pandemic. Emissions from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) also increased in the latest year by 0.6 MtCO2e, reflecting a reduction in the forestry sink as a result of historic planting reaching maturity.

Between 1990 and 2023, estimated net emissions fell by 51.3%, equivalent to a reduction of 41.6 MtCO2e. Over this period, all sectors recorded reductions apart from international aviation and shipping. The largest contributions to this overall reduction, in order of significance, were as follows:

- Electricity supply emissions fell by 13.8 MtCO2e, representing a 93.4% reduction.
- Industrial emissions decreased by 7.5 MtCO2e, or 59%.
- LULUCF reduced its net emissions by 5.5 MtCO2e since 1990.
- Waste management emissions declined by 4.6 MtCO2e, equivalent to a 73.1% reduction.
- Fuel supply emissions fell by 3.7 MtCO2e, or 55.9%.
- Buildings and product use emissions decreased by 3.4 MtCO2e, representing a 31.0% reduction.
- Domestic transport emissions fell by 2.4 MtCO2e, or 17.3%.
- Agricultural emissions reduced by 1.1 MtCO2e, equivalent to a 13.0% reduction.
- International aviation and shipping emissions increased by 0.4 MtCO2e over the period.

Highland Council

LULUCF net emissions related to GHG emissions in the Highland Council are estimated to have accounted for 30.25% of total emissions in the area and 21.43%

as a result of agriculture. Between 2022 and 2023, LULUCF sector emissions rose by 0.6 million tonnes of CO2e (MtCO2e) across the UK, largely due to lower emissions sinks from forest land. Despite this overall rise, 75% (272 of 361) of local authority areas saw a decrease in LULUCF sector net emissions. At the local level, greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture decreased 62% (223 of 361) of local authority areas between 2022 and 2023. The agriculture sector was the largest emitting sector in 13% (48 of 361) of local authority areas in 2023. Looking at longer term trends, 92% (333 of 361) local authority areas have seen a reduction in emissions from agriculture since 2005.

Table 14-1: Estimated GHG Emissions Associated with the Highland Council Area (2023)

Highland Council Area GHG Emissions in 2023 (t CO_2e)	
Industry	225.0
Commercial	113.6
Public Sector	26.4
Domestic	360.5
Road Transport (A roads)	424.8
Road Transport (Motorways)	0.0
Road Transport (Minor Roads)	120.9
Disel Railways	12.3
Transport Other	15.1
Agriculture	622.4
Waste	104.2
LULUCF Net Emissions	878.9
Total net Emissions	2904.3

Flood Risk and Climate Change

Climate change has the potential to increase flood risk in upland environments, particularly through changes in rainfall patterns, more intense rainfall events and greater surface water runoff. In upland locations such as the Proposed Development Site, flooding is more likely to arise from pluvial processes and from the response of small upland watercourses and drainage channels to heavy rainfall, rather than from coastal or tidal influences. In addition, saturated ground conditions, shallow soils and steep topography can increase the likelihood of rapid runoff and localised ponding, particularly where drainage pathways are limited or where the ground has been disturbed.

SEPA flood mapping indicates that the Site is subject to medium risk from surface water and small watercourse flooding, with no specific risk identified from river or coastal flooding. This suggests that flooding at the Site is most likely to be associated with rainfall runoff and localised drainage features rather than from main

river channels or coastal processes. In upland settings, such risks may be exacerbated by weather extremes, seasonal saturation and temporary exceedance of existing drainage capacity. As a result, future development should be designed to remain resilient to changing climatic conditions and to accommodate appropriate drainage and runoff control measures.

Flood risk management planning in Scotland provides a coordinated framework for reducing flood risk and identifying the areas where action is most needed. These plans support a targeted, long-term approach to flood risk management and help ensure that responsibilities are aligned between the relevant authorities. For upland developments, this reinforces the need for site-specific drainage design and water management measures that take account of local topography, runoff behaviour and future climate change impacts.

Deep Peat

Phase 1 peat probing was undertaken in May 2026 within the interpolated results illustrated within Figure 14-3. Please refer to Section 10 Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Peat, for full details on Phase 1 peat probing survey.

Carbon-rich soils comprise peat soils and peaty soils. In Scotland, peat soils are characterised by a surface peat layer containing more than 60% organic matter and measuring at least 50 cm in depth. Peaty soils have a thinner surface peat layer of less than 50 cm. Peat forms in naturally cold, highly acidic and waterlogged conditions, where plant material decomposes very slowly and is gradually converted into peat, a stable form of soil organic matter that can persist for long periods if left undisturbed.

Carbon-rich soils represent Scotland's principal terrestrial store of organic carbon and, when degraded, contribute significantly to annual CO2e emissions. Scotland's soils are a major carbon sink, containing more than 3,000 megatonnes of carbon. By comparison, this accounts for more than half of the UK's total soil carbon store and around 60 times more than Scotland's vegetation carbon, with most of this stored as organic carbon within peat and peaty soils.

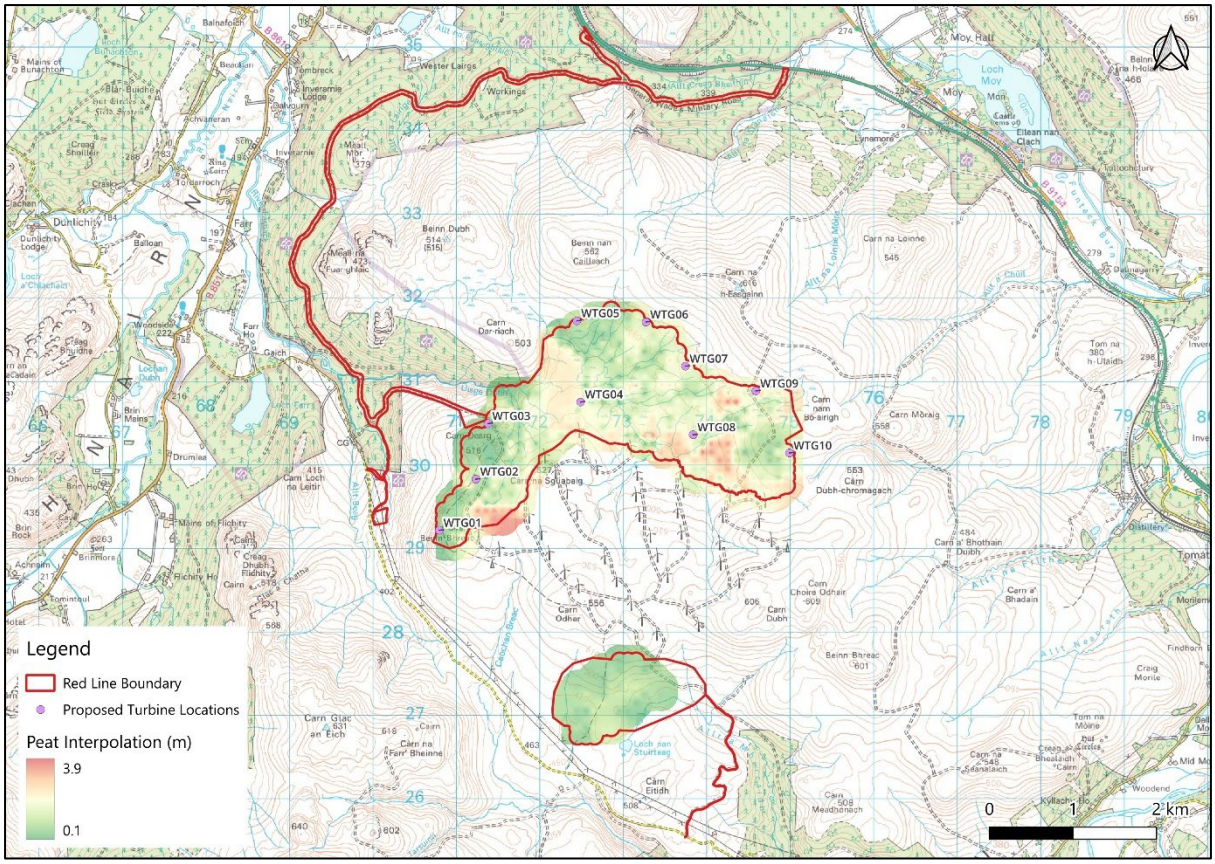

Figure 14-3: Phase 1 Peat Probing

14.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

The methodology and associated impact assessment had regard to the general guidance regarding the undertaking of a scoping report, as presented in the following climate specific guidance as follows:

- PAS 2080:2023 'Carbon Management in Buildings and Infrastructure' (British Standards Institution, 2023);
- Scottish Government Energy and Climate Change Directorate Carbon calculator for wind farms on Scottish peatlands (Version 2.9.0, February 2022);
- Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) (Edition 2.1, April 2026) Guidance on 'Assessing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Evaluating their Significance';
- Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) (2020) Environmental Impact Assessment Guide to Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation; and
- Scottish Renewables Guidelines on Streamlining Environmental Impact Assessment for Onshore Wind Farms September 2025.

Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) Assessing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Evaluating Their Significance

ISEP (formerly Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment) published this guidance (Edition 2.1, April 2026) to assist practitioners with addressing GHG emissions assessment and mitigation. The guidance indicates that a 'good practice' approach is advocated where GHG emissions are always considered and reported but at varying degrees of detail depending on the project.

The guidance sets out there are a number of different assessment methods available for measuring and quantifying the GHG emissions associated with the built environment, ranging from general guidance to form standards. The Guidance recognising that:

'Qualitative assessments are acceptable, for example: where data is unavailable or where mitigation measures are agreed early on in the design phase with design and engineering teams.'

The assessment in this section of the Scoping Report presents a qualitative assessment and discussion in terms of GHG emissions.

Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) Environmental Impact Assessment Guide to Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation, June 2020

The Guide to Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation (June 2020) provides an updated framework for the effective consideration of climate change resilience and adaption in the assessment process). This document is a revision of the 2015 ISEP guidance on Climate Change Resilience and Adaption in assessment and reflects lessons learnt from emerging practice.

A step-by-step method presented within this guidance is set out below and has been given due cognisance within this chapter:

- Step 0 – Building climate resilience into the project by considering incorporating resilience during the design stage and by identifying appropriate mitigation measures;
- Step 1 – Scoping for the project; e.g. identify the climate change projections for use in the assessment and identify key climatic variables relevant to the project;

- Step 2 – Defining the future (climate) baseline; define future conditions using selected climate change projections (i.e. increase in rainfall, increase in mean summer temperature and wind strength).
- Step 3 – Identifying and determining sensitivity of receptors;
- Step 4 – Reviewing and determining magnitude of the effect; consider probability and consequence to determine the magnitude of the effect;
- Step 5 – Determination of significance;
- Step 6 – Developing additional adaptation / mitigation measures;
- Step 7 (Development permitted) – Monitoring and adaptive management by implementing mitigation measures.

Climate Assessments produced in line with this guidance are to be proportionate in their approach and not include superfluous assessment that does not address likely material issues.

In lieu of a prescribed methodology, ISEP guidance on Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation (2020) has been prepared to assist practitioners with the effective consideration "of both climate change resilience and adaptation in the assessment process".

The guidance stresses that climate change should be an integrated consideration within the assessment, by undertaking an assessment that is "proportional to the evidence base available to support any assessment" and focusses on impacts "specific to project".

Scottish Renewables Guidelines on Streamlining Environmental Impact Assessment for Onshore Wind Farms September 2025

As part of an initiative to accelerate the planning processes for onshore wind projects in Scotland, the Scottish Onshore Wind Sector Deal (the Sector Deal) includes a commitment to work collaboratively towards streamlining EIA.

EIA Reports for onshore wind projects often exceed the minimum legal requirements in order to facilitate effective stakeholder engagement. The Guidance therefore adopts a series of principles intended to support a more streamlined EIA process, including: using scoping to concentrate on those matters with a genuine potential for significant effects, informed by project-specific information and more than 30 years of wind farm development experience in Scotland; making efficient use of consultee resources; addressing scoped-in topics clearly and concisely; and reducing the need for further information requests through robust scoping and thorough assessment of relevant topics.

In regard to climate, the requirement for climate impact assessment is addressed through the use of the Scottish Government Carbon Calculator and other developing guidance relating to carbon balance and lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment. Consideration should also be given to the vulnerability of the Proposed Development to climate-related risks, with climate change adaptation addressed within each relevant topic assessment where appropriate.

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

United Kingdom

In December 2020, the UK communicated its 2030 Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The 2030 NDC, which was updated in September 2022, commits the UK to reducing economy-wide GHG emissions by at least 68% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. In January 2025, the UK communicated its 2035 NDC under the Paris Agreement to the UNFCCC, which commits the UK to reducing economy-wide GHG emissions by at least 81% by 2035, compared to 1990 levels.

Through the Climate Change Act 2008, as amended by the 2050 Target Amendment in June 2019, the UK Government has also committed to:

- reduce GHG emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050; and
- contribute to global emission reductions, to limit global temperature rise to as little as possible above 2°C.

To meet these targets, the UK Government has set five-yearly carbon budgets, which currently run until 2037. They restrict the amount of GHG the UK can legally emit in a five-year period. The carbon budgets during each period and the corresponding reduction compared to 1990 levels are presented in Table 14-2.

Table 14-2: UK Government Carbon Budgets

Carbon Budget Period	Carbon Budget ($MtCo_2e$)	Reduction below 1990 levels
4th Carbon Budget (2023 to 2027)	1,950	51% by 2025
5th Carbon Budget (2028 to 2032)	1,725	57% by 2030
6th Carbon Budget (2033 to 2037)	965	78% by 2035

In February 2025, the Climate Change Committee advised the UK government to set the 7th Carbon Budget at 535 MtCO2e for the period 2038-2042, aiming for an 87% reduction in emissions compared to 1990 levels by 2040. Whilst this recommendation has yet to be adopted, and therefore has not been considered within this assessment, the UK government must set the 7th Carbon Budget by June 2026.

Scotland

Scotland's climate change policy framework has evolved through a series of legislative and strategic measures aimed at supporting the transition to net zero by 2045. The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, as subsequently amended, established the statutory basis for emissions reduction in Scotland. The Climate Change Committee has indicated that Scotland is unlikely to meet its 2030 emissions reduction target, and the Scottish Government has confirmed its intention to take forward the carbon budget approach in order to provide a revised statutory framework for emissions reduction.

The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2024 replaced the former system of annual and interim emissions reduction targets with a framework of Scottish carbon budgets, which was subsequently implemented through the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 (Scottish Carbon Budgets) Amendment Regulations 2025. The carbon budgets set are as follows:

- 2026 to 2030 43% proportion of budget-relevant baseline;
- 2031 to 2035 31% proportion of budget-relevant baseline;
- 2036 to 2040 20% proportion of budget-relevant baseline; and
- 2041 to 2045 6% proportion of budget-relevant baseline.

Relevant policy documents, including Scotland's Climate Change Plan, the Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programmes, National Planning Framework 4 and the Scottish Government Environment Strategy, all emphasise the need for development to support emissions reduction, climate resilience and adaptation. In planning terms, these policies require development proposals to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions where possible, reduce dependence on carbon-intensive travel and energy use, and take account of both current and future climate risks. The policy context also places significant weight on the contribution of development to wider decarbonisation objectives across key sectors, including transport, energy, buildings, agriculture, land use, forestry and waste.

The Highland Council - Climate Change Adaptation Strategy August 2025

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, as subsequently amended, places a legal duty on the Council to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Recommended for approval in August 2025, the Council's own updates in early 2026 indicate that adaptation work is continuing through a broader climate resilience programme, with governance, planning, and delivery arrangements still progressing.

The strategy outlines how THC will turn strategic goals into tangible actions, strengthening resilience across all services and communities. The strategy identifies a series of actions, organised under six Priority Themes:

- Flooding and Coastal Erosion;
- Nature-based Solutions;
- Heat and Health Resilience;
- Resilient Infrastructure and Services;
- Community Preparedness and Inclusion; and
- Economic Opportunities in Adaptation

These priorities will guide the development of the Council's Adaptation Action Plan. By prioritising actions that deliver multiple co-benefits for people, nature, and the economy, THC aims to build a Highlands that is both prepared for, and prosperous in, a changing climate.

Furthermore, the THC is committed to working with organisations such as the Highland Adapts partnership to bring together communities, businesses, land managers, and agencies to create a climate-ready Highland. This also includes collaboration with regional and national partners and networks such as the Public Sector Climate Adaptation Network (PSCAN).

Potential Impacts

Construction

GHG during the construction phase will be unavoidable given the scale of the Proposed Development and the construction methods required, including the use of heavy plant and machinery. Disturbance of any carbon-rich soils within the Site could result in the release of stored carbon into the atmosphere in the form of carbon dioxide. Accordingly, in addition to the embodied GHG associated with the

manufacture and delivery of the turbines and associated ancillary infrastructure, construction activities may also reduce the Site's carbon sequestration capacity.

Within the EIAR process, climate change is considered in terms of both the Proposed Development's contribution to GHG with global warming potential and its resilience to the effects of climate change. GHG may arise across the lifecycle of a development, including during construction and operation, and are influenced by factors such as material use and energy demand. The Applicant will implement best practice measures during construction to reduce fuel consumption, energy use, raw material consumption and waste generation.

Construction of the Proposed Development will generate a limited amount of GHG, including embodied carbon within the turbines and ancillary infrastructure. Temporary emissions will also arise from vehicle and construction plant exhausts, together with the potential release of carbon dioxide during dewatering and the disturbance of peat and peat soils. Neither of these sources is considered likely to be significant in terms of global warming potential (GWP).

In the context of the cumulative contribution of GHG to climate change, and the sensitivity of the global climate system to changes in emissions, it is not anticipated that construction emissions would materially compromise the UK's ability to meet its carbon reduction targets, as these effects would be short term and temporary in nature.

Operation and Maintenance

The operation of the Proposed Development is unlikely to contribute a significant amount of GHG emissions and can be viewed as achieving emissions savings by reducing the consumption of fossil fuel generated mains electricity.

Decommissioning

GHG emissions during the decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development will be unavoidable, again due to the requirement for heavy plant and machinery. As a result, emissions arising from the decommissioning phase are likely to have a negative but temporary effect on the climate.

Lifecycle emissions

Given the cumulative nature of GHG, the assessment of a development should consider total lifecycle emissions rather than the impacts of each phase in isolation.

Any adverse effects associated with construction and decommissioning would be outweighed by the beneficial effect of generating low-carbon electricity through the Proposed Development. Depending on the final design, the overall net effect has the potential to be significantly beneficial.

Assessment of Effects

'Climate' is generally understood to refer to the prevailing weather conditions over an extended period of time, while climate change describes changes in long-term observed climate patterns. As a topic within EIAR assessment, climate change is a relatively recent consideration. Guidance in this area continues to develop, and there is currently no prescribed approach for how climate change should be addressed within an EIAR. However, ISEP has produced guidance, considered further below, which identifies the two principal approaches that may be adopted to assess a project's impact on climate change.

Direct and indirect effects that are considered to have an impact on environmental receptors as a result of the Proposed Development can be defined as follows:

- Direct GHG emissions are emissions from sources that are owned or controlled by the operator. Examples include vehicular emissions, plant use (such as generators) and independent onsite energy generation (oil, gas and diesel); and
- Indirect GHG emissions are emissions that are a consequence of the construction of operational activities of a development but are a result of procurement and / or activities controlled by another entity. Examples include energy generation and the manufacture of materials (known as 'embodied' carbon).

The methodology used to calculate predicted CO2 emissions from the Proposed Development is based upon the work of Nayak et al. (2008, 2010) and Smith et al. (2011), which are the basis for the latest version (V2.9.0) of the Scottish Government's Carbon Calculator Tool. This tool enables carbon losses and carbon savings to be quantified across the project lifecycle stages (construction, operation and decommissioning/site restoration), and these losses and savings are combined to establish the overall (net) carbon effect of the Proposed Development, as well as its 'carbon payback period'.

The assessment will also estimate the Proposed Development's net GHG impact and 'carbon balance period' (the time following the start of wind farm operation at which the GHG emissions associated with manufacture, construction and

decommissioning activities are offset through GHG savings from the wind farm's operation).

During the design process, the wind turbines will be located so as to avoid the deepest peat areas as far as practicable, and measures to reduce peat disturbance, particularly during excavation works, will be considered. To further minimise peat disturbance during both construction and decommissioning, best practice measures will be incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Significance

In light of the global urgency of climate change, the sensitivity of the receptor, namely the global climate, to changes in GHG is considered to be very high. The significance of effects is therefore determined by the scale and timing of GHG, together with the extent to which severe climate change can be avoided (Table 14-3).

In accordance with ISEPs Guide to Assessing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Evaluating their Significance (Edition 2.1, April 2026), any project that results in GHG being avoided or removed from the atmosphere is considered to have a beneficial effect of always significant value. In such circumstances, the project would materially exceed national net zero requirements and align with the Paris Agreement objective of limiting global temperature increase to well below 2°C, with efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C.

Table 14-3: Sensitivity of Receptor Criteria

Significance	Level	Criteria
Significant	Major adverse	Project adopts a business-as-usual approach, not compatible with the national Net Zero trajectory, or aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement (i.e., a science-based 1.5°C trajectory). GHG impacts are not mitigated or reduced in line with local or national policy for projects of this type.
	Moderate adverse	Project's GHG impacts are partially mitigated, and may partially meet up-to-date policy; however emissions are still not compatible with the national Net Zero trajectory, or aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Not significant	Minor adverse	Project may have residual emissions, but the project is compatible with the goals of the Paris Agreement, complying with up-to-date policy and good practice.
	Negligible	Project has minimal residual emissions and goes substantially beyond the goals of the Paris Agreement, complying with up-to-date policy and best practice.
Significant	Beneficial	Project causes GHG emissions to be avoided or removed from the atmosphere, substantially exceeding the goals of the Paris Agreement with a positive climate impact.

Cumulative Impacts

An all-encompassing list of cumulative projects is provided within Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report.

As stated by ISEP Edition 2.1, April 2026, all GHG emissions are considered significant and therefore will contribute to climate change. The cumulative GHG emissions would not just be limited to the cumulative schemes listed, as the receptor of the GHG emissions assessment is the global climate, with the UK National Carbon Budget used as a proxy. Consequentially, whilst any GHG emissions across the UK could be considered to have cumulative effects with the GHG emissions of the Proposed Development, the assessment methodology has by default already covered this wider perspective.

The cumulative impact of carbon emissions arising from global human activity is “High”. This is true to the nature of climate change as a global, cumulative problem. It is assumed that all committed developments will be required to meet relevant standards for emissions reduction and to comply with related planning policy. On this basis, it is considered appropriate to assume that any applications that are consented include ‘reasonable’ measures to avoid, reduce and /or offset the generation of GHG and therefore that no significant cumulative effects are anticipated.

14.5 Scope of Assessment

Any carbon contribution must be measured against the energy offset created by the Proposed Development which will lead to net positive impact on climate change.

The Scottish Governments Carbon Calculator Tool will be used to produce a statement of the expected carbon savings over the lifetime of the proposed development which will form a Technical Appendix to the EIAR.

Carbon emissions associated with ground conditions, access works, foundations, materials used, transportation of materials and components to site, and any carbon loss through tree felling or through degradation of peaty soils will be considered.

Matters to be Scoped Out

Emissions associated with the Proposed Development will be limited to temporary and short-term emissions of exhaust gases from vehicles and construction plant, and embodied carbon content of materials. Neither source is considered likely to be significant in terms of GWP due to the temporary and intermittent nature and is therefore scoped out of the EIAR.

Scotland is projected to experience warmer temperatures, higher rainfall levels and sea level rise as a result of climate change. However, these effects are not likely to have a significant impact on the Proposed Development, given its inherent resilience in relation to temperature, together with the elevated and inland nature of the turbine locations in respect of sea level rise.

A further consideration in relation to climate change is sea level pressure, which can influence wind speed. Projections for sea level pressure remain highly uncertain. However, turbine operation is limited by built-in braking and shutdown mechanisms, meaning that in the event of severe wind conditions, the turbines would cease operation. On this basis, it is considered unlikely that climate change would give rise to significant effects on the Proposed Development, and the Climate Resilience topic is therefore proposed to be scoped out of further assessment.

In terms of climate adaptation, consideration would be given to the potential implications of future climate change on turbine design in line with the Scottish Renewables Guidance on Streamlining Environmental Impact Assessment for Onshore Wind Farms (September, 2025).

Where appropriate, climate change adaptation measures will instead be addressed within the relevant EIAR chapters, including peat, hydrology, ecology and any other topics considered relevant for the Proposed Development.

Taking into account the above approach, which includes an assessment of carbon savings and employing professional judgement it is proposed that a separate chapter on climate change is not required as part of the EIAR.

14.6 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree that all sensitive receptors and impact pathways have been identified for climate?
- Do you agree with the proposed approach to the assessment of climate?
- Do you agree that a separate chapter on climate change is not required as part of the EIAR?
- Do you agree that the proposed approach, whereby relevant topic consultants assess climate adaptation impacts of the Proposed Development within their respective EIAR chapters, is appropriate?

14.7 References

- Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)
- Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (S.I. 180 of 2011)
- Clean Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC)
- Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP), Assessing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Evaluating Their Significance (Edition 2.1, April 2026)
- Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP), Environmental Impact Assessment Guide to Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation, June 2020.
- SEPA Flood Risk Management Plan Highland and Argyll Local District Plan (Dec 2021)
- Climate Change Act 2008. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents.
- The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/12/contents.
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- Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2024. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2024/15
- The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 (Scottish Carbon Budgets) Amendment Regulations 2025. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2025/281/regulation/2/made
- Scottish Renewables Guidelines on Streamlining Environmental Impact Assessment for Onshore Wind Farms September 2025

15. AVIATION

15.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential aviation impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation and maintenance and during decommissioning.

Wind developments have the potential to impact aviation and radar infrastructure in their vicinity. This is predominantly due to:

- wind turbines as physical structures that present a collision risk; and
- wind turbines interacting with electromagnetic signals by weakening a radio signal in the shadow of the wind development or reflection of an electromagnetic signal in unwanted directions.

It is recommended that Aviation be scoped out of the EIAR.

15.2 Study Area

The potential impact of the Proposed Development as a collision risk has considered aerodromes within a study area of 20km, based on the maximum distance of the largest protected surface in accordance with guidance set out by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), Regulatory Articles (Ministry of Defence), International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO) and European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

The relevant safeguarding distance for electromagnetic communications varies depending on the type of infrastructure being considered. Long-range radar used for en-route navigation purposes can reasonably be safeguarded against wind turbines at ranges of 100 km or more.

15.3 Baseline Environment

Pager Power has used its own database of aviation infrastructure to identify potential aviation effects of the Proposed Development.

Table 15-1 below summarises the identified aviation receptors as part of the baseline potentially impacted by the Proposed Development.

Table 15-1: Baseline Aviation Receptors

Receptor	Distance
Inverness Airport	20.8 km
Inverness Airport Primary Surveillance Radar	20.8 km
RAF Lossiemouth Primary Surveillance Radar	59.8 km
MOD Low Flying Area	-

15.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

The assessment of the effects of the proposed turbines will be based upon the relevant guidance and best practice.

It is necessary to take into account the aviation and air defence activities of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) as safeguarded by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO). The types of issues that will be addressed in the EIAR chapter include:

- Licensed and unlicensed aerodromes within the relevant safeguarding distances;
- MOD Airfields, both radar and non-radar equipped;
- MOD remote Air Traffic Control (ATC) radars;
- MOD air defence radars;
- UK Met Office meteorological radars; and,
- Military low-flying.

It is also necessary to take into account the possible effects of turbines upon the NATS (formally National Air Traffic Services) En Route Ltd (NERL) Communications, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS) equipment systems – a network of primary and secondary radars and navigation facilities around the country.

As well as examining the technical impact of turbines on Air Traffic Control (ATC) facilities, it is also necessary to consider the physical safeguarding of ATC operations using the criteria outlined in the relevant guidance to determine whether the Proposed Development will breach obstacle clearance criteria.

Pager Power's aviation database and assessment software will be used to identify potential aviation effects of the Proposed Development. Any potential effects will be

categorised based on industry experience and professional judgement. The results will then be used as a basis for consultation and liaison with relevant aviation bodies, including the MOD DIO, and NATS.

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Guidance and policy in respect of Aviation are dictated primarily by the Civil Aviation Publications (CAP) which are produced by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). There is also policy provided by the Ministry of Defence (MOD), NATS (formally National Air Traffic Services), International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO), European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and Eurocontrol. Specific document guidance documents relevant to the Proposed Development include:

- CAA (2022), CAP 168: Licensing of Aerodromes – Edition 12;
- CAA (2019), CAP 670: Air Traffic Services Safety Requirements – Edition 3;
- CAA (2020), CAP 738: Safeguarding of Aerodromes – Edition 3;
- Civil Aviation Authority (2016), CAP 764: CAA Policy and Guidelines on Wind Turbines – Edition 6;
- CAA (2018) CAP 777: Air Traffic Control (ATC) Surveillance Minimum Altitude Charts in UK Airspace Policy and Design Criteria;
- NATS Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) (digital resource, various publication dates);
- International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Procedures for Air Navigation Services, Aircraft Operations, Volume II Construction of Visual and Instrument Flight Procedures, Fifth Edition;
- EASA Certification Specifications and Guidance Material for Aerodrome Design (CS-ADR-DSN);
- EUROCONTROL Guidelines on assessing the potential impact of wind turbines on surveillance sensors; and,
- Air Navigation Order, 2016 – government legislation.

Assessment of Effects

The significance of effects will be identified in consideration of the magnitude of impact, and the sensitivity of the receptor. Each assessment will consider effects during construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning phases.

Table 15-2 below summarises the matrix that will determine the significance of effects.

Table 15-2: Assessment of Significance Matrix

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact				
	No Change	Negligible	Low	Medium	High
Negligible	No Change	Negligible	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor
Low	-	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Minor or Moderate
Medium	-	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate or Major
High	-	Minor	Minor or Moderate	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial
Very High	-	Minor	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial	Substantial

An all-encompassing list of cumulative projects is provided within Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report.

Of these projects, those relevant to inform the cumulative Aviation assessment of the Proposed Development are:

- Farr Wind Farm.

15.5 Scope of Assessment

The Proposed Development can pose a physical obstruction either to aviation operations at aerodromes, or in the vicinity of the development or aircraft transiting the area. Where turbines are within 20km of licensed and military aerodromes, assessment of the Proposed Development relative to the Obstacle Limitation Surfaces will be undertaken to consider the significance of the proposed turbines as a physical obstruction and collision risk. Further assessment of Instrument Flight Procedures may also be undertaken.

Where there is line of sight between turbines and air traffic control radars it is possible that the turbines may be detected by the radar, dependent on atmospheric conditions, and appear as clutter on the controllers' screens; such clutter can have a direct operational impact on air traffic control operations.

The EIA and accompanying Aviation Impact Assessment will identify the potential impacts and effects relevant to the topic and identify those impacts which are considered likely to result in significant effects, if any.

The Proposed Development will be designed to avoid impacts on aviation activity and infrastructure, where possible. Technical mitigation solutions are likely to be available if significant effects cannot be avoided.

Any technical mitigation will be implemented prior to the construction of the Proposed Development through consultation with the relevant safeguarding body. A record of these consultations will be included and documented in the EIA chapter. Any requirement for mitigation will likely be enforced via a planning condition.

15.6 Matters to be Scoped Out

The turbines are within 20km of Inverness Airport. At this distance, the turbines are laterally underneath and vertically clear of the Outer Horizontal Surface of the Obstacle Limitation Surfaces, therefore presenting a low risk as a physical obstruction. The receptor sensitivity is High, and the Magnitude of Impact is Negligible. The Significance of Effect is Minor and Not Significant.

The Proposed Development is within line-of-sight to the Primary Surveillance Radar (PSR) at Inverness Airport. Given that the existing Farr Wind Farm turbines are considered to be visible to Inverness Airport PSR, it is likely that the existing Farr Wind Farm has been considered operationally accommodatable or mitigated by Inverness Airport. It is therefore likely that the Proposed Development can also be considered operationally accommodatable and/or any mitigation can be extended to cover the Proposed Development. The receptor sensitivity is High, and the Magnitude of Impact is Low. The Significance of Effect is Minor and Not Significant.

The majority of the Proposed Development is hidden from the PSR at RAF Lossiemouth, with few turbines remaining within line-of-sight. The Proposed Development is located within the lateral limits of the ATC Surveillance Minimum Altitude Chart for RAF Lossiemouth, but not located near any published flight procedures associated with, nor is it within the Military Aerodrome Traffic Zone (MATZ). Therefore, is not predicted that the Proposed Development will have a significant operational impact on the PSR at RAF Lossiemouth. The receptor sensitivity is High, and the Magnitude of Impact is Low. The Significance of Effect is Minor and Not Significant.

The Proposed Development is located within a low-priority area of military low-flying activities.

It is therefore recommended to scope out Aviation.

15.7 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- For the safeguarding team at Inverness Airport: Can the Proposed Development be operationally accommodated for, or mitigated for the PSR, similarly to the existing Farr Wind Farm?
- For the MOD: Can the Proposed Development be operationally accommodated for, or mitigated for the PSR, similarly to the existing Farr Wind Farm?

16. TELECOMMUNICATIONS

16.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential telecommunications impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation and maintenance and during decommissioning.

Microwave and Ultra-High Frequency (UHF) wireless communication links are used to transmit information between two antennae via radio waves within a particular frequency band. Obstructions such as wind developments which are sited in between two microwave link antennae can partially block the radio signal passing between them, thereby reducing the functionality of the link, or by reflecting the signal between transmitter and receiver.

16.2 Study Area

There is no defined study area for impacts upon telecommunication infrastructure. The functionality of telecommunication infrastructure is safeguarded by ensuring turbines are kept clear of a defined distance from the link path and link masts.

16.3 Baseline Environment

The Ofcom Spectrum Information Portal has been reviewed to identify existing telecommunication infrastructure.

Pager Power will consult with the most prevalent telecommunications link operators (based on Pager Power's experience and contacts database) in order to obtain local link and infrastructure details relevant to the Proposed Development.

The combination of the above will be used to establish the baseline environment.

16.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

A desk-based assessment and consultation with the relevant stakeholders will identify the existing infrastructure and assess the potential impact. Consultation with relevant telecommunication providers is a routine part of wind farm development.

Telecommunication links and/or infrastructure identified within the vicinity of the Site will be taken forward for technical assessment in accordance with the recommended methodology from the Joint Radio Company (JRC) for UHF links, and in accordance with the recommended methodology from Ofcom for microwave links, to predict potential impacts and plot relevant exclusion zones.

This assessment methodology will be used to inform future layout iterations where necessary.

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

There is no legislation or policy regarding the impact of wind turbines upon telecommunication infrastructure.

There is no standardised process within national guidance for assessing the impact of wind turbines upon telecommunications infrastructure. Pager Power's Telecommunications White Paper aims to guide the industry on this complex planning issue and demonstrates Pager Power's approach to managing this process. Pager Power considers the second Fresnel Zone when considering diffraction effects of a moving obstruction (such as a wind turbine) upon microwave links, and 60% of the First Fresnel zone when considering diffraction effects of a moving obstruction upon Ultra-High Frequency (UHF) links. An additional buffer distance may then be added to produce the exclusion zone. Where the link is UHF, reflection considerations may be required.

Assessment of Effects

Microwave and Ultra-High Frequency (UHF) wireless communication links are used to transmit information between two antennae via radio waves within a particular frequency band. Obstructions such as wind developments which are sited in between two microwave link antennae can partially block the radio signal passing between them, thereby reducing the functionality of the link, or by reflecting the signal between transmitter and receiver.

A Fresnel Zone takes the form of an ellipsoid surrounding a link path and represents the area in which obstructions should not be sited in order to avoid diffraction losses. The width of the zone at any point along the link path is determined by the Fresnel Zone number, the frequency of the link and the distance from each link end. The width of the zone is maximal at the midpoint of the link path.

Obstructions such as wind turbines, which are sited in between two microwave link antennae, can partially block the radio signal passing between them, thereby reducing the functionality of the link. This can occur even if the obstruction is not directly between the antennae but close to the link boresight. This kind of blocking is called 'diffraction'.

Obstructions can affect UHF links by reflecting the signal between transmitter and receiver. This is not a significant concern for microwave links because they are highly directional. Typically, diffraction effects are likely to be the most significant concern due to the greater abundance of microwave point-to-point links and because both microwave and UHF links are safeguarded against diffraction effects

An all-encompassing list of cumulative projects is provided within Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report.

Of these projects, none are relevant to inform the cumulative telecommunications assessment of the Proposed Development, as the impact upon infrastructure is independent of other developments, due to where turbines are located.

16.5 Scope of Assessment

The EIA and accompanying Telecommunications Impact Assessment will identify the potential impacts and effects relevant to the topic and identify those impacts which are considered likely to result in significant effects, if any.

The Proposed Development will be designed to avoid impacts on telecommunications links and infrastructure, where possible. Technical mitigation solutions are likely to be available if significant impacts cannot be avoided.

Any technical mitigation will be implemented prior to construction of the Proposed Development through consultation with the relevant stakeholders. A record of these consultations will be included in the project consultation log, and any design changes will be documented in the EIA design chapter. Any requirement for mitigation will be enforced via a planning condition.

Matters to be Scoped Out

It is proposed that the potential for impacts on telecommunications links and infrastructure during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases be scoped out of the EIA, due to the existing wind farm existing without any significant

impacts. It is perceived that any impacts as a result of the Proposed Development can be designed out by maintaining clearance of the exclusion zones.

16.6 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree with telecommunications being scoped out?
- To link operators: what are your nearby links and associated infrastructure (mast ends, link frequencies and dish heights above ground level)?

17.TV AND RADIO

17.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential terrestrial television and radio reception impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation and maintenance and during decommissioning.

Terrestrial television and radio signals propagate from transmitters to receiving aerials, which are in turn connected to television and radio receiving equipment. Wind turbines can cause interference to terrestrial television and radio signals.

It is recommended to scope Television and Radio out of the EIA.

17.2 Study Area

The methodology used by Pager Power is to undertake Carrier to Interference Ratio (CIR) calculations relative to the turbine and a square area (20km by 20km) surrounding the Proposed Development.

17.3 Baseline Environment

An initial assessment has been completed to identify the baseline environment with respect to the relevant terrestrial television and radio transmitters serving the study area. The relevant transmitters are outlined in Table 17-1 below.

Table 17-1: Identified Terrestrial Television and Radio Transmitters

Trasnmitter	Distance
Rosemarkie Main Transmitter	30.6 km
Tomatin Relay Transmitter	7.4 km

17.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

The terrestrial transmitters serving the area will broadcast digital television signals only. Both digital and analogue radio signals will be broadcast. A desk-based study and/or site survey can be undertaken to determine the potential interference of the Proposed Development upon terrestrial television and radio signals either during planning or post-consent as part of a planning condition.

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

There is no formal national or local guidance on the assessment process. The assessment methodology has been derived from Pager Power's expertise and assessment experience.

Assessment of Effects

An all-encompassing list of cumulative projects is provided within Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report.

Of these projects, those relevant to inform the cumulative terrestrial television and radio reception assessment of the Proposed Development are:

- Farr Wind Farm.

17.5 Scope of Assessment

No preliminary analysis has been completed with respect to terrestrial television services. The terrestrial transmitters serving the area will broadcast digital television signals only. Both digital and analogue radio signals will be broadcast. A desk-based study and/or baseline site survey can be undertaken to determine the potential interference of the Proposed Development upon terrestrial television and radio signals either during planning or post-consent as part of a planning condition.

Matters to be Scoped Out

If adverse effects on television or radio services occur as a result of the Proposed Development, mitigation measures will be required. The most effective form of mitigation is dependent on the specific impact. The impacts will only be identified once the Proposed Development is operational via complaints received or by

carrying out a post-construction survey. The requirement for the implementation of such measures will be addressed on a case-by-case.

It is recommended to scope Television and Radio out, as a mitigation strategy can be implemented pursuant to a planning condition.

17.6 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree that TV and Radio can be scoped out of the EIAR?

18. SHADOW FLICKER

18.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential shadow flicker impacts of the Proposed Development arising during construction, operation and maintenance and during decommissioning.

The term 'shadow flicker' is given to the flickering effect created when the motion of a rotating wind turbine rotor blade periodically casts a shadow across a constrained opening (such as a window). The likelihood and duration of the effects depend on a range of factors including the direction, distance and aspect of residential dwellings in relation to the turbines, turbine height and rotor diameter, the topography between residential dwellings and turbines, the time of year and day, and local weather conditions. The magnitude of the shadow flicker effect therefore varies spatially and intermittently.

The section of the Scoping Report sets out the study area, baseline environment, Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance and proceeds to set out the reasons for "Scoping Out" the requirement for a Shadow Flicker Chapter in the EIA.

18.2 Study Area

Receptors with the potential to be affected by shadow flicker as a result of the Proposed Development have been identified using Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping, aerial imagery and Geographical Information System (GIS) software.

It is generally accepted as outlined in Onshore Wind Turbines: Planning Advice (2014), that 10 rotor diameters from a wind turbine is the maximum limit within which significant shadow flicker effects can occur. The Council's Onshore Wind Energy: Supplementary Guidance (2017) requires that a shadow flicker assessment is required for all residential receptors within 11 rotor diameters of each turbine. Although the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) and supplementary guidance are not the primary planning policies for the Proposed Development, this assessment followed The Council's guidance by adopting an 11-rotor diameter threshold to account for the northern latitudes of Highland.

On this basis, the Shadow Flicker Study Area is limited to 11 rotor diameters. The rotor diameter of the 11 No. proposed turbines are 1630 metres (m). Based on this

approach, the eleven-rotor diameter (1630 m) Study Area for the Proposed Development was mapped for each turbine as shown in Figure 18.1.

18.3 Baseline Environment

There are no residential properties within the 11 x Rotor Diameter of the proposed turbine locations (i.e. within the Shadow Flicker Study Area).

Figure 18.1 details the red line boundary, proposed turbine layout, shadow flicker study area and location of residential sensitive receptors.

18.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Relevant national policy is contained in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023a). Policy 11(e) of NPF4 requires that project design and mitigation demonstrates how impacts, including shadow flicker, on communities and residential receptors have been minimised.

Local guidance on shadow flicker is provided in Policy 67 of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) (2012) and its Onshore Wind Energy: Supplementary Guidance (2017). The HwLDP Policy 67 Renewable Energy Developments states that:

“The Council will support proposals where it is satisfied that they are located, sited and designed such that they will not be significantly detrimental overall, either individually or cumulatively with other developments … having regard in particular to any significant effects safety and amenity of any regularly occupied buildings, including from shadow flicker.”

Furthermore, the Highland Council’s (”the Council”) supplementary guidance highlights the need for proposals to seek to avoid significant adverse effects on the safety of any residential or regular occupied property, including shadow flicker. It goes on to state that:

“Wind energy schemes should always be designed to avoid causing shadow flicker, blade glint, glare and light effects to any regularly occupied buildings not associated with the development. Where this cannot be achieved, the Council will expect wind energy developments to be located a minimum distance of 11 times the blade

diameter of the turbine(s) from any regularly occupied buildings not associated with the development. Within a distance less than 11 times the blade diameter, a shadow flicker assessment will be required."

Studies have shown that even in UK latitudes, shadows from wind turbines can only be cast approximately 130 degrees either side of north relative to the turbine due to the orientation of the earth's axis and the positioning of the sun (Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC), 2011).

This equates to a region between 50 degrees either side of due south where a wind turbine will not cast a shadow. Properties within this region will not experience shadow flicker effects, regardless of their distance from the turbine. While DECC has now been replaced by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), which does not provide guidance on shadow flicker, these findings are still considered relevant. Although an angle of 130 degrees either side of north has been used to define the study area, modelling of shadow flicker employs the use of worst-case assumption. Therefore, results of shadow flicker predictions assume that all properties within 11-rotor diameters of the Proposed Development will be influenced by shadow flicker from each turbine regardless of the angle from north.

The proposed assessment method, has however, been based on established best practice guidelines, including the following as published by the Scottish Government, THC, and the UK's Department of Environment and Climate Change:

- Scottish National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (Scottish Government. 2023);
- The Highland Council's Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (THC, 2022); and
- Update of UK Shadow Flicker evidence base (Department of Environment and Climate Change, 2011).

Assessment of Effects

There are no shadow flicker effects during the construction or decommissioning of a wind farm, as it only has potential to occur whilst the wind turbine blades are rotating. For the operational phase, when shadow flicker can occur, there are no receptors within the shadow flicker study area. Therefore, there is no potential impact from shadow flicker from the proposed Farr Wind Farm Extension turbine layout. The magnitude of impact is therefore "No Change".

Table 18-1 below confirms the "magnitude of Impact and the "sensitivity".

Table 18-1: Assessment of Significance Matrix

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact				
	No Change	Negligible	Low	Medium	High
Negligible	No Change	Negligible	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor
Low	-	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Minor or Moderate
Medium	-	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate or Major
High	-	Minor	Minor or Moderate	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial
Very High	-	Minor	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial	Substantial

As the respective eleven-rotor diameter study area for neighboring wind farm developments does not overlap the Study Area for the Proposed Development and the location of sensitive receptors associated with Farr Windfarm Extension there is no reasonable prospect of significant cumulative shadow flicker effects occurring at any receptor.

An all-encompassing list of cumulative projects is provided within Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report. Table 18-2 provides a summary of developments within less than 5km.

Table 18-2: Cumulative Development Table - 5km

Status	Name	Application Reference	Blade tip height and number of turbines	Location relative to Proposed Development
Operational and/or Under Construction	Farr	20/03263/S36	102m and 40 turbines	0km
	Glen Kyllachy	13/01441/Ful	110m and 20 turbines	0km
In planning	Lynemore Wind Farm	25/01748/S36	200m blade tip	0km north
	Kyllachy Wind Farm	25/03511/S36	180m blade tip	0km south east

18.5 Scope of Assessment

The assessment Study Area was defined as the area over which shadow flicker effects could impact residential properties (i.e., within 11 rotor diameters of each turbine). Given the parameters of the Proposed Development, a buffer radius of 1793 m was applied to each turbine location to determine the overall Study Area, which is shown on Figure 18.1. This is based on a maximum 163 m rotor diameter x11.

Shadow flicker resulting from the Proposed Development will not potentially occur at properties within the Study Area. No properties have been identified within the within the Study Area. Therefore, the effect of shadow flicker due to the Proposed Development is not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.

Matters to be Scoped Out

Shadow flicker is a phenomenon that only occurs once the turbines are installed and operational and thus no shadow flicker effects are anticipated during the construction or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development. As such, the construction and decommissioning phases have been scoped out of the assessment. During the operation of the Proposed Development, no properties are predicted to theoretically experience shadow flicker. The effects of shadow flicker due to the operation of the Proposed Development is therefore not significant in isolation or cumulatively.

It is therefore considered to scope out Shadow Flicker based on the evidence presented in this section of the Scoping Report.

18.6 Scoping Questions to Consultees

- Do you agree that all sensitive receptors and impact pathways have been identified for shadow flicker?
- Do you agree with the proposed approach to the assessment of shadow flicker?
- Do you agree that Shadow Flicker can be scoped out of the assessment of the Proposed Development?

19. SOCIO-ECONOMICS AND TOURISM

19.1 Introduction

This section of the Scoping Report considers the potential socio-economic, recreation and tourism impacts of the Farr Wind Farm Extension (the Proposed Development) arising during construction, operation and maintenance and during decommissioning.

This includes a consideration of employment and Gross Value Added (GVA) generation, tourism effects and any indirect supply chain economic effects from the Proposed Development. It also considers the effects on the recreational and land use assets associated with the Proposed Development.

Socio-economic assessments of onshore wind farms over the last decade have found no adverse effects as significant in terms of the EIA Regulations and there is no reason to expect significant effects for the Proposed Development. It is therefore proposed to scope socio-economics, recreation and tourism out of the EIA, and present the effects within a standalone assessment.

Nevertheless, it will be necessary to determine whether the Proposed Development is likely to comply with Policy 11 of NPF4, specifically paragraph (c), which states that "development proposals will only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities".

For this reason, it is proposed that the socio-economics, recreation and tourism assessment will be provided as a standalone assessment and submitted alongside the EIAR and Planning Statement.

The assessment will include a description of the current socio-economic, tourism, recreation and land-use baseline within the local area. This will include a summary of economic performance data for each study area and a description of the relevant tourism, recreation and land-use assets that will be covered in the assessment.

The Proposed Development is an extension to the existing Farr Wind Farm, which has been operational since 2005. The socio-economic performance of the existing wind farm provides a relevant and project-specific baseline against which to assess

the additional effects of the extension. It also offers a validated evidence base to inform predictions for the construction, operation and maintenance phases of the Proposed Development.

A summary of the actual socio-economic impacts delivered by the existing Farr Wind Farm to date will be presented in the standalone socio-economics, recreation and tourism report.

This document forms the start of the consultation process; further consultation will be undertaken as required during the study process.

This section has been compiled by MKA Economics who has led the socio-economic, recreation and tourism assessment of over 50 renewable developments across Scotland, a number of which are located in the Scottish Highlands. MKA Economics has been retained on the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) Economic Impact Framework since 2013, and has worked closely with many Highland based private clients seeking funding and planning, as well as working closely with THC, Highland Renewables and Highland Tourism.

19.2 Study Area

The baseline environment in the standalone report will cover and compare three study areas:

- Local Area, comprising the local council ward of Inverness South that both covers the location of the development and nearest settlements (for instance Inverness to the north and Tomatin to the west);
- The Region, being THC, the local authority; and
- The national economy, being Scotland.

The economic impacts will be quantified and presented for THC and Scotland study areas. The recreation and tourism assessment will consider assets within 10 km from the Site boundary.

19.3 Baseline Environment

The baseline study will cover:

- The demographic profile of the local area within the context of the regional and national demographic trends;

- Employment and economic activity in the local area within the context of regional and national economies;
- The industrial structure of the local area within the context of regional and national economies;
- The role of the tourism sector in the local and regional economy;
- An analysis of tourism statistics in Scotland, THC and the local area (Inverness South including the settlements of Tomatin and Inverness);
- Identification of local tourism assets, including accommodation providers, visitor attractions and assets;
- Wage and salary levels within the regional economy compared to the national level; also including educational attainment levels within the regional area and compared to the national level; and
- An assessment of relative deprivation based on a review of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (Scottish Government, 2020), over the period from 2004, through to 2020, to show how the local area has changed over time, compared to the national level.

Tourist attractions and accommodation will be identified within 10 km of the Site boundary. Tourist attractions include permanent fixtures (e.g., museums, attractions, castles and trails) as well as temporary events (e.g., music, sport, cultural or arts festivals). Negative tourism effects are not anticipated, as repeated studies demonstrate no negative effects, but on balance these attractions will be included as it may be the expected norm, but also given the additional positive benefit potential of visitors seeing the Highlands as a sustainable destination playing a strong role in tackling climate change.

Important attractions attributed to the Highlands, including Inverness South, will also be identified due to their increased sensitivity. A specific focus will be on tourism assets within 10 km of the Site boundary.

In terms of recreation and land-use assets and activities, these will also be assessed in terms of their vicinity to the Proposed Development. This will be based on a review of recreation and land-use assets within 10 km of the Proposed Development, including hill summits and walks and land uses such as agriculture, crofting and forestry.

The tourism, recreation and land-use assessment will cross reference the Landscape and Visual and Cultural Heritage Chapters of the EIAR.

19.4 Proposed Assessment Methodology

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

It is proposed that the assessment uses desk-based information sources to assess the likely scale of effects, supplemented by consultation with local stakeholders, informed by professional judgement. Cross-reference would be made to other technical assessments contained with the EIAR to consider potential effects on recreational and land-use assets and other leisure and tourism attractions in the vicinity.

A range of existing surveys and assessments of socio-economic and visitor profiles, land use and ownership, and public attitudes will be collated to provide background information against which to assess the potential for significant effects.

Socio-economic impacts associated with onshore wind farms primarily relate to job creation, use of local services and income spent in the locality of a project, and community benefit. These impacts can have both short and long term, direct beneficial effects for surrounding local communities. This aspect will be completed in line with NPF4 (Scottish Government, 2023) policy on energy developments, which states at Policy 11c "Development proposals will only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities."

As noted above a desktop socio-economic assessment will consider the potential direct and indirect effects of the Proposed Development, during both construction and operational phases. During the construction of the Proposed Development, local sourcing will be preferred where possible, bringing direct economic benefits from the Proposed Development. Similarly, operational jobs will inherently be targeted at people residing close to the Proposed Development, either local people or people relocating to the area for these job opportunities. An estimate of economic benefits will be provided in the report.

In terms of regional policy, a new piece of policy has been ratified by THC in May 2024 (THC, 2024), which sets out a Social Value Charter for Renewables Investment. This sets out the community benefit expectations THC has from developers wishing to invest in renewables in this area. It also outlines what the Highland Partnership – public, private and community – will do to support and enable this contribution. It aims to:

- Embed an approach to community wealth building into wider Highland policy framework;
- Maximise economic benefits from the natural environment and resources;
- Engage and involve relevant stakeholders to understand how we can continually improve our impact; and
- Unlock economic opportunities for the area.

The Applicant is also aware that Highland Renewables and Highland Tourism, two industry led sector fora, are actively working together to present a Routemap for how the renewables sector and the tourism sector in the Highlands can work together to promote sustainable tourism and achieve net zero. The new Sustainable Tourism Strategy for Highland 2025 – 2035 (THC, 2025) will also be reviewed.

An assessment of effects upon tourism receptors will also be undertaken and will take into account published data on visitor numbers and the value of tourism to the economy of the Highlands, including Inverness South. This will also include consultations with local businesses such as accommodation associations and providers, tourism businesses, transport operators and visitor attraction and tourism agencies such as VisitScotland, THC, Highland Tourism Partnership and other relevant consultees within the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

A cumulative assessment will also be presented, and this will take into account other similar renewable and infrastructure projects ongoing or planned in the local area. This will assess the cumulative impact of such investments, including the Proposed Development. The cumulative impact will assess development within a 20km radius of the Proposed Development.

It is also important that the socio-economic and tourism assessment takes account of the relevant local and national policy objectives. The most relevant objectives for this are expected to be included in the following strategies:

- National Strategy for Economic Transformation (Scottish Government, 2022);
- National Planning Framework 4 (Scottish Government, 2023);
- Net Economic Benefits and Planning (Scottish Government, 2016);
- Onshore Wind Policy Statement (Scottish Government, 2022);
- Regional Economic Strategy (Highlands and Islands Enterprise, 2023);
- Tourism Scotland 2030 (Scottish Tourism Alliance, 2020);
- Maximising Net Economic Planning Supplementary Planning Guidance (The Highland Council, 2024);
- Social Value Charter for Renewables Investment (The Highland Council, 2024)

- Sustainable Tourism Strategy for Highland 2024 - 2030 (The Highland Council, 2024); and
- Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan for Highland (The Highland Council, 2022).

These policy documents would also allow for the relevant baseline to be collected.

Assessment of Effects

The issues that will be considered in the assessment will include the potential socio-economic, recreation and tourism effects associated with the Proposed Development.

A socio-economic impact analysis will be undertaken using the methodology developed by RenewableUK and deployed by MKA Economics, which has been used to assess over 50 renewable energy developments across Scotland. The potential socio-economic effects that will be considered are:

- Temporary effects on the local, regional and/or national economy due to expenditure during the construction phase;
- Permanent effects on the local, regional and/or national economy due to expenditure associated with the ongoing operation and maintenance of the Proposed Development;
- Permanent effects as a result of any additional public expenditure that could be supported by the additional tax revenue that would be generated by the Proposed Development during the operational phase; and
- Permanent effects on the local economy that could be supported by any community funding and/or shared ownership proposals during the operational phase of the Proposed Development.
- Learning from the existing Farr Wind Farm – the assessment will use actual employment, GVA, supply chain and community benefit data from the operational wind farm to inform baseline conditions, calibrate economic multipliers, and improve the accuracy of forecasts for the extension. Where possible, a comparison will be made between predicted and realised effects for the existing development to identify any over- or under-estimation.

The tourism sector is an important contributor to the Scottish economy and whilst repeated studies and operational experience indicates no negative effect on tourism from onshore wind farms, there is merit in considering whether the Proposed Development will have any effect (positive and negative) on the tourism sector, with

particular reference to ensuring the construction phase minimises any disturbance to tourist routes.

This assessment will consider the potential effects that the Proposed Development could have on tourism attractions, tourism businesses, local accommodation, tourism and recreational trails and hill summits and hill walks.
This will consider the implications of any effects identified for the tourism sector in the local area and wider region.

The assessment should also be read in conjunction with the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment as in many cases the tourism assets are also recreational assets and therefore this assessment will, in part, assess similar receptors when assessing tourism/recreational trails and routes.

The assessment will consider effects during construction and operational phases. Further, each assessment must consider the potential for cumulative effects. The projects to be considered cumulatively with the Proposed Development will be agreed and be in line with those considered in other technical assessments.

The predicted socio-economic, recreation and tourism effects of the Proposed Development are assessed, using defined criteria to describe level of effect. As there are no published standards or technical guidelines that set out a preferred methodology for assessing the likely socio-economic or tourism effects of a project of this nature, professional judgement, with reference to commonly used methodologies, and recognised approaches to quantifying economic effects, is used to determine the significance criteria.

Potential impacts will be presented across socio-economic, recreation and tourism aspects. The socio-economic effects will be presented in the form of GVA, jobs, turnover and inward investment levels. Tourism, recreational and land-use effects will be based on the review of the area's tourism, recreation and land-use baseline, a review of secondary sources and other technical assessments will be undertaken to measure the scale of these effects.

It should be confirmed that each assessment will consider effects during construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning phases. Further, each assessment will consider the potential for cumulative effects.

Cumulative details of projects within 20km and appropriate associated details are provided in Section 5.9 of this Scoping Report. All projects in Table 5-4 are relevant

to inform the cumulative socio-economics, recreation and tourism assessment of the Proposed Development.

19.5 Scope of Assessment

Construction related effects will be based on dialogue with the Applicant and their consultants as well as drawing on the economic consultant's own knowledge from other onshore wind farms in Scotland. Where required we will draw on case study evidence from RenewableUK research on the economic benefits of onshore wind farms. In order to calculate the economic effect of new jobs, the GVA per head for civil engineering related projects in Highlands and Scotland will be utilised. These figures will be sourced from the Scottish Annual Business Statistics. The economic impact assessment will also take displacement and multiplier effects into consideration to provide a net economic impact figure at the regional, national and UK levels.

For operational effects, employment levels will be provided by the Applicant and backed up with evidence from RenewableUK modelling and assumptions. The employment impacts associated with the mature operational phase will be presented by occupation type. In order to calculate the economic effect of new jobs, the GVA per head for civil professional, scientific and technical work in the Highlands and Scotland will be utilised. These figures are also drawn from the Scottish Annual Business Statistics and the resultant economic impact will be presented at the Highland and Scotland levels.

As noted in the construction phase, economic impact assessments must also consider the effects of displacement. For the Proposed Development, displacement levels are not expected to be as significant as the construction related activity, and it is assumed that displacement would be low during operation and maintenance at both the regional and national levels. Multiplier effects will also be built into the economic impact assessment, and these will be sourced from the Type II Output, Income, Employment and GVA Multipliers, produced by the Scottish Government.

The link between renewable developments and the tourism sector is a subject of debate. However, the most recent research has not found a link between tourism employment, visitor numbers and renewable developments. For example, research completed by the Scottish Government found that there is no relationship between the development of onshore wind farms and tourism employment at the level of the Scottish economy, at the local authority level nor in the areas immediately surrounding developments. Highland Renewables has been founded to foster the relationship between the renewable energy sector and the tourism sector in the

Highlands with the mission to enhance collaboration and to further develop the Highlands as a premium and sustainable tourist destination.

In presenting the socio-economic, recreation and tourism assessment for the extension, the standalone report will clearly distinguish between:

- the continuing impacts of the existing Farr Wind Farm (which form part of the baseline), and
- the additional impacts arising specifically from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

This approach avoids double-counting and provides a transparent assessment of the net change attributable to the extension.

19.6 Matters to be Scoped Out

In line with advice generated by Scottish Renewables, and in line with other similar assessment in The Highland Council Area, it is recommended that the Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism chapter is scoped out of the EIAR, and is presented as a standalone report. This is consistent with advice from THC on other similar development proposals.

The long-term impacts associated with the decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development are not proposed to be assessed given the significant time lapse between planning and decommissioning phases.

19.7 Scoping Questions to Consultees

It is proposed that the following stakeholders will be consulted in relation to the assessment:

- THC (Access, Tourism and Economic Development Teams);
- VisitScotland (as national tourism lead body);
- Highland Tourism Partnership (as the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for tourism in the Highlands);
- The Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (ScotWays);
- Mountaineering Scotland; and
- Any local recreation, land-use and tourism groups.

The following are questions to consultees:

- Do the consultees agree with the approach of scoping socio-economics, recreation and tourism out of the EIA and into a stand-alone report?
- Are you aware of any key sensitive receptors that should be taken into account?
- Are you aware of any particular consultees in the area who may wish to provide comment on the scope of this assessment?
- Do consultees agree that the standalone assessment should include a comparison of predicted versus actual socio-economic impacts from the existing Farr Wind Farm, and that this comparison should inform predictions for the extension?

19.8 References

- Highlands and Islands Enterprise (2023) Regional Economic Strategy 2023–2028. Available at: https://www.hie.co.uk/about-us/policies-and-publications/strategy-and-operating-plan (Accessed: June 2026).
- Scottish Government (2016) Draft Advice on Net Economic Benefit and Planning. March. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2016/03/draft-advice-on-net-economic-benefit-and-planning/documents/draft-advice-net-economic-benefit-planning-pdf/draft-advice-net-economic-benefit-planning-pdf/govscot:document/Draft+Advice+on+Net+Economic+Benefit+and+Planning.pdf (Accessed: June 2026).
- Scottish Government (2020) Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020. A National Statistics Publication for Scotland. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/ (Accessed: June 2026).
- Scottish Government (2022) National Strategy for Economic Transformation. Published 1 March. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-national-strategy-economic-transformation/ (Accessed: June 2026).
- Scottish Government (2022) Onshore Wind Policy Statement 2022. December. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/ (Accessed: June 2026).
- Scottish Government (2023) National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). February. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/ (Accessed: June 2026).
- Scottish Tourism Alliance (2020) Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future (National Tourism Strategy). Launched 4 March. Available at: https://scottishtourismalliance.co.uk/scotland-outlook-2030-overview/ (Accessed: June 2026).

- The Highland Council (2022) Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan. February. Available at: https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/25436/strategic_tourism_infrastructure_development_plan.pdf (Accessed: June 2026).
- The Highland Council (2024) Maximising Net Economic Planning Supplementary Planning Guidance. (Document reference: THC204). Available at: https://www.highland.gov.uk (Accessed: June 2026).
- The Highland Council (2024) Social Value Charter for Renewables Investment. Agreed 27 June (Report No HC/18/24). Available at: https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/83522/item_10_social_values_charter_for_renewables_investment (Accessed: June 2026).
- The Highland Council (2024) Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2024–2030. Approved 14 November (Report No ECI/45/24). Available at: https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/84114/item_6_sustainable_tourism_strategy_2024-2030 (Accessed: June 2026).

20. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This Scoping Report is submitted to inform the EIA and associated EIAR which will accompany an application for consent to the ECU, for the construction and operation of an extension to Farr Wind Farm with a MEC of 67MW.

The Proposed Development falls under Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations. The Applicant has not sought a Screening Opinion from Scottish Ministers rather, it is the Applicant's intention to submit an EIA Report in support of the forthcoming application.

It is proposed that the EIAR will be comprised of the following chapters:

- Introduction
- Project Description
- Design Evolution and Assessment of Alternatives
- Landscape and Visual
- Ecology
- Ornithology
- Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Peat
- Noise and Vibration
- Access, Traffic and Transport
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
- Schedule of Environmental Commitments

The detailed assessments for each of these topics will be undertaken in accordance with standard guidance and best practice and reported in the EIAR. Where likely significant effects are identified, mitigation measures will be described where possible to reduce the residual effects. The above chapters will be supplemented by associated technical appendices and ancillary planning documents.

This EIA Scoping Report is submitted to the ECU with a formal request for a Scoping Opinion in accordance with Regulation 12 of the EIA Regulations.

Should any further information be required in order that a full EIA Scoping Opinion can be provided we would be happy to provide this upon request and/or discuss any matters.

APPENDIX A - FIGURES

List of Figures

APPENDIX B - LIST OF CONSULTEES

Statutory and Non-statutory Consultees

Statutory Consultees
Energy Consents Unit
The Highland Council
Historic Environment Scotland
NatureScot
SEPA
Transport Scotland – Internal Advisor
Scottish Forestry – Internal Advisor

Non-statutory Consultees
British Telecom
British Horse Society Scotland
Highlands and Islands Airports
Civil Aviation Authority - Airspace
Crown Estate Scotland
Defence Infrastructure Organisation
Fisheries Management Scotland
Findhorn District Salmon Fishery Board
Findhorn Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust
Highland Tourism Partnership (as the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for tourism in the Highlands)

John Muir Trust

Joint Radio Company

Mountaineering Scotland

NATS Safeguarding

Office for Nuclear Regulation

RSPB Scotland

Scottish Water

Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (ScotWays)

Visit Scotland

Woodland Trust

Community Councils

Strathdearn Community Council

Strathnairn Community Council


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Thank you

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