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EIA Report – Volume 1 – Non- Technical Summary

Bankend Rig III Onshore Wind Project

Wilson Renewables III LLP

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Executive Summary

This document is a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) supporting an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and consequential Report (EIA Report) that has been undertaken and produced on behalf of Wilson Renewables III LLP (Wilson Renewables/the applicant) to accompany a proposed renewable energy development consisting of 10 Wind Turbine Generators (WTG's) with an installed generating capacity of 66 megawatts (MW) (6.6 MW per WTG), associated access(es) and infrastructure (the Proposed Development) and is located at National Grid Reference (NGR) NS 68167 33067 (centred location); wholly within the administrative boundary of South Lanarkshire Council (SLC/the LPA [Local Planning Authority]) and bounding land of East Ayrshire Council (EAC) to the south.

The Proposed Development is submitted for consideration by the Scottish Ministers via the Scottish Government's Energy Consent Unit under Section 36 (S36) of the Electricity Act 1989 (The Electricity Act) due to the installed generating output exceeding 50 MW.

The EIA Report comprises the following documents:

- Volume 1 – EIA Report, NTS (this document).
- Volume 2 – EIA Report, comprising 17 chapters with Technical Assessments.
- Volume 3 – EIA Report, LVIA supporting figures and visualisations.
- Volume 4 – EIA Report, general supporting information and all other technical assessments' supporting figures and Technical Appendices.
- Volume 5 – Glossary.

In addition to the above, the S36 application is accompanied by a Planning Statement, a Gatecheck Report, a non-statutory Design Statement, and a non-statutory Consultation Report.

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Document Control | 1 |
| Executive Summary | 2 |
| Contents | 3 |
| 1 Purpose of the EIA Report | 5 |
| 1.1 Introduction..... | 5 |
| 1.2 Layout and Format of the EIA Report..... | 5 |
| 1.3 EIA Screening and Scoping..... | 8 |
| 1.3.1 Screening..... | 8 |
| 1.3.2 Scoping..... | 8 |
| 1.4 Availability of the EIA Report..... | 10 |
| 1.4.1 Alternative Arrangements..... | 11 |
| 1.5 Representations..... | 12 |
| 1.5.1 S36, to Scottish Ministers and Planning Consultation to Local Planning Authority..... | 12 |
| 2 Site Location, Description and Selection | 13 |
| 2.1 Site Location..... | 13 |
| 2.2 Key Components of the Proposed Development – Locations..... | 13 |
| 2.3 Site Characteristics..... | 14 |
| 2.4 Site Selection..... | 14 |
| 3 The Proposed Development | 16 |
| 3.1 Summary of Proposals..... | 16 |
| 3.1.1 Introduction..... | 16 |
| 3.1.2 Site Access(es)..... | 16 |
| 3.1.3 Wind Turbine Infrastructure..... | 16 |
| 3.1.4 Associated Infrastructure..... | 16 |
| 3.1.5 Substation Compound..... | 17 |
| 3.1.6 Construction Specific Infrastructure and Requirements..... | 17 |
| 3.1.7 Elements Indicated but Outwith the Scope of the EIA Report..... | 17 |
| 3.2 Project Programme..... | 18 |
| 3.2.1 Management of Construction Activities..... | 18 |
| 3.2.2 Construction Traffic and Access..... | 19 |
| 3.3 Operational Phase..... | 19 |
| 3.4 Decommissioning Phase..... | 19 |
| 4 The EIA Process | 20 |

| | | |
|-------|---|----|
| 4.1 | Introduction..... | 20 |
| 4.2 | EIA Process and Methodology..... | 20 |
| 4.2.1 | EIA Process | 20 |
| 4.2.2 | EIA Methodology..... | 21 |
| 4.2.3 | Consultation | 21 |
| 5 | Energy and Planning Policy | 24 |
| 5.1 | Summary of Policy Requirements | 24 |
| 6 | Summary of EIA Report – Technical Assessments | 25 |
| 6.1 | Introduction..... | 25 |
| 6.2 | Topic Specific Summaries | 25 |
| 7 | Conclusions | 33 |

TABLES

| | | |
|-----------|--|----|
| Table 1.1 | EIA Report Layout and Contents | 5 |
| Table 1.2 | Summary of Written Statement by Topic | 8 |
| Table 1.3 | Summary of Requirements to Distribute the EIA Report..... | 10 |
| Table 1.4 | Key Contact Information for Representations | 12 |
| Table 2.1 | Infrastructure Component Locations..... | 13 |
| Table 3.1 | Outline Construction Programme | 18 |
| Table 4.1 | Key Stages of the EIA Process..... | 20 |
| Table 4.2 | Summary of Stakeholder Consultation | 21 |
| Table 6.1 | Non-technical Summary of EIA Report Findings per Topic | 25 |

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Site Location Plan and Site Layout Plan

1 Purpose of the EIA Report

1.1 Introduction

TNEI Services UK Limited (TNEI) were appointed by Wilson Renewables III LLP (the Applicant) to assess the environmental effects of 10 Wind Turbine Generators (WTG's) with associated access(es) and infrastructure in accordance with The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations 2017).

The EIA process is reported in an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report), which describes the methods used to assess the beneficial and adverse environmental impacts predicted to result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. Where appropriate, it also sets out mitigation measures designed to prevent, reduce and, if possible, offset any significant adverse environmental impacts. An assessment of residual effects, those expected to remain following implementation of mitigation measures, is also presented. This document is intended to present a summary of the findings of the EIA Report in non-technical language.

1.2 Layout and Format of the EIA Report

Table 1.1 below provides an outline of the layout of the EIA Report submitted as part of the S36 application for the Proposed Development.

Table 1.1 EIA Report Layout and Contents

| EIAR Volume and Chapter | Title | Summary Note |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Vol 1 | Non-Technical Summary (this document) | A summary of findings from the EIA Report in a plain English, non-technical format. |
| Vol 2, Ch 1 | Introduction | An introductory chapter providing contextual information on the legislative context of the EIA Report, the layout, form and content of the report and other key information. |
| Vol 2, Ch 2 | Project Background | A chapter providing the background information to the Bankend Rig III Wind Farm Project, the Site, and pre-application activities undertaken. |
| Vol 2, Ch 3 | Project Description | Detailed description of the Project and its various phases of development, operation and decommissioning. |
| Vol 2, Ch 4 | Approach to Preparing the EIA Report | A detailed explanation of the methodology adopted for the EIA and carried through the various Technical Assessments contained within Volume 2. |

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| Vol 2, Ch 5 | Planning and Energy Policy | A detailed review of relevant adopted and emerging Energy, Planning and Environmental policy to set the consenting context for the Proposed Development. |
| Vol 2, Ch 6 | Landscape and Visual | The assessment takes account of the current best practice and guidance for LVIA and considers the Landscape and Visual effects arising from the short-term and long-term presence of the Proposed Development. |
| Vol 2, Ch 7 | Ecology | A detailed review of the potential effects of the conservation and operation of the Proposed Development on non-avian ecology and nature conservation features, utilising the findings of a range of ecology surveys undertaken in 2022. |
| Vol 2, Ch 8 | Ornithology | The Chapter presents the potential effects of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development on avian nature conservation features, utilising the results of ornithological surveys and informed by relevant ornithological legislation and policy. |
| Vol 2, Ch 9 | Hydrology, Geology and Hydrogeology | This Chapter covers the predicted hydrology, hydrogeology and geology effects of the Proposed Development on the Site and near vicinity. |
| Vol 2, Ch 10 | Noise | The Chapter presents the findings and recommendations of the operational noise assessment and construction noise assessment, detailing the methodology of both assessments and the predicted noise effects caused by the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. |
| Vol 2, Ch 11 | Forestry | The Chapter considers the likely significant effects on the forests and woodland associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. Forestry related legislation and policies have been identified, with the Proposed Development assessed against this legislation and guidance. |

| | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| Vol 2, Ch 12 | Cultural Heritage | The Chapter details the potential effects of the Proposed Development on cultural heritage, against the identified cultural heritage baseline, the significance of any predicted effects and mitigation and the methodologies employed throughout the assessment. |
| Vol 2, Ch 13 | Traffic and Transport | The Chapter sets out the baseline conditions for the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the surrounding transport network. Legislation and guidance specific to Highways and Transportation has also been included to assess the Proposed Development's predicted effects against these. |
| Vol 2, Ch 14 | Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation | This Chapter considers the potential socio-economic, recreational, and touristic effects of the Proposed Development, including a consideration of existing land uses within the Site, local tourism activity, employment generation, and any indirect economic effects from the Proposed Development. |
| Vol 2, Ch 15 | Other Matters | This Chapter considers the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the remaining environmental topics which were scoped out of the EIA thus which do not require an individual chapter nor a full assessment as part of the EIA. Assessment of the Proposed Development in relation to shadow flicker, climate change and carbon balance, aviation and radio-communications is presented in this Chapter. |
| Vol 3 | Landscape and Visual Technical Appendices | Supporting Technical Appendices to the LVIA chapter including Figures, Visualisations and Viewpoints. |
| Vol 4 | Technical Appendices for all other Impact Assessments | Supporting Technical Appendices by Topic for all other Topics of the EIA Report excluding the LVIA. |
| Vol 5 | Glossary | A master glossary of terms for the EIA Report as a whole document. |

1.3 EIA Screening and Scoping

1.3.1 Screening

Screening is the process which is used to establish the requirement for EIA under the relevant EIA Regulations. Note, Screening is optional and may be skipped where it is assured that EIA will be required from outset (such is the case with the Proposed Development).

The applicant opted not to formally screen the Proposed Development under Regulation 6 of the EIA Regulations 2017 as it was deemed to constitute an EIA development under Schedule 2(1) of the EIA Regulations 2017. In the absence of Screening, the applicant proceeded directly to Scoping.

1.3.2 Scoping

Scoping is the process by which the applicant seeks to establishing the ‘scope’ of the EIA through the undertaking of consultation with the consenting authority (in this case the Energy Consents Unit (ECU)) and relevant stakeholders/consultees. Scoping includes consideration of key responses and how these should be addressed within the EIA. The output of the Scoping process is a written document by the consenting authority known as a Scoping Opinion, which is used as the basis for informing the scope of the EIA.

The applicant wrote to Scottish Ministers on 9th June 2022 to formally request a Scoping Opinion on the Proposed Development (document reference 15257-007). In response, a Scoping Opinion was issued by the ECU in August 2022 (ECU reference ECU00004516. Table 1.2 below provides a summary of the conclusions within the Scottish Minister’s written statement contained within Scoping Opinion as well as details of how these key topic areas have been addressed within the EIA Report.

For the avoidance of doubt, at the time of the Scoping Request submission, the Proposed Development layout and scale differed from the finalised layout which has been subject to this EIA. The Scoping layout comprised 11 WTG’s in different locations to the currently proposed 10 WTG’s of the EIA layout. Further detail on the design evolution of the Project can be found within the submitted Design Statement (document reference 15747-016).

Table 1.2 Summary of Written Statement by Topic

| Topic | Summary from Written Statement | Cross-Reference within EIA Report |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Landscape and Visual | <p>A robust Night Time Assessment with agreed viewpoints must be included to consider the effects of aviation lighting and how the chosen lighting mitigates the effects. This survey area must be pre agreed with SLC and Nature Scot with full details of all mitigation of aviation lighting impacts subsequently identified provided within the EIA Report.</p> <p>Development to be included within the cumulative landscape assessment should be discussed and pre-agreed with SLC, with photography and visualisations submitted within the EIA Report reflecting the most up-to-date cumulative position.</p> | <p>Considered within the assessment undertaken and reported within Volume 2, Chapter 6 of the EIA Report. Consultation with SLC has been undertaken with any further consultation with Nature Scot to be engaged by SLC.</p> |

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|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <p>Ornithology - Bird Surveys</p> | <p>Decision on bird surveys, including species, methodology, vantage points, view sheds & duration – site specifics & cumulative – should be pre agreed following discussions with Nature Scot.</p> | <p>Considered within the assessment undertaken and reported within Volume 2, Chapter 8 of the EIA Report. All considerations detailed within Nature Scot’s Scoping Opinion have been addressed within Chapter 8 of the EIA Report.</p> |
| <p>Borrow Pits</p> | <p>Details of proposed Borrow Pits, details relating to the location, size and nature, should be included within the EIA Report. This should include proposed depth of excavation in comparison to the actual topography and water table, proposed drainage, etc.</p> <p>Impacts of proposed Borrow Pits should be appraised as part of the overall impact of the working, with information to cover the requirements set out in ‘PAN 50: Controlling the Environmental Effects of Surface Mineral Workings’.</p> | <p>Considered within the assessment undertaken and reported within Volume 2, Chapter 9 of the EIA Report.</p> |
| <p>Water Supply</p> | <p>The EIA Report should include details of any relevant mitigation measures to be provided. Further advice provided by Scottish Water within the Scoping Opinion should also be adhered to within the EIA Report.</p> <p>Presence of private water supplies which may be impacted by the development should be investigated. The EIA Report should address any potential impacts, risks and any mitigation required to safeguard identified private water supplies impacted by the development.</p> | <p>Considered within the assessment undertaken and reported within Volume 2, Chapter 9 of the EIA Report. The hydrogeological regime of the Site as well as the distance from identified properties has resulted in the scoping out of PWS from further assessment.</p> |
| <p>Marine Science Scotland (MSS)</p> | <p>The applicant should identify and consider any areas of Special Area of Conservation where fish are a qualifying feature and proposes felling operations particularly within acid sensitive areas.</p> <p>The EIA Report should account for MSS’s standing advice for onshore wind farm or overhead line development relating to freshwater and diadromous fish and fisheries. The applicant is required the corresponding checklist to this standing advice within the application submission package.</p> | <p>Considered within the assessment undertaken and reported within Volume 4, TA7.1.</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Baseline Fish Survey | Recommended that the applicant discussed and agrees Baseline Fish Surveys within the local District Salmon Fishery Board and Fisheries Trust. | Considered within the assessment undertaken and reported within Volume 2, Chapter 7 of the EIA Report. Pre-construction surveys are intended to form the baseline from which changes can be assessed. |
| Landscape Designations | The applicant should discuss and agree designated sites to be included within the EIA Report and survey work and further in-depth modelling and research to be undertaken. | Considered within the assessment undertaken and reported within Volume 2, Chapter 6 of the EIA Report. Consideration of scoping response issued by both EAC and SLC included within assessment. |
| Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment | The applicant should provide demonstrable evidence that peat landslide hazard and risks are acceptable and capable of being controlled by mitigation measures. Best Practice Guide for Proposed Electricity Generation Developments (Second Edition), should be followed in the preparation of the EIA Report. | Considered within the assessment undertaken and reported within Volume 2, Chapter 6 of the EIA Report. A peat landslide hazard risk assessment has been completed within Appendix 9.4 in line with best practice guidelines. |
| Noise | The applicant should agree a list of receptors contained within the submitted noise assessment following discussions with SLC. The noise assessment should be carried out in line with relevant legislation and standards. | Considered within the assessment undertaken and reported within Volume 2, Chapter 10 of the EIA Report. A copy of the full consultation response from SLC is contained within Annex 2 of TA 10.2. |

1.4 Availability of the EIA Report

Table 1.3 Summary of Requirements to Distribute the EIA Report

| Requirement | Regulation | Note |
|-------------|------------|------|
|-------------|------------|------|

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Requirement for the physical distribution of the EIA Report | 14 of the EIA Regulations 2017 | Regulation 14 of the EIA Regulations 2017 required that an EIA Report must be subject to a notice which states that the EIA Report is available for inspection free of charge. This shall include details of the location and hours of availability for inspection. |
| Requirement for Notices | 14 and 20 of the EIA Regulations 2017 | Regulations 14 and 20 of the EIA Regulations 2017 require that an application for consent under S36 of the Electricity Act 1989 must include publication of a notice stating the times and places at which either an EIA Report or additional information to be included in an EIA Report may be inspected by members of the public. |
| Requirement for the submission of hard copies of the EIA Report to Scottish Ministers | 17 and 18 of the EIA Regulations 2017 | Regulation 17 of the EIA Regulations 2017 requires the developer to submit hard copies of an EIA Report to the Scottish Ministers. Regulation 18 of the EIA Regulations 2017 places a requirement upon a developer to make available an EIA Report, on submission of an EIA application, for physical inspection at a named place. |
| Requirement for the submission of hard copies of the Local Planning Authority | 15 of the EIA Regulations 2017 | Regulation 15 of the EIA Regulations 2017 requires that a copy of the EIA Report be received by the Local Planning Authority. Responsibility for this sits with the Scottish Ministers. |

1.4.1 Alternative Arrangements

The applicant recognises the need to present the findings of the EIA Report as a matter of public record and in the interests of public engagement and transparency has also sought to provide a link within the following web address which will take you to the ECU portal where all documentation can be viewed in digital format.

<https://www.wilsonrenewables.com/backend-rig-3>

1.4.1.1 Request for Physical and Digital Copies of the EIA Report

Digital copies of complete application submissions are available free of charge on CD. Hard copies of the application may be obtained at a reasonable charge reflecting the cost of making the application(s) available. To request a copy of the application submissions please contact:

Wilson Renewables III LLP
c/o TNEI Services UK Limited
7th Floor
80 St Vincent Street
Glasgow
G2 5UB

The cost for obtaining a hard copy version of the EIA Report is £900 inclusive of VAT.

1.5 Representations

1.5.1 S36, to Scottish Ministers and Planning Consultation to Local Planning Authority

Any representations on the S36 application should be made directly to the Scottish Government ECU via the details below. During the Scottish Ministers’ assessment of the S36 application a consultation will be provided to South Lanarkshire Council (SLC). Comments can also be made on the consultative submission to SLC using the information below.

Table 1.4 Key Contact Information for Representations

| Contact Method | Contact Information | Contact Method | Contact Information |
|--------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| Scottish Ministers | | South Lanarkshire Council | |
| Address | Scottish Government 4 th Floor 5 Atlantic Quay 150 Broomielaw Glasgow G2 8LU | Address | Community and Enterprise Resources Planning and Regulatory Services South Lanarkshire Council Council Offices Almada Street Hamilton South Lanarkshire ML3 0AA |
| Email | representations@gov.scot | Email | Planning@southlanarkshire.gov.uk |
| Website | www.energyconsents.scot | Website | www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk |

2 Site Location, Description and Selection

2.1 Site Location

The Site, as defined by the EIA site boundary is located within an area of commercial plantation forestry and open moorland approximately 4.75 km to the north of the settlements of Muirkirk, 10.3 km south-east of Darvel and approximately 4 km south of Dungavel. The Site has an approximate centre point of NGR NS 68185 33072 and covers an area of approximately c.313 hectares (ha).

A copy of the Site Location Plan, is provided within Appendix A.

2.2 Key Components of the Proposed Development – Locations

The main infrastructure components of the Proposed Development assessed under the EIA Regulations 2017 and considered within the EIA Report are located as shown in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 Infrastructure Component Locations

| Component | Note | NGR (centred location) |
|---------------|---|------------------------|
| WTG T1 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS666327 |
| WTG T2 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS671325 |
| WTG T3 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS673331 |
| WTG T4 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS677328 |
| WTG T5 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS684329 |
| WTG T6 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS689328 |
| WTG T7 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS695334 |
| WTG T8 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS690335 |
| WTG T9 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS685335 |
| WTG T10 | Wind turbine with associated hardstanding area and gravity base foundations | NS680337 |
| Access Tracks | A network of existing and new access tracks are proposed, some of which utilises existing forestry tracks throughout the Proposed Site. | Several Locations |

| | | |
|--|--|-------------------|
| Substation Compound | Proposed housing a single storey control building, a 33 kV substation and associated internal electrical HV equipment, operations and welfare facilities for the maintenance personnel and associated parking spaces. | NS681333 |
| Scottish Power (Transmission) (SPT) Substation | Proposed SPEN substation compound with details of location and specifications to be contained within a separate planning application. | NS 681334 |
| Borrow Pit A | Proposed to eradicate the need to bring aggregate from external sources to Site. | NS668327 |
| Borrow Pit B | Proposed to eradicate the need to bring aggregate from external sources to Site. | NS682334 |
| Construction Laydown Area (Temporary) | Proposed Temporary Construction Compound to with an approximate measurement 50 m x 100 m near the centre of the Site. To comprise of an area of hardstanding offering space for site offices and associated staff welfare. | NS682331 |
| Underground Grid Connection | Proposed Network of Underground Cables laid in trenches approximately 1-2 m in width and 1 m in depth. | Several Locations |

A copy of the Site Layout Plan, is provided within Appendix A.

2.3 Site Characteristics

The Site is located within an area of commercial plantation forestry and open moorland. The upper catchments of the Regal Burn and other small watercourses drain the land throughout the Site, to the Glengavel Reservoir to the north. The Site comprises a series of broadly rounded hills encompassing coniferous forest with upland grass rides, marshland, and landform associated with the numerous small watercourses.

The B743 public highway bisects the Site through its approximate centre in a north-south direction and all other accesses within the Site are limited to existing forestry tracks. There are no residential properties located within the Site.

2.4 Site Selection

The applicant's site selection process has been designed to identify a site which provides the most financially and technically viable option whilst being the least environmentally impactful and thereby standing the best opportunity to gain consent. The applicant has selected this Site to achieve this. In doing so, the Site principally allows for the best opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to Scotland's national targets for renewable energy generation and further the aims of NPF4 in the provision of renewable energy infrastructure as a direct contributor to reducing carbon emissions and achieve Net Zero.

The applicant is committed to avoiding the development of renewable energy infrastructure in areas where there would be an unacceptable effect on designated sites and where suitable mitigation cannot be achieved. The applicant is also committed to not considering sites that have an unacceptable effect on landscape character or amenity of National Parks and National Scenic Areas, and special consideration is attributed to internationally and nationally important species and habitats in the wider area.

The following factors have led to the selection of this Site for the Proposed Development:

- There is a commercially viable grid connection;
- There is high annual mean wind speed across the Site;
- The Proposed Development is located in proximity to and in an area where wind farms are already operating;
- The Site is sufficiently removed from the nearest residential properties and settlements;
and
- The Site benefits from good access to an existing road network which has proven capable of supporting the delivery of WTG's and associated infrastructure through the construction of other comparable developments.

3 The Proposed Development

3.1 Summary of Proposals

3.1.1 Introduction

This Section of the NTS provides a brief outline of each of the key components which form the Proposed Development and that are the subject of the EIA. It is however not designed to offer a technical explanation of the Proposed Development and its components. Further detailed information on these components and their locations is available and should be viewed by reading the associated Planning Statement for the S36 application (document reference 15747-012).

A copy of the Site Layout Plan, is provided within Appendix A.

3.1.2 Site Access(es)

Access to the site is proposed to utilise the existing access for Bankend Rig Wind Farm via the A71. A network of both new and upgraded access tracks are proposed to lead from the Site access junction of the existing Bankend Rig Wind Farm to the Site of the Proposed Development.

The Proposed Development has been carefully designed to align the wind farm access roads with existing and consented or constructed commercial forestry access tracks on Site as far as possible. This was done in order to reduce the volume of land take required for the Proposed Development and therefore to reduce its overall environmental impact.

3.1.2.1 New Access Tracks

A network of new access tracks has been included within the design of the Proposed Development, accounting for relevant environmental considerations and constraints. The proposed access tracks have been designed to utilise existing forestry tracks onsite, some of which will be upgraded to support the construction of the wind farm, as well as to account for the environmental and technical conditions onsite. This includes the requirement for felled woodland where required to enable new access tracks to accommodate abnormal load vehicles.

3.1.3 Wind Turbine Infrastructure

A candidate WTG has been selected for the purposes of this EIA as the Siemens model SG 6.6-155. Volume 2, Chapter 3 of the EIA Report (Project Description) contains a Figure (Figure 3.10) illustrating typical elevations for the Siemens SG 6.6-155 and depicting its main components. Based on the candidate selected, the WTGs proposed have a rotor diameter of 155 m and an installed electrical capacity of approximately 6.6 MW, resulting in an anticipated projected output of 66 MW.

3.1.4 Associated Infrastructure

Each WTG will be constructed on a gravity-base reinforced concrete foundation, that would require approximately 1400 m³ of concrete and 120 tonnes of steel reinforcement however, the exact amount of which will be subject to a detailed design process prior to construction commencing. The construction area within approximately 1 m of the tower base would be restored using the retained topsoil after the WTGs have been installed.

Each WTG will also require a 33 kV transformer with internal switchgear in order to increase their electrical voltage. These will sit internally within the WTG tower.

Underground electrical cabling will be laid in trenches of approximately 1-2 m in width and 1 m in depth and will follow the direction of the onsite access tracks wherever possible in order to minimise



the Proposed Development's footprint. The network of cables will link the WTG transformers to the onsite substation which will in turn connect into the electricity network.

An area of hardstanding – measuring at approximately 72 m x 30 m – will be constructed adjacent to each of the WTG foundations in order to accommodate two cranes and thus facilitate the erection of the WTGS. The areas of hardstanding will be composed of compacted rock (with layers of geotextile as required), will be sufficiently level and will have an appropriate load-bearing capacity to enable safe crane operation.

In addition to WTG hardstanding areas, four auxiliary pads – measuring at approximately 20 m x 12 m – will be required for crane assembly and two blade laydown fingers – measuring at approximately 30 m x 5 m each – would be required to site the WTG blades and WTG components before WTG erection. These smaller areas of hardstanding will be temporary and used during construction only.

3.1.5 Substation Compound

The substation compound will be located south of T10 at approximately NGR: NS 68156 33305, expecting to house a single storey control building, 33 kV substation and associated internal electrical HV equipment, operations and welfare facilities for the maintenance personnel, and 8 Vehicle parking spaces.

3.1.6 Construction Specific Infrastructure and Requirements

The follow sections provide a summary of construction specific requirements for the Proposed Development.

3.1.6.1 Temporary Laydown Areas

A Temporary Construction Compound (TCC) will be built for use during the construction of the Proposed Development, measuring approximately 50 m x 100 m located south of T10. The TCC will comprise an area of hardstanding which offers space for site offices, staff welfare areas, parking, storage and laydown areas for plant, tool and other material, laydown areas and storage for turbine components and an area bunded appropriately to store fuels and oil tanks.

3.1.6.2 Borrow Pits

Two onsite borrow pits are proposed as part of the Proposed Development, that will eradicate the need to bring the majority of the aggregate required to the Site from external sources. The location of each borrow pit search area has been influenced by onsite environmental constraints in order to minimise environmental disturbance however the exact location and material required from each would be determined after full ground investigation works and testing have been undertaken.

3.1.7 Elements Indicated but Outwith the Scope of the EIA Report

3.1.7.1 SPT Substation Compound

For the avoidance of doubt, the application drawings and proposed layout illustrate an indicative location for a Scottish Power operated site substation. Consent is not being sought for this element and this is not therefore subject to this EIA. SPT will address the planning requirements of this element separately and in due course.

3.1.7.2 Grid Connection

For the avoidance of doubt, the final grid connection does not form part of the application, nor this EIA. Any future consent to connect the Proposed Development to the national grid will be sought by the relevant owner/operator of the local distribution network, Scottish Power.



3.2 Project Programme

It is anticipated that construction activities associated with the Proposed Development would take approximately 52 weeks / 12 months with a programme based on a predicted construction commencement date of June 2029 and a construction completion date of May 2030. The breakdown of construction activities within this 52-week programme and as currently anticipated is outlined below in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Outline Construction Programme

| Activity | Projected Timeframe |
|---|---------------------|
| Site Mobilisation | Month 1 |
| Timber Extraction | Months 1 & 2 |
| Construction Compound Construction | Month 2 |
| Sub-Station Compound Construction | Months 3 – 6 |
| Site Access, Track and Hardstanding Formation and Construction | Months 1 – 7 |
| Foundations | Months 4 – 9 |
| Cabling | Months 7 – 10 |
| Turbine Delivery and Installation | Months 7 – 11 |
| Turbine Testing and Commissioning | Months 10 – 12 |
| Site Reinstatement Activities (inc. Borrow Pits and Temporary Construction Compounds) | Months 11 & 12 |
| Operation | Month 12 |

3.2.1 Management of Construction Activities

3.2.1.1 Construction Environmental Management Plan

It is proposed that the management of all construction activities on site would be informed through the production of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which would be prepared and adopted prior to the onset of construction activities on site. The CEMP would be produced in line with best practice guidelines and in consultation with the LPA, the Council’s Environmental Health Officer (EHO) and other identified stakeholders. As with the CTMP, it is anticipated that the requirement for a CEMP would form a condition of consent.

Combined, the CTMP and CEMP would form the primary management and reporting tools for all on-site construction activities.

3.2.2 Construction Traffic and Access

Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport of the EIA Report details the breakdown of the Construction Traffic Timeline, with estimated traffic numbers throughout individual periods of the Construction process. Vehicular access for construction traffic would be provided from the A71 via the existing Bankend Rig Wind Farm and from an access on the B743. A network of new and upgraded access tracks leading from the Site access points will provide access to the turbine locations.

Increases in traffic levels associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Development are temporary in nature and can be accommodated by the existing road network within the study area. Good practice construction measures will ensure efficient transportation of construction materials and co-ordination with other wind farms under construction within the same timescales as the Proposed Development to minimise disruption to the local area.

3.3 Operational Phase

Consent is being sought for the Proposed Development for 30 years (from the date of commissioning). With development of this type, increasing the operational period allows the costs of renewable energy to be reduced and maximises the contribution that the Proposed Development can make towards climate change and renewable energy targets. Furthermore, there are no current statutory or legislative limits to the duration of consent for renewable energy development proposals.

3.4 Decommissioning Phase

Decommissioning of components and infrastructure will take account of the environmental legislation and technology available at the time of decommissioning. While it is noted that consent is sought for and operational period of 30 years from the date of commissioning, when a component, or section of, reaches the end of its individual operational lifespan it is anticipated that replacement works would occur on a like for like basis. Where necessary, notice will be given to the LPA and EHO in advance of commencement of decommissioning works, with all necessary licenses or permits being acquired. This will be in line with the Project Decommissioning Plan to ensure any works are timed to minimise environmental impact.



4 The EIA Process

4.1 Introduction

This section of the NTS provides a brief general summary of the EIA Process and the methodology by which Impact Assessment occurs within the context of an EIA. Included is explanatory text on the consultation process undertaken specifically in relation to the Proposed Development.

4.2 EIA Process and Methodology

4.2.1 EIA Process

EIA is the process undertaken to identify and evaluate the likely significant effects of a proposed development on the environment and to identify measures to mitigate or manage any significant adverse effects. The assessment must be carried out following consultation with statutory consultees, other interested bodies and members of the public. The purpose of identifying significant effects is to ensure decision makers are able to make an informed judgement on a proposal. Where one or more significant effects are identified, it does not automatically follow that a proposal should be refused.

The EIA Report has been prepared following a systematic approach to EIA and project design.

The process of identifying environmental effects is both iterative and cyclical, running in tandem with the iterative design process. The key elements in EIA are outlined below in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Key Stages of the EIA Process

| Step | Summary |
|---------------------------|---|
| Screening | Used to establish the requirement for EIA under the relevant EIA Regulations. Note, Screening is optional and may be skipped where it is assured that EIA will be required from outset. |
| Scoping | Establishing the scope of the EIA and undertaking consultation, including consideration of responses and how these should be addressed. |
| Environmental Assessment | The undertaking of technical environmental assessments, including baseline studies, input to the design process and identification of potential significant environmental effects. |
| Reporting | Preparation of the EIA Report which presents the findings of the technical environmental assessments and draws conclusions as to the predicted environmental impact of the scheme factoring any mitigation measures required to offset or negate significant environmental effects. |
| Submission and Assessment | Submission of the applications alongside the EIA Report, including publicity of the submitted EIA findings. |

The above table is not designed to provide an exhaustive list of the various steps undertaken within the EIA process, but rather give an overall non-technical explanation of key steps.

4.2.2 EIA Methodology

All assessments contained within the EIA Report have been undertaken based on the Site and relevant study areas related to the Proposed Development. All the topic assessments presented in the EIA Report have been undertaken on the basis of a common understanding of the nature of the Proposed Development, as described within Volume 2, Chapter 3: Project Description. Each topic area includes the assessment of likely significant effects, predicted and undertaken by competent experts with relevant specialist skills, drawing on their experience of working on other development projects, good practice in EIA and on relevant published information. The magnitude of any impact has been assessed against the identified baseline environmental conditions identified through associated data collection and collated through various methods.

Each of the technical disciplines within the EIA follow the above methodology, however there are minor variations to the approach depending on the topic-specific requirements.

4.2.3 Consultation

Consultation between the Applicant, the wider project team and both statutory and non-statutory consultees has been ongoing throughout the pre-application process. Details of consultation responses received as part of scoping are included within Volume 2, Chapter 4: Approach to Preparing the EIA Report. Proactive consultation enabled the technical specialists undertaking the EIA to suitably refine their approaches to undertaking their technical assessments and their survey methodologies. Consultation also allowed consultees to offer views and advice on different design configurations throughout the EIA process.

4.2.3.1 Stakeholder Consultation

Prior to the submission of this application, consultation has been undertaken with both the ECU and the LPA. Table 4.2 lists the dates of all consultation between TNEI, the applicant, the ECU, NatureScot (previously Scottish Natural Heritage) (NS), SEPA, Historic Environment Scotland (HES), SEPA, RSPB, MoD, Glasgow Airport, Glasgow Prestwick Airport, Scottish Forestry and the LPA undertaken to date.

Table 4.2 Summary of Stakeholder Consultation

| Date | Name | Summary |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 20 th September 2022 | NatureScot | A meeting was held to discuss the Proposed Development with specific regard to Ornithology. |
| 24 th February 2023 | SLC | Email correspondence issuing a letter and graphics to SLC to seek confirmation of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) parameters and viewpoint locations. |
| 24 th February 2023 | East Ayrshire Council (EAC) | A letter and graphics were issued to EAC to inform them of changes to the LVIA assessment parameters and viewpoint locations. |
| 15 th March 2023 | NatureScot | A follow-up meeting to the meeting held on 20 th September 2022 was held to further discuss the Proposed Development with specific regard to ornithological surveys being undertaken for the Proposed Development. |

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|---|---|--|
| 1 st May – 1 st April 2023 | HES | Email correspondence with HES regarding draft ZTV and wirelines of the Proposed Development which were provided to them for commentary. |
| June – November 2023 | Glasgow Prestwick Airport | Email and telephone correspondence regarding changes to the number and configuration of the WTGs since scoping and the resultant further assessments needed. |
| 9 th June – 20 th July 2023 | Glasgow Airport | Email correspondence regarding changes to the number and configuration of the WTGs since scoping. |
| 7 th July 2023 | Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO/MoD) | Email correspondence issuing a letter to DIO/MoD to update them on changes to the number of WTGs, the maximum blade tip heights, and the WTG co-ordinates since scoping. |
| 13 th July 2023 | SEPA | Email correspondence with SEPA to seek clarification of any changes to SEPA’s original scoping response. |
| 18 th July 2023 | SLC | Email correspondence with SLC to seek clarification of any changes to SLC’s original scoping response. |
| 20 th – 21 st July 2023 | HES | Email correspondence with HES to seek clarification of any changes to HES’ original scoping response. |
| 28 th July 2023 | SLC and HES | A virtual meeting was held to discuss Landscape and Visual, Cultural Heritage and Archaeology aspects of the Proposed Development. |
| 3 rd August 2023 | SLC and SEPA | A virtual meeting was held to discuss the Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Geology aspects of the Proposed Development. |
| 7 th August 2023 | Scottish Forestry | Telephone correspondence with Scottish Forestry to discuss the forestry aspects of the Proposed Development. |
| 9 th August 2023 | NatureScot | Email correspondence with NatureScot to seek clarification of any changes to NatureScot’s original scoping response. |
| 17 th August 2023 | SLC, NatureScot and RSPB | A virtual meeting was held to discuss the Ecology and Ornithology aspects of the Proposed Development. |

4.2.3.2 Public Consultation

The applicant consulted the members of the public, the local community, community councils and locally elected officials through public consultation events, leaflet distribution, correspondence via email and implementation of a project specific website. Notably, there are no statutory pre-application consultation procedures for S36 applications under the Electricity Act in the UK. However,

the Scottish Government has published good practice guidance¹ that sets out the minimum expectations for applicants to carry out pre-application consultation with the public and other stakeholders. The guidance provides advice on how to conduct public consultation events, how to notify and consult with relevant planning authorities and statutory consultees, and how to prepare and submit a Pre-application Consultation (PAC) report. The guidance also covers the pre-application discussion and scoping stages, as well as the EIA requirements for S36 applications. A non-statutory PAC report (document reference: 15747-013) which provides a summary of the public consultation activities has been prepared and can be viewed alongside the application.

¹ Electricity Act 1989 - sections 36 and 37: applications guidance - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)



5 Energy and Planning Policy

5.1 Summary of Policy Requirements

For the purpose of determination under the relevant statutory powers, the Proposed Development comprises components which are deemed to consist of electricity generating stations and their ancillary infrastructure (i.e., the WTG's) and have an installed capacity exceeding 50 MW. This therefore requires consent from the Scottish Ministers under Electricity Act.

In the case of a S36 application to Scottish Ministers, the LPA is a statutory consultee in the development management process and procedures and the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) (in this case the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2, adopted December 2020 (SLLDP2)) is not afforded primacy in the determination of the application, although it – alongside the local planning authority consultation response - remains a significant material consideration.

Since its adoption in February 2023, the 4th iteration of the National Planning Framework for Scotland (NPF4) has become the primary material consideration in the assessment of all developments of this type within Scotland. NPF4 represents a step change in how planning policy is implemented in Scotland; focussing decisions to be taken within a primarily national policy context, rather than a local-centric policy context. Consequently, the amount of weight afforded to local planning policy in the determination of S36 applications is further reduced through the adoption of NPF4.

A summary of relevant international, UK-wide and Scottish energy policy has been referenced within the EIA Report. The Proposed Development relates to the generation of electricity from renewable energy sources (in this case onshore wind) and comes as a direct response to national planning and energy policy objectives. Furthermore, the Proposed Development would contribute to the attainment of carbon emissions reduction, renewable energy and electricity targets at both the Scottish and UK levels. Detailed reference to the energy policy context for the S36 application is provided in the corresponding Planning Statement (document reference 15747-012).

National planning policy and guidance has been reviewed as part of the EIA process including NPF4, relevant Circulars and Planning Advice Notes. This can be viewed within Volume 2, Chapter 5: Planning and Energy Policy and Legislation of the EIA Report.

The statutory LPD (SLLDP2) relevant to the Proposed Development has also been considered. This comprises the following documents:

- The South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2, December 2020;
- SLLDP2 Supplementary Guidance 1, Sustainable Development and Climate Change;
- SLLDP2 Supplementary Guidance 2, Green Belt and Rural Area; and
- SLLDP2 Supplementary Guidance 9, Natural and Historic Environment.

Consideration has been given to the relevant policies contained within the LDP during the design of the Development. The policies most relevant are considered to provide guidance on the main issues the LPA will consider when acting as a statutory consultee for the S36 application.

6 Summary of EIA Report – Technical Assessments

6.1 Introduction

The following Section has been written to detail a summary of the findings of each Chapter included within Volume 2 of the EIA Report, in addition to supporting technical appendices and figures associated with each Chapter of the EIA Report. Each section below provides a summary of the predicted effects the Proposed Development, as predicted by each individual discipline.

6.2 Topic Specific Summaries

Table 6.1 provides a non-technical summary of the findings of the EIA Report split by individual topic.

Table 6.1 Non-technical Summary of EIA Report Findings per Topic

| Topic | Summary |
|----------------------|--|
| Landscape and Visual | <p>The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 6 of the EIA Report. Corresponding Technical Appendices, Baseline Figures, Visualisations and Viewpoints to the LVIA are contained within Volume 3. The assessment considers the Landscape and Visual effects arising from the short-term and long-term presence of the Proposed Development.</p> <p>The purpose of the LVIA is to identify and determine the potential effects on landscape character, landscape features, visual receptors, and visual amenity as a result of the works associated with the Proposed Development during construction, operation and decommissioning.</p> <p>The assessment concludes that the Proposed Development would result in significant effects however, these are typically inevitable due to this scale and habitually prominent locations. The surrounding context of the Proposed Development comprises a low sensitivity area with limited designations, undulating topography and landscape character that is increasingly characterised as a wind farm landscape. It is therefore concluded that the landscape could accommodate the wind farm without leading to unacceptable levels of detrimental effects on the overall landscape setting or visual amenity.</p> |

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| <p>Ecology</p> | <p>The Ecology Impact Assessment (EclA) can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 7 of the EIA Report. Corresponding Technical Appendices to the EclA are contained within Volume 4. The purpose of the EclA is to detail the anticipated potential effects of the Proposed Development on identified non-avian ecological receptors. Surveys were carried out to determine the ecological receptors within the report and were carried out in accordance with the best practice methodologies current at the time of commissioning.</p> <p>The EclA has determined that the Proposed Development is not expected to have any direct impacts on designated sites however, there may be indirect impacts on the qualifying interests of these designations, which have been further considered within Chapter 7 of the EIAR. The EclA has assessed the potential effects of the Proposed Development on a number of ecological receptors, including Habitats and Flora, Otter, Water Vole, Badger, Red Squirrel and Fisheries, which are discussed further within Chapter 7 of the EIAR.</p> <p>A Habitat Management Plan (HMP) has been produced in line with the recommendations of the EclA, to implement opportunities for further ecological enhancement to deliver biodiversity benefits wherever possible, in particular to reduce residual impacts and to deliver biodiversity net gain as per the requirements of NPF4. The intention is for the HMP to be an organic, live document, that will be modified post-submission and pre-construction, and potentially during construction and post-construction as required. The HMP will form a component of a wider strategy of positive conservation management being implemented across Avondale in response to other HMPs associated with wind farms within the surrounding environment.</p> |
| <p>Ornithology</p> | <p>The Ornithological Impact Assessment can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 8 of the EIA Report. Corresponding Technical Appendices to the Ornithological Impact Assessment (OIA) are contained within Volume 4. The report provides collision risk modelling (CRM) for Target Species recorded during surveys onsite. It is a theoretical cumulative and in combination assessment focuses solely on the potential collision risk impacts on SPA species, in the context of the SPA populations.</p> <p>The assessment provides a summary of the methodologies adopted and a description of the findings and the relevant information to be taken through to the OIA summarised within Chapter 8 of the EIA Report. As the Proposed Development covers a range of potential turbine sizes, the modelling contained within the technical assessment is presented as a worst-case scenario, in accordance with best practice methodologies at the time of commissioning. OIA Collision risk associated with the Proposed Development was determined to be limited to just that associated with hen harrier and peregrine, and therefore these are the only two species included within the tables contained within the report.</p> |



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| <p>Hydrology, Geology and Hydrogeology</p> | <p>The Hydrological Impact Assessment can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 9 of the EIA Report. Corresponding Technical Appendices to the Hydrological Impact Assessment are contained within Volume 4. The assessment covers the hydrology, hydrogeology and geology of the Site and near vicinity. No assessment of slope stability or geotechnical risk has been included in this chapter other than the peat landslide hazard risk assessment. The assessment is based on a methodology derived from generic EIA regulation guidance, IEMA guidance and SNH publication Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook Version 5 (April 2018). The methodology is also based upon relevant SEPA guidance including Assigning Groundwater Assessment Criteria for Pollutant Inputs (SEPA 2010).</p> <p>During the construction phase, the Magnitude of effect is assessed as Low for the majority of the Proposed Development and the sensitivity of the watercourses are of Medium for the watercourses, therefore the significance of effects is mostly Minor (not significant) for erosion and sedimentation. The development of tracks and cable trenches has the potential to alter natural drainage on the Site by the creation of altered preferential flow pathways. The likely effect from alteration of natural drainage patterns, runoff volumes and rates, prior to mitigation and management, is assessed as Minor and therefore no site-specific mitigation is required other than good practice outlined in Appendix 9.1.</p> <p>A peat landslide hazard risk assessment has been completed (refer to Appendix 9.4) which has identified six potential source locations. Sensitivity to peat disturbance is considered to be low to medium as much of the main infrastructure is not located on peat or is on degraded peat <1 m in depth. Furthermore, almost the entire peatland is considered to be modified due to the Site being afforested and the best quality peatland has been avoided by design. The total volume of peat predicted to be excavated does not exceed the intended peat reuse volume, so no disposal of excess peat offsite is expected. In addition to the peat reuse detailed in the Outline Peat Management Plan (OPMP) in Appendix 9.3, the Applicant proposes to undertake restoration works of further peat erosion areas as part of the Outline Habitat Management Plan (OHMP) (provided as Technical Appendix 7.3) to offset some of the adverse effects on peatland. The majority of the infrastructure will result in an overall significance of effect that is Minor for erosion/sedimentation of watercourses, pollution, alteration of natural drainage patterns, runoff volumes and rates, geological disturbance and PLHRA and therefore no further specific mitigation is required beyond the good practice methods.</p> |
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| <p>Noise</p> | <p>The Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 10 of the EIA Report. Corresponding Technical Appendices to the NIA are contained within Volume 4. A Noise Impact Assessment was carried out to predict the potential effects of the Proposed Development on identified sensitive noise receptors as a result of the operation of the Proposed Development, in the form of an Operational Noise Report, as well as another Noise Impact Assessment to predict the potential effects of the Proposed Development on identified sensitive noise receptors as a result of the construction of the Proposed Development, in the form of a Construction Noise Report. TNEI have been commissioned by the applicant to carry out both of these assessments and present the findings within Chapter 10 of the EIA Report.</p> <p>The operational noise assessment uses good practice guidance in the form of the ETSU-R-97 assessment to derive the noise limits at noise sensitive receptors, predict the likely effects determining whether noise emission at noise sensitive receptors will meet the Total ETSU-R-97 Noise Limits, and finally derive Site Specific Noise Limits for the Proposed Development and undertake predictions against those limits. Should consent be granted for the Proposed Development it would be appropriate to include a set of noise related planning condition, which detail the noise limits applicable to the Proposed Development. A set of suggested planning conditions have been included within Annex 6 of the Operational Noise Assessment.</p> |
| <p>Forestry</p> | <p>The Forestry Impact Assessment can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 11 of the EIA Report. Corresponding Technical Appendices to the Forestry Impact Assessment are contained within Volume 4. The Chapter considers the likely significant effects on the forests and woodland associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. A list of forestry related legislation and policies considered within the forestry assessment are listed within Section 11.5 of Volume 2, Chapter 11 of the EIA Report. The Criteria for the assessment of effects on forestry are based against the standards set in UK Forestry Standards (UKFS) and the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy (CoWRP) and the implementation guidance.</p> <p>The Proposed Development is located in an area of productive conifer forest known as High Plewland, which forms part of a more extensive area of forestry under single ownership, collectively known as Avondale Forest extending to 1,012.48 ha. Under the Wind Farm Forest Plan, felling coupes have been redesigned to reflect provisions from proposed wind farm roads and underlying site conditions, using existing wind-firm boundaries and interlocking designs of varying sizes, appropriate to the scale of the forest and the low to moderate landscape sensitivity of the forest. Areas felled to accommodate the Proposed Development will be replanted back to the bat protection buffer zones around each turbine. Any loss of woodland cover is mitigated through the delivery of a local compensatory planting programme of equivalent area.</p> <p>As a result of the construction of the Proposed Development, there would be a net loss of woodland area. The area of stocked woodland in the study area would decrease by 42.64 ha. In order to comply with the criteria of the Scottish Government's CoWRP, off-site compensation planting would be required. The Applicant is committed to providing appropriate compensatory planting. The residual effects on forestry are a reduction of planted ground of 42.64 ha. However, when considering the proposed mitigation measures, including compensatory planting, the overall magnitude of impact would be negligible and there would be no likely significant effect.</p> |



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| <p>Cultural Heritage</p> | <p>The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 12 of the EIA Report. Corresponding Technical Appendices to the HIA are contained within Volume 4. A description of the current cultural heritage baseline related to the Proposed Development, the potential effects on cultural heritage that may occur as a result of the Proposed Development, the significance of any predicted effects and mitigation that will be undertaken to minimise and/or offset predicted impacts is provided within Volume 2, Chapter 12 of the EIA Report. Main items of legislation, policies and guidance documents specifically related to cultural heritage have been assessed within the Chapter.</p> <p>The desk-based study for the area beyond the Site Boundary consisted of the identification of designated cultural heritage assets, including Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Inventory Historic Battlefields and Inventory Garden and Designed Landscapes within 30 km of the Site Boundary. Following consideration of the likely levels of setting effects at such long distances (see, for example, Figure 6.29) the study area was ultimately refined to 10 km from the Site Boundary. Following the desk study the site survey was undertaken in March 2023. It examined the Site on the ground. It aimed to record the current condition and extent of previously identified cultural heritage assets, record any new assets and assess if any of the Site had potential to hold buried archaeological remains.</p> <p>Effects on the setting of cultural heritage assets identified during this assessment were all visual in nature. No non-visual setting effects are predicted. Of the 93 designated assets within 10 km of the Site Boundary 56 were shown by the ZTV to have no visibility of the Proposed Development (Figure 12.2) and they did not form part of a group of assets that may have resulted in their setting being impacted despite the specific assets themselves not being inter-visible with the Proposed Development. Through the design process the layout of the Proposed Development has avoided direct impacts on the vast majority of known cultural heritage assets (Figure 12.1). Direct effects were however predicted on one known asset, The Regal Burn bridge. The magnitude of effect is anticipated to be slight adverse meaning the significance of effect will be negligible.</p> <p>Cumulative effects on cultural heritage assets relative to this assessment will relate to setting and be visual in nature however, no non-visual cumulative setting effects or other types of cumulative effects were identified. Potential direct effects on as yet undiscovered buried assets are possible during construction and the significance of this effect is currently unknown. Should buried archaeology be uncovered that cannot be avoided and preserved in situ further archaeological work will offset but not reduce the significance of any effect.</p> |
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| Traffic and Transport | <p>The Transport Impact Assessment (TIA) can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 13 of the EIA Report. Corresponding Technical Appendices to the TIA are contained within Volume 4. The chapter assesses the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the existing transport network and on sensitive receptors as a result of the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development. It sets out the baseline conditions for the transport network around the Proposed Development before going on to identify the potential environmental effects that could arise as a result of increased traffic. The traffic levels are then identified, and an assessment of effects is undertaken with mitigation proposed where required.</p> <p>The study area for the assessment of traffic and transport is indicated by Figure 13.1 and has been identified using the assessment thresholds within the IEMA Guidelines as an aide. The study area has been predicated on the access points to the Site and the proposed road routes to the access points. Both consultation responses from South Lanarkshire Council and Transport Scotland, included within the Scoping Response for the project, have been adhered to within the proposed access route included within this application.</p> <p>Volume 2, Chapter 13 of the EIA concludes that the effects of increased traffic as a result of the Proposed Development are considered to be negligible and Not Significant across the study area in accordance with the EIA Regulations. The assessment also concludes that no significant cumulative effects are predicted during construction of the Proposed Development. Implementation of a CTMP as a good practice construction measure will ensure efficient transportation of construction materials and co-ordination with other wind farms under construction within the same timescales as the Proposed Development to minimise disruption to the local area. It is noted that increases in traffic levels associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Development are temporary in nature and can be accommodated by the existing road network within the study area.</p> |
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| <p>Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation</p> | <p>The Socio-economic Impact Assessment can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 14 of the EIA Report. Corresponding Technical Appendices to the Socio-economic Impact Assessment are contained within Volume 4. The Chapter considers the potential socio-economic, recreational, and touristic effects of the Proposed Development, including a consideration of existing land uses within the Site, local tourism activity, employment generation, and any indirect economic effects from the Proposed Development. The Chapter assesses the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development on the baseline socio-economic situation of the Site surroundings, nearest settlements, and Nationwide targets. This includes SLC and nationally in Scotland with consideration also given where relevant to likely significant environmental effects in relation to tourism and recreation both within, and in close proximity to, the Site and the wider area, along with public safety issues.</p> <p>The following effects were considered to be potentially significant in relation to socio-economic, tourism and recreation and land use at the scoping stage and have been assessed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 14 of the EIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on employment (direct, indirect and induced job creation) and economy. • Effects on tourism (likely effects on tourism destinations and activities). • Effects on recreational activities and assets. <p>In summary, the Proposed Development would result in a likely beneficial significant economic effect at a ward level during construction and as a result of the community benefit fund (during operation). Residual economic effects during operation and decommissioning would be beneficial, but not significant at a regional and national level. The Proposed Development would not result in any adverse significant effects on identified tourism receptors or on recreational routes (on top of those identified in the landscape and visual impact assessment). Significant effects for this socio-economic assessment are identified for two recreational routes but as noted above use of these routes are likely to change due to the presence of turbines in views. Health effects as a result of the Proposed Development would not result in a significant environmental effect at a ward, Council, or national level.</p> |
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| <p>Other Matters</p> | <p>All other matters covered within the EIA can be viewed in full within Volume 2, Chapter 15 of the EIA Report. This considers the potential effects of the Proposed Development on any other remaining environmental topics which were scoped out of the EIA thus which do not require an individual chapter nor a full assessment. An explanation of why all of the aforementioned environmental topics were scoped out of the full assessment in this EIA has been provided. Chapter 15 illustrates why no further information nor assessment was required for the following environmental topics: air quality, population and human health, and accidents and natural disasters. Chapter 15 also presents the findings of the assessment of likely effects of the Proposed Development with regard to the following environmental topics: Shadow Flicker, Climate Change and Carbon Balance, Aviation, and Radio-communications. Corresponding Technical Appendices covering Shadow Flicker and Climate Change and Carbon Balance are contained within Volume 4k.</p> <p>In summary, any shadow flicker effects which may occur at the one assessed property (Dippal Lodge) are likely to only be short term in nature and are considered unlikely to have a large impact upon the residents' amenity. The Proposed Development is also expected to have an overall beneficial effect on carbon balance and there is no indication of any radio or telecommunication links within, or in the vicinity of, the Site which are likely to be significantly affected as a result of the Proposed Development. Finally, following consultation with key aviation consultees, Glasgow Prestwick Airport are currently in the process of undertaking further assessments so as to inform any mitigation required to ensure the Proposed Development does not significantly impact its operations.</p> |
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7 Conclusions

The Site at Bankend Rig III has been chosen for a number of reasons.

- There is a commercially viable grid connection;
- There is high annual mean wind speed across the Site;
- The Proposed Development is located in proximity to and in an area where wind farms are already operating;
- The Site is sufficiently removed from the nearest residential properties and settlements; and
- The Site benefits from good access to an existing road network which has proven capable of supporting the delivery of WTG's and associated infrastructure through the construction of other comparable developments.

An EIA for the Proposed Development in its totality has been carried out in accordance with the regulatory requirements of the EIA Regulations as well as relevant good practice guidance, which involves the compilation, evaluation and presentation of any potentially significantly environmental effects which may arise from the Proposed Development.

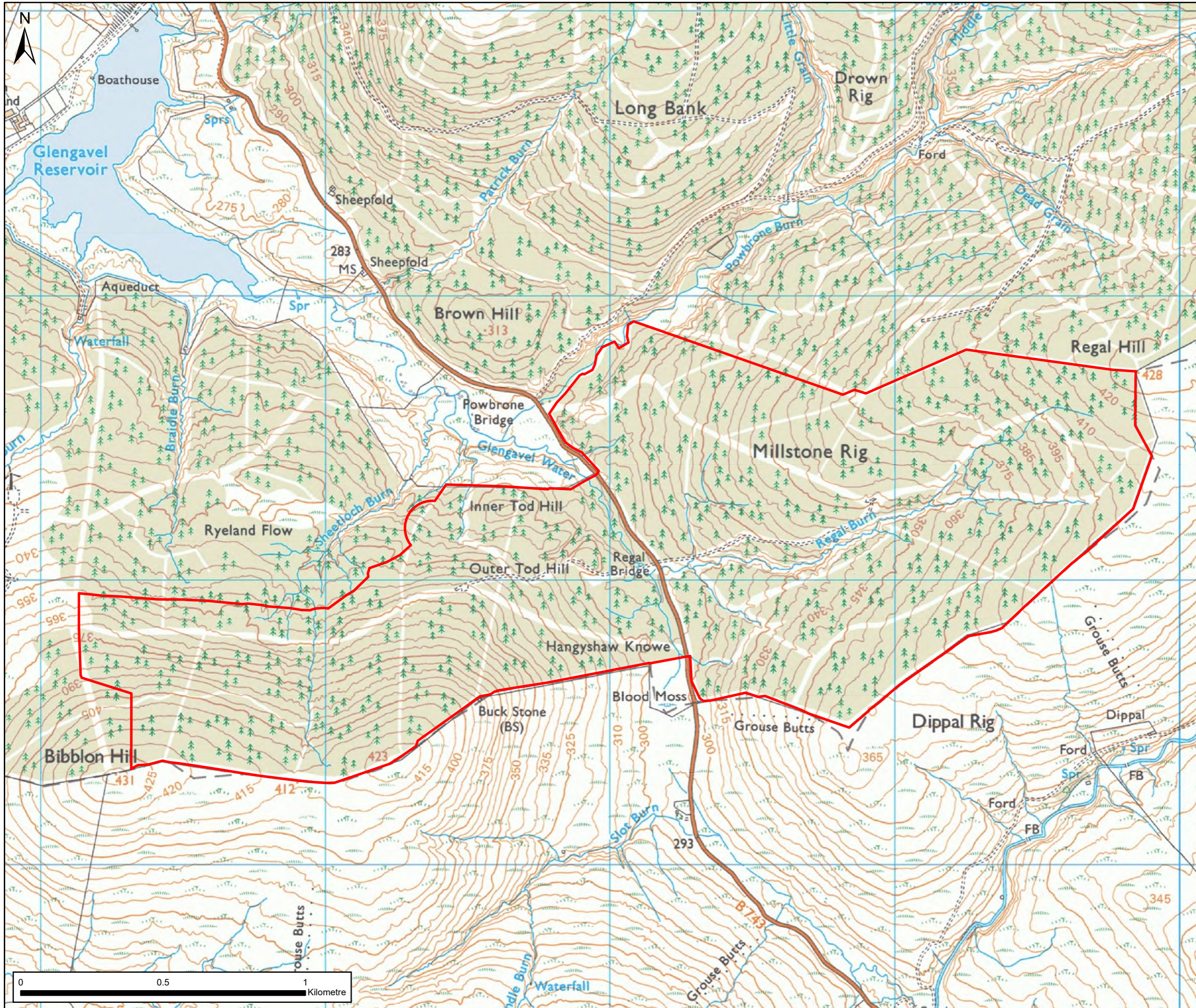
The design strategy has delivered an onshore renewable energy development with a layout that represents the optimum fit within the technical and environmental parameters of the Site.

Through embedded design and proposed mitigation, major and significant adverse effects as a result of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development have been avoided; however, moderate adverse landscape and visual effects will remain albeit to an extremely limited degree. Given the nature of the Project and the Site, these effects cannot be avoided in their entirety; however, landscape and visual effects will be localised in extent to only a very small number of receptors and within approximately 0.2 – 0.3 km of the Site. The EIA Report EcIA identifies the only significant adverse impact is in relation to peatland habitat, however suitable compensatory habitat management has been provided to offset these impacts.

The Proposed Development presents an important environmental benefit as a renewable energy contributing to Scotland's ambitious renewable energy targets and offsetting fossil fuel energy sources which produce CO₂ and contribute to climate change.

Overall, this EIA shows that, given the iterative design process, and with the committed good practice measures and proposed further site-specific mitigation in place, most potential environmental effects associated with the construction and operation of the Proposed Development can be avoided altogether or minimised to a suitable degree.

Appendix A – Site Location Plan and Site Layout Plan

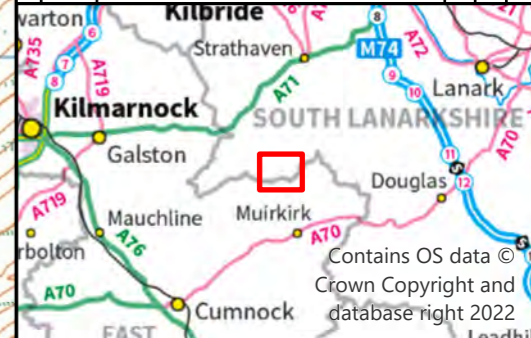


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NOTES

Red Line Boundary

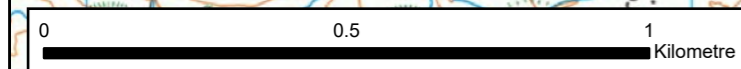
| Rev | Date | Amendment Details | Drwn | Chkd | App'd |
|-----|----------|-------------------|------|------|-------|
| 00 | 18/01/23 | First Issue | | JCM | CP |

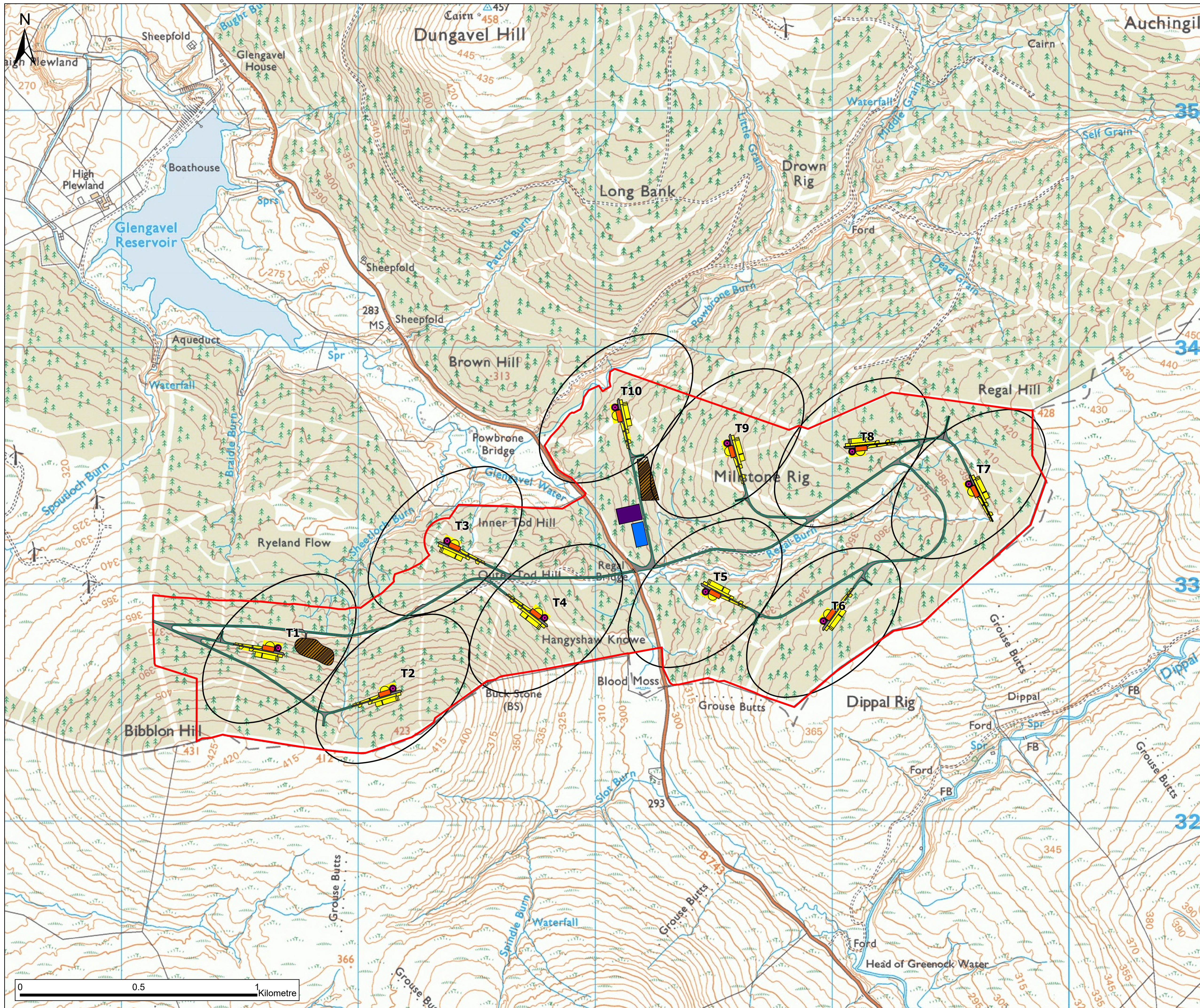


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| Client | WILSON RENEWABLES | | | | | | | | |
| Drawing Status | FOR PLANNING | | | | | | | | |
| Project Title | Bankend Rig III Onshore Wind Project | | | | | | | | |
| Drawing Title | Figure 2.1 - Site Location Plan | | | | | | | | |
| Scale | 1:12,500 | Designed | JCM | Drawn | JCM | Checked | CP | Approved | CP |
| Original Size | A3 | Date | 18/01/2023 | Date | 18/01/2023 | Date | 18/01/2023 | Date | 18/01/2023 |
| Drawing Number | 15747 - 111 | | | | | | | Revision | 0 |

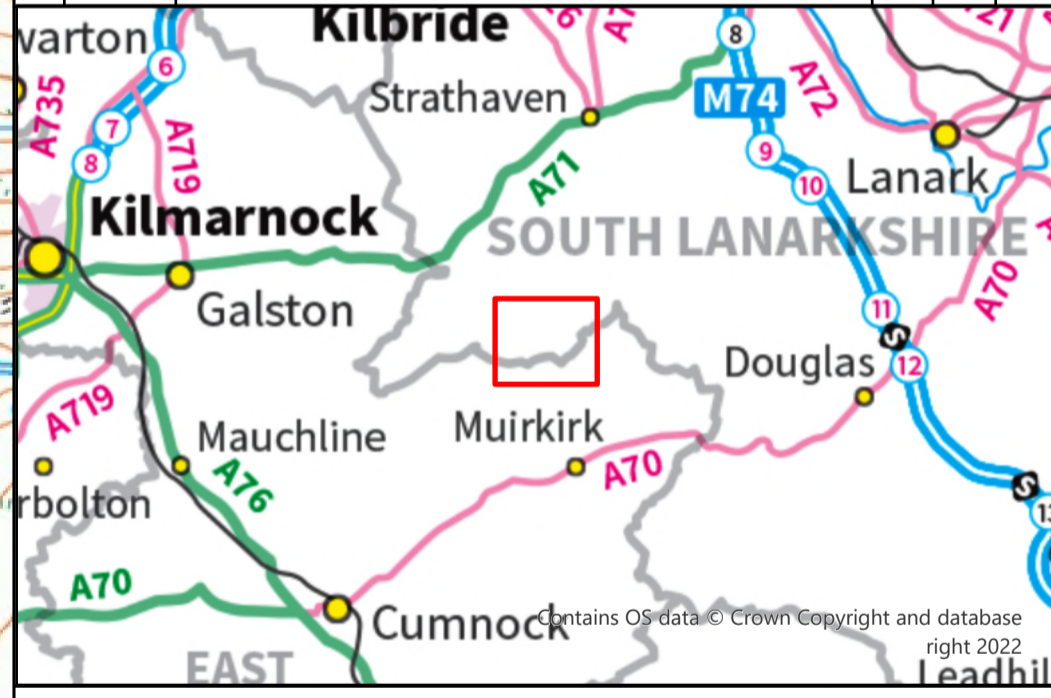




- NOTES**
- ▬ Red Line Boundary
 - Turbine Bases
 - Turbine Ellipses
 - Borrow Pit Search Area
 - Temporary Construction Compound
 - Temporary Turbine Hardstanding Areas
 - Track Shoulders
 - Crane Pad Hardstanding - Permanent
 - Network of Onsite Access Tracks
 - Substation Control Compound

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| Client | |
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Drawing Status: FOR PLANNING

Project Title: Bankend Rig III Onshore Wind Project

Drawing Title: Figure 3.1 - Site Layout Plan - Proposed

| Scale | Designed | Drawn | Checked | Approved |
|---------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1:7,500 | JCM | JCM | CP | CP |
| Original Size | Date | Date | Date | Date |
| A3 | 18/01/2024 | 18/01/2024 | 18/01/2024 | 18/01/2024 |

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| Drawing Number | 15747 - 112 | Revision | 1 |
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