

**Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance:
Highland Strategic Capacity section**

**Landscape Sensitivity appraisals and Strategic
Capacity conclusions for:**

- **Caithness**
- **Black Isle, Surrounding Hills and Moray
Firth Coast**

(‘Part 2b’)

Statement of Publicity and Consultation

October 2017

Statement prepared in accordance with Regulation 27(1) of The Town and Country Planning
(Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008



Introduction

This paper sets out the publicity measures undertaken by The Highland Council (THC) during the preparation of content relating to two study areas:

- Caithness
- Black Isle, Surrounding Hills and Moray Firth Coast

for addition (as 'Part 2b') to the Highland Strategic Capacity section of the adopted Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (SG).

Supporting evidence is included as hyperlinks (full web addresses are included as footnotes) and images.

Extensive consultation, as previously documented, led to the adoption of the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance in November 2016. That SG included the methodology for undertaking landscape sensitivity appraisals and reaching strategic capacity conclusions which are to be part of the Supplementary Guidance, set out a programme of such studies to cover a number of areas of Highland and included the first such appraisal and conclusions – that for the Loch Ness study area.

The Highland Council acknowledges the ongoing input and assistance received from Scottish Natural Heritage to this work programme in the form of officer time, knowledge and expertise.

Publicity and Consultation undertaken for 'Part 2b'

The Highland Council has a dedicated [webpage](http://www.highland.gov.uk/onshorewind)¹ for the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance. As well as providing the Supplementary Guidance as adopted in November 2016 and information on the preparation of it, the page also provides information on the programme of studies referred to above. In respect of the undertaking of studies to prepare the relevant SG content for Caithness and for the Black Isle, Surrounding Hills and Moray Firth Coast ('Part 2b'), it sets out information on the previous consultation stage and links to relevant documents.

¹ <http://www.highland.gov.uk/onshorewind>

Draft appraisals for 'Part 2b'

Consultation ran from 25th November 2016, initially scheduled to conclude on 20th January 2017 but was extended to 31st January 2017. Press releases were made ([12 December 2016](#)² and [10 January 2017](#)³) which led to some coverage in local media. Use was made of social media to further publicise the consultation and to help maintain awareness of it during the consultation period. The following public notice was placed in local media, detailing arrangements for the consultation including where the document could be viewed online and in paper form, how to submit comments and the deadline for doing so:

²https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9897/comments_sought_on_landscape_appraisals_to_guide_wind_energy_development

³https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9938/more_time_to_comment_on_landscape_appraisals_to_guide_wind_energy_development

ONSHORE WIND ENERGY SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE

The Highland Council has incorporated modifications required by Scottish Ministers into its Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance and subsequently adopted it on 24 November 2016 as part of the Development Plan for Highland. The Council has also prepared the associated Strategic Environmental Assessment Post Adoption Statement. These documents are available to view free of charge during normal opening hours at: Development and Infrastructure Service, The Highland Council, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX or online at: highland.gov.uk/onshorewind

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the Development Plans Team by email devplans@highland.gov.uk or by telephone [01349 886608](tel:01349 886608)

LAUNCH OF CONSULTATION ON: DRAFT LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY APPRAISALS FOR THE BLACK ISLE, SURROUNDING HILLS AND MORAY FIRTH COAST AND FOR CAITHNESS

The Highland Council has prepared draft landscape sensitivity appraisals for two study areas: for the Black Isle, Surrounding Hills and Moray Firth Coast; and for Caithness. The Council intends that these will be added to and become part of the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance. Comments are now invited.

The easiest way to read and comment on the Draft Landscape Appraisals is through our consultation portal at consult.highland.gov.uk. If you have not done so already you will need to register on that portal to submit comments. Once registered, you can then use your login details to read the Appraisals online and make comments by clicking on the 'Add Comments' tabs displayed in the document. Comments should be submitted no later than **12 noon on Friday 20 January 2017. They should be submitted via the portal wherever possible – comments by letter or email will not be accepted unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Development Plans Team.** Therefore if you are not able to access or use the website (for example if you cannot access the internet) please contact the Development Plans Team on [01349 886608](tel:01349 886608) and we will provide an alternative method for you to submit your comments. Comments by letter or email will not be accepted unless agreed in advance with the Development Plans Team. Anyone without internet access can view a paper copy of the document at the following locations in or near the study areas:

Highland Council Service Points and/or Public/Community Libraries at:

Alness, Ardersier, Beauly, Bettyhill, Bonar Bridge, Cromarty, Culloden, Dingwall, Dornoch, Fortrose, Grantown-on-Spey, Helmsdale, Inshes, Invergordon, Inverness, Muir of Ord, Nairn, Tain, Thurso, Wick.

Mobile Libraries:

Brora Mobile Library, Dingwall Area Mobile Library, Far North Mobile Library, Invergordon Mobile Library, Moray Firth Mobile Library, West Ross Mobile Library.

The documents are available for inspection free of charge during normal opening hours, through the consultation period. Additionally, at the Council's access points you can read the documents on our computers and there is free WiFi access. If you have any other requirements in order to access and read the Landscape Sensitivity Appraisals (on paper or online) please contact us by email devplans@highland.gov.uk or by telephone [01349 886608](tel:01349 886608).

This notice is provided in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 and The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

The Council sent notifications directly to a wide range of potentially interested parties to make them aware of the consultation, including: those Community Councils within (or within 5km) of the study areas, relevant Key Agencies and Neighbouring Authorities, relevant organisations and individuals who had previously submitted comments to the Council (including those who commented on the relevant parts of the adopted SG during its preparation).

Finalised 'Part 2b' for Adoption

Taking into account the comments received on the Draft, the content for 'Part 2b' was refined and, alongside a summary of and response to comments received, a draft for adoption was presented to committee in a [paper](#)⁴ (with associated [booklet A](#)⁵) on 16th August 2017. This committee paper summarises comments made on the draft content for the two study areas and makes recommended council responses to issues that set out how the issues should be taken into account. At committee Members agreed these recommendations, as set out in the [Minutes of the meeting](#)⁶, and therefore this paper (including the linked-to Committee Reports and Minutes) meets the Council's obligations as required by Regulation 27(1) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008. Should Scottish Ministers require a copy of that committee paper (with associated appendices) and minutes, rather than accessing the document online, The Highland Council would be happy to provide it.

⁴https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/72319/item_11_onshore_wind_energy_supplementary_guidance_%E2%80%93_landscape_sensitivity_appraisals

⁵https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/72331/item_11_booklet_a_-_landscape_sensitivity_appraisal

⁶https://www.highland.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/3864/environment_development_and_infrastructure_committee/attachment/72419