Agenda Item	**6.3**
Report No	**PLN/025/24**

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: North Planning Applications Committee

Date: 5 March 2024

Report Title: 23/02936/S36 : Creag Riabhach Wind Farm Limited

Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, Lairg, IV27 4AD

Report By: Area Planning Manager - North

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Creag Riabhach Extension Wind Farm - erection and operation of 3 turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, installation of Battery Energy Storage System, access tracks, and associated infrastructure

Ward: 01 - North, West and Central Sutherland

Development category: National Development (S36 Application)

Reason referred to Committee: Section 36 Application under Electricity Act

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the recommendation to **RAISE NO OBJCTION** the application as set out in section 11 of the report.

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

1.1 The Highland Council has been consulted by the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU) on an application made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended) for the erection and operation of an extension to Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, for a period of 40 years, comprising of 3 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), access tracks, and ancillary infrastructure. The proposal has the capacity to generate an additional 49.9MW (12.6MW for the 3 turbines and 37.3MW for the Battery Energy Storage System).

1.2 Owing to the proposal being an extension to the existing wind farm and anticipated to be developed and operated by the same named company, the proposal requires consent under the Electricity Act, as opposed to under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, which would be the usual consenting route for this scale of development proposals where the generating capacity does not exceed 50MW of electricity.

1.3 Key elements of the development as assessed within the application's Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Environmental Impact Assessment Report Supplementary Information (EIAR-SI) include:

- 3 x wind turbine of 149.9m to blade tip (with a maximum generating capacity of 12.6MW);
- 16 x Battery Energy Storage System units (with a maximum generating capacity of 37.3MW) measuring approximately 12.8m x 18.2m x 2.35m;
- Turbine foundations and crane hard standings;
- New access tracks (approximately 1.5km) and 3 watercourse crossings;
- A network of underground cables; and
- Temporary construction compound, storage area and car park.

1.4 The proposed development will be accessed from the existing access that serves Creag Riabhach Wind Farm approximately 120m south of the Vagastie Bridge on the A836 north of Lairg. The same routes will be utilised as those used for the construction of Creag Riabhach Wind Farm.

1.5 The applicant has requested a micro-siting allowance of 50m for site infrastructure, tracks and turbine locations to accommodate unknown ground conditions, whilst also maintaining environmental buffers (e.g. set back from watercourses). The final design of the turbines (hub and tip heights, rotor diameters, colours, and finish), BESS units, substation and control buildings, compounds, ancillary electrical equipment, landscaping and fencing etc, would be expected to be agreed with the Planning Authority at the time of project procurement. For example, it should be noted that the 149.9m tip height of the turbines is presented as a worst-case scenario for the purposes of the assessment. Whilst typical drawings for these elements are set out in the application, turbine manufacturers regularly update designs that are available, thereby necessitating the need for some flexibility on the approved design details, the final details of which, can be secured by condition.

1.6 The wind farm has an expected operational life of 40 years from the date of final commissioning. The applicant has advised that a decision would then be made as

to whether to apply to re-power the site. If in the event permission is granted for the development, and then the decision is made to decommission the wind farm, the applicant advises that all turbine components, transformers, substation and associated buildings and infrastructure will be removed. Turbine foundations would remain on site however, although the exposed concrete plinth of the turbine foundations would be removed to a depth that will permit the continuation of current land use practices. Hardstanding will be removed or regraded with soil and planting where appropriate. It is likely that if the site is decommissioned the access tracks to the turbines would need to be reinstated. The applicant acknowledges that these matters would not be confirmed until the time of the submission of the decommissioning and restoration plan. It is anticipated that decommissioning works would be undertaken for a period of approximately 6 months.

1.7 The applicant anticipates that the construction period will last up to 23 months with a Construction Environment Management Document to be utilised throughout the construction period. This would require to be approved by the Planning Authority, in consultation with the relevant statutory bodies before the commencement of development.

1.8 The applicant utilised the Highland Council's pre-application advice service for major developments (21/05942/PREMAJ). The response noted that it was generally supportive of the proposal subject to:

- Landscape and visual impacts on receptors, particularly on short range views and those travelling through the landscape given the increased scale of turbines located closer to the A836; and
- The potential impact on peat.

1.9 The application is supported by an EIAR and contains chapters on: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Terrestrial Ecology; Freshwater Ecology; Ornithology; Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Soils; Transport and Access; Cultural Heritage; Noise; Traffic and Transport; Socio-Economics, Recreation and Tourism; and Other Issues. The application is also accompanied by a Planning Statement and Pre-Application Consultation Report.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The application site is the operational Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, which lies 6.5km southwest of Altnaharra and 33.5km north of Lairg on the west side of the A836 and within the Altnaharra Estate. The site extends approximately 83ha, although the footprint of the development is significantly less, of undifferentiated moorland over blanket bog and peatland with some commercial forestry. Several watercourses cross the site flowing to the River Vagastie to the site's west. The majority of the site is within the Rounded Hills - Caithness and Sutherlands (LCT135) Landscape Character Type (LCT) with the southern extent being within the Sweeping Moorland and Flows LCT (LCT134). The scheme is associated with the high ground of Meall An Fhuarain (472m AOD), Ben Harrald (400m AOD), and Creag Riabhach (400m AOD), while Ben Klibreck (962m AOD) is approximately 4km to the east and Ben Hee (873m AOD) is approximately 10km west.

2.2 Creag Riabhach Wind Farm was consented in October 2016 and comprises 22 turbines with tip heights just under 125m, hub heights of 67m, and rotor diameters of 115.7m and a generating capacity of 92MW. Installed infrastructure includes site compound with substation and control room, access tracks, an access junction with the A836 and a new bridge over the River Vagastie. The wind farm is operational with the developer now implementing the approved Peat and Habitat Management Plans to remove temporary infrastructure and restore disturbed ground.

2.3 There are no environmental designations within the site. Immediately west and south however is the "Cnoc an Alaskie" Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which forms part of the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), and Ramsar designations and now part of the candidate Flow Country World Heritage Site. Ben Klibreck SSSI lies to the immediate east of the River Vagastie. Other designations, ranging from local to international levels of protection, are contained in the wider area surrounding this site. There are no features recorded on the historic record within the site however the nearby Crask and Allt A'Chrasig Bridge are Category C Listed.

2.4 To the north, north-west and west of the site there are three National Scenic Areas (NSA's) including Kyle of Tongue, North West Sutherland and Coigach and Assynt. These are set back from the site with the closest at a distance of approximately 10km. There are two Special Landscape Areas (SLA's) located to the east including Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA and Bens Griam and Loch Nan Clar SLA. The designations do not extend over the site area, with the Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA boundary approximately 2 to 3km to the east. Wild Land Area (WLA) 35: Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest is immediately adjacent to the east with WLA 37: Foinaven – Ben Hee immediately adjacent to the west. WLA 38: Ben Hope – Ben Loyal to the north and WLA34: Reay – Cassley to the south west are set back approximately 10km and 12km respectively.

2.5 The wider site is located in a rural setting, comprising of open moorland with areas of farmland in the wider surrounding area. The closest residential property to the proposed development is The Crask Inn which is approximately 2km to the south. The nearest settlement as defined within the Council's Local Development Plan is Lairg approximately 21km to the south located outwith the ZTV.

2.6 There are 23 Scheduled Monuments and 5 Listed Buildings within the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) up to a distance of 20km for designated assets and 5km for non-designated assets. A number of Scheduled Monuments in the locality but the majority of these are located to the north east of the site, many of which are situated along the Loch Naver valley. These include Ben Klibreck, campsite and survey station, Meall nan Con; Dun Creagach Island, broch, Loch Naver; Grumbeg Township; Grummore, broch; Grummore, depopulated township, Loch Naver and Klibreck, chapel, cross-slab and settlement. Within 5km of the site centre there are two listed buildings, Crask Bridge and Vagastie Bridge, both category C.

2.7 Peat is present across the whole site and is characteristic of this area. Blanket bog and wet heath habitat are qualifying features of the adjacent Caithness and Sutherland Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and are present at the site which are listed under Annex I of the Habitats Directive. The site is used by a number of

protected species (otters, water vole, badger and common lizard) and birds (golden eagle, greylag goose, Arctic skua etc.), all present in the wider area and including some associated with designated sites.

2.8 The applicant undertook a Phase 1 habitat survey to identify wetland habitats occurring within the site and potential Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE). Wetland habitats were identified including wet modified heath and blanket bog within the site. The wet modified heath found within the proposed development was not composed of species requiring base rich conditions (indicating a groundwater fed community) or found in locations where an obvious groundwater feature was evident. Therefore, it is considered there is a low likelihood that they are ground water dependant.

2.9 Ornithological Surveys identified the site and immediate surrounds are frequented by a varied range of birds including but not limited to red and black throated divers, golden eagle, merlin, hen harrier, dunlin, greenshank, golden plover, pink-footed goose, greylag goose, barnacle goose, whooper swan, peregrine, barn owl, black grouse, Arctic skua, cuckoo, snow bunting and fieldfare, and skylark. The Golden Eagle Topographical (GET) model was used in the assessment.

2.10 The key recreational interests in this area are walking, cycling, horse riding and fishing. Within the study area are a number of national recreational routes including The National Cycle Route 1 (NCN1), North Coast 500, Cape Wrath Trail, Sutherland Trail and Moray Firth Trail. Additionally, there are a number of Munros in the surrounding area including Ben Hope, Ben More Assynt, Ben Hee and Ben Klibeck along with various corbetts. There is visibility along the NCN1/A836 for an approximate 5km interval between the summit of The Crask and Druim Allt na h-Aire as well as from the munros noted.

2.11 There are a number of turbine developments in proximity of the proposal, which must be taken into account by the assessment for cumulative landscape and visual impacts (LVIA). Windfarms beyond 35km radius of the application site have been scoped out of the assessment of cumulative effects, so the list below sets out windfarm projects within 35km that are operational, approved or have been submitted but not yet determined:

Site Name	**No. of turbines**	**Tip height (m)**	**Distance from the nearest turbine (km)**
Operational / Under Construction			
Creag Riabhach Wind Farm	22	125	0.3
Achany Wind Farm	19	100	21.6
Rosehall Wind Farm	19	90	22.4
Lairg Wind Farm	3	99.5	24.5

Kilbraur Extension	8	125	31.8
Kilbraur	19	115	32.1
Gordonbush Extension	11	149.9	34.1
Gordonbush	35	107	34.4
Consented			
Chleansaid	16	200	11.2
Sallachy	9	149.9	12.3
Strath Tirry	4	135	13.3
Achany	20	149.9	17.8
Braemore	18	126	24.9
Lairg 2	10	200	25.1
Meall Buidhe	8	149.9	31.5
Strathy South	39	200	32
In Planning or at Appeal			
Garvary	25	180	26.4
Strath Oykel	11	200	29.1

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1	10.09.2012	12/03115/FUL - Erection of 60m Anemometer Mast	Permission granted
3.2	17.12.2012	12/04366/SCOP - Erection of 38 x Wind Turbines (Creag Riabhach Wind Farm)	Scoping Decision Issued
3.3	17.10.2016	14/00004/S36 - Erection of 22 x Wind Turbines (max tip height 125m) (Creag Riabhach Wind Farm - 72.6MW)	Approved by Scottish Ministers
3.4	27.11.2015	15/03819/FUL - Erection of a 60m anemometer mast (36 month time extension)	Permission Granted
3.5	03.12.2018	18/04520/FUL - Retention of 60m anemometer mast (36 month time extension)	Permission Granted

3.6	05.12.2018	18/05384/SCRE - Proposed 132kV Overhead Line supported by double trident 'H' pole structures to provide a grid connection	EIA Required
3.7	06.06.2019	19/01713/SCOP - Creag Riabhach OHL grid connection	Scoping Decision Issued
3.8	23.03.2021	20/01014/S37 - Installation and operation of 132 kV overhead electric line to connect Creag Riabhach Wind Farm to the grid	Approved by Scottish Ministers
3.9	19.05.2020	20/00775/FUL - Formation of borrow pit for use in the construction of Creag Riabhach Wind Farm	Permission Granted
3.10	19.05.2020	20/00774/FUL - Formation of borrow pit for use in the construction of Creag Riabhach Wind Farm	Permission Granted
3.11	30.07.2020	20/01967/FUL - Construct a temporary alternative access	Permission Granted
3.12	23.03.2021	20/01014/S37 - Installation and operation of 132kV overhead electric line to connect Creag Riabhach Wind Farm to the grid	Approved by Scottish Ministers
3.13	14.06.2021	21/01648/FUL - Installation of three junction boxes to house electricity cables	Permission Granted
3.14	30.10.2021	21/04166/FUL - Erection of temporary bridge (retrospective)	Permission Granted
3.15	24.06.2022	22/02371/SCOP - Creag Riabhach Wind Farm - Erection and operation of a wind farm, comprising of 3 Wind Turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, battery energy storage facility, access tracks and ancillary infrastructure	Scoping Decision Issued
3.16	16.08.2023	23/01517/S36 - Creag Riabhach Wind Farm - S36 Variation to extend operational life from 25 years to 40 years (14/00004/S36)	No Objection

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Advertised: Section 36 Application and EIA development

Date Advertised:

- The Northern Times – 23 June 2023 and 30 June 2023
- The Hearld - 23 June 2023
- The Edinburgh Gazette – 23 June 2023

Representation deadline: 1 August 2023

Timeous representations to The Highland Council:	None
Timeous Representations to Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit:	None

4.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

None

4.3 Non-material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

None

5. CONSULTATIONS

Consultations Undertaken by The Highland Council

5.1 **Bettyhill, Strathnavar and Altnaharra Community Council (host)** do not object to the application. The considered the incremental change to the overall impact on the site is marginal and concur with the arguments regarding economic development and climate change targets.

5.2 **Lairg Community Council** did not reply to the consultation request.

5.3 **Rogart Community Council** did not reply to the consultation request.

5.4 **Access Officer** does not object to the application subject to a condition requiring a Recreational Access Management Plan be agreed prior to works commencing.

5.5 **Environmental Health** does not object to the application subject to a condition that limits cumulative noise levels from this development and the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm to 35dB LA90 at the nearest noise sensitive property.

5.6 **Flood Risk Management Team** do not object to the application and have no further comment.

5.7 **Forestry Officer** does not object to the application. The proposed development will result in the loss of 2.28ha of woodland. Compensatory tree planting over an area of 3.81ha is proposed. Full details of the compensatory planting plan will be controlled by condition.

5.8 **Historic Environment Team (Archaeology)** do not object to the application noting there are no direct or indirect impacts on cultural heritage. They recommend that procedures are put in place in the CEMP for dealing with any unexpected archaeological discoveries prior to the start of any works.

5.9 **Historic Environment Team (Conservation)** do not object to the application. Outwith Category C Listed Crask Bridge to the south and Category C Listed Allt A'Chrasig Bridge adjacent to the east they consider that the impact on listed buildings will not be significantly worse given the effects from the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm. Use of these structures during the construction phases will require structural assessment (before and after works) with appropriate recording and mitigation measures and is controlled by condition.

5.10 **Landscape Officer** does not object to the application. They consider that the level of landscape and visual effects are properly assessed and are acceptable. They note the most significant effect is the view of turbine T1 from Viewpoint VP8 (A836 Northbound / NCN 1, near The Crask) but they are satisfied that this view is of a short enough duration and sufficiently associated with the existing development that it does not represent an unacceptable impact.

Consultations Undertaken by The Energy Consents Unit

5.11 **British Telecom** do not object to the application. The proposed development should not cause interference with British Telecoms' current and presently planned radio network.

5.12 **Crown Estate Scotland** do not object to the application.

5.13 **Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS)** do not object to the application. They note the proposed development spans the river catchments relating to the Northern and Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fishery Boards (DSFB's), Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust and the Flow Country Rivers Trust. Such developments have the potential to impact on migratory fish species and the fisheries they support. FMS strongly recommend their guidelines, developed in conjunction with Marine Scotland Science, for DSFB's and Trusts are considered throughout the planning, construction and monitoring phases of the proposed development.

5.14 **Historic Environment Scotland** do not object to the application.

5.15 **Highland and Island Airports Limited** do not object to the application. They advise that the proposal would not infringe the safeguarding criteria for Inverness Airport.

5.16 **John Muir Trust** object to the application. They note concerns regarding: the impact on peat which they consider disproportionate and the scheme not adequately designing out the impacts on peat; reliance on the reuse of peat; non-compliance with the existing Peat Management Plan for the Creag Riabhach Wind Farm (planning reference 14/00004/S36); and impact on woodland.

5.17 **Joint Radio Company** do not object to the application.

5.18 **National Air Traffic Services (NATS)** do not object to the application. The proposed development has been examined from a technical safeguarding aspect and does not conflict with any of their safeguarding criteria.

5.19 **NatureScot** do not object to the application subject to conditions that mitigate the potential impacts on the River Naver Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Whilst they note there are natural heritage interests within Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Special Protection Area (SPA) they consider these will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.

NatureScot consider the proposed development is likely to have a significant adverse effect on Atlantic salmon and freshwater pearl mussel within the River Naver SAC. Consequently, the Scottish Government, as competent authority, is required to carry out an appropriate assessment in view of the site's conservation objectives for its qualifying interests. NatureScot consider that conditions requiring a 50m set back from watercourses, a drainage strategy to prevent run-off, sediment, and pollution management along with a Pollution Prevention Plan will mitigate potential detrimental impacts and not affect the integrity of the site.

NatureScot consider the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on otter within the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC. Again, the Scottish Government, as competent authority, is required to carry out an appropriate assessment in view of the site's conservation objectives for its qualifying interests. They consider that conditions requiring a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) ensuring fences/trenches will be fenced/covered to provide means of escape along with a watching brief, pre-construction surveys and independent Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) be appointed will mitigate potential detrimental impacts and not affect the integrity of the site.

The proposed development is intended to restore 85.76ha of habitat, twice the area lost (total loss of habitats of 35.91ha). If the loss of peatland is 4.22ha then NatureScot would expect that there would be in the region of 42.2ha of peatland restoration to offset the loss. This would mean that the 85.76ha proposed for restoration would be 42.2ha of offsetting, and 43.56ha of enhancement. The proposed restoration is an extension to the work that is being carried out for the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm. They note that works shall be carried out in accordance with the Peatland ACTION Technical Compendium.

NatureScot provide further advice regarding peat management, bunding and reinstatement provisions, with such matters, including the need to float the access tracks where peat depths are in excess of 0.5m, to be finalised through conditions.

NatureScot consider the proposed development would not result in new significant landscape effects in addition to those of the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm.

5.20 **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)** do not object to the application, subject to further monitoring of Golden Eagle and mitigation measures to safeguard Black Grouse.

5.21 **Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)** do not object to the proposed application subject to conditions minimising impacts on peat, protecting and enhancing wetland/peatland, protecting the water environment, avoid

increased flood risk, construction works to follow the mitigation measures noted in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP), along with sensitive reinstatement and decommissioning works. A Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) licence will be required and is considered “capable” of being authorised.

5.22 **Scottish Water** do not object to the application. They can not confirm if the site can be served by the water or waste water network in the area. It sets out that the site is not within any Scottish Water drinking water catchments or water abstraction sources.

5.23 **Transport Scotland** do not object to the application subject to conditions and Informatives controlling the route of abnormal loads on the trunk road network, agreement of any mitigation, signage and traffic control measures along the route.

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

The following documents comprise the adopted Development Plan are relevant to the assessment of the application.

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023)

6.1 The NPF4 policies of most relevance to this proposal include:
1 - Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises
2 - Climate Mitigation and Adaptation
3 - Biodiversity
4 - Natural Places
5 - Soils
7 - Historic Assets and Places
11 - Energy
13 - Sustainable Transport
22 - Flood Risk and Water Management
23 - Health and Safety
25 - Community Wealth Benefits
33 - Minerals

Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

6.2 28 - Sustainable Design
29 - Design Quality and Place-making
30 - Physical Constraints
31 - Developer Contributions
36 - Development in the Wider Countryside
42 - Previously Used Land
53 - Minerals
54 - Mineral Wastes
55 - Peat and Soils
56 - Travel
57 - Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
58 - Protected Species
59 - Other Important Species
60 - Other Importance Habitats

61 - Landscape
63 - Water Environment
64 - Flood Risk
66 - Surface Water Drainage
67 - Renewable Energy Developments

- Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
- Other Species and Habitat Interests
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Amenity at Sensitive Locations
- Safety and Amenity of Individuals and Individual Properties
- The Water Environment
- Safety of Airport, Defence and Emergency Service Operations
- The Operational Efficiency of Other Communications
- The Quantity and Quality of Public Access
- Other Tourism and Recreation Interests
- Traffic and Transport Interests

72 - Pollution
77 - Public Access

Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (2018) (CaSPlan)

6.3 No policies or allocations relevant to the proposals are included in the adopted Local Development Plan. It does however identify Special Landscape Areas, of particular relevance are the Ben Kilbreck and Loch Choire and Bens Griam and Loch nan Clar boundaries which lie nearby.

Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance, Nov 2016 (OWESG)

6.4 The Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG) provides additional guidance on the principles set out in HwLDP Policy 67 for renewable energy developments. The Guidance sets out the Council's agreed position on onshore wind energy matters, and, although reflective of Scottish Planning Policy at the time of its adoption prior to the adoption of NPF4, the document remains an extant part of the Development Plan and is therefore a material consideration in the determination of onshore wind energy planning applications. Nevertheless, the Spatial Framework included in the document is no longer relevant to the assessment of applications as in effect, the policies of NPF4 (specifically Policy 11, Energy) removes Group 2 Areas of significant protection from consideration by effectively making all land in Scotland either Group 1 Areas where wind farms will not be acceptable, or Group 3, Areas with potential for wind farm development.

6.5 The OWESG also contains the Loch Ness Landscape Sensitivity Study, the Black Isle, Surrounding Hills and Moray Firth Coast Sensitivity Study, and the Caithness Sensitivity Study, none of which relate to this site.

Other Highland Council Supplementary Guidance

6.6 Developer Contributions (Mar 2018)
Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
Green Networks (Jan 2013)
Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)

Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (Mar 2013)
Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Planning Guidelines (May 2006)
Physical Constraints (Mar 2013)
Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (May 2013)
Special Landscape Area Citations (Jun 2011)
Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)

Other Highland Council Guidance

6.7 The Flow Country Candidate World Heritage Site Planning Position Statement (Apr 2023)

7. OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Emerging Highland Council Development Plan Documents and Planning Guidance

7.1 The Highland-wide Local Development Plan is currently under review and is at Main Issues Report Stage. It is anticipated the Proposed Plan will be published following publication of secondary legislation post National Planning Framework 4.

7.2 The Highland Council also has further advice on the delivery of major developments in a number of documents, which include the Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects; and, The Highland Council Visualisation Standards for Wind Energy Developments.

Other National Guidance

7.3 Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement (2022)
Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023)
Scottish Energy Strategy (2017)
2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy (2011)
Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map, Scottish Government (2018)
Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape, SNH (2017)
Assessing Impacts on Wild Land Areas, Technical Guidance, NatureScot (2020)
Wind Farm Developments on Peat Lands, Scottish Government (2011)
Historic Environment Policy for Scotland, HES (2019)
PAN 1/2011 - Planning and Noise (2011)
PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (2008)
Circular 1/2017: Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (2017)

8. PLANNING APPRAISAL

8.1 This application has been submitted to the Scottish Government under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended). Should Ministers approve the development, it will receive deemed planning permission under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended). Although not a planning application, the Council processes S36 applications in a similar manner given that planning permission may be deemed to be granted.

8.2 Schedule 9 of The Electricity Act 1989 contains considerations in relation to the impact of proposals on amenity and fisheries. These considerations mean the developer requires to:

- have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and
- reasonably mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects.

8.3 It should be noted that for applications under the Electricity Act 1989 that the Development Plan is just one of a number of considerations, and therefore Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 which requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, is not engaged. That said, the application still requires to be assessed against all policies of the Development Plan relevant to the application, all national and local policy guidance and all other material considerations relevant to the application.

Planning Considerations

8.4 The key considerations in this case are:

a) compliance with the development plan and other planning policy
b) energy and economic benefits
c) construction
d) roads, transport and access
e) water, flood risk, drainage and peat
f) natural heritage (including ornithology)
g) built and cultural heritage
h) design, landscape and visual impacts
i) noise and shadow flicker
j) aviation
k) other material considerations

Development Plan / Other Planning Policy

8.5 The Development Plan comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), the adopted Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP), the adopted Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan), and all statutorily adopted supplementary guidance.

8.6 NPF4 forms part of the Development Plan and was adopted in February 2023. The Spatial Strategy sets out that we are facing unprecedented challenges and that we need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to future impacts of climate change. It sets out that that Scotland's environment is a national asset which

supports out economy, identity, health and wellbeing. It also sets out that choices need to be made about how we can make sustainable use of our natural assets in a way which benefits communities. The spatial strategy reflects legislation in setting out that decisions require to reflect the long-term public interest. However, in doing so it is clear that we will need to make the right choices about where development should be located ensuring clarity is provided over the types of infrastructure that needs to be provided and the assets that should be protected to ensure they continue to benefit future generations.

8.7 NPF4 Policies 1, 2, and 3 apply to all development proposals Scotland-wide, which means that significant weight must be given to the global climate and nature crises when considering all development proposals, as required by NPF4 Policy 1. Specific to this proposal, as well as the support in Policy 1 (significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crisis when considering development), NPF4 Policy 11 supports all forms of proposals for renewable, low-carbon and zero emission technologies including wind farms. Critical to the consideration of this proposal is NPF4 Policy 11, part f) which establishes that although consents for development proposals may be time limited, areas identified for wind farms are however to be suitable for use in perpetuity.

Highland wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP)

8.8 The principal HwLDP policy on which the application needs to be determined is Policy 67 - Renewable Energy. HwLDP Policy 67 sets out that renewable energy development should be well related to the source of the primary renewable resource needed for operation, the contribution of the proposed development in meeting renewable energy targets and positive/negative effects on the local and national economy as well as all other relevant policies of the Development Plan and other relevant guidance. In that context the Council will support proposals where it is satisfied they are located, sited and designed such as they will not be significantly detrimental overall, individually or cumulatively with other developments having regard to 11 specified criteria (as listed in HwLDP Policy 67). Such an approach is consistent with the concept of Sustainable Design (HwLDP Policy 28) and the concept of supporting the right development in the right place at the right time.

8.9 Although HwLDP Policy 67, the OWESG and NPF4 Policy 11 are considered compatible, NPF4 expresses greater support for renewable energy projects outwith National Parks and NSAs, and requires greater weight to be attributed to the twin climate and biodiversity crises in the decision making process, whilst still recognising that a balancing exercise must still be carried out.

Area Local Development Plan

8.10 The Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan) does not contain any specific land allocations related to the proposed type of development. Paragraph 74 of the CaSPlan sets out that the Special Landscape Area boundaries have been revised for the CaSPlan area to ensure ‘key designated landscape features are not severed and that distinct landscapes are preserved.’ The boundaries set out in the CaSPlan are supported by a background paper that includes citations for each of the Special Landscape Areas. As mentioned, NPF4 Policy 4 (as referred to in Policy 11), as well as HwLDP Policies 28, 57, 61, and 67

of the HwLDP seek to safeguard these regionally important landscapes. The impact of this development on landscape is primarily assessed in the Design, Landscape and Visual Impact section of this report.

Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance (OWESG)

8.11 The Council's OWESG forms part of the Development Plan and remains a critical document in the determination of applications. The supplementary guidance does not provide additional tests in respect of the consideration of development proposals against Development Plan policy. However, it provides a clear indication of the approach the Council towards the assessment of proposals, and thereby aid consideration of applications for onshore wind energy proposals.

8.12 The OWESG approach and methodology to the assessment of proposals is applicable and is set out in the OWESG Para 4.16 - 4.17. It provides a methodology for a judgement to be made on the likely impact of a development on assessed "thresholds" in order to assist the application of HwLDP Policy 67. The 10 criteria are particularly useful in considering visual impacts, including cumulative impacts. An appraisal of how the proposal relates to the thresholds set out in the criteria, is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement (2022), Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023) and Onshore Wind Sector Deal for Scotland (2023)

8.13 The Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement supersedes the previously adopted Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement which was published in 2017. The document sets out a clear ambition for onshore wind in Scotland and for the first time sets a national target for a minimum level of installed capacity for onshore wind energy, being 20 GW. This is set against a currently installed capacity of 9.4 GW (June 2023). Therefore, a further 10.6 GW of onshore wind requires to be installed to meet the target. It is however acknowledged that targets are not caps. In delivering such a target Scotland would play a significant role in meeting the requirement of 25-30 GW of installed capacity across the UK identified by the Climate Change Committee.

8.14 Like the previous iteration of the Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement, the document recognises that balance is required and that no one technology can allow Scotland to reach its net zero targets. The document is clear that in achieving a balance, environmental and socio-economic benefits to Scotland must be maximised. In taking this approach, this echoes Scotland's Third Land Use Strategy.

8.15 The document recognises that there may be a need to develop onshore wind energy development on peat. While peatland is present on the site, it is considered that appropriate mitigation has been applied by design and peat management plan can be secured by condition.

8.16 Additionally, the document acknowledges that in order for Scotland to achieve its climate targets and the ambition for the minimum installed capacity of 20 GW by 2030, the landscape will change. However, the OWEPS also sets out that the right development should happen in the right place. Echoing NPF4, the document sets

out that significant landscape and visual impacts are to be expected and that where the impacts are localised and / or appropriate mitigation has been applied the effects will be considered acceptable.

8.17 The role of Landscape Sensitivity Appraisals in considering wind energy proposals is promoted through the document. This highlights the importance of applying those contained within the Council's OWESG when assessing applications.

8.18 Benefits to rural areas, such as provision of jobs and opportunities to restore and protect natural habitats, are also highlighted in the document. It considers some of the wider benefits and challenges faced by in delivery of ambition and vision for onshore wind energy in Scotland. These include shared ownership, community benefit, supply chain benefits, skills development and financial mechanisms for delivery. The proposed development does lead to such benefits being delivered, however, in relation to maximising socio-economic benefits, there is no current guidance on what that should look like and evidence of a significant shift of requirements is yet to emerge, which Members may expect to see, from what was likely to be offered pre-adoption of NPF4.

8.19 Finally, the document also highlights technical considerations, those relevant to this application have been considered and mitigation, where required has been secured by condition.

8.20 The Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan has been published for consultation. Ministers will likely give consideration to this document in their decision on the application, however, limited weight can be applied to the document given its draft status. Unsurprisingly, the material on onshore wind in the document reflects in large part that contained in NPF4 and the Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement 2022. A fundamental part of the Strategy is expanding the energy generation sector. Overall, the draft Energy Strategy forms part of the new policy approach alongside the OWEPS and NPF4 and confirms the Scottish Government's policy objectives and related targets reaffirming the crucial role that onshore wind and enabling transmission infrastructure will play in response to the climate crisis which is at the heart of all these policies.

8.21 To deliver the ambition for onshore wind, the Onshore Wind Sector Deal for Scotland was introduced in September 2023. The document focuses on necessary high level actions by Government and the Sector to support onshore wind delivery. Jointly, Government and the Sector are committed to working together to ensure a balance is struck between onshore wind and the impacts on land use and the environment. The document looks to expediate decision making and consent implementation to achieve 20 GW of installation by 2030, meaning we should be seeing faster decisions on applications that are already in the system, with more consents being build out. Again, the sector deal does not detail what the socio-economic commitments should be.

Energy and Economic Benefits

8.22 The Council continues to respond positively to the Government's renewable energy agenda. Installed onshore wind energy developments in Highland account for around 30% of the national installed onshore wind energy capacity, with a

substantial number of onshore wind farm applications pending consideration at present. While The Highland Council has effectively met its own target, as previously set out in the Highland Renewable Energy Strategy, it remains the case that there are areas of Highland capable of absorbing renewable developments without significant widespread effects.

8.23 Notwithstanding any impacts that this proposal may have upon the landscape resource, amenity and heritage of the area, the development could be seen to be compatible with Scottish Government policy and guidance and increase its overall contribution to the Government, UK and European energy targets, with the development having the potential to generate up to 12.6MW of electricity and 37.3MW of battery storage. The Applicant predicts the development is likely to generate 29,100MW hours per year, enough to power around 7900 average homes per year.

8.24 There will also be carbon losses as a result of the development, including those related to turbine manufacture and impact on peat. These losses would equate to a total of approximately 19,724 tonnes of carbon. As a result, the anticipated carbon payback period for the development would be approximately 3.3 years, again based on a grid mix (including both renewables and fossil fuels), with the proposal reported by the applicant to have an overall beneficial effect on climate change mitigation. This is considered a relatively short payback period.

8.25 In terms of economic benefits, the proposed development anticipates a construction period of 23 months, grid connection, and 40 years of operation prior to several months of decommissioning. Such a project has potential to offer some investment / opportunities to the local, Highland, and Scottish economies including for businesses ranging across construction, haulage, electrical and service sectors through the supply chain, with opportunities in research and development, design, project management, civil engineering, component fabrication/manufacture, installation, and maintenance. The applicant is committed to utilising the local supply chain wherever possible. The largest spending proportion is expected to be on turbine procurement, transport, and installation related contracts, followed by balance of plant, grid connection and pre-construction. It is not considered that the proposed development would have a significant contribution to employment opportunities within the local area.

8.26 The Applicant notes that the development has potential to generate a range of economic and social effects and opportunities for local businesses, most notably employment opportunities and local spending. However, it is not considered that the proposed development would have a significant contribution to employment opportunities within the local area. During construction works it is anticipated the development could support up to 3.9 staff per day in Caithness and Sutherland along with 23.6 jobs in the Highlands and 80.1 jobs across Scotland as a whole. Over the 40 operational period it is expected the proposed development could provide 0.8 jobs in Caithness and Sutherland along with 1.5 jobs in the Highlands and 2.4 jobs across Scotland.

8.27 Based on the BiGGAR Economics report commissioned by RenewableUK50, onshore wind Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) is £1.32 million per megawatt (MW) on average. However, the applicant has reported that this has been adjusted to

£500,000 per MW for construction and development costs as expenditure associated with grid connection is minimal given the intention to use the existing link to the grid. Overall, the developer has indicated development costs in the region of £33.5 million would be expected. Operational and maintenance spend would be in addition to this, however, this would not be significant in the context of the ongoing wind fam's operational expenditure.

8.28 In relation to NPF4 Policy 11 Energy, part c) which requires proposals to maximise socio-economic benefit. The socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities associated with this proposal would be consistent with NPF4 Policy 11 part c) with this being reflective of recent appeal decisions where Reporters have clarified that there are considerable supply chain benefits associated with onshore wind farms.

8.29 In this case the applicant is committed to contributing £5,000 per MW of installed capacity to a community fund. This will result in an annual value of approximately £63,000 per year for the 3 turbines. With a 40-year operational period, this will provide approximately £2.52 million in community benefit. No community ownership is proposed. The existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm contributes £5000 per MW per annum index linked for the operational life of the scheme.

8.30 Prior to the publication of NPF4, Council policy and practice was for community benefit to be considered separately and outwith the planning application determination process. The effect of introducing NPF4 Policy 11 and, in particular paragraph c) relating to the need for energy development to maximise socio-economic benefits of which community benefit forms a part, means that this is now material to the determination of an application. Additionally, NPF4 Policy 25 provides support for development that is consistent with local economic priorities and where they contribute to local and/or regional community wealth building strategies. The Council is currently in the process of developing its priorities, along with partners, through the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan and the work on production of a community wealth building strategy that is under way. This work will set a strategic framework along with identifying many of the local priorities and projects to promote and encourage economic activity and retain wealth within the Highland area. The ongoing Local Place Plans initiative will likely identify other opportunities. While many opportunities are likely to be identified locally, there will be a need to consider the opportunities available from a strategic perspective to ensure that communities across all of Highland benefit. Community benefit will be expected to form part of that strategic consideration.

8.31 The Council has commissioned a study on what maximising benefits from development might look like with the intention of providing further guidance. Whether what is on offer, while not without merit, can be said to be considered as maximising socio-economic benefit, particularly for the wider Highland area will need to be an area for further discussion with the applicant, and conditions could be imposed to secure the socio-economic benefits reported in the EIAR, as well as a scheme for community benefit.

Construction

8.32 There are likely to be some adverse impacts caused by construction traffic and disruption, which are most likely to be within the service sector particularly during the construction phase when abnormal loads are being delivered to site. It is anticipated that the construction period for the development would take 23 months. Working hours on site would usually be restricted to be 07.00 – 19.00 Monday to Friday, 08.00 – 13.00 on Saturday with no Sunday or Bank Holiday working. It is recommended that the applicant continues to keep noise to a minimum on the site and construction noise will be considered as part of the Construction Environment Management Document.

8.33 The project anticipates the deployment of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in association with the successful contractor engaged. This should include a site-specific environmental management procedures which can be finalised and agreed through appropriate planning conditions with the Planning Authority and relevant statutory consultees. Such submissions are expected to be "plan based" highlighting the measures being deployed to safeguard specific local environmental resources and not simply re-state best practice manuals. Due to the scale of the development SEPA will control pollution prevention measures relating to surface water run-off via a Controlled Activities Regulations Construction Site Licence.

8.34 In addition to the requirement for submission and agreement on a CEMP, the Council will require the applicant to enter into legal agreements and provide financial bonds with regard to its use of the local road network (Wear and Tear Agreement) and final site restoration (Restoration Bond). In this manner the site can be best protected from the impacts of construction and for disturbed ground to be effectively restored post construction and operational phases.

8.35 Developers must also comply with reasonable operational practices with regard to construction noise so as not to cause nuisance. Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 sets restrictions in terms of hours of operation, plant and equipment used and noise levels, amongst other factors, which is enforceable via Environmental Health. The applicant has submitted a construction noise assessment that indicates predicted construction noise levels will be well below maximum permitted levels. It is also expected that the developer and contractors would employ the best practicable means to reduce the impact of noise from construction activities at all times.

8.36 The applicant has sought a micro-siting allowance 50m. Micro-siting is acceptable within reason to address unforeseen onsite constraints, anything in excess of 50m may have a significant effect on the composition of this development due to the constrained nature of the site. Further if matters are identified during the application stage which require movement of infrastructure, it is considered that this is best addressed during the application stage rather than relying on micro-siting. A micro-siting limit of no more than 50m, shall be secured by condition.

8.37 Should the development be granted consent, the existing Community Liaison Group (CLG) for the parent wind farm should be re-established to ensure that the

community council and other stakeholders are kept up to date and consulted before and during the construction period.

Roads, Transport and Access

8.38 During construction the proposed development will be accessed from the existing access that serves Creag Riabhach Wind Farm approximately 120m south of the Vagastie Bridge on the A836 north of Lairg. The same routes will be utilised as those used for the construction of Creag Riabhach Wind Farm.

8.39 The wind turbine components will be transported as abnormal loads from Nigg Port, and that the potential access corridors for the Study Area can be defined as:

- The A9;
- The A839;
- The A836;
- The existing site entrance.

In order to construct the proposed development, bulk materials such as concrete and aggregate will be brought in from local suppliers from the south via the A836. The majority of the construction traffic will access the site from the east via the A836 and the south via the A9.

8.40 The applicant provided an assessment of the development's impact on the surrounding road network during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases, as well as an Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) Route Assessment from the Port of Entry to the site. Operational and decommissioning effects have been scoped out of the assessment. The Applicant found that the likely effect using IEMA guidelines would be minor, non-significant effects along the A836 road corridor from the site access junction through to Lairg and Rogart, relating to the increase in HGV traffic operating on the route. All other receptors within the Study Area have been scoped out of the assessment. By applying mitigation measures such as following best practice guidelines during construction through the implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan impacts will be minimised.

8.41 Nigg Port has successfully accommodated turbine deliveries in the past. Temporary mitigation to the load road network out of this area may be required due to the size of the components being transported. A detailed up-to-date structural assessment of bridges, culverts and any other affected structures along the route would be required, in consultation with the Council's Structures Section, along with an unladen AIL run. Following on, a programme of Road Mitigation Schedule of Works should be agreed and carried out by the developer in consultation with the road's authorities. Full details can be included within the CTMP should the development be granted consent.

8.42 During the 23 month construction period, it is predicted that there would be between 280 and 632 total vehicle movements for the lowest and highest activity on site (for month 2 and month 11 respectively). This would result in an average of between 9 and 21 total vehicle movements per day during the lowest and highest construction activity on site. The peak of construction is due to occur between months 10 and 13 along with months 17 and 19 when there will be a total of 30 journeys per day. In months 10 to 13 this will consist of 10 HGV journeys and 20 cars/LGV's, and in

months 17 to 19, 8 HGV journeys and 22 car/LGV's. Any effects during construction are reduced by mitigation proposals including a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP).

8.43 Both Trunk Road Authority Transport Scotland and the Highland Council Transport Planning Team has confirmed that development traffic can be accommodated on the road network, subject to conditions and a requirement for a legal agreement to address "wear and tear" provisions. These will be consistent with current best practice.

8.44 The site, like most land in Scotland, is subject to the provisions of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. Although there are no significant recreational access resources within the proposed site boundary, there are a series of core paths, rights of way, heritage path, hill tracks, cycle and other recreational routes within the study area. The most significant are the Strath Tirry to Badanloch Tracks Heritage Path from the Crask Inn to Badanloch Lodge; and Sustrans Cycle Route 1. There may be a need to restrict access to the site during construction works at key times. However, where feasible accesses should be made available for a wide variety of users during the construction phase with this to be detailed within a Recreational Access Management Plan which can be secured by condition.

Water, Flood Risk, Drainage and Peat

8.45 The EIAR is clear that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be in place. The CEMP will ensure that potential sources of pollution on site can be effectively managed throughout construction and in turn during operation; albeit there will be fewer sources of pollution during operation.

8.46 The CEMP needs to be secured by planning condition to ensure the agreement of construction methodologies with statutory agencies following appointment of the contractor and prior to the start of development or works.

8.47 The proposed development site is not identified as being located within a flood risk area, as such the Council's Flood Risk Management Team and SEPA have not raised any concerns regarding flooding.

8.48 The EIAR notes that there are no known private water supplies within a 2km radius of the proposed site. Scottish Water confirmed that the development does not lie within a designated Drinking Water Protection Area (DWPA).

8.49 EIAR Chapter 6: Terrestrial Ecology notes the wider site is home to potential Ground Water Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTEs). The Applicant identified potential groundwater dependent NVC communities that have potential to be moderately groundwater dependent. This included wet modified heath (M15) and blanket bog (M17) within the site. However, the M15 communities found within the proposed development was not composed of species that require base rich conditions (indicating a groundwater fed community) or found in locations where an obvious groundwater feature was evident, therefore, it is considered there is a low likelihood that they are ground water dependant. Any indirect impacts on GWDTEs during the construction phase can be mitigated through good practice, design and construction outlined in the CEMP.

8.50 The soil type expected to occur within the site is peaty gleys which result from frequent waterlogging and are mapped across the entirety of the site. These are Class 1 and Class 2 peat soils which are nationally important and have high conservation value. Peat probing was completed in support of the proposed development with the highest proportion (55.8%) of recorded peat depths shallow (under 0.5m). Areas of deepest peat (greater than 2m deep) were located close to turbine T2 and T3 which informed the design to relocate these turbine locations to areas of shallower peat.

8.51 The proposed development is intended to restore 85.76ha of habitat, twice the area lost (total loss of habitats of 35.91ha). Given the 4,22ha loss of peatland NatureScot would expect in the region of 42.2ha of peatland restoration to offset the loss. The 85.76ha proposed for restoration would be 42.2ha of offsetting and 43.56ha of enhancement. The proposed restoration is an extension to the work that is being carried out for the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm.

8.52 Development shall commence in compliance with a Habitat Management Plan which shall be based on the proposals set out in the submitted Outline version (Appendix 6.2) delivering peatland restoration works to an area of no less than 85.76ha and can controlled by condition.

8.53 The applicant has proposed to block drains and remove scrub from bog habitats. Any works carried out for peatland restoration should be done so in accordance with the Peatland ACTION Technical Compendium and shall comply with SEPA's Management of Forest Waste guidance.

8.54 SEPA do not object to the proposed development subject to conditions minimising impacts on peat, protecting and enhancing wetland/peatland, protecting the water environment, avoid increased flood risk, construction works to follow the mitigation measures noted in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP), along with sensitive reinstatement and decommissioning works. A Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) licence will be required and is considered "capable" of being authorised.

8.55 NatureScot do not object to the proposed development and provided further advice regarding peat management, bunding and reinstatement provisions, with such matters, including the need to float the access tracks where peat depths are in excess of 0.5m, to be finalised through conditions.

8.56 EIAR Chapter 7: Freshwater Ecology considers there would be no likely significant effects on any freshwater ecology important ecological feature. Best practice and mitigation is recommended to minimise potential effects on the important ecological features identified and to avoid pollution, run-off, sedimentation and other potential environmental effects during construction. A Fish Monitoring Plan would be implemented to monitor the effects of the proposed development and inform on the effectiveness of the mitigation and amend if deemed necessary.

Natural Heritage including Ornithology

8.57 The Applicant has identified and assessed the development's likely impacts on designated sites, ornithology, protected species, and ecology. The development is

situated outwith sites designated for ecological interests but is close to, and has potential connectivity with, a number of sites that are designated at national and international level. These include the River Naver SAC and Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC and SPA.

8.58 As there is potential for the proposal to impact connected sites designated at a European level, the requirements of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 as amended (the "Habitats Regulations") apply or, for reserved matters, The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Consequently, the Scottish Government as the competent Authority is required to consider the impact of the proposal on these sites through Habitats Regulations Appraisals (Appropriate Assessment). NatureScot has provided advice in relation to each of the sites including the likelihood of significant effects and subsequent mitigations that may be required, which is summarised in NatureScot's consultation response above. They consider that conditions requiring a 50m set back from watercourses, a drainage strategy to prevent run-off, sediment, pollution management along with a Pollution Prevention Plan, CEMP, ensuring fences/trenches will be fenced/covered to provide means of escape along with a watching brief, pre-construction surveys and independent Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will mitigate potential detrimental impacts to the River Naver SAC, Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC and SPA and not affect the integrity of the site.

8.59 Third party concerns were raised by RSPB in relation to the Golden Eagle data within the EIAR which was compiled for the original Creag Riabhach Wind Farm over 10 years ago and potential cumulative impact of the proposed development on the nearby nesting Golden Eagle pair. As such, RSPB recommend further monitoring of this Golden Eagle pair and this is controlled by condition.

8.60 An appropriately qualified and experienced Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) should be employed by the developer to oversee construction of turbines, tracks and other infrastructure and delivery of mitigation measures in order to minimise ecological impacts. Prior to the commencement of the development, details of the proposed ECoW should be submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority.

8.61 The EIAR includes an assessment of the impact on protected species, this included surveys which confirmed the presence of otter, water vole, badger and common lizard. In addition, the presence of adder was confirmed during the previous Creag Riabhach Wind Farm surveys. No otter holts, couches, or badger setts were recorded but two water vole colonies were recorded within the site. The surveys found the surrounding habitat to be poor for foraging and roosting bats, with only one potential roost feature noted within a bridge on the A836 located 10m outside the site boundary. Pine marten were not noted during the surveys, but anecdotal evidence indicates they are present in the wider area. However, it is unlikely that pine martens are present within the site due to the lack of woodland or foraging habitat.

8.62 The site boundary will extend into an area of woodland to accommodate turbines T2 and T3 with along with the associated infrastructure resulting in a requirement of 2.28ha for onsite compensatory tree planting. An area of 3.81ha within the site

is set aside for compensatory planting. The proposed tree planting scheme will appear as a natural extension to the existing which will enhance screening from the A386. The existing deer fence line will be extended by 715m to enclose the compensatory planting area. Full details of the compensatory planting plan and ongoing management will be controlled by condition.

8.63 Due to the low suitability of habitats present and low activity levels of bats, NatureScot are in agreement that further bat activity surveys would not provide beneficial information regarding the use of the site by foraging and roosting bats, however, surveys to check for potential bat roost features was undertaken.

8.64 NPF4 sets out that proposals should contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, as such, a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) is required to meet the provisions of NPF4. Details should also be provided for any follow up works required, to ensure success of any biodiversity enhancements. The finalisation of the HMP will be secured through the CEMP.

8.65 The habitats present across the site have been subject to a voluntary Biodiversity Enhancement and Restoration Plan (Technical Appendix 6.1). The proposed development is intended to restore 85.76ha of habitat, twice the area lost (total loss of habitats of 35.91ha). If the loss of peatland is 4.22ha then Naturescot would expect that there would be in the region of 42.2ha of peatland restoration to offset the loss. This would mean that the 85.76ha proposed for restoration would be 42.2ha of offsetting and 43.56ha of enhancement. The proposed restoration proposal is an extension to the work that is being carried out for the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm.

8.66 The BERP includes the following which are in addition to previous enhancement works at the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm:

- Peatland habitat restoration - drainage blocking and self-seeding trees and scrub removal;
- Enhancement of nectar resource for pollination insects – creation of flower-rich areas;
- Creation of boggy pools – creation of a network of boggy pools;
- Deadwood management – provision of deadwood habitat types to support a diversity of saproxylic invertebrates and saprophytic fungi;
- Creation of solitary bee next sites – creation of slopes and bare substrate;

Creation of reptile hibernaculum – creation of a communal hibernation site for reptiles using the BESS bund.

8.67 It is considered the BERP will enhance local biodiversity, increase habitat resilience within the wider landscape and improve connections between nature networks in line with NPF4.

8.68 Whilst it is recognised that there will be impacts on natural heritage as a result of the proposed development both through the construction and operational phases of the development, there is, as with other successfully accommodated wind farm development in Highland, workable and practical mitigation that can be put in place to minimise these effects.

Built and Cultural Heritage

8.69 Both Historic Environment Scotland and Historic Environment Team are in broad agreement with the conclusions presented within the EIAR at Chapter 11: Cultural Heritage. The document considered heritage assets within the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) up to a distance of 20km for designated assets, and 5km for non-designated assets. It identified 56 sites of potential heritage interest within the ZTV, of which 23 were Scheduled Monuments and five were Listed Buildings. None of these assets were assessed as subject to large or medium effects and no mitigation was recommended.

8.70 Outwith Category C Listed Crask Bridge to the south and Category C Listed Allt A'Chrasig Bridge adjacent to the east HET do not consider the impact on listed buildings will be significantly worse given the current effects from the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm. Both buildings will require structural assessment (before and after works) with appropriate recording and mitigation measures during the construction phases. Additionally, HET recommend that procedures are put in place in the CEMP for dealing with any unexpected archaeological discoveries prior to the start of any works which will be controlled by condition.

8.71 A walkover survey identified and recorded the possible remains of a Post-Medieval or Modern quarry measuring 8m by 4m, located on the western periphery of the proposed development area. It is deemed to be of low heritage value, as it is a relatively common modern feature that is not associated with any other features of significance.

Design, Landscape and Visual Impacts

8.72 The applicant has presented details that illustrate the landscape and visual impact of the development both singularly and cumulatively with existing and consented wind farm developments. To this end, the EIAR and Planning Statement includes a description of the design process, along with assessments against Landscape Designations and Landscape Character Areas. A study area of 35km was assessed. Up to 20 initial viewpoints were considered, with 9 viewpoints being scoped into the LVIA, with these covering a 25km radius. These viewpoints are representative of a range of receptors including communities and recreational users of the outdoors, which use the land, hill tracks and roads in the vicinity.

8.73 Following a review of the LVIA, sufficient information has been provided to enable an assessment and overall the photomontages are considered to have been produced to a good standard. The methodology for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is sufficiently clear, being generally in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3), with the assessment's methodology being provided within EIAR. This methodology has been used to appraise the assessment provided and to come to a view on what combination of effects on the sensitivity of receptor and magnitude of change are leading to a significant effect.

8.74 In the assessment of each viewpoint, the applicant has come to a judgement as to whether the effect is significant or not. In assessing visual impacts in particular, it is important to consider that the viewpoint is representative of particular receptors

i.e., people who would be at that point and experiencing that view of the landscape not just in that single view but in taking in their entire surroundings.

8.75 A key consideration in the effects on receptors of wind energy development is the sequential effect when travelling through an area on the local road network both by individuals who live and work in the area and tourists. Those travelling scenic routes, whether designated as such or not, have a higher sensitivity to views. While a driver of a vehicle is likely to be concentrated on the view immediately in front, passengers have a greater scope for looking at their surroundings. As such it is considered that road users are usually medium, medium-high or high sensitivity receptors.

Siting and Design

8.76 EIAR Chapter 3: Description of Development sets out the reasons for the site selection, as well as the design evolution from the initial iteration through pre-application discussion and Scoping stage (22/02371/SCOP) in 2022. The current design has evolved through negotiations with the applicant due to consultation concerns, in particular from SEPA regarding the impacts on peat and the Council's Landscape Officer regarding the visual impacts. Amendments prior to the application being submitted have been made to the location of the proposed turbines / BESS and internal access track alignment in order to mitigate potential impacts by design.

8.77 The EIAR bases the design principles on an environmental assessment process, taking into account potential environmental, landscape and visual impacts and their effects, physical constraints, and health and safety considerations while maximising the generating capacity. The layout has, where possible, been designed to avoid habitats of highest ecological importance and with the highest sensitivity to impacts.

8.78 The site is relatively flat within the shallow bowl landform. The adjacent Creag Riabhach Wind Farm comprises 22 turbines at 125m (14/00004/S36) with the proposal design viewed as an extension to the south east of the existing. The 3 additional turbines follow a general linear layout from south to north adjacent to the A836 with the distance between turbine T1 and T3 approximately 750m and the distance between turbine T3 and T2 approximately 350m. T2 and T3 lie to the north of the existing substation and to the south of Turbine 13 and follow the general slope of the terrain at this location. T1 will be sited 330m to the east of Turbine 3 and will lie within around 300m of the A836. Given the shallower nature of the terrain at this location and the curvature and descending nature of the A836 it will appear more conspicuous and slightly detached from the remaining wind farm. It is considered that in this sense the proposed development therefore reflects the of pattern of wind turbine development in the immediate area. The site is located within an "area with potential for wind farm development" as mapped within the OWESG. Across the immediate landscape of the study area there are several distinctive groups of wind turbines/wind farms (outwith the site and adjacent to) with heights ranging between 90m to tip at Rosehall 149.9m to tip at Gordonbush Extension.

8.79 It has become increasingly important to consider the context in which wind farm development is seen and subsequent cumulative effects. Of particular importance

is how developments relate to each other in design and relationship to their surroundings; their frequency when moving through the landscape; and their visual separation to allow experience of the character of the landscape in between. Care and attention are therefore required regarding design, siting and location to avoid detrimental visual impacts. NatureScot's Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape Guidance notes that it can be particularly challenging to accommodate multiple wind farms in an area, and so advances windfarm design objectives of limiting visual confusion and reinforcing the appropriateness of each development for its location.

8.80 Within 5km of the proposed development ZTV coverage extends in all directions out to approximately 2.5km at which point visibility becomes contained by local hills to the north/north east (Meall an Fhuarain at 473m AOD, Creag Riabhach at 399m AOD and an unamed summit at 418m AOD), to the south west (Cnoc an Alskie at 312m AOD) and to the east/south east (Cnoc Sgriodian at 544m AOD). ZTV coverage is more extensive to the north east along Strath Vagastie and the lower west facing slopes of Ben Klibreck, and south west along the Strath Tirry between 5km to 10km. Further intermittent visibility continues to the south east along the north facing slopes of Strath a' Chraisg (251m AOD) and the north and west facing slopes of Meall Meadhonach (438m AOD).

8.81 Beyond 10km, ZTV coverage is sporadic with the largest area of visibility limited to the rising landform to the south west of Loch Shin between approximately 12km and 22km with occasional visibility continuing to the north and south of Lairg between 20km to 30km. Other visibility is shown in open moorland north of Altnaharra and on isolated hill slopes and summits (Ben Hope at 927m AOD, Ben More Assynt at 998m AOD, Beinn Leoid at 792m AOD, Ben Hee at 873m AOD, Ben Loyal at 764m AOD and Beinn Sgeireach at 476m AOD).

8.82 The three turbines proposed will form an integral part of the Creag Riabhach Wind Farm array located to the south east of the existing turbines and generally appear as an infill as they are largely in alignment with the existing. The extension will utilise the natural topography with proposed turbines broadly within the existing visual envelope of Creag Riabhach Wind Farm turbine array with no lateral addition. Where visible, the proposed development would always be viewed adjacent to the existing wind farm in all views.

8.83 The location of the three additional turbines, on the shoulder of the ridge to the south east of Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, means that these will be approximately 30m below the average base height of the existing turbines, on a similar ground level to turbines nos. T13 and T18. Owing to the lower elevation of the proposed turbines, the 25m difference in blade tip height would not be immediately obvious in more distant views, albeit the proposed largest turbines would be located close to the roadside, with a setback of between approximately 305m, 335m and 380m for turbines T1, T3 and T2 respectively, which maintains the prevailing setback established by the north eastern turbines of the parent wind farm.

8.84 The proposed turbine and track locations have also sought to minimise disturbance to deep peat, with the scheme utilising the established road access and internal access track network, which is capable of accommodating the proposed larger turbines with minimal upgrades being required. Additionally, the site benefits from

a commercially viable grid connection maximising the available capacity of the connection already installed for Creag Riabhach Wind Farm. The BESS would also ensure that the generating potential of the extended wind farm would be maximised, with this infrastructure being appropriately sited in the area of the temporary construction compound for Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, with the site infrastructure focussed around the substation location. This approach requires minimal ground works therefore minimising further environmental impact. A bund, comprising re-used materials from site excavations is proposed adjacent to the south east of the proposed BESS units which would provide additional screening from the A836.

Landscape Impact

8.85 The proposed development lies within both the Rounded Hills LCT, and the Sweeping Moorland and Flows LCT with the development spanning across these two landscape character types. The site is located at the transition point there is little discernible difference in landscape features. Wind farm development is recognised as characteristic of the Rounded Hills landscape in “subtly undulating and lower hills set within the interior of these uplands.” Wind farm developments are also recognised as “more prominent features within the more modified outer fringes” of the Sweeping Moorland and Flows LCT. Including the host LCT’s, there are three neighbouring LCT’s within 6km of the proposed development that are also overlapped by the blade tip ZTV and are included in the assessment: LCT 135 - Rounded Hill, LCT 134 - Sweeping Moorland and Flows, LCT 138 - Lone Mountains.

8.86 Turbine T1 in the southern portion of the site is located within LCT 134 - Sweeping Moorland and Flows. This LCT covers an extensive area to the north-east of Scotland within Caithness and East Sutherland and it is noted that wind farms are key features within the “more modified outer fringes” of this LCT. 8 of the existing wind farm’s 22 turbines are located within the Sweeping Moorland and Flows LCT. As a whole, the proposed development relates to the lower lying slopes in the transitional area where surrounding elevated landforms provide a degree of screening in the wider landscape. The presence of existing turbines in combination with the site’s location in a moorland landscape surrounded by low lying hills reduces susceptibility. The magnitude of landscape character type change arising from the proposed development would at worst be Medium within approximately 1.5km to 2km to the east / south east. The level of landscape effect would at worst be Moderate and Significant at such close range, marginally extending significant effects arising from the wind farm. Elsewhere landscape character type change would be Minor to Negligible.

8.87 Turbines T2 and T3 in the northern portion of the site would be located within Rounded Hills LCT. This LCT comprises several large units covering a large geographic expanse within Caithness and Sutherland and extending into Ross and Cromarty. It is noted that wind farms are again a key features “in more accessible and generally lower rolling hills” of this LCT, with there being several existing and consented wind farms within the LCT to the south west beyond Loch Shin, as well as to the south. 14 of the 22 existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm turbines are also located within this LCT. Owing to the presence of the existing wind farm, the effect of the proposed development on this landscape character type would again at worst

be Moderate and Significant within 1.5-2km to the east, and Minor to Negligible in other directions and from a greater distance across all neighbouring LCTs.

8.88 There are no landscape designations covering the site. Although there are National Scenic Area (NSA), as well as areas of Wild Land in proximity, NatureScot agreed that these areas would not be significantly affected and could be scoped out of the applicant's detailed assessment. That said, a high-level assessment on the Special Landscape Qualities of the Kyle of Tongue and Assynt – Coigach NSA's, and the wild land qualities of the Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest and Foinaven – Ben Hee WLA's has been included in the LVIA.

8.89 The proposed development would be located approximately 16km south of the boundary of the Kyle of Tongue NSA. Viewpoints 10 (Ben Hope, Southeast of summit at Sail Romascaig) and 16 (Ben Loyal, South of summit at An Creagan) are located within the NSA. ZTV coverage within the NSA is very limited across the south facing slopes of Ben Hope, Ben Loyal and Cnoc nan Cuilean. Existing, consented and other application wind farms also have a Minor to Negligible effect (Very Low magnitude) on the "ever-present backdrop of mountains" of the NSA and appear in the same field of view as the proposed development. The level of combined cumulative landscape effect on the SLQs of the NSA would be Minor to Negligible and Not Significant. The additional cumulative landscape effect on the SLQ's of the NSA would also remain Minor to Negligible and Not Significant.

8.90 The proposed development would be located approximately 18km east of the boundary of the Assynt - Coigach NSA. Viewpoints 12 (Ben More Assynt) and 15 (Beinn Leoid) are located within the NSA. ZTV coverage within the NSA is very limited on the east facing slopes and summits of Ben More Assynt, Meall an Aonaich, Beinn Uidhe and Beinn Leoid. The NSA covers several LCTs including Rugged Mountain Massif LCT, two areas of Lone Mountain LCT, an area of Rocky Hills and Moorland LCT and also includes Sweeping Moorland and Flows LCT at the eastern extent and Cnocan - Caithness and Sutherland LCT at the western extent. Existing, consented and other application wind farms also have a Minor to Negligible effect (Very Low magnitude) on the "spectacular scenery of mountains", "vast open space and exposure" and "wild land" SLQ's of the NSA and appear in the same field of view as the proposed development. The level of combined cumulative landscape effect on the SLQ's of the NSA would be Moderate to Minor and Not Significant. The additional cumulative landscape effect on the SLQs of the NSA would be Negligible and Not Significant. The nature of this effect would be cumulative, indirect, long term (reversible) and negative to neutral.

8.91 Turning to Wild Land Areas (WLAs), the site lies outwith any WLA. Approximately 0.5km to the west lies the Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest WLA. Viewpoint 6 (Ben Klibreck) is located within this WLA. ZTV coverage within the WLA is very limited on the west facing slopes and summit of Ben Klibreck along with some lower lying ground along Strath Vagastie. The WLA overlaps with the Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA and some of the Bens Griam and Loch nan Clar SLA. The WLA covers three LCT's, including Rounded Hills, Sweeping Moorland and Flows, and Lone Mountains LCTs. The proposed development would be located approximately 0.95km east of the boundary of the Foinaven – Ben Hee WLA. Viewpoint 7 (Ben Hee) is located within the WLA. ZTV coverage within the WLA is limited to the eastern extremities and margins of the WLA with some hill summits, including Ben

Hee. The WLA overlaps with the North-West Sutherland NSA beyond 20km and covers three LCT's including Rounded Hills, Sweeping Moorland and Flows, and Rugged Mountain Massif LCT's. It is important to note that with the introduction of NPF4 in February 2023 there has been a significant policy change brought about by NPF4 Policy 4, which states that renewable energy developments that support national targets will be supported in Wild Land Areas (WLA) and that buffer zones around WLAs will not be applied, so that effects of development outwith WLAs will not be a significant consideration.

8.92 In relation to Special Landscape Areas, the proposal would have an indirect effect on the nearby Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA. This regionally important SLA is principally an area of the Lone Mountain LCT which extends slightly south east to cover lower lying summits and Loch Choire which lies between Ben Klibreck and the lower lying hills. It is located approximately 2.3km east of the proposed development. The SLA is an irregular shape covering an area measuring around 12km to 15km north to south / east to west. The southern extents are located within an area of Rounded Hills LCT and a small area of Sweeping Moors and Flows LCT. Viewpoint 6 (Ben Klibreck) is located within the SLA.

8.93 Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA is noted as one of several prominent lone mountains and mountain groups which rise dramatically from an open moorland in central Sutherland, Ben Klibreck is notable for its distinctive western profile. It rises like a great wave above Strath Vagastie and Loch Naver and is the dominant landscape feature in this part of Sutherland. It is separated from the neighbouring Ben Armine Forest by a secluded glen occupied by Loch Choire and Loch a' Bhealaich. The slopes rising from the southern shores of these lochs have fine remnants of native broadleaved woodland. The Special Landscape Qualities are noted as:

- Distinctive Mountains;
- Secluded Glen with Network of Tracks;
- Extensive Views from Peaks and Summits; and
- Historic Landscape.

8.94 Despite its proximity to the proposed turbines, ZTV coverage is limited to the western slopes, summit and ridgeline of Ben Klibreck with the remainder of the SLA outwith the ZTV due to intervening landform. There would be no effect on the "Secluded Glen with Network of Tracks" and the "Historic Landscape" as there is no ZTV coverage in these parts of the SLA. The proposed development would also have a limited effect on its "Distinctive Mountains" and "Extensive Views from Peaks and Summits" SLQs.

8.95 Whilst the proposed development would have some localised impacts on Distinctive Mountains SLQ the overall effect is considered Not Significant. The Ben Armine massif is outwith the ZTV but would be mostly visible from the A836 through Strath Vagastie. Views from the A836 are illustrated by Viewpoints 1 (A836 Southbound / NCN 1, South of Altnaharra), 4 (A836 Southbound / NCN 1, South of Loch Staing), 8 (A836 Northbound / NCN 1, near the Crask), and 17 (A836, South of Crask Inn). From the route, the proposed development would be visible to the west of Strath Vagastie, in a different part of the landscape to the Ben Klibreck ridgeline and steep western slopes. These views demonstrate that the perceptual

qualities of the steep western slopes descending to Strath Vagastie and the distinctive stepped profile would remain strong. The proposed development would be identified in a different part of the landscape relating to lower hills to the west of Strath Vagastie.

8.96 The Distinctive Mountains SLQ notes that "the area retains a strong sense of wildness" which relates partially to the popular ascent of Ben Klibreck from Altnaharra and the absence of constructed tracks along the route. A promoted route to the summit of Meall nan Con ascends the western slopes from the A836 adjacent to the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm. Although there are no direct effects on this route, the existing wind farm is visible from the majority of the route and the proposed development would slightly increase the number and presence of turbines in this location. The sense of wildness due to lack of pathways would not be affected by the proposed development and it is noted that the A836 is also visible as a human development in the same views as the proposed development. Although not within the SLA, the track towards Cnoc Sgriodain and the associated designated parking area in combination with the promoted route to Ben Klibreck denotes a well-defined popular route for the ascent used by many hill walkers.

8.97 Whilst the proposed development would have some localised impacts on Extensive Views from Peaks and Summits SLQ the overall effect is again considered Not Significant. Views from the ridgeline at A' Chioch are illustrated by Viewpoint 6 (Ben Klibreck) with the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm in the middle distance views south west. The existing turbines are visible on low lying slopes beyond Strath Vagastie where they occupy a small part of the view. The proposed development would form part of the same cluster of turbines, slightly increasing the influence of wind turbines in this part of the view. Views north to the coastline and the neighbouring peaks of Ben Hope and Ben Loyal would be unaffected by the proposed development.

8.98 It is generally agreed with the Applicant's assessment. The magnitude of change would be Very Low and the level of effect would be Minor to Negligible and Not Significant for "Distinctive Mountains" and the magnitude of change would be Low and the level of effect would be Moderate to Minor and Not Significant for "Extensive Views from Peaks and Summits".

8.99 In summary, in assessing the acceptability or otherwise of the development's impact on the landscape, owing to the siting and design of the development conforming with the established pattern of wind farm development, new landscape impacts would be limited and sufficiently localised. Highland Council's Landscape Officer, along with other consultees, have not raised an objection regarding the landscape impact of the proposed development.

Visual Impact

8.100 The Council considers visual impact using the criterion set out in Section 4 of the OWESG, with assessment against the criterion and view as to whether the threshold set out in the guidance is met or not, is contained in Appendix 1 to this report. In relation the OWESG criterion, Officers consider that the proposed development scores well. Whilst there are localised significant effects, particularly with regards to Criterion 4: The amenity of key recreational routes and ways is

respected, and Criterion 5: The amenity of transport routes is respected, from the A836 / NCN 1 and Ben Klibreck, it is considered the proposed development generally meets 8 of the 10 criterion. The OWESG criterion is a useful tool to inform wind farm design and to generally guide development to appropriate places. The OWESG criterion are not however absolute policy requirements, with these reflecting the time of the OWESG's publication which pre-dates NPF4.

8.101 When considering the additional visibility of turbines beyond that experienced as a result of the consented and operational wind farms in the study area there are limited new areas of visibility. Areas of new wind farm visibility are limited to a small pocket of land within the lower lying areas of the strath to the north east and along approximately 800m stretch of the A836 / NCN 1 when travelling south.

8.102 Whilst a wind energy scheme would be expected to result in significant visual impact effects, the Council, through the OWESG, also acknowledges that significant effects does not automatically translate to unacceptable effects. Following a review of the applicant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), the applicant's findings are generally not contested. The visual impact assessment provide in the applicant's LVIA indicates that significant visual effects are likely to occur in limited locations within around 5.6km, mainly to the east / north east and immediate south.

8.103 Potential visual impacts from the most pertinent viewpoints are summarised below, with these relating to impacts on recreational users of the outdoors and impacts on road users.

Viewpoint 6: Ben Kilbreck

8.104 This viewpoint is located at a distance of 5.67km from the nearest turbine at the summit of Ben Klibreck and affords 360° panoramic views of the surrounding landscape. The view is orientated west / south west and extends across Strath Vagastie towards Loch Fiag and the layers of hills beyond. To the centre of the view, the mountains of Ben More Assynt and Conival form the skyline with Ben Hee forming a focal point towards the right of the view. Landcover mainly consists of rough grassland and moorland, with areas of coniferous forestry also visible. Loch Shin is visible in the distance towards the left of the view with numerous lochans scattered throughout the centre and left of the view. The existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm is prominent on the western banks of Strath Vagastie. Other human development in the view includes the A836, and geometric blocks of coniferous forest. The viewpoint is located within the locally designated Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA and the Ben Klibreck - Armine Forest WLA. The value of the viewpoint is therefore assessed as High. The view would be experienced by hill walkers whose attention is likely to be on the surrounding landscape features. Therefore, susceptibility to change, and consequently the sensitivity is assessed as High.

8.105 All of the proposed turbines would be visible from this viewpoint. The proposed turbines would generally appear as a relatively simple, cohesive group, integrated into the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm array to the south east extending the overall horizontal expanse of the wind farm. Two of the proposed turbines would be located to the foreground of the existing turbines (T2 and T3), backclothed by the moorland landscape, and the third turbine (T1) would however be more prominent

and to the left of the existing array. Due to the relatively wide views, large scale of the receiving landscape and presence of the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, the proposed development would on the whole appear reasonably well accommodated in the view. The proposed BESS would also be visible behind the proposed turbines, although partially screened by intervening mitigation bunding. The magnitude of change would be Low resulting in a Moderate level of effect that would be Significant due to the location of the turbines to the fore of the existing wind farm and the increase in the horizontal spread of turbines.

8.106 In terms of cumulative effects, the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm would be visible adjacent and behind the proposed development at approximately 5km distance. Achany and Rosehill Wind Farms would be visible to the south / south west at approximately 23km along with Kilbraur and Kilbraur Extension to the south east at approximately 30km. More distant existing wind farms would be theoretically visible in very clear conditions (all Very Low magnitude). Sallachy Wind Farm which is consented would be visible beyond the proposed turbines at approximately 18km distance. Strath Tirry and Braemore, both consented, would be visible to the southeast along with Achany and Meall Buidhe would be theoretically visible in the same view as the proposed development at distances of between approximately 22km and 33km. Chleansaid would be visible to the southeast at approximately 10km distance. The additional magnitude of change would be Low, however, the cumulative effect of existing and consented wind farm development from this viewpoint is considered Significant.

Viewpoint 8: A836 Northbound/NCN 1, near The Crask

8.107 This viewpoint is located at a distance of 0.89km from the nearest turbine at an informal layby and car park on the A836 north of The Crask and directly to the south of the proposed development. The view is orientated north and has mostly short to middle distance views towards Creag Riabhach and associated ridgeline to the centre left and Ben Klibreck which forms a conical focal point to the right of the view. Additionally, there are distant hills visible in the centre of the view. The A836 follows the low lying ground along Strath Vagastie between the two rising landforms. Landcover is predominantly moorland with some rough grassland along roadside verges and some areas of coniferous forestry. The existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm occupies a large part of the view. Other human development in the view includes the A836, road signage, telegraph poles, and forestry.

8.108 Whilst the viewpoint is not located within any nationally or locally designated landscapes it is on the Sustrans Cycle Route 1. The value of the viewpoint is therefore assessed as High. The view would be experienced by road users with a Medium susceptibility to change (due to the transitory nature of the view, the attention is generally on the road ahead) and cyclists accessing the national cycle route whose focus is likely to be on landscape features resulting in a High susceptibility to change. Therefore, the sensitivity is assessed as High.

8.109 All of the proposed turbine hubs would be visible against the sky, affecting the horizontal field of view. Turbine T1 is particularly prominent from this section of the A836 in both directions, with the addition of the proposed turbines extending the duration of significant effects along this route. The perception of T1 is enhanced by its siting around 300m from the A836, halving the separation distance with the wind

farm traveling northwards in this locality. This is further emphasised as the road descends at this point coupled with the shallow nature of the landform. The significant visual effects arising from the extended wind farm array would occur for approximately 5km when travelling along the single track road which is relatively straight with vehicles expected to be fast moving. Views are screened to some extent by plantation woodland when travelling north.

8.110 Whilst the 3 proposed turbines would appear prominent and be located approximately 330m closer to road users than the closest surrounding turbines, the set back between 305m, 335m and 380m for turbines T1, T3 and T2 respectively, generally corresponds with the set back of the closest existing turbines in the north western portion of Creag Riabhach Wind Farm. The proposed BESS would also be theoretically visible within the existing wind farm as a lower lying unit but would be mostly screened by mitigation bunding to integrate it into the surrounding landscape. Due to the prominence of the additional proposed turbines, the proposed development's magnitude of change would be High with the effect considered Significant.

8.111 In terms of cumulative effects, Sallachy Wind Farm which is consented would be theoretically visible to the southwest at approximately 12km but would be screened by coniferous forestry. A blade tip of Strathy South Wind Farm would be theoretically visible at approximately 32km but would not be discernible due to distance and intervening vegetation. Cumulative effects may occur, however, the extended Creag Riabhach Wind Farm would be the prominent feature in this locality.

Viewpoint 20: A836 at track to Vagastie Cottage

8.112 The viewpoint is located at a distance of 0.42km from the nearest turbine on the A836 adjacent to the access track to the former Vagastie Cottage. The route passes close to the proposed development and the view is orientated west / south west along the A836 and across the rising landform west of the road. The view in this direction comprises short to middle distance features with the longest views along Strath Vagastie to the south west. To the north east are more distant views where Ben Klibreck flanks the strath and forms the main focal feature from this location. Landcover is simple and comprises rough moorland grass and heather species with areas of young mixed woodland visible on the rising landform and horizon. The existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm turbines are visible on the skyline. Other human development in the view includes the A836, young mixed woodland, post and wire fencing, telegraph poles and road signage.

8.113 Whilst on the western edge of the Ben Klibreck - Armine Forest WLA, the viewpoint is orientated away from the WLA and is not located within any nationally or locally designated landscapes. The viewpoint is, however, located on the Sustrans Cycle Route 1. The value of the viewpoint is therefore assessed as High. The view would be experienced by road users with a Medium susceptibility to change (due to the transitory nature of the view and primary focus on the road ahead) and cyclists accessing the national cycle route whose focus is likely to be on landscape features resulting in a High susceptibility to change. Consequently, the sensitivity is assessed as High. All of the 3 proposed turbines would be visible from this viewpoint with the turbines generally appearing as a simple and cohesive group

following the upper strath side set back from the road with bases screened by intervening landform and vegetation. Views towards the proposed turbines would be along the valley in the direction of travel increasing the prominence of Creag Raibhach Wind Farm.

8.114 The proposed turbines would be to the fore of the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm turbines and would appear broadly incorporated into the existing design layout, extending the horizontal spread of turbines. None of the other infrastructure components of the proposed development or the BESS would be visible. The magnitude of change would be High with the visual effect considered Significant.

Other Nearby Visual Receptors

8.115 There are no nearby settlements with visibility of the proposed development and the closest isolated residential receptors are located approximately 2.4km from the closest turbine at the Crask Inn, with Crask Cottage being a further 60m to the south across the A836. Both properties have theoretical visibility of a single turbine which would not be detrimental to residents visual amenity. Whilst the properties face south, rear windows will look northwards to the development. The view is screened at the Crask Inn by outbuildings, and for both properties by intervening topography and existing commercial woodland. A Residential Visual Amenity Assessment has not been undertaken given that there was only 1 property within 2km of the proposed development, the former Vagastie Cottage which was demolished following a fire in 2018.

8.116 In terms of the effects on the key recreational routes in the surrounding area, the applicant considers the effects on the Strath Tirry to Badanloch Tracks Heritage Path are Not Significant. This is not disputed by Officers given that the ZTV coverage is patchy from this route within 6km of the proposed development with blades of all 3 turbines and partial hub in view from short intermittent sections of the track.

8.117 Additionally, the applicant considers that there would be Significant effects along Sustrans Cycle Route 1 (which overlaps with the A836) for approximately 4.9km (or 4.4km with coniferous trees retained north of the Crask) as the route approaches and passes the proposed turbines between the summit of the Crask and Druim Allt na h-Aire. At this section of the route, the proposed turbines would be visible at close proximity to the foreground of the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm. Whilst there are significant visual effects as summarised above, which are close range views from surrounding munros / corbetts along with key routes including the A836 / NCN 1 cycle route, the proposed development is relatively well contained, views will be for short periods when travelling through lowland locations and the three new turbines, BESS and other associated infrastructure appears well connected to the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm from upland locations. As such, it is considered the proposed development does not represent an unacceptable visual impact. Viewpoint 8 (A836 Northbound/NCN 1), near the Crask and Viewpoint 20 (A836 at track to Vagastie Cottage) gives an indication of the key transport and cycle routes in the surrounding area. Whilst there will be Significant visual effects experienced from both these routes, particularly turbine T1 from Viewpoint (VP8

A836 Northbound / NCN 1) given the close proximity it will only be visible for a brief interval.

8.118 Although additional significant visual effects would arise, these are localised and suitably mitigated by design. The scale of the turbines would increase from 125m to 149.9m which is comparatively a small increase mitigated by the lower landform. The three additional turbines are also well sited and generally merge successfully within the scheme which appears as a single wind farm with the proposal making use of the existing location within the shallow bowl landform with visibility fairly well contained. That said, due to the close proximity to the roadside, the array would be more prominent in views for a slightly longer stretch of the route in both directions.

Compensatory Planting

8.119 Turbines T2 and T3 will extend into a native woodland planting scheme of Upland Birch planted around 1996 as part of a Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme. The woodland has established at variable stocking densities and shows slow growth rates over much of the site given the poor soil conditions and exposure. Species present include Downy Birch, Scots Pine, Rowan, Alder, Willow, Aspen and Juniper with the sporadically distributed trees measuring between 1m to 7m. The 3.81ha area for compensatory planting is proposed approximately 300m to the north east of turbine T1 within the wider site. The proposed compensatory planting will improve the age diversity of the woodland, some of which has failed over the years given the harsh conditions on site. The proposed area for compensatory planting will be on areas of peat with a depth under 50cm that will avoid the wettest peat areas where drainage is poor and nutrition is low which has led to trees to fail previously. The Forestry Officer has no objection to the compensatory planting measures which can be controlled by condition.

Noise and Shadow Flicker

8.120 Predicted operational noise levels are expected to meet the derived noise limits. Environmental Health have confirmed they have no objection subject to an appropriate noise condition to ensure the target noise levels are either a simplified standard of 35dB LA90 at wind speeds up to 10m/s or a composite standard of 35dB LA90 (daytime) and 38dB LA90 (nighttime) or up to 5dB above background noise levels at up to 12m/s. As noted in EIAR Chapter 13: Noise, construction noise impacts have been scoped out of the given the lack of noise sensitive receptors in proximity to the site. The closest property, the Crask Inn, is approximately 2.4km from the closest turbine and 2.2km from the proposed BESS, as such, operational noise will not be audible given the separation distance. Noise arising from within the operational land of the substation, when measured and/or calculated as an LZeq, 5min, in the 100Hz one third octave frequency band must not exceed 30dB, at noise sensitive premises and will be secured via a planning condition.

8.121 Noise associated with HGV and site traffic movements along local roads during construction of the proposed development could cause a temporary increase in noise levels, particularly for dwellings located along the proposed routes to the proposed development given the rural setting. Even during the most intensive delivery periods during construction, noise limits would not be breached. Whilst night time deliveries are not generally expected, however, if unavoidable would be

agreed with Environmental Health with residents of neighbouring dwellings kept informed to minimise disturbance.

8.122 EIAR Chapter 12: Noise considers notes a doubling of road traffic would see a 3dB in noise level at receptor locations. As the increase in both HGV traffic and total traffic is less than 3dB during the construvtion pahses of development, therefore, no significant effects would occur.

8.123 In terms of shadow flicker, it is not anticipated that this will be an issue for this development either individually or cumulatively given the location of the development in relation to properties.

Aviation

8.124 There are no unresolved objections with regard to aviation interests, with no outstanding concerns being raised by the Highlands and Islands Airports Limited or National Air Traffic Services. Should the proposal be granted permission, a condition can be applied to secure suitable mitigation in terms of aviation lighting and notification to the appropriate bodies of the final turbine positions. Owing to the proposed turbine heights being less than 150m to blade tip, aviation lighting can be restricted to infrared only, not visible to the naked eye.

Other Material considerations

8.125 Owing to the scale of the proposed BESS on site, a fire safety management plan could be secured by condition. There are no other material considerations.

Non-material considerations

8.126 There are no other non-material considerations.

Matters to be secured by Legal Agreement

8.127 An assessment of the condition of the roads, pre and post construction will be required. This will inform the production of a roads wear and tear agreement under Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act. This type of agreement can be secured by condition.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Scottish Government gives considerable commitment to renewable energy and encourages planning authorities to support the development of wind farms where they can be situated in appropriate locations to operate successfully. The project has the potential to contribute a generating capacity of 49.9MW (12.6MW from the 3 turbines and 37.3MW from the 16 BESS units) of renewable energy capacity towards Scottish Government targets and play a role in the route to a net zero Scotland. In addition, the development has potential to bring economic benefits to the area and to create some job opportunities.

9.2 However, as with all applications, the benefits of the proposal must be weighed against potential drawbacks and then considered in the round, taking account of the relevant policies of the Development Plan. As noted in this report, collective

visual and landscape effects on the local landscape composition are generally considered appropriate. While Significant visual effects would occur, these are confined to locations in close proximity when travelling on surrounding routes for short intervals and from isolated upland areas. As such, these impacts are generally considered to be within acceptable limits.

9.3 Due consideration has been given to the policies set out in NPF4 and the Development Plan, including Policy 67 of the Highland wide Local Development Plan with its eleven tests which are expanded upon with the OWESG. This policy also reflects policy tests of other policies in the plan, for example Policy 28. The proposal can be considered to benefit from in principle support, with the extent of landscape and visual effects being outweighed by the contribution the development would make toward tackling climate change. The development also contains proposals for habitat management, which could, if appropriately conditioned, lead to peatland and biodiversity enhancement.

9.4 It is recognised that the proposed extension to the south east of Creag Riabhach Wind Farm will result in some localised adverse visual and landscape effects with the magnitude of change being perceptible, particularly from the closer range locations. It is considered that T2 and T3 sit well and represent a natural infill. T1 is more pronounced because of its proximity to the A836 and the shallower nature of the landform at a point where the road descends when travelling northwards. It has however been evidenced from the EIAR that such effects have been considered, with the proposed development being generally well sited in terms of separation from receptors, landscape designations, more utilised accessible roads and other recreational routes, with the proposal's visibility being relatively well contained.

9.5 It is accepted that the design of the wind farm has had to balance landscape character and visual amenity; environmental constraints; topography and ground conditions; and technological and operational requirements. The applicant has explained for each viewpoint how the design has sought to address the receptor(s) at the viewpoint. It is considered that the development has been appropriately designed to address the constraints of the area.

9.6 The Council is satisfied that environmental effects of this development can on the whole be addressed by way of mitigation. The Council has incorporated the requirement for a schedule of mitigation within the conditions of this permission. Monitoring of operational compliance has been secured through conditions of this permission.

9.7 Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act sets out what an applicant shall do in relation of the preservation of amenity. It is considered that the proposal has had regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty and has mitigated the effects of the development in relation to the effects on the natural beauty of the countryside. This is by virtue of the location, setting and design of the wind farm, resulting in landscape and visual impacts which can be accommodated. Officers are also satisfied that environmental effects of this development can be addressed by way of mitigation, with the suggested conditions incorporating a schedule of mitigation and operational compliance monitoring should permission be forthcoming.

9.8 Given the above analysis, the application is considered acceptable in terms of the Development Plan, national policy and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

10. IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Resource: Not applicable

10.2 Legal: If an objection is raised to the proposal, the application will likely be subject to a Public Local Inquiry. Further if the Scottish Ministers chose not to give effect to the conditional raise no objection, then it would also likely be subject to a Public Local Inquiry.

10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable

10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: The proposal has the ability to make a meaningful contribution toward renewable energy generation.

10.5 Risk: Not applicable

10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATION

Action required before decision issued N

It is recommended to **RAISE NO OBJECTION** to the application, subject to, the following conditions and reasons:

Conditions to be attached to any Section 36 consent which may be approved

1. Notification of Date of First Commissioning

Written confirmation of the Date of First Commissioning and the Date of Final Commissioning shall be provided to the Planning Authority and the Scottish Ministers no later than one calendar month after those dates.

Reason: To allow the Planning Authority and Scottish Ministers to calculate the date of expiry of the consent.

2. Commencement of Development

(1) The Commencement of development shall be no later than 5 years from the date on which this consent is granted, or in substitution, such other period as the Scottish Ministers may hereafter direct in writing.

(2) Written confirmation of the intended date of Commencement of development shall be provided to the Planning Authority and the Scottish Ministers no later than one calendar month before that date.

Reason: To ensure that the consent is implemented within a reasonable period and to allow the Planning Authority and the Scottish Ministers to monitor compliance with obligations attached to this consent and deemed planning permission as appropriate.

3. Non-assignation

(1) This consent shall not be assigned without the prior written authorisation of the Scottish Ministers. The Scottish Ministers may authorise the assignation, with or without conditions.

(2) The Company shall notify the Planning Authority and the Scottish Ministers in writing of the name of the assignee, principal named contact and contact details within fourteen days of the consent being assigned.

Reason: To safeguard the obligations of the consent if transferred to another company.

4. Serious Incident Reporting

In the event of any breach of health and safety or environmental obligations relating to the Development during the period of this consent, the Company will provide written notification of the nature and timing of the incident to the Planning Authority and the Scottish Ministers, including confirmation of remedial measures taken and/or to be taken to rectify the breach, within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

Reason: To keep the Scottish Ministers informed of any such incidents which may be in the public interest.

Conditions Attached to Deemed Planning Permission

5. Commencement of Development

(1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of 5 years beginning with the date of this permission.

(2) Written confirmation of the intended date of Commencement of development shall be provided to the Planning Authority and the Scottish Ministers no later than one calendar month before that date.

Reason: To comply with section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

6. Implementation in Accordance with Approved Plans

(1) Except as otherwise required by the terms of the section 36 consent and deemed planning permission, the Development shall be undertaken in accordance with the application:

(a) including the approved drawings;

(b) the Environmental Impact Assessment Report ("the EIAR"); and

(c) other documentation lodged in support of the application.

Reason: To ensure that the Development is carried out in accordance with the approved details.

7. Site Enabling Works

The Site Enabling Works shall not commence until a detailed scheme of all Site Enabling Works (including off-site and on-site works) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. This shall include a timetable for all enabling works and shall be submitted a minimum of 1 month in advance of the proposed date of commencement of any Site Enabling Works.

Reason: To ensure the final details of the Site Enabling Works have regard for the rural setting of the Development Site and the potential impact of such works on the infrastructure of the area.

8. Design and Operation of Wind Turbines

No development, with the exception of the Site Enabling Works, shall commence until full details of the proposed wind turbines hereby permitted, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. These details shall include:

(a) the make, model, design, direction of rotation (all wind turbine blades shall rotate in the same direction), power rating, sound power level and dimensions of the turbines to be installed which shall have internal transformers, and

(b) the external colour and/or finish of the wind turbines to be used (including towers, nacelles and blades) which shall be non-reflective, pale grey semi-matte.

(c) No text, sign or logo shall be displayed on any external surface of the wind turbines, save those required by law under other legislation.

(d) Thereafter, the wind turbines shall be installed and operate in accordance with these approved details and, with reference to part (b) above, the wind turbines shall be maintained in the approved colour and monitored to ensure no significant rust, staining or dis-colouration occurs until such time as the wind farm is decommissioned.

Reason: To ensure the Planning Authority is aware of the wind turbine details and to protect the visual amenity of the area.

9. Signage

No anemometer, power performance mast, switching station, transformer building, or enclosure, ancillary building or above ground fixed plant shall display any name, logo, sign or advertisement (other than health and safety signage) unless and until otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

10. Design of Battery Energy Storage System and other Ancillary Development

(1) No development, with the exception of the Site Enabling Works, shall commence, unless and until final details of the external appearance, dimensions, battery energy storage system and surface materials of the buildings, associated compounds, boundary fencing, external lighting and parking areas have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority.

(2) The battery energy storage system buildings, associated compounds, fencing, external lighting and parking areas shall be constructed in accordance with the details approved under paragraph (1).

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenity of the area.

11. Micro-siting

(1) All wind turbines, buildings, masts, areas of hardstanding and tracks shall be constructed in the location shown on plan reference Site Layout Plan (Figure 3.1a); wind turbines, buildings, masts, areas of hardstanding and tracks may be adjusted by micro-siting within the site.

However, unless otherwise approved in advance in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with NatureScot, SEPA and the ECoW, micrositing is subject to the following restrictions:

(a) the wind turbines and other infrastructure hereby permitted may be micro-sited within 50 metres save that no wind turbine or other infrastructure may be micro-sited to less than 50 metres from any watercourse feature ;

(b) No wind turbine foundation shall be positioned higher, when measured in metres Above Ordinance Datum (AOD), than 5m above the position shown on plan reference Site Layout Plan (Figure 3.1a);

(c) No micro-siting shall take place within areas of peat deeper than currently shown for the relevant infrastructure on Figure 9.3: Interpolated Peat Depth, Volume 3a of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report 2020; and

(d) “Floated” access tracks shall be used where peat depths are in excess of 0.5m;

(e) All micro-siting permissible under this condition must be approved in advance in writing by the Environmental Clerk of Works (“ECoW”) (refer to Condition 13).

(2) A plan showing the final position of all wind turbines buildings, masts, areas of hardstanding, tracks and associated infrastructure forming part of the Development shall be submitted to the Planning Authority within one month of the completion of the development works. The plan shall also specify areas where micrositing has taken place and, for each instance, be accompanied by copies of the ECoW or Planning Authority's approval, as applicable.

Reason: To enable necessary minor adjustments to the position of the wind turbines and other infrastructure to allow for site-specific conditions while maintaining control of environmental impacts and taking account of local ground conditions.

12. Construction Environment Management Document

No later than three months prior to the Commencement of the Development, a Construction Environment Management Document (CEMD) shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority, in consultation with SEPA, NatureScot, Environmental Health and other consultees as appropriate. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved CEMD unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. The CEMD shall include details of:

a) An updated Schedule of Mitigation (SM) as it relates to construction highlighting mitigation set out within each chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and the conditions of this consent;

b) Processes to control / action changes from the agreed SM;

c) Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) for the construction phase, covering:

i) Habitat and Species Protection;

ii) Pollution Prevention and Control;

iii) Dust Management, covering demolition and construction activity, including vehicle movements;

iv) Construction Noise and Vibration;

v) Temporary Site Lighting;

vi) Site Waste Management;

vii) Surface and Ground Water Management, including: drainage and sediment management measures from all construction areas including access tracks; drainage by SUDS to accommodate the 1 in 200 plus an allowance for climate change; mechanisms to ensure that construction will not take place during periods of high flow or high rainfall; and a programme of water quality monitoring;

viii) Peat Management Plan (refer to Condition 22);

ix) Habitat Management Plan (refer to Condition 23);

x) Soil Management, with details of soil placement;

xi) Public and Private Water Supply Protection Measures, including a programme of water quality monitoring;

xii) Emergency Response Plans;

xiii) Timetable for post construction restoration/reinstatement of the temporary working areas and construction compound;

xiv) Phasing plans for the construction;

xv) Other relevant environmental management as may be relevant to the development;

xvi) Procedures to process any unexpected archaeological discoveries prior to the start of any works;

d) A statement of responsibility to 'stop the job/activity' if a breach or potential breach of mitigation or legislation occurs; and

e) Methods for monitoring, auditing, reporting, and the communication of environmental management on site and with client, Planning Authority and other relevant parties.

Reason: To ensure protection of surrounding environmental interests and general amenity.

13. Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW)

(1) No development or Site Enabling Works shall take place unless and until the terms of appointment of an independent Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW) by the Company have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The terms of appointment shall:

(a) impose a duty to monitor compliance with the ecological, ornithological and hydrological commitments provided in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report ("the EIAR") and other information lodged in support of the Application, the Construction Environmental Management Plan (Condition 12), the pre-construction ecological surveys (Condition 14), the Bird Protection Plan (Condition 15), the Peat Management Plan (Condition

22) and the Habitat Management Plan (Condition 23) and other plans approved in terms of the conditions of this planning permission ("the ECoW Works");

(b) advise on micrositing proposals issued pursuant to Condition 11;

(c) require the ECoW to report to the nominated construction project manager, developer and Planning Authority any incidences of non compliance with the ECoW works at the earliest practical opportunity;

(d) require the ECoW to submit a monthly report to the construction project manager, developer and Planning Authority summarising works undertaken on site; and

(e) require a statement that the ECoW shall be engaged by the Planning Authority but funded by the developer. The ECoW shall be appointed on the approved terms throughout the period from Commencement of Development to completion of construction works and post-construction site reinstatement works.

(2) No later than 18 months prior to decommissioning of the Development or the expiry of the section 36 consent (whichever is the earlier), details of the terms of appointment of an ECoW by the Company throughout the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases of the Development shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority. The ECoW shall be appointed on the approved terms throughout the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases of the Development.

Reason: To secure effective and transparent monitoring of and compliance with the environmental mitigation and management measures associated with the Development during the construction, decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases.

14. Pre-Construction Ecological Survey

A pre-construction survey is required to been undertaken not more than 3 months prior to works commencing and a report of the survey has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The survey shall cover both the application site and an appropriate buffer from the boundary of application site and the report of survey shall include mitigation measures where any impact, or potential impact, on protected species or their habitat has been identified. Development and work shall progress in accordance with any mitigation measures contained within the approved report of survey and the timescales contain therein.

Reason: To ensure that the site and its environs are surveyed and the development does not have an adverse impact on protected species or habitat.

15. Bird Protection Plan

No development or Site Enabling Works shall commence until:

(a) a breeding bird protection plan has been submitted and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with NatureScot. This shall include details of: proposed pre-construction survey work, records of breeding or foraging birds within disturbance distance of the site; and appropriate mitigation to avoid the risk of disturbance and/or displacement occurring which:

(i) for black grouse, shall include but no be limited to suspension of all works within 750m of any lek sites before 9am in the months of April and May.

(b) a nesting bird survey has been undertaken no more than 24 hours prior to the commencement of development if this coincides within the main bird breeding season (March- August inclusive) and throughout the breeding bird season if new areas are being developed or there has been a break in construction.

(c) a Golden Eagle population monitoring scheme has been submitted and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. This shall include details of pre and post construction survey work, and monitoring periodically throughout the operational lifetime of the development, unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority.

Reason: Construction works have the potential to disturb nesting birds or damage their nest sites, with all wild bird nests are protected from damage, destruction, interference and obstruction under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). To monitor the effects of wind farm development on the Golden Eagle population.

16. Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)

No development or Site Enabling Works shall commence until a works specific Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), related to the phase or phases of works or development to be undertaken has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Trunk and Local Roads Authorities, the Police and affected Community Councils. The final CTMP shall be submitted no later than two months prior to commencement of the relevant phase. The approved CTMP shall be carried out as approved in accordance with the timetable specified within the approved CTMP. The CTMP shall include (but not be limited to) the provision of:

(a) A risk assessment for transportation during daylight and hours of darkness;

(b) Proposed traffic management and mitigation measures within any settlements along the access routes, as required. Measure such as

temporary speed limits, suitable temporary signage, road markings and the use of speed activated signs should be considered;

(c) The routeing of all traffic associated with the Development on the local road network which shall limit construction vehicle entering and exiting the site from the south along the A836;

(d) Measures to ensure that the specified routes are adhered to, including monitoring procedures;

(e) A contingency plan prepared by the abnormal load haulier. The plan shall be adopted only after consultation and agreement with the Police and the respective Roads Authorities. It shall include measures to deal with any haulage incidents that may result in public roads becoming temporarily closed or restricted;

(f) A procedure for the regular monitoring of road conditions and the implementation of any remedial works required as may be reasonably attributable to the project's construction plant and vehicle movements during the construction period, including the provision of a wear and tear agreement for the local road network under Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (As Amended);

(g) A detailed protocol for the delivery of abnormal loads/vehicles, prepared in consultation with the Planning Authority, Trunk Roads and the Community Liaison Group. The protocol shall identify any requirement for convoy working and/or escorting of vehicles and include arrangements to provide advance notice of abnormal load movements in the local media. Temporary signage, in the form of demountable signs or similar approved, shall be established, when required, to alert road users and local residents of expected abnormal load movements. Any accommodation measures required including the removal of street furniture, junction widening, traffic management must similarly be approved by the affected Roads Authority. All such movements on roads shall take place out with peak times on the network, including school travel times and shall avoid local community events;

(h) During the delivery period of the wind turbine construction materials any additional signing or temporary traffic control measures deemed necessary due to the size or length of any loads being delivered or removed must be undertaken by a recognised QA traffic management consultant, to be approved by Transport Scotland and the Roads Authority before delivery commences;

(i) Wheel washing facilities shall be provided at an appropriate point within the site adjacent to the site access so as to prevent vehicles depositing debris on the road;

(j) During the operational stage of the Development, advance written notification and approval of the Planning Authority in consultation with the respective Roads Authorities, and affected Community Councils is required

for any significant HGV or Abnormal Load movement required during this period; and

(k) Identification of a nominated person to whom any road safety issues can be referred.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and to ensure that abnormal loads access the site in a safe manner.

17. Abnormal Loads

No delivery of abnormal indivisible load (AIL) shall be made to site until an Abnormal Indivisible Load Construction Traffic Management Plan (AIL-CTMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority, in consultation with the local Roads Authority, Transport Scotland, the Police and all affected Community Councils. The AIL-CTMP shall provide a detailed protocol for the delivery of AILs, including details of their proposed routing on the local and trunk road network, with any accommodation measures required, including the removal and replacement of street furniture, junction widening, and traffic management with these measures to be undertaken by a recognised Quality Assured traffic management consultant. The AIL-CTMP shall be prepared in consultation with all interested parties and thereafter be carried out as approved.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and to ensure that abnormal loads access the site in a safe manner.

18. Road Signage and Temporary Control Measures

Any additional signing or temporary traffic control measures deemed necessary due to the size or length of loads being delivered must be undertaken by a recognised Quality Assured traffic management consultant, to be approved by Transport Scotland before delivery commences.

Reason: To ensure that the transportation of abnormal loads will not have any detrimental effect on the trunk road network.

19. Watercourse Crossings

No development shall commence until full details of watercourse crossings have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority and if single span bridges are required these shall be designed to pass the 1 in 200-year flood plus an allowance for climate change. The watercourse crossings shall be achieved by way of oversized bottomless culverts. All existing watercourse crossings which require to be replaced shall be designed following recognised best practice guidance.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the water environment.

20. Recreational Access Management Plan

No development shall commence until an updated Recreational Access Management Plan (RAMP) has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Planning Authority. The updated plan should look to maintain public access during construction of the development, as far as it is practicable and safe to do so, and thereafter enhance public access during the operation of the development. This shall include delivering net improvements to the accessibility of access paths on completion of the development. The plan as agreed shall be implemented in full, unless otherwise approved in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of maintain public access rights and pedestrian safety.

21. Compensatory Planting Plan

No development, with the exception of the Site Enabling Works, shall commence unless and until a finalised Compensatory Planting Plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Forestry Officer.

Reason: To ensure appropriate planting and ongoing management of trees.

22. Peat Management Plan

No development or Site Enabling Works shall commence until a works specific finalised Peat Management Plan (PMP), related to the phase or phases of works or development to be undertaken, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with NatureScot and SEPA. The PMP shall include:

(a) the mitigation measures described within the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and other information submitted in support of the Application.

Reason: To ensure that a plan is in place to deal with the storage and reuse of peat within the application site, including peat stability and slide risk.

23. Habitat Management Plan

(1) No later than three months prior to the Commencement of the Development, a finalised habitat management plan (HMP), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, in consultation with SEPA.

(2) The HMP shall set out proposed habitat management of the site during the period of construction and operation of the site.

(3) The HMP shall include information on how and where any disturbed peat that cannot be used in site reinstatement will be used for peat restoration. This should include (a) location plan of the proposed peatland re-use/restoration area, clearly showing size of individual areas where peat re-use is proposed and total area to be restored, with this including the delivery

of improvement of **at least 42.2ha of peatland** (b) evidence, in the form of photographs, aerial imagery, or surveys to demonstrate that the area identified is appropriate for peat re-use and is capable of supporting carbon sequestration and (c) basic calculations which demonstrate that the proposal will make use of all excavated material (this information could alternatively be included in the Peat Management Plan).

(4) The HMP shall include post construction measures for the most sensitive habitats, peatland restoration proposals, provide enhancement of Annex 1 habitats, habitats for protected species and birds.

(5) The approved HMP will include provision for regular monitoring and review to be undertaken to consider whether amendments are needed to better meet the habitat plan objectives. In particular, the approved habitat management plan will be updated to reflect ground condition surveys undertaken following construction and prior to the date of Final Commissioning and submitted to the Planning Authority for written approval, in consultation with SEPA.

(6) Unless otherwise approved in advance in writing with the Planning Authority, the approved HMP shall be implemented in full.

(7) GIS Shapefiles must be supplied of the compensation and enhancement areas to the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.

Reason: In the interests of the protection of the habitats identified in the EIAR and EIAR Supplementary Environmental Information.

24. Biodiversity Net Gain

Prior to the commencement development, a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, in consultation with NatureScot. The BEP must include details of compensation and enhancement measures of **at least 85.76ha**, to ensure the development results in at least 10% biodiversity net gain. The BEP must include management, maintenance and monitoring strategies of the compensation and enhancement measures, that ensure longevity of the proposals. The approved BEP shall be implemented in full and in accordance with the approved timing, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development delivers biodiversity net gain.

25. Deer Management Plan

No development, with the exception the Site Enabling Works, shall commence until an updated Deer Management Plan ("DMP") has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with NatureScot. The DMP will set out proposed long term management of deer using the Development site and shall provide for the monitoring of deer numbers on site from the period from Commencement of development until

the date of completion of restoration. The approved DMP shall thereafter be implemented in full.

Reason: To protect ecological interests and in the intertest of habitat enhancement.

26. Water Quality and Fish Monitoring Plan

(1) There shall be no Commencement of development until an integrated Water Quality and Fish Monitoring Plan ("WQFMP") has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with local District Fishery Board.

(2) The WQFMP must take account of Marine Scotland Science's guidance and shall include:

(a) provision that water quality sampling should be carried out for 12 months (or as agreed with the Planning Authority) prior to Commencement of development, during construction and for 12 months after construction is complete;

(b) key hydrochemical parameters (including turbidity and flow data), the identification of sampling locations (including control sites), frequency of sampling, sampling methodology, data analysis and reporting;

(c) fully quantitative electrofishing surveys at sites potentially impacted and at control sites for 12 months (or as agreed with the Planning Authority) prior to the Commencement of development, during construction and for 12 months after construction is completed to detect any changes in fish populations; and

(d) appropriate site specific mitigation measures.

(3) Thereafter, the WQFMP shall be implemented in full within the timescales set out in the WQFMP.

Reason: To ensure no deterioration of water quality and to protect fish populations within and downstream of the development area.

27. Borrow Pits – Scheme of Works

(1) No development or Site Enabling Works shall commence unless and until a scheme for the working and restoration of each borrow pit relative to each phase of works has been prepared and submitted in advance of each phase to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority (in consultation with SEPA). The scheme shall include:

(a) a detailed working method statement based on site survey information and ground investigations;

(b) details of the handling of any overburden (including peat, soil and rock); drainage measures, including measures to prevent surrounding areas of peatland, water dependent sensitive habitats and Ground Water Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE) from drying out;

(c) a programme of implementation of the works described in the scheme;

(d) details of the reinstatement, restoration and aftercare of the borrow pit(s) to be undertaken at the end of the construction period, including topographic surveys of pre-construction profiles and details of topographical surveys to be undertaken of the restored borrow pit profiles.

(2) The approved scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To ensure that excavation of materials from the borrow pit(s) is carried out in a manner that minimises the impact on road safety, amenity and the environment, and to secure the restoration of borrow pit(s) at the end of the construction period.

28. Cultural Heritage

No development or Site Enabling Works shall commence until structural surveys have been carried out by a suitably qualified person of Crask Bridge. Full details and mitigation measures (inclusive of post construction, and post site decommissioning, structural surveys, and remedial measures), shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to retain and/or protect the character and qualities of the listed buildings.

29. Noise

The rating level of noise emissions from the combined effects of the wind turbines hereby permitted along with the existing Creag Rhiabhach Wind Farm (including the application of any tonal penalty), when determined in accordance with the attached Guidance Notes, shall not exceed 35dB LA90 at any noise sensitive properties.

In addition:

(A) Prior to the First Commissioning Date, the Company shall submit to the Planning Authority for written approval a list of proposed independent consultants who may undertake compliance measurements in accordance with this condition. Amendments to the list of approved consultants shall be made only with the prior written approval of the Planning Authority.

(B) Within 21 days from receipt of a written request of the Planning Authority, following a complaint to it alleging noise disturbance at a dwelling, the Company shall, at its expense, employ an independent consultant approved by the Planning Authority to assess the level of noise emissions from the Development at the complainant's property (or a suitable alternative location

agreed in writing with the Planning Authority) in accordance with the procedures described in the attached Guidance Notes.

The written request from the Planning Authority shall set out at least the date, time and location that the complaint relates to. Within 14 days of receipt of the written request of the Planning Authority made under this paragraph (B), the Company shall provide the information relevant to the complaint to the Planning Authority in the format set out in Guidance Note 1(e).

(C) Prior to the commencement of any measurements by the independent consultant to be undertaken in accordance with these conditions, the Company shall submit to the Planning Authority for written approval the proposed measurement location identified in accordance with the Guidance Notes where measurements for compliance checking purposes shall be undertaken.

Where the proposed measurement location is close to the wind turbines, rather than at the complainants property (to improve the signal to noise ratio), then the Company's submission shall include a method to calculate the noise level from the wind turbines at the complainants property based on the noise levels measured at the agreed location (the alternative method). Details of the alternative method together with any associated guidance notes deemed necessary, shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any measurements.

Measurements to assess compliance with the noise limits of this condition shall be undertaken at the measurement location approved in writing by the Planning Authority

(D) Prior to the commencement of any measurements by the independent consultant to be undertaken in accordance with these conditions, the Company shall submit to the Planning Authority for written approval a proposed assessment protocol setting out the following:

i. the range of meteorological and operational conditions (the range of wind speeds, wind directions, power generation and times of day) to determine the assessment of rating level of noise immissions.

ii. a reasoned assessment as to whether the noise giving rise to the complaint contains or is likely to contain a tonal component.

The proposed range of conditions shall be those which prevailed during times when the complainant alleges there was disturbance due to noise, having regard to the information provided in the written request of the Planning Authority under paragraph (B), and such others as the independent consultant considers necessary to fully assess the noise at the complainant's property. The assessment of the rating level of noise immissions shall be undertaken in accordance with the assessment protocol approved in writing by the Planning Authority and the attached Guidance Notes.

(E) The Company shall provide to the Planning Authority the independent consultant's assessment of the rating level of noise immissions undertaken in accordance with the Guidance Notes within 2 months of the date of the written request of the Planning Authority made under paragraph (B) of this condition unless the time limit is extended in writing by the Planning Authority. The assessment shall include all data collected for the purposes of undertaking the compliance measurements, such data to be provided in the format set out in Guidance Note 1(e) of the Guidance Notes. The instrumentation used to undertake the measurements shall be calibrated in accordance with Guidance Note 1(a) and certificates of calibration shall be submitted to the Planning Authority with the independent consultant's assessment of the rating level of noise immissions.

(F) Where a further assessment of the rating level of noise immissions from the Development is required pursuant to Guidance Note 4(c) of the attached Guidance Notes, the Company shall submit a copy of the further assessment within 21 days of submission of the independent consultant's assessment pursuant to paragraph (E) above unless the time limit for the submission of the further assessment has been extended in writing by the Planning Authority.

(G) The Company shall continuously log power production, wind speed and wind direction, all in accordance with Guidance Note 1(d) of the attached Guidance Notes. The data from each wind turbine shall be retained for a period of not less than 24 months. The Company shall provide this information in the format set out in Guidance Note 1(e) of the attached Guidance Notes to the Planning Authority on its request within 14 days of receipt in writing of such a request.

(H) In the event that the rating level, after adjustment for background noise contribution and any tonal penalty, is found to exceed the conditioned limits, the Company shall submit to the Planning Authority for written approval, a scheme of mitigation to be implemented within fourteen days of submission of the report identifying the exceedance (as required under paragraph (F) above). The scheme shall define any reduced noise running modes to be used in the mitigation together with sound power levels in these modes and the manner in which the running modes will be defined in the SCADA data.

(I) The scheme referred to in paragraph H above should include a framework of immediate and long-term mitigation measures. The immediate mitigation measures must ensure the rating level will comply with the conditioned limits and must be implemented within 14 days of the submission of the report identifying the exceedance. These measures must remain in place, except during field trials to optimise mitigation, until a long-term mitigation strategy is ready to be implemented.

Guidance Notes for Noise Condition

These notes are to be read with and form part of the noise condition. They further explain the condition and specify the methods to be employed in the assessment of complaints about noise immissions from the wind farm. The

rating level at each integer wind speed is the arithmetic sum of the wind farm noise level as determined from the best-fit curve described in Note 2 of these Guidance Notes and any tonal penalty applied in accordance with Note 3 with any necessary correction for residual background noise levels in accordance with Note 4. Reference to ETSU-R-97 refers to the publication entitled "The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms" (1997) published by the Energy Technology Support unit (ETSU) for the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Note 1

a) Values of the LA90,10-minute noise statistic should be measured at the complainant's property (or an approved alternative representative location as detailed in Note 1(b)), using a sound level meter of EN 60651/BS EN 60804 Type 1, or BS EN 61672 Class 1quality (or the equivalent UK adopted standard in force at the time of the measurements) set to measure using the fast time weighted response as specified in BS EN 60651/BS EN 60804 or BS EN 61672-1 (or the equivalent UK adopted standard in force at the time of the measurements). This should be calibrated before and after each set of measurements, using a calibrator meeting BS EN 60945:2003 "Electroacoustics - sound calibrators" Class 1 with PTB Type Approval (or the equivalent UK adopted standard in force at the time of the measurements) and the results shall be recorded. Measurements shall be undertaken in such a manner to enable a tonal penalty to be calculated and applied in accordance with Guidance Note 3.

b) The microphone shall be mounted at 1.2 - 1.5 metres above ground level, fitted with a two-layer windshield or suitable equivalent approved in writing by the Planning Authority, and placed outside the complainant's dwelling. Measurements should be made in "free field" conditions. To achieve this, the microphone shall be placed at least 3.5 metres away from the building facade or any reflecting surface except the ground at the approved measurement location. In the event that the consent of the complainant for access to their property to undertake compliance measurements is withheld, the Company shall submit for the written approval of the Planning Authority details of the proposed alternative representative measurement location prior to the commencement of measurements and the measurements shall be undertaken at the approved alternative representative measurement location.

c) The LA90,10-minute measurements should be synchronised with measurements of the 10-minute arithmetic mean wind speed and wind direction data and with operational data logged in accordance with Guidance Note 1(d) and rain data logged in accordance with Note 1(f).

d) To enable compliance with the conditions to be evaluated, the Company shall continuously log arithmetic mean wind speed in metres per second and wind direction in degrees from north at hub height for each turbine, arithmetic mean power generated by each turbine and any data necessary to define the running mode as set out in the Curtailment Plan, all in successive 10-minute periods. Unless an alternative procedure is previously agreed in

writing with the Planning Authority, this hub height wind speed, averaged across all operating wind turbines, shall be used as the basis for the analysis. Each 10 minute arithmetic average mean wind speed data as measured at turbine hub height shall be 'standardised' to a reference height of 10 metres as described in ETSU-R-97 at page 120 using a reference roughness length of 0.05 metres. It is this standardised 10 metre height wind speed data which is correlated with the noise measurements determined as valid in accordance with Note 2(b), such correlation to be undertaken in the manner described in Note 2(c). All 10 minute periods shall commence on the hour and in 10 minute increments thereafter synchronised with Greenwich Mean Time and adjusted to British Summer Time where necessary.

e) Data provided to the Planning Authority shall be provided in comma separated values in electronic format with the exception of data collected to asses tonal noise (if required) which shall be provided in a format to be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

f) A data logging rain gauge shall be installed in the course of the independent consultant undertaking an assessment of the level of noise immissions. The gauge shall record over successive 10 minute periods synchronised with the periods of data recorded in accordance with Note 1(d). The Company shall submit details of the proposed location of the data logging rain gauge to the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of measurements.

Note 2

a) The noise measurements should be made so as to provide not less than 20 valid data points as defined in Note 2 paragraph (b).

b) Valid data points are those measured during the conditions set out in the assessment protocol approved by the Planning Authority but excluding any periods of rainfall measured in accordance with Note 1(f).

c) Values of the LA90,10-minute noise measurements and corresponding values of the 10-minute standardised ten meter height wind speed for those data points considered valid in accordance with Note 2(b) shall be plotted on an XY chart with noise level on the Y-axis and wind speed on the X-axis. A least squares, "best fit" curve of an order deemed appropriate by the independent consultant (but which may not be higher than a fourth order) shall be fitted to the data points to define the wind farm noise level at each integer speed.

Note 3

a) Where, in accordance with the approved assessment protocol noise immissions at the location or locations where compliance measurements are being undertaken contain or are likely to contain a tonal component, a tonal penalty shall be calculated and applied using the following rating procedure.

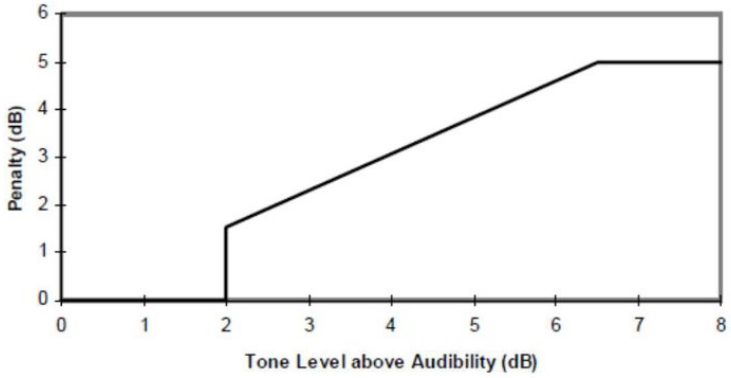
b) For each 10-minute interval for which LA90,10-minute data have been determined as valid in accordance with Note 2, a tonal assessment shall be performed on noise immissions during 2 minutes of each 10-minute period. The 2-minute periods should be spaced at 10-minute intervals provided that uninterrupted uncorrupted data are available ("the standard procedure"). Where uncorrupted data are not available, the first available uninterrupted clean 2-minute period out of the affected overall 10-minute period shall be selected. Any such deviations from the standard procedure shall be reported.

c) For each of the 2-minute samples the tone level above audibility shall be calculated by comparison with the audibility criterion given in Section 2.1 on pages 104 -109 of ETSU-R-97.

d) The tone level above audibility shall be plotted against wind speed for each of the 2-minute samples. Samples for which the tones were below the audibility criterion or no tone was identified, a value of zero audibility shall be substituted.

e) A least squares "best fit" linear regression shall then be performed to establish the average tone level above audibility for each integer wind speed derived from the value of the "best fit" line fitted to values within ± 0.5m/s of each integer wind speed. If there is no apparent trend with wind speed then a simple arithmetic mean shall be used. This process shall be repeated for each integer wind speed for which there is an assessment of overall levels in Note 2.

f) The tonal penalty is derived from the margin above audibility of the tone according to the figure below derived from the average tone level above audibility for each integer wind speed.



Note 4

a) If a tonal penalty is to be applied in accordance with Note 3 the rating level of the turbine noise at each wind speed is the arithmetic sum of the measured noise level as determined from the best fit curve described in Note 2 and the penalty for tonal noise as derived in accordance with Note 3 at each integer wind speed within the range set out in the approved assessment protocol. If no tonal penalty is to be applied then the rating level of the turbine noise at

each wind speed is equal to the measured noise level as determined from the best fit curve described in Note 2.

b) If the rating level lies at or below the noise limits approved by the Planning Authority then no further action is necessary. In the event that the rating level is above the noise limits, the independent consultant shall undertake a further assessment of the rating level to correct for background noise so that the rating level relates to wind turbine noise immission only.

c) The Company shall ensure that all the wind turbines in the development are turned off for such period as the independent consultant requires to undertake the further assessment. The further assessment shall be undertaken in accordance with the following steps:

i. Repeating the steps in Note 2, with the turbines switched off, and determining the background noise (L3) at each integer wind speed within the range set out in the approved noise assessment protocol.

ii. The wind farm noise (L1) at this speed shall then be calculated as follows where L2 is the measured level with turbines running but without the addition of any tonal penalty:

$$L_1 = 10\log\left[10^{L_2/10} - 10^{L_3/10}_{1}\right]$$

iii. The rating level shall be re-calculated by adding the tonal penalty (if any is applied in accordance with Note 3) to the derived noise L1 at that integer wind speed.

iv. If the rating level after adjustment for background noise contribution and adjustment for tonal penalty lies at or below the noise limits approved by the Planning Authority, then no further action is necessary. If the rating level at any integer wind speed exceeds the noise limits approved by the Planning Authority, then the Development fails to comply with the conditions

Reason: To protect amenity and to ensure that noise limits are not exceeded and to enable prompt investigation of complaints

30. Aviation Safety - Lighting

(1) No development, with the exception of Site Enabling Works, shall commence until a scheme for aviation lighting for the Development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The aviation-lighting scheme shall specify infrared lighting only, not visible to the naked eye, and define how the development will be lit throughout its life to maintain civil and military aviation safety requirements, and shall include:

(a) Details of any construction equipment and temporal structures with a total height of 50 metres or greater (above ground level) that will be deployed during the construction of wind turbine generators and details of any aviation warning lighting that they will be fitted with; and

(b) The locations and heights of all wind turbine generators in the development, identifying those that will be fitted with aviation warning lighting and the position of the lights on the wind turbines generators; the types(s) of lights that will be fitted; and the performance specification(s) of the lighting types(s) to be used.

(2) Thereafter, the aviation-lighting scheme shall be implemented as approved, unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority.

31. Aviation Safety

At least one calendar month prior to the commencement of the erection of the turbines the Company shall provide the Planning Authority, Ministry of Defence, Defence Geographic Centre and National Air Traffic Services (NATS) with the following information and shall provide evidence to the Planning Authority of having done so.

(a) the date of the commencement of the erection of wind turbine generators;

(b) the maximum height of any construction equipment to be used in the erection of the wind turbines;

(c) the date any wind turbine generators are brought into use;

(d) the latitude and longitude and maximum heights of each wind turbine generator, and any anemometer mast(s).

Reason: In the interests of aviation safety.

32. Telecommunication

Within 12 months of the first export date, any claim by any individual person regarding television or telecommunications interference at their house, business premises or other building, shall be investigated by a qualified engineer appointed by the developer and the results shall be submitted to the Planning Authority. Should any impairment of services be attributable to

the development, the developer shall remedy such impairment within 3 months.

Reason: To mitigate the potential effect of telecommunications interference on the development.

33. Fire Risk Management Plan

Prior to development commencing, a detailed plan addressing the procedures and operations to tackle and extinguish a fire or other polluting incident must be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority, in consultation with Fire and Rescue Scotland.

Reason: In order to ensure full consideration can be given to the suitability of site for such a use, and to ensure that development has contingencies in place to

34. Site Inspection Strategy

(1) Prior to the Date of Final Commissioning, the Company shall submit an outline Site Inspection Strategy (Outline SIS) for the written approval of the Planning Authority. The Outline SIS shall set out a strategy for the provision of site inspections and accompanying Site Inspection Reports (SIR) to be carried out at 25 years of operation from the Date of Final Commissioning and every five years thereafter.

(2) No later than 24 years after the Date of Final Commissioning, the Company shall submit a final detailed Site Inspection Strategy (Final SIS), based on the principles of the approved Outline SIS for the written approval of the Planning Authority. The Final SIS shall set out updated details for the provision of site inspections and accompanying Site Inspection Reports (SIR), in accordance with relevant guidance at that time, to be carried out at 25 years of operation from the Date of Final Commissioning and every five years thereafter.

(3) At least one month in advance of submitting each SIR to the Planning Authority, the scope of the SIR shall be agreed with the Planning Authority.

(4) The SIR shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Details to demonstrate that the infrastructure components of the Development are still operating in accordance with Condition 8 and Condition 29; and

(b) An engineering report which details the condition of tracks, turbine foundations and the wind turbines and sets out the requirements and the programme for the implementation for any remedial measures which may be required.

(5) The SIS and each SIR shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in advance in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the Development is being monitored at regular intervals throughout after the first 25 years of operation.

35. Site Decommissioning, Restoration and Aftercare

(1) The Development will be decommissioned and will cease to generate electricity by no later than the date 40 years from the date of Final Commissioning. The total period for restoration of the Site in accordance with this condition shall not exceed three years from the date of Final Generation without prior written approval of the Scottish Ministers in consultation with the Planning Authority.

(2) No development or Site Enabling Works shall commence unless and until a decommissioning, restoration and aftercare strategy has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority (in consultation with NatureScot and SEPA). The strategy shall outline measures for the decommissioning of the Development and restoration and aftercare of the site and shall include proposals for the removal of the Development, the treatment of ground surfaces, the management and timing of the works and environmental management provisions.

(3) Not later than 3 years before decommissioning of the Development or the expiration of this consent (whichever is the earlier), a detailed decommissioning, restoration and aftercare plan, based upon the principles of the approved decommissioning, restoration and aftercare strategy, shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority in consultation with NatureScot and SEPA.

(4) The detailed decommissioning, restoration and aftercare plan shall provide updated and detailed proposals, in accordance with relevant guidance at that time, for the removal of the Development, the treatment of ground surfaces, the management and timing of the works and environment management provisions which shall include (but is not limited to):

(a) site waste management plan (dealing with all aspects of waste produced during the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases);

(b) details of the formation of the construction compound, welfare facilities, any areas of hardstanding, turning areas, internal access tracks, car parking, material stockpiles, oil storage, lighting columns, and any construction compound boundary fencing;

(c) a dust management plan;

(d) details of measures to be taken to prevent loose or deleterious material being deposited on the local road network, including wheel cleaning and lorry sheeting facilities, and measures to clean the site entrances and the adjacent local road network;

(e) details of anticipated impacts on the road networks and vehicle types and movements;

(f) a pollution prevention and control method statement, including arrangements for the storage and management of oil and fuel on the site;

(g) details of measures for soil storage and management;

(h) a surface water and groundwater management and treatment plan, including details of the separation of clean and dirty water drains, and location of settlement lagoons for silt laden water;

(i) details of measures for sewage disposal and treatment;

(j) temporary site illumination;

(k) the construction of any temporary access into the site and the creation and maintenance of associated visibility splays;

(l) details of watercourse crossings;

(m) details of archaeological supervision to oversee the protection / fencing off of all known heritage assets within 50m of the proposed working areas, including all areas to be used by construction vehicles; and

(n) a species protection plan based on surveys for protected species (including birds) carried out no longer than eighteen months prior to submission of the plan.

(5) The Development shall be decommissioned, site restored and aftercare thereafter undertaken in accordance with the approved plan, unless otherwise agreed in writing in advance with the Planning Authority in consultation with NatureScot and SEPA.

Reason: To ensure the decommissioning and removal of the Development in an appropriate and environmentally acceptable manner and the restoration and aftercare of the site, in the interests of safety, amenity and environmental protection.

36. Financial Guarantee

(1) No development or Site Enabling Works shall commence unless and until a bond or other form of financial guarantee in terms reasonably acceptable to the Planning Authority which secures the cost of performance of all decommissioning, restoration and aftercare obligations referred to in Condition 35 is submitted to the Planning Authority.

(2) The value of the financial guarantee shall be agreed between the Company and the Planning Authority or, failing agreement, determined (on application by either party) by a suitably qualified independent professional as being sufficient to meet the costs of all decommissioning, restoration and aftercare obligations referred to in Condition 35.

(3) The financial guarantee shall be maintained in favour of the Planning Authority until the date of completion of all decommissioning, restoration and aftercare obligations referred to in Condition 35.

(4) The value of the financial guarantee shall be reviewed by agreement between the Company and the Planning Authority or, failing agreement, determined (on application by either party) by a suitably qualified independent professional no less than every five years and increased or decreased to take account of any variation in costs of compliance with decommissioning, restoration and aftercare obligations and best practice prevailing at the time of each review.

Reason: To ensure that there are sufficient funds to secure performance of the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare conditions attached to this deemed planning permission in the event of default by the Company.

37. Socio-Economic Benefits

(1) No later than 15 months after the Date of Final Commissioning of the development, a report demonstrating the project has met the minimum socio-economic benefit assumptions provided within the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), for both the development's construction period and initial 12 month operational period, for both Highland and Scotland, shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority.

(2) Where the report shows that projected socio-economic benefit has not achieved the assumptions in the EIAR, it shall include proposed measures to address, and compensate for any shortfall, to ensure that the economic assumptions for the development have been met. In the absence of any alternative actions, the Scheme for Community Benefit, as required by Condition 38, shall be enhanced accordingly to offset any detriment of economic impact.

Reason: In order to ensure compliance with NPF4 Policy 11c) and to maximise the local socio-economic benefits of the development to the wider local community**.**

38. Scheme for Community Benefit

Anytime between 3 months to 6 months prior to the Date of Final Commissioning of the development, details of a Scheme for Community Benefit shall be submitted for the prior written approval of the Planning Authority. This scheme, comprising a developer financial contribution, or alternative means of provision, shall be to the prevailing value required for onshore wind energy development in Highland, at the time of the developer applying to satisfy this condition. The scheme shall be used for projects across Highland directly related to infrastructure, supply chain development, support for business, including tourism and regeneration projects, skills and barriers to employment in Highland. The scheme shall be implemented as

approved, and administered by The Highland Council, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure compliance with NPF4 Policy 11c) and to maximise the local socio-economic benefits of the development to the wider local community.

39. Community Liaison Group

No development or Site Enabling Works shall commence unless and until a Community Liaison Plan has been approved in writing by the Planning Authority after consultation with the relevant local community councils. This plan shall include the arrangements for establishing a Community Liaison Group to act as a vehicle for the community to be kept informed of project progress by the Company. The terms and condition of these arrangements must include that the Community Liaison Group will have timely dialogue in advance on the provision of all transport-related mitigation measures and keep under review the timing of the delivery of turbine components. The terms and conditions shall detail the continuation of the Community Liaison Group until the wind farm has been completed and is fully operational. The approved Community Liaison Plan shall be implemented in full.

Reason: In the interest of informing the community of progress with the development and to inform the provisions of the Construction Traffic Management Plan.

40. Planning Monitoring Officer

(1) There shall be no Commencement of Development unless and until the terms of appointment by the Company of a suitably qualified environmental consultant as Planning Monitoring Officer (PMO) have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The terms of appointment shall:

(a) impose a duty to monitor compliance with the terms of the deemed planning permission and the conditions attached to it;

(b) require the PMO to submit a report to the Planning Authority every 2 months summarising works undertaken on site; and

(c) require the PMO to report to the Planning Authority any incidences of non-compliance with the terms of the deemed planning permission and conditions attached to it at the earliest practical opportunity.

(2) The PMO shall be appointed on the approved terms throughout the period from Commencement of Development to completion of construction works and post-construction site reinstatement works.

Signature:	Dafydd Jones
Designation:	Area Planning Manager - North
Author:	Roddy Dowell
Background Papers:	Documents referred to in report and in case file.
Relevant Plans:	Plan 1 - Figure 1 Location Plan
	Plan 2 - Figure 4 Site Layout Plan
	Plan 3 - Figure 3.3 Indicative Turbine Elevations

Appendix 1 - Assessment against Landscape and Visual Assessment Criteria contained within Section 4 of the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance

Response to EIAR Review of Design against Criteria in THC Onshore Wind Energy SG 2016		
1	Relationship between Settlements/Key locations and wider landscape respected.	Turbines are not visually prominent in the majority of views within or from settlements/Key Locations or from the majority of its access routes. ---------- Criterion 1 is related to relationships between settlements/key locations and the wider landscape. The nearest settlement within the Development Plan is Lairg approximately 21km to the south, which is located outwith the ZTV. Therefore, there would be no opportunity for settlements to be "encircled" by wind energy development. Due to the site location and topography, the proposed turbines are relatively well screened from larger settlements/key locations and access routes and approaches into settlements/key locations within the study area. The proposed development would not be visually prominent in views from any settlements within the 35km study area and the majority of the approach roads and other routes are generally well screened by landform. The exception to this is views from the A836 / NCN1 when travelling north and south and surrounding munros such as Ben Kilbreck. There would be significant effects from upland summits and along approximately 4.9km of the A836 / NCN1 as it approaches and passes the proposed turbines between the summit of The Crask and Druim Allt na h-Aire. Whilst significant from these locations it would not be overwhelming. The proposed development would not contribute to the perception of settlements or key locations being encircled by wind energy development to a point that would be unacceptable. The proposed development would not be seen in the majority of views within or from settlements/key locations or from the majority of settlement approach routes. The proposed development is considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 1.
2	Key Gateway locations and routes are respected.	Wind Turbines or other infrastructure do not overwhelm or otherwise detract from landscape characteristics which contribute the distinctive transitional experience found at key gateway locations and routes. ---------- Criterion 2 is related to the transitional nature of key gateway locations and routes. The proposed development would not significantly affect any "key gateways" and would not detract from any landscape characteristics which contribute a "distinctive transitional experience" through the landscape. Whilst the A836 is identified as a key route in the OWESG, it is not identified as a key gateway location or route within the 35km study area. However, there would be localised significant visual effects on short stretches of the A836 as noted above. Whilst the level of effect is considered significant it would not be overwhelming. The proposed development would not significantly affect or detract from the key views as listed in the OWESG.

		The proposed development would have localised effects on the Distinctive Mountains and Extensive Views from Peaks and Summits SLQ's of Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA. The proposed development would not significantly affect or detract from the Special Landscape Qualities of the Assynt - Coigach NSA, Kyle of Tongue NSA and the Wild Land Qualities of the Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest and Foinaven – Ben Hee Wild Land Areas. The proposed development would not reduce or detract from the transitional experience of key gateway locations and routes or overwhelm or otherwise detract from landscape characteristics which contribute the distinctive transitional experience found at key gateway locations and routes. The proposed development is considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 2.
3	Valued natural and cultural landmarks are respected	The development does not, by its presence, diminish the prominence of the landmark or disrupt its relationship to its setting. ------ Criterion 3 is related to the extent to which the proposal affects the fabric and setting of valued natural and cultural landmarks. The Council's Historic Environment Team (Conservation) have no objection to the proposals noting Category C Listed Crask Bridge to the south which already experiences effects from the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm. There are a number of Munros within the surrounding area such as Ben Hope, Ben More Assynt, Ben Hee and Ben Kilbreck along with various corbetts which will have visibility of the proposed development. Whilst there are some effects, particularly from Ben Kilbreck to the east, these are considered relatively localised. The proposed development is considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 3.
4	The amenity of key recreational routes and ways is respected.	Wind Turbines or other infrastructure do not overwhelm or otherwise significantly detract from the visual appeal of key routes and ways. ---- Criterion 4 is related to the amenity and visual appeal of key recreational routes and ways. For this scheme this would include the A836 / NCN1, North Coast 500, Cape Wrath Trail, Sutherland Trail, Moray Firth Trail and Strath Tirry to Badanloch Tracks Heritage Path from the Crask Inn to Badanloch Lodge. Additionally, there are several munros in the surrounding area including Ben Hope, Ben More Assynt, Ben Hee and Ben Klibeck along with various corbetts. The proposed development would have a significant effect on views when travelling both north and south on a stretch of approximately 4.9km along the A836 / NCN1 along with views from Ben Kilbreck to the east. No other surrounding transport routes would be significantly affected by the proposed development with visibility relatively well contained beyond these recreational routes. It is considered the proposed development would have a significant effect on key recreational routes including the A836 / NCN1 and Ben Kilbreck. The proposed development is not considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 4 given the significant effects.

5	The amenity of transport routes is respected	Wind Turbines or other infrastructure do not overwhelm or otherwise significantly detract from the visual appeal of transport routes. -------- Criterion 5 is related to the amenity and visual appeal of transport routes. The proposed development would have significant effects on views when travelling both north and south on a stretch of approximately 4.9km along the A836 / NCN1. No other surrounding transport routes would be significantly affected by the proposed development with visibility relatively well contained beyond the A836 / NCN1. It is considered the proposed development significantly effects the amenity and visual appeal of this transport route. The proposed development is not considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 5 given the significant effects.
6	The existing pattern of Wind Energy Development is respected.	The degree to which the proposal fits with the existing pattern of nearby wind energy development, considerations include: • Turbine height and proportions, • density and spacing of turbines within developments, • density and spacing of developments, • typical relationship of development to the landscape, • previously instituted mitigation measures, • Planning Authority stated aims for development of area. ---------- Criterion 6 is related to pattern of development. The pattern of development is discussed under Criteria 1 above in so far as it relates to encirclement and raised no issues given the lack of views from settlements. Given the location of the proposed development adjacent to the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, the 3 additional turbines would maintain the existing distribution of wind farm groupings within the landscape and reflect the patten of existing wind development clusters, located mainly to the south of the 35km study area beyond a distance of approximately 21km. The proposed development would largely integrate with the existing wind farm and would appear as a reasonable infill expansion given the alignment of turbines is broadly within the visual envelope of the Creag Riabhach Wind Farm. Together, they will appear as a single wind farm that generally “fits” with the simplicity of the local landscape character of the Sweeping Moorland and Flows, and Rounded Hills LCT’s. The proposed development is considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 6.
7	The proposal contributes positively to existing pattern or objectives for development in the area.	The proposal maintains appropriate and effective separation between developments and / or clusters. ---------- Criterion 7 is related to the separation between development/and or clusters both in visual and landscape terms. All of the viewpoints show the proposed 3 turbine extension alongside the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm which generally appears as a cohesive group. The proposed development maintains an appropriate separation of over 21km from other existing wind farms including Achany, Rosehall and Lairg located to the south.

		The proposed development is considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 7.
8	The perception of landscape scale and distance is respected	The perception of landscape scale and distance is respected. --- Criterion 8 is related to perception of landscape scale and distance. The proposed development is for 3 larger 149.9m turbines in comparison to the 22 smaller 125m turbines at the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm adjacent. This difference is generally negligible from the majority of viewpoints but would be noticeable from the closest viewpoints, particularly VP8 (A836 Northbound / NCN 1, near The Crask), with the proposed development bringing turbines closer to the receptor. Although additional landscape effects would arise, these are localised and suitably mitigated by design with the 3 turbines located within the lower landform, the views are of short enough duration and sufficiently associated with the existing development that it does not represent an unacceptable impact. The proposed development is considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 7.
9	Landscape setting of nearby wind energy developments is respected	Proposal relates well to the existing landscape setting and does not increase the perceived visual prominence of surrounding wind turbines. --- Criterion 9 is related to the separation between development/and or clusters both in visual and landscape terms. All of the viewpoints show the proposed 3 turbine extension alongside the existing Creag Riabhach Wind Farm which generally appears as a cohesive group. The proposed development maintains an appropriate separation of over 21km from other existing wind farms including Achany, Rosehall and Lairg located to the south. The proposed development is considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 9.
10	Distinctiveness of Landscape character is respected	Integrity and variety of Landscape Character Areas are maintained. ---------- Criterion 10 is related to distinctiveness of landscape character. The proposed development would be located within the Sweeping Moorland and Flows, and Rounded Hills LCT with the “simple” turbine layout being more suitable to the underlying landform and simpler landscape character. The proposed development would have localised effects on the Distinctive Mountains and Extensive Views from Peaks and Summits SLQ’s of Ben Klibreck and Loch Choire SLA. Despite localised significant visual effects, the overall integrity of the landscape character would be maintained. The proposed development is considered to meet the threshold of Criterion 10.

GENERAL NOTES.

THE CONTRACTOR MUST CONSULT THE CIVIL/STRUCTURAL DESIGN ENGINEER IMMEDIATELY IF:
a) GROUND CONDITIONS VARY ON SITE.
b) EXISTING BUILDINGS VARY ON SITE.
c) DIMENSIONS OR LEVELS SHOWN ARE CHANGED BY ANYONE ON SITE.
d) COMPLETE OR PARTIALLY COMPLETE STRUCTURES ARE TO BE SUBJECT TO CONSTRUCTION LOADING OR AFFECTED BY TEMPORARY WORKS.

DO NOT SCALE – IF IN DOUBT, ASK.

LARGE SCALE DETAILS TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER SMALL SCALE DETAILS.

ALL MATERIALS ARE TO BE USED STRICTLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH MANUFACTURERS INSTRUCTIONS.

THE CONTRACTOR WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL COSTS INVOLVED IN CHANGES OR MODIFICATIONS REQUESTED AND APPROVED, TO SUIT HIS PREFERED WORK METHOD.

CONTRACTOR METHOD STATEMENTS MUST BE PROVIDED TO THE ENGINEER AND DESIGN TEAM LEADER PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF ASSOCIATED SITE OPERATIONS.

Rev.	By	App.	Description	Date
B	SNC	–	AMENDED SITE BOUNDARY	06/04/23
A	SNC	–	INITIAL ISSUE	04/04/22

Project

PROPOSED WIND FARM DEVELOPMENT AT CREAG RIABHACH, SUTHERLAND.

Drawing Title

FIGURE 1:
LOCATION PLAN.

Architect

Drawn By	Scale	Issue	Job No.
SNC	1:50,000–A0 1:100,000–A2	–	B8497
Date	Revision	Approved by	Drawing No.
APR 22	B		109

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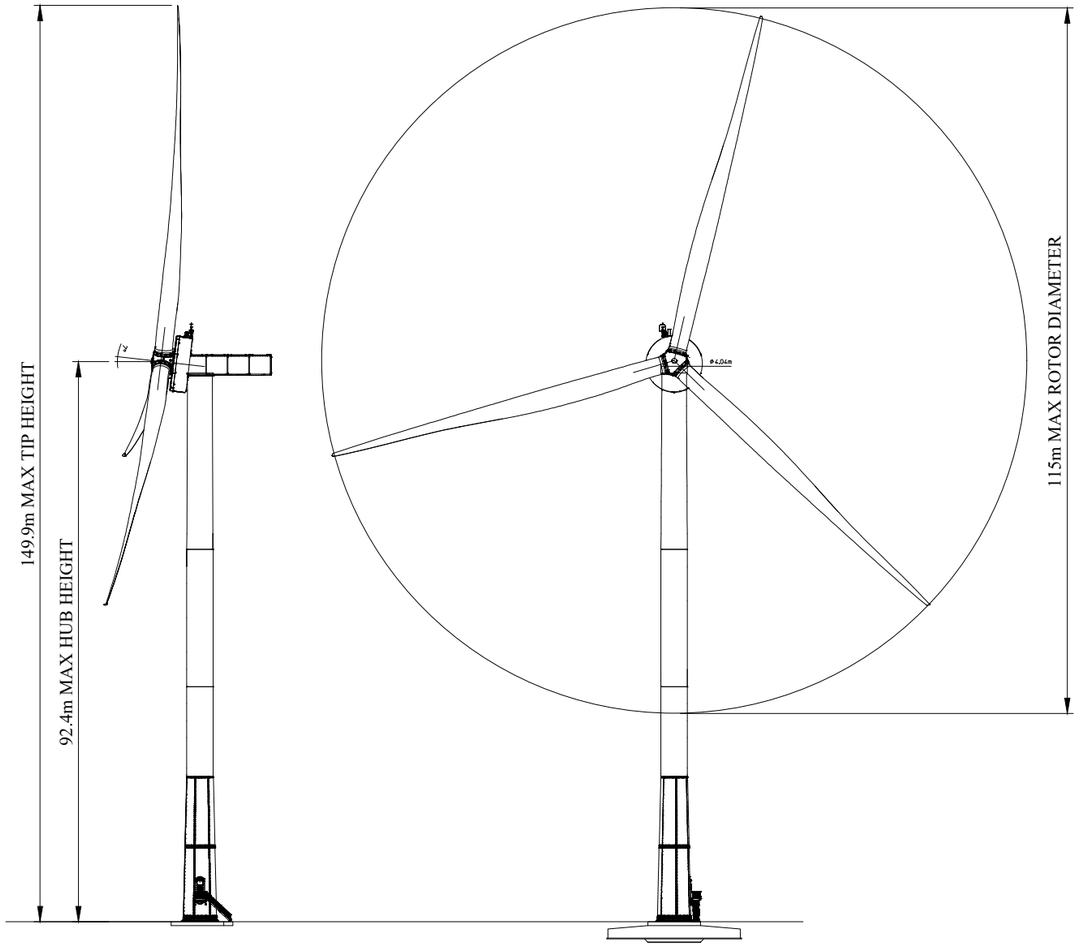

Map Scale 1:500,000

Rev.	By	App.	Description	Date
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
P02	SNC	-	AMENDED TO RECEIVED TURBINE INFORMATION.	03/03/2023
P01	SNC	-	INITIAL ISSUE.	27/01/2023

ERG
EVOLVING ENERGIES

Creag Riabhach Wind Farm Extension

Figure 3.3: Indicative Turbine Elevations

Drawing number	Imp.	Dcs.	Type.	Prog.	Rev.
CRE-RAC-ZZ-XX-DR-C-0201-P02	CRE	RAC	C	0201	P02

Date:	Map Scale:
2023-03-03	not to scale

Prepared by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
SNC	-	-

Page size: A3 (420 x 297 mm)

OSGC 1936 / British National Grid

EXISTING TURBINE 14
EXISTING TURBINE 11
EXISTING TURBINE 12
EXISTING TURBINE 13
EXISTING TURBINE 10
EXISTING TURBINE 9
EXISTING TURBINE 8
EXISTING TURBINE 7
EXISTING TURBINE 5
EXISTING TURBINE 6
EXISTING TURBINE 4
EXISTING TURBINE 2
EXISTING TURBINE 3
EXISTING TURBINE 1

REFER TO DRAWING 209

Feith Bad an Loch

River Vagastie

Allt Bealach an Fhuarain

Allt á' Bhuic

EXT-02

EXT-03

EXT-01

BATTERY STORAGE COMPOUND.

EXISTING SUB- STATION

MET MAST 1

Allt a' Chraisg

REFER TO DRAWING 208

LEGEND:

DENOTES EXTENT OF ORIGINAL PERMISSION.

DENOTES EXTENT OF EXTENSION AND BESS APPLICATION.

Map Scale 1:500,000

Rev.	By	App.	Description	Date
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
P02	SNC	-	AMENDED BOUNDARY LINE.	06/04/2023
P01	SNC	-	CREATED BASED ON DRAWING 0120-P10.	06/04/2023

ERG
EVOLVING ENERGIES

Creag Riabhach Wind Farm Extension

Figure 4: Site Layout

Drawing number	Imp.	Dcs.	Type.	Prog.	Rev.
CRE-RAC-ZZ-XX-DR-C-0305-P02	CRE	RAC	C	0305	P02

Date:	Map Scale:
2023-04-06	1:10,000

Prepared by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
SNC	-	-

Page size: A3 (420 x 297 mm)

OSGC 1936 / British National Grid