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## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd (the Applicant) is seeking consent pursuant to Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 to install and operate a wind farm comprising up to 14 wind turbines and associated infrastructure, with a generation capacity exceeding 50 megawatts (MW), on land adjacent to the existing operational Clashindarroch Wind Farm, in Aberdeenshire, on land owned by Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) located approximately 6km to the south-west of Huntly, as shown on Figure 1.1 (the Site). This would be known as the Clashindarroch II Wind Farm (the proposed development). The Applicant is also seeking a Direction from the Scottish Ministers for planning permission to be deemed to be granted pursuant to Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.
- 1.2 For the avoidance of doubt, this application for the proposed development would not be an extension to the existing wind farm. If consented, the proposed development would be a new and separate development. However, the proposed development is considered in the context of the Clashindarroch Wind Farm for assessment purposes in this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report.
- 1.3 The application boundary of the proposed development is shown on Figure 1.2. The application boundary encompasses the proposed wind turbines and associated infrastructure. An aerial view of the Site is shown on Figure 1.3.
- 1.4 The maximum height of the proposed turbines would be 180m to the tip of the blade in an upright position. It is expected that each wind turbine would be rated to between 4MW and 6MW (or greater, subject to future advances in turbine technology) giving an estimated total installed capacity of between 56MW and 84MW. The proposed development would produce an average of between approximately 184GWh and 276GWh of electricity annually (based on an average capacity factor of 37.5%). This equates to the power consumed by between 48,653 and 72,980 average homes in the UK.
- 1.5 The generating capacity of the proposed development would exceed 50MW, and as such an application for the proposed development will be submitted to Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) under Section 36 of the 1989 Act.
- 1.6 The proposed development would connect to the Transmission Grid network near Craighead, at the same location as the existing Scottish and Southern Electricity (SSE) substation associated with the Clashindarroch Wind Farm. The grid connection cabling for the proposed development would be underground and within the application boundary, and as such it forms part of the application under Section 36 of the 1989 Act. At this stage, it is not envisaged that there would be a separate application for the Transmission Grid connection under Section 37 of the 1989 Act. The project has an expected grid connection date of 2023.
- 1.7 SLR Consulting (SLR) has been appointed to undertake an EIA to determine and evaluate the potential effects of the proposed development. The results are presented in this document, the EIA Report.

## PURPOSE OF THE EIA REPORT

- 1.8 The EIA Report has been prepared to accompany the application, in accordance with the Electricity

Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations') (Ref 1.1). An EIA Report is required where a development is an EIA development, that is a development which is *"likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location."*

- 1.9 A Scoping Report was originally submitted to Scottish Government Local Energy and Consents (LEC) on 5th April 2017 to accompany a request for the Scottish Ministers to adopt a Scoping Opinion under Regulation 7 of the EIA Regulations 2000. At that time, the proposal was for up to 16 turbines each having a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, with the total generating capacity proposed to be in excess of 50MW when considered with the existing Clashindarroch Wind Farm.
- 1.10 Since the submission of the Scoping Report in 2017, the Applicant has taken the opportunity to review the project and consider the economic viability of the project and this resulted in the consideration of a number of revised turbine options. This has resulted in a layout of up to 14 turbines with a maximum tip height of 180m. This layout is presented at Figure 3.1.
- 1.11 An updated Scoping Report was submitted in October 2018 regarding the updated layout, and a form Scoping Opinion received from Scottish Ministers in March 2019.
- 1.12 It is acknowledged that a previous Scoping Opinion was sought under the previous Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2000 as amended (the EIA Regulations 2000), but since a subsequent Scoping Opinion was sought under the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017, the EIA subsequently relates to the scoping request and opinion made over 2018 and 2019, and subsequently any transitional provisions have ceased to apply.
- 1.13 For the avoidance of doubt, the following aspects of the 2017 Regulations are followed as best practice in this EIA:
- the report which contains the EIA will be referred to as the EIA Report;
  - this EIA Report is based on the EIA Scoping Opinion provided by ECU on 3 July 2017, along with subsequent EIA Scoping Opinion provided by ECU on 7 March 2019; and
  - the technical chapters of the EIA Report clearly set out any mitigation measures proposed, and a Schedule of Mitigation is included as Chapter 18: Schedule of Mitigation.
- 1.14 The proposed development is "a generating station, the construction of which (or the operation of which) will require a Section 36 consent but which is not Schedule 1 development". In this regard, the proposed development is of a type falling within Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations 2017 and therefore requires to be screened as to whether or not it constitutes EIA development as envisaged by Regulation 8 of the EIA Regulations 2017. Additionally, as the proposed development is located within a commercial forestry plantation and would require some felling of trees, the assessment has regard to the Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.
- 1.15 It was acknowledged at an early stage in the development that given the nature, location and characteristics of the proposed development that an EIA would be required. It was therefore not considered necessary to seek a screening opinion and this EIA Report is submitted voluntarily as per Regulation 6 of the EIA Regulations 2017. Further details on the Scoping Report and ECU Scoping Opinion is provided in Chapter 6: Scoping and Consultation.

- 1.16 Regulation 3 of the EIA Regulations 2017 prohibits a planning authority or the Scottish Ministers from granting planning permission for EIA development unless they have first taken the environmental information provided in the ES (EIA Report) into consideration.
- 1.17 This EIA Report is presented for assessment by ECU in the determination of the application for consent under Section 36 of the 1989 Act and for deemed planning permission in terms of Section 57 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, for the proposed development.

## THE APPLICANT

- 1.18 The Applicant is a leading European energy company with approximately 20,000 employees. For more than 100 years, it has powered industries, supplied energy to people's homes and modernised the way its customers live through innovation and cooperation.
- 1.19 The Applicant seeks to make fossil-free living possible within one generation. Therefore, it is driving the transition to a more sustainable energy system through growth in renewable production and climate smart energy solutions for our customers.
- 1.20 The Applicant has been delivering wind energy projects in the UK since 2008. Today, it operates more than 1GW of renewable energy and has invested £3.5bn. Its broader thinking means it is drawing on its capability across northern Europe to build significant and integrated UK operations in wind energy, district heating and cooling, independent power distribution, electric vehicle charging services and infrastructure, B2B sales and retail.
- 1.21 Further information on the Applicant can be found on its corporate website at <https://group.vattenfall.com>.

## EIA PROJECT TEAM AND COMPETENCY

- 1.22 SLR is the UK's fastest growing multi-disciplinary environmental consultancy. Within the energy sector, SLR provides a wide range of planning, environmental and technical services relating to the design and development of wind farms and other renewable energy projects. The company becomes involved in all aspects of facility development, from initial concept design, through planning and permitting, to the detailed design, construction management and closure stages.
- 1.23 SLR is a registered Environmental Impact Assessor and Member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). The company has significant experience in the preparation of planning and Section 36 applications and undertaking EIA for a wide variety of projects, including renewable energy, minerals, waste and infrastructure developments.
- 1.24 SLR has drawn upon the expertise of its in-house team of appropriately qualified and experienced specialists, comprising town planners, engineers, hydrogeologists, landscape and visual assessors and other environmental specialists for the majority of the technical assessments presented within this EIA Report. Further information on SLR can be found on its corporate website at [www.slrconsulting.com](http://www.slrconsulting.com).
- 1.25 SLR has also worked closely with other external specialists to provide the assessment of aviation, ecological and ornithological assessments, as well as all inputs in relation to forest felling and forest

design plans.

1.26 The competency of the full EIA team is presented in Table 1-1.

**Table 1-1**  
**EIA Team Competency**

Chapter	Specialist Assessor	Qualifications	Years of Experience
Forest Felling and Design	James Anderson DGA Forestry Ltd	PG Dip in forestry and a B.Arch and Dip.Arch	7
Renewable Energy and Planning Policy	Alison Sidgwick Technical Director SLR Consulting Ltd	BSc (Hons), MSc, RTPi	22
Landscape and Visual Assessment	Lindsey Guthrie Technical Director Simon Myers SLR Consulting Ltd	MA (Hons), MPhil, CMLi	32
Ornithology and Ecology	Paul Bradshaw Partner MBEC Environmental Consulting	BSc (Hons), MSc, MRes	20
Ecology	Andy Mackenzie Partner, MBEC Environmental Consulting	BSc (Hons), PhD	27
Soils, Geology, Carbon Emissions and Track Design	Colin Duncan Technical Director SLR Consulting Ltd	BSc (Hons), MSc, FGS	37 (25 in the UK on environmental projects)
Hydrology and Hydrogeology	Gordon Robb Technical Director SLR Consulting Ltd	BSc (Hons), MSc, FICIWEM, MBA	27
Cultural Heritage	Tim Malim Technical Director SLR Consulting Ltd	BA (Hons), FSA, MIFA	38
Noise	Emma Parsons Technical Director SLR Consulting Ltd	BSc (Hons), MIOA	14
Highways, Traffic & Transport	Tom Green Technical Director SLR Consulting Ltd	BEng (Hons), CEng, MICE	27
Socio-economics, Tourism, Recreation & Land Use	Alan Mitchell Technical Director SLR Consulting Ltd	MA (Hons), RTPi	21

Chapter	Specialist Assessor	Qualifications	Years of Experience
Socio-economics, Tourism, Recreation & Land Use – Economic Modelling	Stephen Lucas, Managing Director, Development Economics Ltd	MSc, B.Econs (Hons)	28
Aviation	Stewart Heald Senior Consultant Osprey Consulting Ltd	Air Traffic Controllers Course, Diploma Leadership Management	8 years as an Aviation Consultant. Previously 34 years' experience in military Air Traffic Control, including 22 years as an Air Traffic Controller
Other Matters	Alison Sidgwick Technical Director SLR Consulting Ltd	BSc (Hons), MSc, RTPI	22
Shadow Flicker	Scott Pritchard Technical Discipline Manager – GIS CAD SLR Consulting Ltd		23

## STRUCTURE OF THE EIA REPORT

1.27 The EIA Report is presented in four volumes as follows:

- Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary (NTS):
  - The NTS provides a non-technical overview of the EIA Report and is intended for review by the general public. It includes a description of the proposed development and a summary of the predicted environmental effects.
- Volume 2: Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report):

The EIA Report text is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction;
- Chapter 2: Site Description and Design Evolution;
- Chapter 3: Description of the Development;
- Chapter 4: Renewable Energy and Planning Policy;
- Chapter 5: Environmental Impact Assessment;
- Chapter 6: Scoping and Consultation;
- Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Assessment;
- Chapter 8: Ornithology;
- Chapter 9: Ecology;
- Chapter 10: Cultural Heritage;

- Chapter 11: Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Geology;
  - Chapter 12: Carbon Emissions;
  - Chapter 13: Highways, Traffic and Transport;
  - Chapter 14: Noise;
  - Chapter 15: Aviation;
  - Chapter 16: Socio-economics, Tourism, Recreation and Land Use;
  - Chapter 17: Other Matters; and
  - Chapter 18: Schedule of Mitigation
- Volume 3: EIA Report Figures:
    - The Figures support the EIA Report text and are numbered sequentially for each Chapter in which they are principally referred to. The landscape figures are presented in a separate volume.
  - Volume 4: EIA Report Technical Appendices:
    - The Technical Appendices that are referred to in each Chapter of the EIA Report are compiled separately in Volume 4. They are numbered sequentially for each Chapter in which they are principally referred to.

1.28 A number of additional documents will accompany the application. These do not form part of the EIA, but do form part of the application. The documents include:

- A Planning Statement;
- Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) report; and
- Design and Access Statement (DAS).

## PUBLICITY OF THE EIA REPORT AND APPLICATION

1.29 As required by Part 5 of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017, the Applicant will advertise the submission of this EIA Report, in accordance with those Regulations. The requirements include (a) describing the application and stating that it is accompanied by an EIA Report; (b) providing details of where a copy of the application and EIA Report may be inspected, along with details of where and the cost of obtaining a copy; and (c) state the date by which representations should be made to the Scottish Ministers.

1.30 The full suite of application material, including the EIA Report, will also be publicised in accordance with the Electricity (Applications for Consent) Regulations 1990, as is required.

1.31 Hard copies of the EIA Report can be viewed at the following locations during normal offices hours:

- Stewarts Hall, 15-17 Gordon Street, Huntly; and
- Aberdeenshire Council Offices, 25 Gordon Square, Huntly.



- 1.32 In addition to the statutory requirements for publicising the EIA Report, the Applicant has advised the following four local Community Councils of the EIA Report being available and be sent an electronic copy:
- Huntly Community Council;
  - Strathbogie Community Council;
  - Tap O' Noth Community Council; and
  - Cabrach Community Association.
- 1.33 A copy of the NTS, as well as the full EIA Report and wider application documents, will be made available for download from the Applicant's corporate website at: [www.vattenfall.co.uk/clashindarrochII/](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/clashindarrochII/).
- 1.34 A copy of the EIA Report can also be viewed electronically at the following locations:
- Aberdeenshire Council Planning Portal; and
  - ECU Website.
- 1.35 The EIA Report can also be viewed at the Scottish Government Library at Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ, or on the Energy Consents website at [www.energyconsents.scot](http://www.energyconsents.scot).
- 1.36 Hard copies of the NTS are available free of charge from:
- SLR Consulting Limited  
Floor 2  
4/5 Lochside View  
Edinburgh Park  
Edinburgh EH12 9DH
- Tel.: 0131 335 6830
- 1.37 Hard copies of the EIA Report may be purchased by arrangement from the above address for £1,200.00 per copy, or £15 per DVD/USB. The price of the hard copy reflects the cost of producing all of the Landscape and Visual photographs at the recommended size. As such, a DVD/USB version is recommended.

## REFERENCES

- Ref. 1.1: The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/102/contents/made> [Accessed 12 November 2019].

