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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2022, Kirkton Wind Farm Limited¹ (the applicant) submitted an application to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) for Section 36 consent under the Electricity Act 1989, to install and operate an energy park (the proposed development) in The Highland Council administrative area. A request was also made by the applicant that planning permission for the proposed development be deemed to be granted under Section 57 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 1.2 The proposed development would be located in Sutherland, within The Highland Council (THC) administrative area, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) NC 87999 59788. The application for consent (ECU Reference: ECU00003244) comprised 11 turbines up to 149.9m to blade tip height and associated infrastructure. The application was accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report which was prepared in accordance with the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations).

PURPOSE OF SUPPLEMENTARY ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

- 1.3 The EIA Regulations include provision for the preparation of Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI), where further work in relation to the likely environmental effects has been undertaken. This may reflect the fact that a project has been modified since the original application was submitted, and updates to the EIA are necessary. It may also be as a result of further information being requested by the determining authority or a consultee.
- 1.4 This SEI has been prepared to provide further information to the EIA Report (as submitted in November 2022), including amendments to the proposed development since the original application was submitted, and to address certain information requests from consultees during the consultation period.
- 1.5 The SEI is intended to be read alongside and complement the EIA Report, to ensure that all relevant environmental information is available for consideration by the determining authority. Unless otherwise stated, the information contained in the EIA Report remains valid.
- 1.6 In summary, this SEI for the proposed development is intended to provide additional information relating to the EIA Report, explain the amendments to the proposed development (and where appropriate re-assess effects) and address the following key points that have been raised by consultees during the consultation process for the application:
 - Update the cumulative assessments presented in the Landscape and Visual, Noise, Ornithology and Traffic and Transport chapters of the EIA Report, in order to take account of the following developments:

¹ The applicant is Kirkton Wind Farm Limited, which is part of a joint venture between Wind2 Limited (Wind2) and companies managed by Octopus Energy Generation.

- Melvich Wind Energy Hub;
 - Armadale Wind Farm (updated design);
 - Pentland Offshore Floating Wind Farm;
 - West of Orkney Offshore Wind Farm;
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) have requested that Turbine No.7 be microsited north in order to minimise direct impacts on M6 habitat;
 - NatureScot have advised that they would like to see the proposed access track that crosses from the east to the west of the site, linking up to Turbines No.5 – No.11, to be amended so as to avoid sensitive habitats; and
 - Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) objection due to a lack of information and assessment of the effects of the proposal, specifically the Habitat Management Plan (HMP) measures, on the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Special Protection Area (SPA).
- 1.7 In each chapter of this SEI, details are provided where relevant, on the consultation responses received during the application consultation period and how these have been addressed, if necessary.
- 1.8 An Addendum Planning Statement is being submitted alongside this SEI.
- 1.9 Upon the request of THC, an Outstanding Universal Values (OUV) Assessment has been completed, which looks at the potential effects of the proposed development on the outstanding universal values of the proposed Flow Country World Heritage Site. The OUV Assessment forms part of the wider SEI being submitted, however is a stand-alone document (similar to the Addendum Planning Statement).
- 1.10 The information contained in this SEI is considered to be substantive information for the purposes of the EIA Regulations. It will therefore be published as additional information in terms of Regulation 20 of the EIA Regulations and publicly advertised as the same.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SUPPLEMENTARY ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

- 1.11 This SEI has been prepared by SLR, and the associated specialists who contributed to the EIA Report, as follows:
- SLR: the introductory chapters (Chapters 1-6), Landscape and Visual (Chapter 7), Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils (Chapter 10), Cultural Heritage and Archaeology (Chapter 11), Site Access Traffic and Transport² (Chapter 12), Socio-Economics and Land Use (Chapter 14), Other Issues (Chapter 15), and Schedule of Commitments (Chapter 16);
 - Atmos: Ecology (Chapter 8), and Ornithology (Chapter 9); and

² With input in terms of Abnormal Load Route Assessment from Pell Frischmann

- Bow Acoustics: Noise (Chapter 13).

Statement of Expertise

1.12 In the context of the EIA Regulations, **Table 1-1** below outlines the relevant expertise and / or qualifications of the experts who prepared the EIA Report and have contributed to this SEI. The SEI team is led by SLR with assistance from specialist consultants. **Table 1-1** demonstrates the relevant competency for each technical discipline covered in the EIA Report and this SEI.

Table 1-1: EIA / SEI Team Competency

Discipline	Specialist Assessor	Qualifications	Years of Experience
Renewable Energy and Planning Policy	SLR:		
	- Michael Fenny	MA(Hons), MSc, MRTPI	16 years
	- Alastair Smith	BSc (Hons), MSc, LRTPI	5.5 years
Landscape and Visual	SLR:		
	- Simon Myers	MLPM (Hons), AMLI	23 years
	- Lindsey Guthrie	MA (Hons), MPhil, CMLI	36 years
Ecology	Atmos:		
	- Greg Fullerton	BSc (Hons), Ph.D, MRSB, C. Biol, MCIEEM	28 years
	- James Wilson	MSc IT, BSc (Hons), CIEEM	21 years
Ornithology	Atmos:		
	- Mark Doherty	BSc (Hons)	11 years
	- James Wilson	MSc IT, BSc (Hons), CIEEM	21 years
	- Jenny Bell	BSc (Hons)	27 years
Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	SLR:		
	- Gordon Robb	BSc (Hons), MSc, MBA, FCIWEM, C.WEM	29 years
	- Adrian Cowe	BSc (Hons), MSc	8 years
	- Alan Huntridge	BSc (Hons), MSc	15 years
	- Colin Duncan ³	BSc (Hons), MSc, FGS	38 years
	- David Nisbet ³	BSc (Hons), FGS	9 years
Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	SLR:		
	- Charlotte Dawson	BSc, MSc, MCIfA	17 years
	- Beth Gray	MA (Hons), ACIfA	7 years

³ Worked on the Kirkton Energy Park EIA Report, however has since left SLR.

Discipline	Specialist Assessor	Qualifications	Years of Experience
Noise	Bow Acoustics: - Richard Carter ⁴	CEng, BEng (Hons), MIOA	18 years
	SLR: - David Gerard	BSc, AMIOA	10 years
Traffic and Transport	SLR: - Joanna Read	BSc, MSc	19 years
	- Lauren Long ³	BSc, (Hons)	4 years
	Pell Frischmann: - Gordon Buchan	BEng (Hons), MSc, FCIHT, MCILT	26 years
Socio-Economics and Land Use	SLR: - Anne Dugdale	BSc, MA, FIQ, MRTPI	34 years
	Development Economics: - Steve Lucas	BSc, MSc	32 years
Infrastructure, Telecommunications and Broadcast Services	SLR: - Alastair Smith	BSc (Hons), MSc, LRTPI	5.5 years
Shadow Flicker	SLR: - Tim Doggett	BSc, MSc	15 years
Forestry	Bidwells: - Denis Torley	MA (Hons), MICFor	20 Years
Aviation	Wind Business: - Ian Fletcher	B.Eng	25 years
Carbon Emissions	SLR: - Colin Duncan ³	BSc (Hons), MSc, FGS	38 years
GIS	SLR: - Lauren McConnachie	BSc, MSc	11 years
	- Anne Altringham	BSc, MSc	10 years
	- Jon Salter	BSc	7 years
	- Daisy Bradshaw	BSc, MSc	2 years

⁴ Richard Carter was working for SLR Consulting at the time of the Kirkton Energy Park EIA Report production.

STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

- 1.13 All of the EIA Report chapters have been reviewed to identify the need to update or replace content in light of the amendments to the proposed development (relocation of Turbine No.7 and access track realignment), and / or information gathered since the EIA Report was completed. Where a chapter or assessment does not need updated, supplemented or replaced, no changes have been made (this will be explained in the relevant SEI Chapter) as it is not the intention of this SEI to repeat information contained in the EIA Report that remains valid. As a consequence, whilst the structure and chapter numbering of the SEI reflects that of the EIA Report, the format and level of content in the SEI chapters does vary.
- 1.14 Where Technical Appendices and Figures from the EIA Report have been updated, the original numbering has also been retained (but are prefixed with 'SEI'). Where new Technical Appendices and Figures have been added, their numbering follows on from those in the EIA Report (and are prefixed with 'SEI'). Technical Appendices and Figures from the EIA Report that are not updated as part of this SEI remain valid, and this is clearly stated in the introductory text for each SEI chapter.
- 1.15 This SEI comprises four volumes, the first containing the Non Technical Summary (NTS)⁵, the second containing the SEI Chapters, the third containing the Figures and Technical Appendices, and the fourth containing wirelines and photomontages.
- 1.16 The content of the SEI chapters, including the extent to which they update, or supplement information in the EIA Report is set out below, adopting the original chapter numbering:
- **SEI Chapter 1: Introduction** (this Chapter), provides a brief introduction to the purpose of the SEI, the reasons for submitting SEI in relation to the proposed development, the format of the SEI, and how the SEI is being advertised and consulted on;
 - **SEI Chapter 2: Site Description and Design Evolution**, considers any implications of the proposed amendments to the design strategy of the proposed development;
 - **SEI Chapter 3: Description of Development**, includes further details of the proposed amendments to the proposed development;
 - **SEI Chapter 4: Renewable Energy and Planning Policy**, considers relevant policy documents that have become available / been adopted, since the submission of the application in November 2022. This includes the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4);
 - **SEI Chapter 5: Environmental Impact Assessment**, discusses the need for EIA and sets out the approach to assessment, within the SEI, taken in respect of the proposed development;

⁵ The SEI NTS provides a brief, easy to understand overview of the SEI. It is not designed to replace the original EIA Report NTS in its entirety.

- **SEI Chapter 6: Scoping and Consultation**, outlines consultation responses following the submission of the Kirkton Energy Park application in November 2022, and provides a summary of the issues and how they are being addressed;
- **SEI Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Amenity**, considers the implications of the proposed amendments to the proposed development for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 7 of the EIA Report. It also considers the updated cumulative wind farm situation and any implications for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 7 of the EIA Report;
- **SEI Chapter 8: Ecology**, considers the implications of the proposed amendments to the proposed development for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 8 of the EIA Report;
- **SEI Chapter 9: Ornithology**, considers the implications of the proposed amendments to the proposed development for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 9 of the EIA Report. It also considers the updated cumulative wind farm situation and any implications for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 9 of the EIA Report;
- **SEI Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils**, considers the implications of the proposed amendments to the proposed development for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 10 of the EIA Report;
- **SEI Chapter 11: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology**, considers the implications of the proposed amendments to the proposed development for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 11 of the EIA Report. It also considers the updated cumulative wind farm situation and any implications for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 11 of the EIA Report;
- **SEI Chapter 12: Site Access, Traffic and Transport**, considers the implications of the proposed amendments to the proposed development for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 12 of the EIA Report. It also considers the updated cumulative wind farm situation and any implications for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 12 of the EIA Report;
- **SEI Chapter 13: Noise**, considers the implications of the proposed amendments to the proposed development for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 13 of the EIA Report. It also considers the updated cumulative wind farm situation (specifically Melvich Wind Energy Hub) and any implications for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 13 of the EIA Report;
- **SEI Chapter 14: Socio-Economics and Land Use**, considers the implications of the proposed amendments to the proposed development for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 14 of the EIA Report;
- **SEI Chapter 15: Other Issues**, considers the implications of the proposed amendments to the proposed development for the assessment findings presented in Chapter 15 of the EIA Report; and
- **SEI Chapter 16: Schedule of Commitments**, considers and updates the summary of proposed mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures proposed in the EIA Report, to take account of the amendments to the proposed development.

STATUS OF THE DOCUMENTS THAT WERE SUBMITTED ALONGSIDE THE EIA REPORT

- 1.17 The EIA Report NTS should be read in conjunction with the SEI NTS. The original Design and Access Statement (DAS) remains unchanged, however should be read in conjunction with Chapter 2 of this SEI. The original Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report remains unchanged. An Addendum Planning Statement is being submitted alongside this SEI and should be read in conjunction with the SEI and with the original Planning Statement.

APPROACH TO THE SUPPLEMENTARY ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

- 1.18 The approach to EIA set out in Chapter 5 of the EIA Report describes the methodology used to conduct the EIA in accordance with legislation, policy and accepted good practice. This approach has also been adopted for the preparation of the SEI, as appropriate.
- 1.19 As agreed with THC, only 'Landscape and Visual Amenity', 'Noise', 'Site Access, Traffic and Transport', 'Cultural Heritage' and Ornithology have considered the updated cumulative wind farm position, as it is considered relevant for these topic areas.
- 1.20 Overall, each SEI chapter seeks to:
- provide a revised assessment, where required, taking into account the amendments that have been made to the proposed development, and the updated cumulative wind farm situation; and
 - provide new or additional information, where required, to address consultation responses, or to supplement what was previously provided within the EIA Report.
- 1.21 For completeness, a summary of changes to the significance of effects (if there are any) as presented in the EIA Report, is provided at the end of each SEI topic chapter.
- 1.22 Figures have not been updated where amendments to the layout of the proposed development will have no effects on the findings of the EIA Report. Figures prefixed 'SEI' and with the same number as those included in the EIA Report means that the original EIA Report Figure has been superseded.
- 1.23 Unless otherwise stated, the overall scope of the EIA and SEI remains as stated in Chapter 1 of the EIA Report and Chapter 1 of the SEI.

CONSULTATION ON THE APPLICATION (INCLUDING SEI)

- 1.24 Although not all consultation responses to the Kirkton Energy Park application have resulted in the production of additional information, an overview of the consultee comments on the application is provided in each SEI topic chapter where relevant, as well as details on how the issues have been addressed.

- 1.25 This SEI will be advertised and a notice published as follows:
- on the project website: www.kirktonwindfarm.co.uk;
 - in the Edinburgh Gazette; and
 - in the Northern Times.
- 1.26 This SEI is being made available for viewing in hard copy format at the following locations:
- The Highland Council Wick Office, Caithness House, Market Square, Wick, KW1 4AB;
 - Thurso Library, Davidson's Lane, Thurso, KW14 7AF; and
 - The Halladale Inn, Melvich, KW14 7YJ.
- 1.27 A copy of the SEI volumes will be made available for download from the project website at: www.kirktonwindfarm.co.uk.
- 1.28 Paper copies of the SEI NTS are available free of charge from:
- SLR Consulting Limited
Office 4.04,
Clockwise Offices,
Savoy Tower,
77 Renfrew St,
Glasgow,
G2 3BZT
- Tel: 07718 482283
- 1.29 Paper copies of the SEI may be purchased by arrangement from the above address for £500 per copy, or £15 per disk/USB memory stick copy. The price of the paper copy reflects the cost of producing all of the Landscape and Visual photomontages at the recommended size. As such, a CD/USB memory stick version is recommended.
- 1.30 The submission of this SEI will trigger another public consultation period of 30 days, during which members of the public and consultees will have the opportunity to make representations to the ECU on its content. The 30 day consultation period will run from the date of the final public notice (which will be published as per paragraph 1.25 and via the project website: www.kirktonwindfarm.co.uk)

REFERENCES

Electricity Act 1989.

The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.