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INTRODUCTION

- 12.1 SLR has been commissioned by the applicant to undertake a review of the access, traffic and transport implications that could arise from the relocation of one wind turbine (Turbine No.7), together with those as a result of the changing status and design of wind farms in the cumulative study, resulting in a need for a reassessment of the effects of the proposed development.
- 12.2 This Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI) Chapter supplements **Chapter 12: Site Access, Traffic and Transport** of the 2022 Kirkton Energy Park Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report. The methodology employed in this SEI is as set out in EIA Report **Chapter 12: Site Access, Traffic and Transport**.
- 12.3 The following key documents should be read in conjunction with this SEI:
- EIA Report Volume 2 - **Chapter 12: Site Access, Traffic and Transport** (2022);
 - EIA Report Volume 3d - Chapter 12 Plan Figures (2022); and
 - EIA Report Volume 4b – Chapter 12 Technical Appendices (2022).

CONSULTEE RESPONSES TO THE 2022 EIA REPORT

- 12.4 **Table 12-1** below provides a summary of the site access, traffic and transport related responses to the 2022 Kirkton Energy Park application, received from key consultees. A reply to the consultee responses is also provided in **Table 12-1**.

Table 12-1: Consultation Responses

Consultee	Comments	Response
The Highland Council, Strategic Projects Team 17 May 2023	In light of the evolving cumulative position, the Council require each of the technical chapters within the EIAR to be reviewed, with the provision of updated cumulative assessments.	Set out in this SEI Chapter, Paragraphs 12.8 to 12.14.
The Highland Council 23 May 2023, issued by WSP	Having now completed our review of the additional technical information submitted in relation to transport, we would recommend no objections on the grounds of transport in response to the Planning Application, subject to conditions being attached to any subsequent planning consent (three conditions of planning recommended).	Noted.
The Highland Council 08 February 2023, issued by WSP	The potential to alter the existing A836 / Kirkton Farm Road junction should be explored to enable abnormal loads to directly access the unclassified road from the east to remove the requirement to construct a turning area to the west of the junction	SLR Technical Note issued in response, on 28 March 2023.

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	Details are required to be provided to confirm the assumptions used to determine the link capacity of the A836.	SLR Technical Note issued in response, on 28 March 2023.
	An updated accident data review should be undertaken based on the latest five years, including information on cause of accident, vehicle types and locations, examining the existing accident characteristics of the area and the proposed development's impact on the local road network.	SLR Technical Note issued in response, on 28 March 2023.
	Daily trip generation estimates should be revised based on a six day working week, with the results of the proposed development's impact reviewed where appropriate.	SLR Technical Note issued in response, on 28 March 2023.
	Vehicle profile details should be provided to support the swept-path analysis provided as part of the ALRA.	SLR Technical Note issued in response, on 28 March 2023.
Transport Scotland 25 January 2023	Given the relatively low traffic figures involved, Transport Scotland is satisfied that the potential impact of the development generation traffic will not have a perceivable impact on the A9(T)/A836 junction and no further assessment of this is required. Transport Scotland is satisfied with the submitted EIAR and has no objection to the development in terms of environmental impacts on the trunk road network.	Noted.

DESIGN AMENDMENTS

- 12.5 As outlined in **SEI Chapter 3: Description of Development**, the only design amendments from the site layout of the 2022 Kirkton Energy Park application (as detailed in the 2022 EIA Report) are the repositioning of Turbine No.7 (and associated crane pad) approximately 53m north, and the realignment of proposed access track to Turbines No.5 - 11. These relatively minor amendments have been undertaken in order to accommodate requests from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and NatureScot (see **SEI Chapter 2** and **SEI Chapter 10**).
- 12.6 The amendment to the design will not result in any change to the traffic generation as set out in **Chapter 12: Site Access, Traffic and Transport** of the EIA Report.

REVISED FIGURES

- 12.7 There is no requirement to update the graphic information previously issued with the 2022 EIA Report.

CUMULATIVE BASELINE UPDATE

- 12.8 Since the 2022 Kirkton Energy Park application the cumulative wind farm situation in the study area has changed. The relevant changes to the cumulative context since the 2022 Kirkton Energy Park application are as follows:
- Melvich Wind Energy Hub (ECU00004514): Located approximately 3km north of the proposed development. 12 wind turbines at 149.9m to tip height with additional battery storage provision. Pell Frischman Transport Assessment dated February 2023 confirms that during there would be 118 vehicles on the A836 during the month with the maximum construction traffic generation;
 - Armadale Wind Farm application (ECU00003455): Located approximately 10km to the north west of the proposed development. Amended development includes 9 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m. Chapter 12 of the Further Environmental Information report (dated May 2023) confirms that the peak construction phase would see 248 two way movements per day during concrete pour on A836 through Burnside;
 - Pentland Offshore Wind Farm application (22/03864/S36) – Onshore transmission infrastructure for the floating offshore wind farm is located approximately 11km north east of the proposed development. Chapter 14 of the EIA Report, dated October 2022, confirms that there would be an additional 65 development generated vehicles on the A836 daily during the construction of the onshore infrastructure; and
 - West of Orkney Offshore, scoping (22/01589SCOP) – Offshore wind farm with possible cable land fall locations to include Melvich Bay, Dounreay, Cling Glang and Crosskirk. The A836 is to be included within the study area however the scoping report did not include traffic generation figures. The chapter in the recently submitted West of Orkney Offshore Windfarm Onshore EIA (Chapter 21) notes that the majority of traffic and transport impacts will be to the east and south of Thurso and concludes that “*no significant effects were identified for these impacts*” (Para 21.3.9). From the information submitted in relation to traffic and transport for West of Orkney Offshore there is no change to the conclusions of the assessment on cumulative effects presented in this SEI chapter).

ASSESSMENT OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

- 12.9 The consideration of projects which could result in potential cumulative effects is based on the results of the Traffic and Transport Specific impact assessment and the judgement of the specialist consultant. Projects which overlap the proposed development study area are considered to have the potential to result in cumulative effects for traffic and transport receptors. **Chapter 12: Site Access, Traffic and Transport** of the EIA Report, has presented an assessment of the potential cumulative impacts for those projects identified to be relevant at the time of the assessment, as listed below:
- Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm;
 - Bettyhill Wind Farm Extension;

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- Limekiln Wind Farm S36 Variation;
- Limekiln Wind Farm Extension;
- Strathy South Wind Farm;
- Strathy Wood Wind Farm; and
- Armadale Wind Farm.

12.10 Since the submission of the application it has been confirmed that additional projects require consideration as part of the cumulative impact assessment. These projects have been identified in paragraph 12.8.

12.11 **Table 12-16** from **Chapter 12: Site Access, Traffic and Transport** of the EIA Report has been updated, and is presented as **Table 12-2** below, to include the additional projects in the cumulative assessment.

Table 12-2: Cumulative Wind Farm Sites

Wind Farm	Status	No. of Turbines	Distance from Site	Direction from Site	A836 Daily Traffic (Two-Way)	Notes
Bettyhill wind farm extension	In planning	11	12.39km	West	69	Maximum day two-way movements taken from the Access, Traffic and Transport Chapter
Limekiln S36 Variation	Approved	19	7.46km	East	102	As per EIAR – Pell Frischman Transport Assessment.
Limekiln Extension	Approved	5	10.47km	East	51	As per Transport Chapter in EIA Report
Strathy South	Approved (tip height variation)	35	7.95km	South west	172	Information taken from 'Technical Appendix 8.3: Strathy South Wind Farm – Consented Scheme: Assessment of the potential traffic and transport effects (based on 2023 Baseline)' dated 3 August 2020. Figure taken from the worst-case months during the 24-month construction programme.
Strathy Wood	Approved	13	4.60km	South west	18	Both AIL deliveries and HGVs to use A836.
Armadale	In planning	9	6.64km	West	248	As per Chapter 12 of the Further Environmental Information dated May 2023)
Melvich Energy Hub	In planning	12	3km	North	118	As per Transport Assessment dated February 2023
West of Orkney	Scoping	125	tbc	North	-	No details included in scoping

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Wind Farm	Status	No. of Turbines	Distance from Site	Direction from Site	A836 Daily Traffic (Two-Way)	Notes
Pentland Floating offshore wind farm						Pentland Floating offshore wind farm
Total					843	Total volumes have been calculated based on all of the wind farm's maximum trip generation occurring at the same time.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS

- 12.12 The cumulative assessment in **Chapter 12: Site Access, Traffic and Transport** of the EIA Report identified that a maximum of 492 two-way vehicle movements would be added to the A836 should all of the identified projects be constructed at the same time. The updated review as part of the SEI has identified that this figure would increase to 843 two-way vehicle movements with the addition of the other projects and the assumption that all would be constructed at the same time.
- 12.13 As identified in **Table 12-6 of Chapter 12: Site Access, Traffic and Transport** of the EIA Report, the A836 currently operates with a theoretical spare capacity of 93%, which equates to 16,970 vehicles. This means that the A836 can accommodate a significant increase in vehicles before the road would become congested.
- 12.14 In the event that construction of the proposed development and any of the identified cumulative wind farm schemes occur concurrently, this would not lead to any additional environmental effect in transportation terms, beyond that already assessed. The following standard construction practices would be in place, which are taken into account as part of the first assessment:
- abnormal load movements are programmed in conjunction with Police Scotland and the Roads Authorities (The Highland Council (THC) and Transport Scotland) so as not to occur on the same day; and
 - days of specific high density traffic movement (e.g. concrete pour days) are programmed so as not to occur on the same day (to be enforced through inclusion as a factor within the CTMP, to be agreed with THC, along with Police Scotland and the Roads Authority accordingly).

CONCLUSIONS

- 12.15 The design amendment will not result in any change to the traffic generation and so no updated assessment is required.
- 12.16 This SEI chapter has included the additional projects as requested by THC and completed an assessment of the updated cumulative impacts. The additional vehicles associated with the

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complete list of projects will not have any significant impacts on the A836; the additional number of vehicles is minimal and it has been confirmed that ample spare capacity will be retained.