

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1. This Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report) has been prepared to accompany the application by Heathland Windfarm Partnership LLP (the Applicant), a wholly owned subsidiary of 'EDF Energy Renewables Ltd', for consent to install and operate Heathland Wind Farm (the Development). The Development comprises up to 14 wind turbines and associated infrastructure, with a generation capacity exceeding 50 megawatts (MW), and is located 1.5 kilometres (km) northeast of the village of Forth, at Heathland Forest, shown on Figure 1.1. The Development is located within South Lanarkshire and West Lothian Councils' administrative areas, shown on Figure 1.2.
2. As the Development exceeds 50 MW, the Applicant is seeking consent from the Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended)¹, and for planning permission to be deemed to be granted under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997².
3. Given that the Development requires a Section 36 application, the EIA is required to be undertaken in accordance with the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017³, referred to hereafter as the EIA Regulations.
4. As required by the EIA Regulations, this EIA Report contains the EIA for the Development and presents information on the likely significant environmental effects which may occur as a result of the Development. The EIA Report also informs the reader of the nature of the Development and the measures proposed to protect the environment during site preparation, construction, operation and decommissioning.
5. This Chapter of the EIA Report is supported by the following figures provided in Volume 2a EIA Report Figures:
 - Figure 1.1: Site Location;
 - Figure 1.2: Council Boundaries; and
 - Figure 1.3: Site Layout Plan.

1.2 PURPOSE OF EIA

1.2.1 EIA Process

6. The EIA Regulations implement European Union (EU) Directive 2014/52/EU which amended Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The EIA Regulations outline the process of an EIA and the criteria that would determine if an EIA is necessary or not, the relevant environmental studies and statements, how the information is evaluated by the Scottish Ministers, Planning Authority and consultative bodies, and how this is implemented through consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989.
7. Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations lists certain types of developments for which an EIA is required where there are likely to be significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as the nature, size or location of the development proposal.

¹ UK Government, 1989, Electricity Act 1989 [Online] Available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/29/contents> (Accessed 11/09/2020)

² UK Government (1997) Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 [Online] Available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/8/section/57> (Accessed 08/09/2020)

³ The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 [Online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/101/contents/made> (Accessed 11/09/2020)

8. The results of the EIA are presented in this EIA Report which, as prescribed in the EIA Regulations, is required to include a “description of the likely significant effects” of the Development; the effects which are not considered to be significant do not need to be described. It is therefore necessary for the scope of the EIA to be appropriately and clearly defined to ensure that any likely significant effects are described and assessed.

1.2.2 Scoping

9. The aim of the Scoping process is to identify key environmental issues at an early stage, to determine which elements of the Development are likely to cause significant environmental effects and identify issues that can be ‘scoped out’ of the assessment. The request for a Scoping Opinion was submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2019.
10. The Scoping Opinion was issued by the ECU and received in March 2020, a copy of which is included as Appendix A5.2 The EIA contained within this EIA Report is based on this Scoping Opinion.
11. The EIA Report has been prepared following a systematic approach to EIA and project design, the structure is outlined in Section 1.8 below.

1.3 THE APPLICANT

12. The Applicant is a wholly owned subsidiary of EDF Energy Renewables Ltd (EDF-ER), part of one of the world’s largest electricity companies, whose investment and innovation in the UK is bringing down costs for consumers with significant benefits for communities. The EDF-ER operating portfolio of 36 wind farms and battery storage units (almost 1 GW) are providing some of the much needed new affordable, low carbon electricity to the UK. Work is well underway on the 450 MW Neart Na Gaoithe offshore wind farm project which is in the Firth of Forth. EDF-ER has now completed the 177 MW Dorenell wind farm near Dufftown in the Scottish Highlands which is the largest onshore wind farm in Europe for the EDF-ER group.
13. EDF-ER is operated within the United Kingdom under the brand EDF Renewables. EDF Renewables (EDF-R) and Heathland Windfarm Partnership LLP, as the Applicant, are used interchangeably throughout this EIA Report.

1.4 SITE CONTEXT

14. The land within the site boundary (the Site) which contains the turbines and associated infrastructure covers an area of 831 hectares (ha), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 296917, 657090. The Site is located approximately 1.5 km northeast of the village of Forth. The Site is located within the administrative boundaries of South Lanarkshire Council and West Lothian Council (the Councils), shown on Figure 1.2. The Site lies adjacent to the A706 on the west side of the Site.
15. The topography of the Site and the immediate vicinity is generally gently sloping with relatively low lying, but exposed hills. The elevation ranges from approximately 290 metres (m) Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the south-west part of the Site to approximately 362 m AOD at the north-east part of the Site. The site encompasses several low lying hills, for example Worm Law (343 m AOD). The hills are dissected by several small watercourses, including Wormlaw Burn, Mouse Water, Mosshat Burn and Longford Burn. With the exception of Longford Burn, all other watercourses, and tributaries, drain south into Dippool Water; Longford Burn, amongst other small tributaries, drain north into Breich Water.
16. There are no farmsteads or other built infrastructure which lie within the application boundary. The closest property to the Site is Mountainblaw Farm located approximately 200 m south of the Site’s southern boundary on Tashieburn Road, and 1.25 km south of

the nearest turbine (T4). There are a number of other dispersed properties located along Tashieburn Road in proximity to the Site. The closest settlement is Wilsontown, located 0.8 km to the south-west of the Site boundary and approximately 1.9 km south of the nearest turbine (T2).

17. In terms of public access and recreation, there are no public roads located within the Site, although there are a number of existing forestry tracks. There are also a number of public rights of way within and close to the Site.
18. The Site is within an area of commercial forestry plantation at varying degrees of maturity, including large areas of clear fell. This is owned and managed by Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS). A series of good quality forestry tracks provide access for management purposes and recreation.
19. The Site is located in close proximity to the operational Tormywheel Wind Farm and Pates Hill Wind Farm, and the recently consented Tormywheel Extension and Longhill Burn Wind Farm.
20. There are no international or national ecological, landscape or cultural heritage designations on Site, with the exception of Wilsontown Ironworks Scheduled Monument, which is located well outwith the development area and over 1 km from the nearest turbine (T2).
21. Further details on the Site and surrounding areas are outlined in Chapter 2 – Site Selection & Design.

1.5 OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT

22. The Development will consist of up to 14 three-bladed horizontal axis turbines with a maximum tip height of up to 180 m and associated infrastructure, shown on Figure 1.3.
23. A full description of the Development components is provided in Chapter 3 – The Development. The layout of the Development has evolved via the iterative EIA process described within Chapter 2 – Site Selection and Design.
24. The purpose of the Development is to generate electricity from a renewable source of energy, offsetting the need for power generation from the combustion of fossil fuels. Consequently, the electricity that will be produced results in a saving in emissions of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) with associated environmental benefits, which is discussed in Chapter 17 – Climate Change and Carbon Balance.

1.6 PLANNING HISTORY AND EXTANT CONSENT

25. There is an extant consent on the site for 17 wind turbines (132 m to tip) and associated infrastructure. The Section 36 consent and deemed planning permission for Heathland Wind Farm was granted by Scottish Ministers on 26th October 2018, under reference number EC00003124 (the Consented Wind Farm).
26. EDF R purchased the Partnership for Renewables development portfolio in 2017, at which time the proposed Heathland Wind Farm had not yet been decided by the Scottish Ministers. The Consented Wind Farm remains capable of implementation until 26th October 2023 and therefore the Development must be considered in light of the Applicant's capability to proceed with the Consented project unless a further consent can be secured.
27. The Consented Wind Farm would underutilise the capacity of the site to generate low carbon electricity from the wind resource and has therefore the project has been re-designed in order to optimise and maximise the potential for renewable energy production.

28. The planning principle for a wind farm has been established in this location by the current consent, and though this EIA will focus solely on the effects of this Development, the design has sought to reflect concerns raised by consultees through the EIA process for the Consented Wind Farm. In support of the Planning Statement are two Appendices which are provided to assist in comparing visual impacts between the Consented Wind Farm and the Development.

1.7 PROJECT TEAM AND EXPERIENCE

29. The EIA Report has been compiled by Arcus Consultancy Services Limited (Arcus) on behalf of the Applicant. The EIA Project Team, as outlined in Table 1.1, is led by Arcus.
30. While Arcus have had overall responsibility for the EIA Report, Land Use Consultants (LUC) and Scottish Woodlands have prepared specialist assessment chapters and provided input to the EIA as indicated in Table 1.1 below. For each topic, the detailed assessment of likely significant effects has been undertaken by organisations with relevant specialist skills, drawing on their qualifications, and experience of working on other development projects, good practice in EIA and on relevant published information.
31. Table 1.1 lists the key authors for each chapter and their relevant EIA experience. Non-technical Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, and 18 have been authored by Dr Della Lansley and Jenni O'Neill, of Arcus.

Table 1.1 Project Team

Chapter Number	Title	Key Author and Relevant EIA Experience
1	Introduction	Arcus
2	Site Selection and Design	Dr Della Lansley BSc (Hons) MSc (Disc.) PhD (16 years) Jenni O'Neill BSc (Hons) MRes (1 year)
3	The Development	David Ballentyne BSc (Hons) (18 years)
4	Energy and Planning Policy	Arcus Tim Wheeler BSc (Hons) MRTPI (37 years) Martin Gillespie MSc (3 years) Lewis Monaghan BSc (Hons) (3 years)
5	EIA Methodology	Arcus Dr Della Lansley BSc (Hons) MSc (Disc.) PhD (16 years) Jenni O'Neill BSc (Hons) MRes (1 year)
6	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)	Land Use Consultants (LUC) Neil Elliot MA (Hons) CMLI Gemma Kitson BSc (Hons) MLA
7	Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	Arcus Heather Kwiatkowski BA MA MCifA (12 years) Olivia Watt MA (Hons) MSc (2 years)
8	Ecology	Arcus Nicolas Wright BSc (Hons) MRes MCIEEM CENv (11 years) James Allison BSc (Hons) (8 years)
9	Ornithology	Arcus Lisette Coiffait BSc (Hons) PhD MCIEEM (13 years) Matt Rea BSc (Hons) MSc (5 years)

Chapter Number	Title	Key Author and Relevant EIA Experience
10	Hydrology and Hydrogeology	Arcus Liam Nevins BSc MCIWEM (14 years) Holly Clark BSc (Hons) MSc (Disc.) (5 years)
11	Geology, Soils and Peat	Arcus David Ballentyne BSc (Hons) (18 years) Gregor Hirst BSc (Hons) (5 years)
12	Traffic and Transportation	Arcus Tomos Ap Tomos BEng (Hons) MIHT (23 years) Kenneth Laing BEng (Hons) GMICE (5 years)
13	Noise	Arcus Michael Reid BSc MIOA (17 years)
14	Aviation, Radar and Telecommunications	Arcus Dr Della Lansley BSc (Hons) MSc (Disc.) PhD (16 years) Jenni O'Neill BSc (Hons) MRes (1 year)
15	Forestry	Scottish Woodlands Andrew Crompton BSc (Hons) MRICS (15 years)
16	Socio-economics, Land-use, Recreation and Tourism	Arcus Dr Della Lansley BSc (Hons) MSc (Disc.) PhD (16 years) Jenni O'Neill BSc (Hons) MRes (1 year)
17	Climate Change and Carbon Balance	Arcus Dr Della Lansley BSc (Hons) MSc (Disc.) PhD (16 years) Jenni O'Neill BSc (Hons) MRes (1 year)
18	Other Issues (to include: Health & Safety, including Major Accidents & Disasters, Shadow Flicker and Waste)	Arcus Dr Della Lansley BSc (Hons) MSc (Disc.) PhD (16 years) Jenni O'Neill BSc (Hons) MRes (1 year)
18	Summary of Mitigation	Arcus Dr Della Lansley BSc (Hons) MSc (Disc.) PhD (16 years) Jenni O'Neill BSc (Hons) MRes (1 year)

32. Where further specialist advice has been obtained and informed assessment, this is referenced within technical chapters. This includes Pell Frischmann providing input to the abnormal load route assessment provided in Chapter 12 – Traffic and Transport, Tony Gee providing input into the coal mining assessment provided in Chapter 11 – Geology, Soils and Peat, and Wind Power Aviation Consultants Ltd (WPAC) providing an assessment with regards to the proposed aviation lighting plan detailed in Chapter 14 – Aviation, Telecommunications and Utilities.

1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE EIA REPORT

33. The EIA Report contains the findings of the assessment of likely significant environmental effects of the Development and comprises of the following volumes:
- **Volume 1** – EIA Report Text, comprising 19 chapters;
 - **Volume 2** – EIA Report Figures;
 - **Volume 2a** – Figures excluding LVIA;
 - **Volume 2b** – LVIA Figures;
 - **Volume 2c** – LVIA Visualisations;

- **Volume 3** – EIA Report Technical Appendices; and
- **Volume 4** – EIA Report Non-Technical Summary.

1.9 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

1.9.1 Planning Statement

34. A Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany the application. The Planning Statement sets out an assessment of the Development in the context of the national planning and energy policy and emerging planning policies, and the development plan. It also considers the potential benefits and harm which may arise and concludes as to the overall acceptability of the proposal in relation to the planning context.
35. Although the Planning Statement does not form part of the EIA Report, it draws from the findings of the EIA and is submitted as part of the material supporting the application.

1.9.1.1 Consented Wind Farm and the Development Comparisons

To support the Planning Statement, Appendix I provides a plan showing the location of turbines within the Consented Wind Farm and the Development. Appendix II to the Planning Statement provides comparative wirelines to enable a comparison to be made between the Consented Wind Farm and the Development, from 18 viewpoints.

36. Given that there is an existing consent at the Site for the Consented Wind Farm, these Appendices are provided to summarise differences in visual impacts between the two development designs.

1.9.2 Design and Access Statement

37. There is no statutory requirement for a Design and Access Statement for a Section 36 application, but the Applicant considers that the preparation and submission of this document will be helpful to the decision maker, consultees and interested parties. The statement focusses on the design considerations with an aim to explain the design process behind the Development.

1.9.3 Pre-Application Consultation Report

38. In common with the above there is no statutory requirement for a Pre Application Consultation (PAC) Report for a Section 36 application. The Applicant has however undertaken extensive consultation and engagement at the pre-application stage with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, organisations and individuals. A Pre Application Consultation (PAC) Report has therefore been prepared which forms part of the application submission.

1.10 OBTAINING FURTHER INFORMATION

39. The EIA Report will be publicised in accordance with Part 5 of the EIA Regulations and the Electricity (Applications for Consent) Regulations 1990⁴ and the Electricity Works (Miscellaneous Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020⁵ (the Coronavirus Regulations).
40. Part 5 of the EIA Regulations requires the EIA Report to be available for public viewing; however, as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this would not be in line with current public health guidance from the Scottish Government. Consequently, the Coronavirus Regulations introduces a temporary relaxation of Part 5 of the EIA

⁴ The Electricity (Applications for Consent) Regulations 1990 [Online] Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1990/455/regulation/4/made> (Accessed 11/08/2020)

⁵ The Electricity Works (Miscellaneous Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 [Online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2020/123/made> (Accessed 11/08/2020)

Regulations during the emergency period; the amended regulations therefore require that the Applicant must:

"state that the EIA report is available for inspection free of charge and the means by which, the EIA report is available for inspection;".

41. The EIA Report and supporting documentation to the application, together with a notice of the application, can be viewed on the Heathland Wind Farm project website: www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/heathland
42. Copies of the Non-Technical Summary and DVD copies of the complete application submission are available free of charge while stocks last. Hard copies of the application submission may be obtained at a reasonable charge reflecting the cost of making the relevant information available.
43. To request a copy of the application submission please contact:

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