



# Balnespick Wind Farm

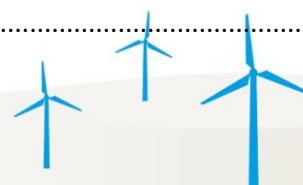
Pre-Application Consultation Report



# Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report

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## List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CNP	Cairngorms National Park
ECU	Energy Consents Unit
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
km	Kilometres
m	Metres
MPs	Members of Parliament
MSPs	Members of the Scottish Parliament
MW	Megawatts
NS	NatureScot
NSA	National Scenic Area
PAC	Pre-Application Consultation
PAN	Planning Advice Note
PWS	Private Water Supply
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
S36	Section 36
THC	The Highland Council
WLA	Wild Land Area



# Glossary

Abbreviation	Definition
The Applicant	Fred. Olsen Renewables Limited
EIA Regulations	The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.
Environmental Impact Assessment	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a means of drawing together by the developer, in a systematic way, a description of the development and information relating to of the likely significant environmental effects arising from a proposed development.
Environmental Impact Assessment Report	A document reporting the findings of the EIA and produced in accordance with the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.
ITPEnergised	The lead consultant EIA co-ordinator is: ITPEnergised
Proposed Development	The proposed Balnespick Wind Farm as described in Chapter 1, Volume 2 of the EIA Report.
Proposed Development Site	The project development area within the site boundary as shown in Figure 7, 9. Chapter 2, Volume 2 of the EIA Report.

## Document Review (to be removed on printing)

Issue	Date	Name	Revision Details
1	08/11/2024	Jamie Scott	Baseline Draft
2	15/11/2024	Jamie Scott	
3	04/12/2024	Jamie Scott	



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

- 1.1.1. This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Fred. Olsen Renewables Limited ('the Applicant') who is applying to the Scottish Ministers for Section 36 (S36) consent and deemed planning permission, under the terms of the Electricity Act 1989<sup>1</sup> ('the Act') and the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, respectively.
- 1.1.2. This PAC Report forms part of the application for construction and operation of Balnespick Wind Farm and associated infrastructure (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development') on land centred at National Grid Reference NH 86646 29834.
- 1.1.3. This Report sets out the pre-application consultation undertaken between the Applicant and the community and relevant consultees prior to the submission of the application to the Scottish Ministers. It also demonstrates how the feedback gathered has influenced the design of Balnespick Windfarm.
- 1.1.4. This application is supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report), as required by The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. The EIA Report has been prepared to assess the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Development and accompanies the S36 Application.

## 1.2. The Applicant

- 1.2.1. The Applicant is a leading developer, owner and operator of renewable energy assets, primarily onshore wind farms. The Applicant has been developing and operating wind farms in the UK since the mid 1990's demonstrating long term commitment to the renewable energy generation market in Scotland.
- 1.2.2. With over twenty-five years' experience in consenting, developing and operating wind farms, Fred. Olsen Renewables is one of very few developers that take a project all the way from initiation and development, through to operation and ultimately decommissioning.
- 1.2.3. Fred. Olsen Renewables is one of the longest standing developers in Scotland. In the UK, Fred. Olsen Renewables portfolio consists of 258 operational turbines, alongside a further 75 consented. This combined with projects in Norway and Sweden, brings the organisations total operational capacity to 804.9 MW – providing enough power for 698,344 UK homes.
- 1.2.4. Fred. Olsen Renewables was the first developer to bring forward community benefit in Scotland. To date, Fred. Olsen Renewables has made available over £6 million to eligible communities surrounding its wind farms and is substantially increasing this investment as new projects come online.
- 1.2.5. The Applicant has, across its portfolio, signed more than £920m worth of contracts with Scottish businesses. £289m of these contracts are related to its Pauls Hill and Rothes Wind Farm operations in neighbouring Moray, which have also created 142 construction jobs (FTE) and 132 operational and maintenance jobs (PTE).

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<sup>1</sup> United Kingdom Government (1989). The Electricity Act 1989. Available at [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)



- 1.2.6. During the construction of Balnespick Wind Farm, the Applicant, has committed to maximising opportunities to involve the local supply chain and support main contractors to spend at least 30% of the contract value locally.
- 1.2.7 Fred. Olsen Renewables is a wholly owned subsidiary of Bonheur ASA and is responsible for the group's renewable energy activities.

### 1.3. Site Description

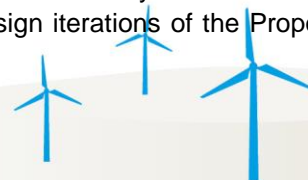
- 1.3.1. The site measures at approximately 1,063 hectares (ha) in size and is located approximately 5km east of Tomatin and 6km north-west of Carrbridge.
- 1.3.2. The site is located within the administrative boundaries of The Highland Council (THC) and is located approximately 26km southeast of the administrative centre of Inverness. The site comprises of upland moor with two fairly prominent hill features, separated by the Allt Loisgte watercourse.
- 1.3.3. The location is approximately 15 km north of the Cairngorm Mountains National Scenic Area (NSA) and is immediately adjacent to the Cairngorms National Park (CNP) boundary. The Monadhliath Wild Land Area (WLA) is approximately 11 km south-west, and the Cairngorm WLA is approximately 19 km to the south of the proposed development.
- 1.3.4. There are no designated heritage assets located within the 1km Study Area. The nearest listed buildings are five Class B and three Class C Listed Buildings which are located southeast within the 5km Study Area of the site. Seven Scheduled Monuments can also be found within the 5km radius.
- 1.3.5. Within the 10 km Study Area a further seven Scheduled Monuments were identified, along with two Category A Listed Buildings.

### 1.4. Overview of the Proposed Development

- 1.4.1. Balnespick Wind Farm comprises of nine wind turbines, each with up to a 200m blade tip height, as well as an associated on-site energy storage facility, and associated access and infrastructure.
- 1.4.2. The proposed developments generating capacity will total 74.8MW, comprising 64.8 MW in wind generation, with an additional 10MW of energy storage. The associated infrastructure includes site access, crane hardstandings and laydown areas, underground cabling, an on-site substation, battery storage facilities, external transformers, temporary construction compound and two potential borrow pits.

### 1.5. Purpose of Pre-Application Consultation (PAC)

- 1.5.1. The Applicant is committed to engaging with and seeking the involvement of local communities through the development process and understand the value of effective consultation. This PAC Report explains how consultation undertaken by the Applicant has informed the finalised layout of the Proposed Development throughout the design iteration process.
- 1.5.2. This Report supplements the information on engagement provided in the Applicant's Gatecheck Report submitted to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in September 2024.
- 1.5.3. PAC Reports are not a legislative requirement for applications made to the Scottish Ministers under S36 of the Electricity Act 1989. Nevertheless, the Applicant is committed to community engagement and as such has prepared this PAC Report in line with best practice to provide information on all activities undertaken to engage with the local community and demonstrate where local feedback has been considered throughout the design iterations of the Proposed



Development.

## 2. Planning Policy Context

### 2.1 Legislative Background

- 2.1.1 The importance of effective community engagement in the planning process is emphasised through the introduction of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015<sup>2</sup>, which provided a greater focus on localism and strengthened local voices in decision-making processes.
- 2.1.2 Part 10 of the Act encourages Scottish public authorities to promote and facilitate the participation of members of the public in the decisions and activities of the authority, including matters of planning and development control.
- 2.1.3 By involving people and communities in local decision-making, the community itself becomes strengthened and empowered to express their needs to the local authority and therefore the authority itself can target its budgets more efficiently.
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### 2.2 Planning Advice Note 3/2010: Community Engagement

- 2.2.1 The Scottish Government produced a Planning Advice Note (PAN) on Community Engagement in 2010<sup>3</sup>, which highlights the main purposes of community engagement:
- Community engagement must be meaningful and proportionate; and
  - Community engagement must happen at an early stage to influence the shape of plans and proposals.
- 2.2.2 The PAN also states that there is an onus on applicants and their agents to comply with the legal requirements to engage with the community before any application is made for a national or major development.

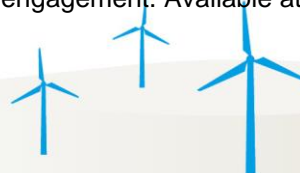
### 2.3. Energy Consents Unit: Good Practice Guidance for Applications under Section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989

- 2.3.1. When applying to the ECU, there are expectations for pre-application consultation and engagement that have been established by the Scottish Government.
- 2.3.2. Carrying out pre-application consultation with the public is considered good practice and applicants should engage meaningfully with local communities who may be affected by the development proposals.
- 2.3.3. Applicants are expected to hold at least two public consultation events prior to submitting the application for their proposed development. These public events should give the local community the opportunity to make comments on the proposals and for their opinions to be voiced. The final

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<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government (2015). Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Available at [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Government (2010). Planning Advice Note 3/2010: community engagement. Available at [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



consultation event should provide the public with feedback considering their comments and how they have contributed to the process.

## 3. Overview of Stakeholder Consultation

### 3.1 Introduction & Overview

- 3.1.1. This Chapter sets out the pre-application consultation undertaken by the Applicant with respect to statutory and non-statutory regulatory authorities and interest groups.
- 3.1.2. The Applicant, has, throughout the pre-application consultation sought to provide information and answer questions regarding the proposed development.
- 3.1.3. In addition, the Applicant has tried to provide context to the application, explaining the rationale for an application and also sought to explain the relationship between this proposed development and other proposals in the area.
- 3.1.4. The Applicant has worked closely with the community to ensure that limited capacity locally has been considered, and that it is working alongside other developers in the area to succinctly present information about each proposal.
- 3.1.5. Throughout the pre-application consultation process the applicant has sought to proactively share information, address any concerns and answer questions. It is intended that this level of communication will continue throughout the determination, construction and operational process.

### 3.2 EIA Scoping

- 3.2.1 The purpose of EIA Scoping is to provide information on the likely environmental implications of a Proposed Development and determine the scope and extent of issues to be addressed.
- 3.2.2 Following the initial THC pre-application process on 23 November 2022, the Applicant wrote to key stakeholders in November 2022 including NatureScot (NS) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) to advise them of the emerging plans for the Proposed Development and submission of the EIA Scoping Report.
- 3.2.3 The EIA Scoping Report was subsequently submitted along with a request for an EIA Scoping Opinion to the ECU in August 2023 and registered under reference ECU00004904.
- 3.2.4 The scoping layout consisted of nine turbines at 200m tip height.
- 3.2.5 A Scoping Opinion was issued by the ECU on 13 December 2023 and included responses from the organisations, outlined in Table 3.1. This provides further detail of consultations undertaken with relevant regulatory bodies, together with action undertaken by the Applicant in response to consultation feedback.
- 3.2.6 Scoping responses were received from the following organisations shown in Table 3.1.

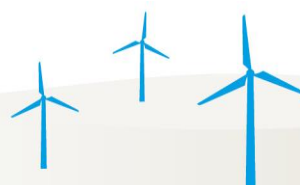




Table 3.1 – EIA Scoping Opinion, Responses Received

Consultee	
Aberdeen International Airport	Joint Radio Company
BT Group	NATS Safeguarding
Cairngorms National Park Authority	NatureScot
Crown Estate Scotland	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Defence Infrastructure Organisation	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
Edinburgh Airport	Scottish Forestry
Glasgow Airport	Scottish Water
Glasgow Prestwick Airport	Scotways
The Highland Council	Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society
Highlands and Islands Airport Limited	Strathdearn Community Council
Historic Environment Scotland	Transport Scotland

- 3.2.7 Prior to an application being submitted, there is a two-stage "Gate Check" process. For Gate Check stage 1, applicants must provide a Gate Check 1 report which sets out the how the applicant is going to address the matters set out in the scoping opinion in the EIA Report and includes details on engagement, insofar as who was consulted and how their views were taken forward in the EIA Report
- 3.2.8 Details of relevant consultations and the measures taken to address the advice received through the EIA scoping process have been detailed in the Gatecheck 1 Report submitted to the ECU. **Chapter 4: Approach to EIA** provides specific details on where the EIA has responded to the advice received throughout the scoping process.

### 3.3 Overview of Consultation & Engagement

- 3.3.1 The Applicant has been actively engaged with key consultees throughout the Scoping process. Beyond these formal engagement platforms, the Applicant continued to engage in further consultation to confirm and agree the scope of technical surveys and approach to the EIA Report.
- 3.3.2 Since the submission of the Scoping Report the Applicant has undertaken consultation with multiple organisations. A summary of consultation is provided in Table 3.2 below and detailed further in Section 4 of this report.

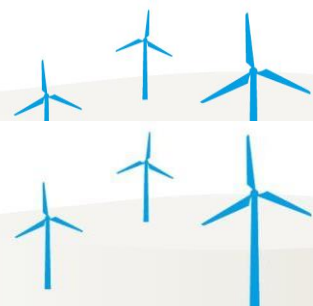
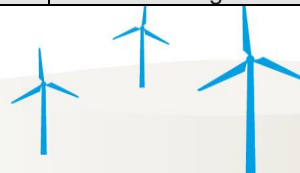


Table 3.2 – Record of Engagement

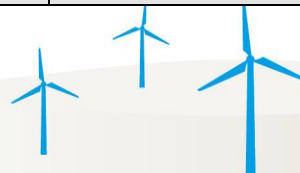
Consultee	Date	Persons	Description of Correspondence
ECU	30/06/2021	The Applicant to ECU	Notification that Applicant is considering a 9-turbine wind energy development and are undertaking a detailed feasibility assessment.
	20/09/2022	The Applicant to ECU	Notification of application and request for meeting to discuss details of the Proposed Development. Meeting held on 08/11/2022.
The Highland Council (THC)	26/02/2021	The Applicant to THC	Request for Private Water Supply (PWS) information.
	03/03/2021	THC to the Applicant	PWS register provided
	30/06/2021	The Applicant to THC	Notification that Applicant is considering a 9-turbine wind energy development and are undertaking a detailed feasibility assessment.
	02/09/2022	The Applicant to THC	Notice of application and request for pre-application advice.
	08/09/2022	The Applicant to THC	Enquiry regarding availability for a Wind Farm Design Workshop.
	23/11/2022	Applicant, THC, ECU, SEPA, NS	Pre-application meeting
	21/12/2022	THC to Applicant	Issue of Pre-Application Advice Pack
	12/02/2024	The Applicant to THC	Request to arrange a design workshop with the THC. THC acknowledged and forwarded request to case officer.
	26/03/2024	Applicant's Landscape Consultant to THC	Consultation and agreement on proposed final viewpoint list (refer to Appendix 1).
	02/05/2024	The Applicant to THC	Request to case officer at THC to arrange a design



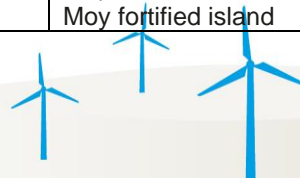
			workshop. No response received to date.
	02/05/2024	The Applicant to THC	Query to THC on one of the statements provided in THC's scoping response. Request to confirm that the preapplication service the Applicant has undertaken satisfies the requirement for the Applicant to submit the proposal for major pre-application advice as noted in THC's scoping response. No response received to date.
NS	09/03/2020	Applicant's Ecology/Ornithology Consultant to NS	Request for advice on the need for goose migration VP surveys and surveys for other species, especially capercaillie, near SPA forests.
	06/04/2020	NS to the Applicant	Advised that Capercaillie should be a key focus of surveys due to potential movement between nearby SPAs.
	08/04/2020	Applicant's Ecology/Ornithology Consultant to NS	Requesting confirmation that Vantage Point coverage is suitable. Response from NS confirming that Vantage Point approach seems reasonable.
	11/01/2021	The Applicant to NS	Request for feedback following completion of first six months or ornithology surveys covering the 2020 breeding season. Request for comments and recommendations regarding survey methods and initial results. Informing NS that due to limitations on access to Glenkirk Forest, capercaillie surveys will not be possible. Request for clarification on what type of information will be required given limitation.
	01/03/2021	NS to the Applicant	Response providing feedback on ornithology survey methodology, including recommendation for 2nd year of bird survey



			work. Guidance on surveying capercaillie and assessment of potential collision risk provided.
	20/04/2021	The Applicant to NS	Clarification on points raised within NS correspondence with regards to ornithology and ecology surveys on 01/03/2021.
	14/05/2021	NS to the Applicant	Feedback on approach to bird survey and assessment of areas where access is restricted.
	26/03/2024	Applicant's Landscape Consultant to NS	Highland Council and NatureScot requests for additional L&V viewpoints and Proposed Dark Sky Viewpoints.
	20/05/2024	NS to the Applicant	NS provided feedback on proposed viewpoint locations and photomontages to be included. Wireline from Cromdale Hills requested.
	03/07/2024	The Applicant to NS	Requested wireline from Cromdale Hills provided.
	29/07/2024	NS to the Applicant	NS confirmed they were content for wireline to be provided from Cromdale Hills and from Cromdale Hills and inclusion of a dark sky hours visualisation from Craigowrie.
SEPA	04/07/2024	The Applicant's Geology Consultant to SEPA	Request for meeting to discuss and receive feedback on design chill layout.
	05/07/2024	SEPA to the Applicant	Request for Applicant to submit plans via email for SEPA to review and consult internally.
	09/08/2024	Applicant to SEPA	Update provided on design and request for feedback.
	28/08/2024	SEPA to Applicant	Feedback provided on infrastructure layout, particularly regarding track layout.



	04/09/2024	The Applicant to SEPA	Outlining reasons why current route chosen is most suitable from an engineering perspective.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	29/04/2021	Applicant's Heritage Consultant to HES	Introduction to Proposed Development. Request for comments on any features within Site or nearby designated assets that raise concerns. Offer to meet to discuss.
	03/06/2021	HES to the Applicant	Confirmation of review of consultation materials and provision of feedback on recommended scope of baseline assessment for Feasibility Study.
	11/03/2024	The Applicant to HES	Provision of draft wirelines and request for a meeting to discuss layout.
	02/05/2024	HES to the Applicant	Feedback on draft visualisations provided by Applicant. Request for photomontages and metadata for wirelines
	07/05/2024	The Applicant to HES	Updated set of wirelines with metadata information issued. Request for feedback on design and meeting to discuss. HES advised that they would not provide detailed comment until they had received photomontage visualisations.
	18/07/2024	The Applicant to HES	Update on progress with design and photomontage photography.
	15/08/2024	The Applicant to HES	Draft visualisations provided for requested heritage assets, including cumulative wind farm schemes. Request for feedback on visualisations and offer for a meeting to discuss.
	06/09/2024	HES to the Applicant	Feedback on the draft visualisations provided to HES where HES note that they are content that Isle of Moy fortified island



			(SM1231), Banchor cairn (SM11814), Edinchat cairn (SM11734) and Ruthven depopulated township (SM11901) are unlikely to experience significant effects from the Proposed Development. Request to discuss relocation of turbines to reduce impacts to Lochindorb Castle SM. A meeting was held on 17 September 2024 to further discuss the matters raised. It was agreed sequential visualisations along the shore from Lochindorb would be produced.
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- 3.3.3 As a result of the feedback received during this consultation process and site surveys informing design, the Applicant has designed Layout E which is shown in Figure 9. In accordance with the comments received, Layout E was informed by Stage 2 peat probing of the turbine infrastructure locations. It involves micrositing T2, T3, T5, T6 and T7 to reduce the impacts to peat.
- 3.3.4 The design evolution of the Proposed Development is summarised in Section 4 of this PAC Report and is discussed further in **Chapter 2: Site Selection and Design** of the EIAR.

## 4 Community Consultation

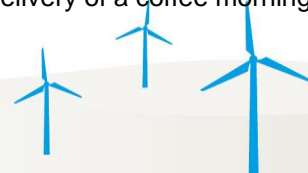
### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section sets out engagement activities undertaken by the Applicant with the local community, key stakeholders and community groups, including community councils, to inform the design process.
- 4.1.2 Community engagement is a key element of the consenting process. At all times, the Applicant has sought to ensure that the local communities are fully informed of the Proposed Development.
- 4.1.3 Throughout the pre-application consultation, local stakeholders have been provided with opportunities to provide comment on the proposals, have been notified in advance of events and advised on changes to the proposals or application timeframes.
- 4.1.4 Communicating information about the project has been at the forefront of engagement and the Applicant has employed several methods to share information locally. This has included distributing newsletters to all households within a 10km radius of the wind farm (which was subsequently increased in response to feedback, to a 10km radius and the Strathdearn Community Council boundary); creating a dedicated project website ([www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk)), attending meetings and hosting events; and providing information for local newsletters and newspapers. This has been combined with regular telephone calls, email contact and face-to-face meetings.
- 4.1.5 The Applicant has always sought to provide a dedicated point of contact – telephone numbers and email addresses – and encourage residents to get in touch with any queries. The project website has also provided a useful stream of information about the Proposed Development, events and background information.
- 4.1.6 These communication methods will remain in place throughout the determination process and beyond.



## 4.2 Community Organisations

- 4.2.1 The Applicant recognises that the communities closest to the proposals are represented by a variety of organisations, including community councils.
- 4.2.2 The Applicant considered the ZTV for the project and identified that the communities within a 10km radius of the wind farm could be considered as experiencing varying impacts from the project – such as transport and visual impact.
- 4.2.3 Therefore, the following community councils were communicated with throughout the pre-application consultation process included:
- Strathdearn Community Council;
  - Dulnain Bridge Community Council;
  - Cawdor and West Nairnshire Community Council;
  - Carrbridge Community Council; and
  - East Nairnshire Community Council.
- 4.2.4 It is recognised that Community Councils within the Highland Council area have experienced a particularly tumultuous period of which there has been limited representatives to enable community councils to continue. However, the Applicant has sought to continue to inform representatives of all bodies – despite their operation or not.
- 4.2.5 In addition, in light of the intermittent presence of community councils during the consultation period, the Applicant has sought to identify alternative means of communication with local residents and key community groups. This has included seeking to inform Community Trust representatives, for instance Carrbridge Ahead.
- 4.2.6 Ahead of submitting the Scoping Report to the ECU, the Applicant wrote to all community councils and local stakeholders to advise them of the proposed development and offered a face-to-face meeting and/or telephone call.
- 4.2.7 This engagement was supplemented with ongoing one-to-one contact with members of the local community, neighbours to the site, other groups and key stakeholders, as required.
- 4.2.8 Throughout the consultation process the Applicant has sought to attend community council meetings and provide an update on the proposals. This outreach resulted in a telephone call with the Strathdearn Community Council Chair (September 2023), and subsequent meetings with Strathdearn Community Council (September, October and December 2023). The Applicant attended a Strathdearn Community Council meeting in March 2024 and has continued contact with the community council throughout the pre-application consultation process.
- 4.2.9 In addition, the Applicant has remained in contact with Dulnain Bridge Community Council representatives and has sought to update and inform Carrbridge Ahead in the absence of a constituted community council.
- 4.2.10 Community Council meetings and conversations have been supplemented with regular written updates at key project milestones, including invitations and notifications of key events.
- 4.2.11 The information provided by local groups and gathered through contact with the community councils helped to shape wider public consultation. Specifically, it helped to guide engagement surrounding community benefit and also helped to encourage a coalition of developers in the area to collaborate and agree to align, where possible, on key topics in the future such as community benefit, habitat management and traffic and transport. This also resulted in the delivery of a coffee morning further



information can be found on this in section 4.7 of this report.

### 4.3 Wider Engagement

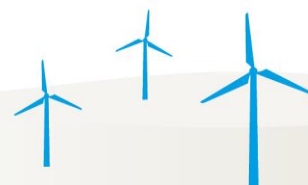
- 4.3.1 Throughout the consultation process, the Applicant has sought to engage the wider community and local interest groups, as well as interact with key local stakeholders including ward councillors and local MSPs and MPs.
- 4.3.2 This contact has included regular written updates on the proposals, invitations, and notifications of key events. This is in addition to and offering one-to-one meetings throughout the consultation process.

### 4.4 Supply Chain Engagement

- 4.4.1 With an established presence in neighbouring Moray, the Applicant already draws on the supply chain in the Highlands.
- 4.4.2 The applicants existing wind farms in Moray, have to date, delivered:
- £289 million of contracts with Scottish businesses;
  - 142 construction jobs (Full Time Equivalent);
  - 1,422 construction job years (Per Year Equivalent);
  - 73 operational and maintenance jobs (Per Time Equivalent);
  - £3.1 million funding for the local community throughout the lifespan of the wind farms; and
  - £141 million contribution to Scottish GVA
- 4.4.3 Drawing on this local experience, the Applicant will continue to pursue the local supply chain surrounding Balnespick Wind Farm. Communication surrounding the project has encouraged local suppliers to register their services with the Applicant and to discuss the opportunities to be involved in the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.
- 4.4.4 To support future engagement, the Applicant is a member of the Inverness Chamber of Commerce. The Applicant intends to work with the Chamber of Commerce to pursue further interaction with local service providers.

### 4.5 Public Consultation Events

- 4.5.1 In addition to direct and written engagement with stakeholders, the Applicant held two rounds of events at pivotal points in the consultation process.
- 4.5.2 The first series of events were held following the submission of the Scoping Report to the Scottish Government and were intended to introduce the proposals and provide an opportunity to discuss the process that the Applicant would be following prior to submission of an application.
- 4.5.3 The second series of events were held prior to the application submission, seeking to provide further information on the plans, demonstrate how they had developed and explain how the Applicant had responded to feedback gathered.





- 4.5.4 Each series of events consisted of two days of events in different locations – Strathdearn and Carrbridge. The venues were selected for a variety of reasons, including the settlements proximity to the site – ensuring that the events were convenient for community attendance.
- 4.5.5 These events were designed to attract local residents and key stakeholders and provided the opportunity to meet with members of the development team, view the proposals, ask questions and submit their feedback.
- 4.5.6 All of the events were advertised through a variety of communication methods. These included:
- An information leaflet / invitation, feedback form and freepost envelope issued to all households within 10 km of the development site (this 10km radius was amended for the second exhibition to ensure that included all of the Strathdearn Community Council boundary)
- 4.5.7 Advertising in The Strathspey and Badenoch Herald and the Inverness Courier in 2023 for the first consultation events (see Appendix B) as well as in 2024 to advertise the second consultation event (see Appendix D)
- Social media promotion (see Appendix F)
  - Direct engagement with key stakeholders including community councils, ward councillors, MSPs and MPs (to include a digital poster to share on their own social media / local noticeboards)
- 4.5.8 Members of the public unable to attend the events were encouraged to view the materials online at [www.balnespickwindfarm.com](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.com). The opportunity to submit questions and request additional information via email, text and/or by phone was also provided.

## 4.6 First Round of Public Consultation Events – October 2023

- 4.6.1 For the first round of public exhibitions the applicant considered it important to provide ample opportunity for local residents and interested parties to view the proposals, meet the team and have their questions answered.
- 4.6.2 These exhibitions were held on:
- 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023: 11 am to 7:30 pm at The Auditorium in Strathdearn; and
  - 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023: 11 am to 7:30 pm at the Carrbridge Village Hall.
- 4.6.3 The purpose of the exhibition was to introduce the Applicant, outline the initial proposals for the site, explain the forthcoming consultation process and gather feedback. The exhibition materials were also available online, alongside a mechanism by which to provide feedback. The exhibition materials are included in Appendix B.
- 4.6.4 Visitors to the events were able to speak to members of the team, have their questions answered and provide their feedback – either at the event, online or by post.
- 4.6.5 The first community consultation event was well attended. A total of 53 feedback forms were completed. A summary of the feedback received is shown in Table 4.1.
- 4.6.6 The feedback revealed that 77% of respondents supported the proposals, 11% did not support and 10% were unsure.

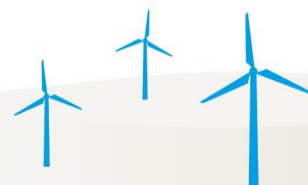
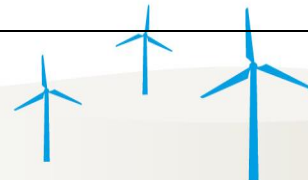


Table 4.1 – Summary of written feedback from first consultation event

Feedback Question	Public Responses		
	Yes	No	Unsure
Do you agree that there is a need to generate more renewable energy?	47	3	1
Do you support our proposals?	41	6	5
Do you have any initial comments or questions on the proposal presented?	22	20	5
Comments/Questions?	How does the proposed community contribution compare with other recent schemes in the area?		
	What would be the community benefit associated with the project? Would this project benefit communities with regards to costs of electricity?		
	I strongly support onshore wind farms and personally I think that they enhance the tourism experience		
	Would local schools (Carrbridge and Strathdearn) benefit from the project?		
	How does the proposed community contribution compare with other recent schemes in the area?		
Do you have any ideas or suggestions as to how we can shape the community benefit offering to make it more appropriate to the local area?	Would like to see the immediate local area benefit from the community fund rather than a larger project in Inverness. Would like to see a community benefit that reaches every member of our community such as a community domestic hot water scheme or lower electricity costs for the village.		
	Help with electric bills.		
	I am director of Carrbridge Ahead, a local community company and recipient of funds from Tom Na Clach. We would be interested in exploring ways to target benefit at addressing fuel poverty		
	Supporting young people of the area, developing pathways for young people to get into the renewable sector. Also supporting by keeping the young people employed locally		



	Put electricity car charging points around the village - at present only have ones by community centre. If we are to move the renewable energy for our cars too we need better access.
Any further comments	Please review your proposals with a view to reducing the visual impact as seen from Carrbridge. This may mean moving them north and/or reducing the height of the machines at the southernmost locations I've noted above.
	Are there any plans to generate hydrogen with the surplus electricity generated overnight when the grid demand is lower? Would like to see homes in the village benefitting from battery storage systems charged by the surplus energy the wind farm generates at night or when grid demand drops.
	How do I go about getting grants for batteries for my PV?
	Company to make sure that everyone in the community is informed as to how this money is spent and ensure there inclusive and transparent decision making

## 4.6 Second Round of Public Consultation Events

- 4.6.1 The second round of public exhibitions were held ahead of the application submission. It was intended that these events would demonstrate how the plans had evolved, and any changes made in response to feedback gathered during the pre-application consultation process. The events also provided the opportunity to have further questions answered and to comment on the plans.
- 4.6.2 Further to discussions with the local community and feedback at the first round of public consultation events, the leaflet for the exhibitions (distributed to local households to encourage attendance) included additional information on the opportunities presented by the community benefit associated with the development.
- 4.6.3 A survey was included within the leaflet, asking for views on the community benefit and how local residents felt that this could be shaped. A summary of this is included in Table 4.2.
- 4.6.4 The Applicant is committed to continuing discussions with local residents regarding their aspirations for community benefit. However, at this stage, there is a strong preference locally for an electricity discount scheme or the delivery of an energy efficiency scheme to support a reduction in energy consumption.
- 4.6.5 The exhibition materials were also available online throughout the events, alongside mechanisms by which to feedback. The exhibition materials can be found in Appendix D.
- 4.6.6 The events were scheduled to take place across two days. The timing of the events had been altered following the first round to ensure that the team were able to capture local footfall.
- 4.6.7 These events were held:
- 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024: 12 noon to 8 pm at The Auditorium in Strathearn; and
  - 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024: 11 am to 6 pm at the Carrbridge Village Hall.
- 4.6.8 The second public consultation events were also well attended and 17 feedback forms were completed. A summary of the feedback received is shown in Table 4.2.
- 4.6.9 The feedback revealed that 71% of respondents supported the proposals, 23% did not support and 6% were unsure.



Table 4.2 – Summary of written feedback from second consultation event

Feedback Questions	Public Responses		
	Yes	No	Unsure
Do you agree that there is a need to generate more renewable energy?	12	3	2
Do you support our proposal?	12	4	1
Do you have any initial comments or questions on the proposal presented?	6	9	2
Comments/Questions?	Positive development for our area.		
	I support any form of natural resources in supporting local and national needs.		
	Regarding the route...to the site through the...on the A938 The surface from the 20mph is in bad shape. I should like it resurfaced before started and checked over afterwards.		
	Is there a case for installing more than 9 turbines?		
	How are you going to link cash benefits to adding value to public services?		
Do you have any ideas or suggestions as to how we can shape the community benefit offering to make it more appropriate to the local area?	Individuals to apply directly to fund with receipted expenses annually. Extracurricular energy and educational projects by local groups		
	Collaborate with public sector and hospitality sector to resource sustainable housing.		
	Make our electric cheaper. Give money to affordable housing.		
	No strong views on community benefit		
	The winter can be quite long and drawn out in Tomatin. I think a scheme that lowers energy costs for residents would be a great way to help residents. As it must be awful to go through a winter worrying about heating costs.		
Any further comments?	I live next to 13 turbines and they are unsightly. The moors should be devoid of them and the noise is bad.		
	This will also be visible from the A9, affecting the views for tourism to the Highlands and in particular the upcoming Tomatin Trading development site in the village.		
	Strathnairn community benefit fund operates well (previously we lived in the catchment)		
	Maybe donating a log splitter to the community or something similar that locals could all borrow during the year would benefit a lot of people.		
	Remove the top 4 turbines (Carn Iain Ruaidh) A 200m turbine near the summit at around 615m altitude is disproportionate		
	thank you for your consideration		



Initially my concerns are:	<p>1. How this development contributes to all other proposed developments for wind farms. I'm confused as to what has been developed, extended, received consent, is proposed, is pre planning, in the pipeline all with separate community benefits and environmental impact assessment / conservation reports. There is no overall contextualising of how these schemes will be parts of the sum of the whole.</p> <p>2. Unknown connection route or visual impact of consequential network infrastructure if scheme consented this being subject to an SSEN application. This needs to be known now to help consider overall impacts.</p> <p>3. Real concern at visual impact to the north of Carrbridge on what is an ancient and un broken natural horizon. Impact at sunsets and CAA aviation red lights at night giving an urban night scape.</p> <p>4. As above for 2&amp;3 above for neighbouring proposed wind farms with same impact - sum of the whole as all applications potential consented. It's just confusing to try and understand or piece together.</p> <p>5. Impact of access from A9 or Dava Moor at time of approved infrastructure upgrade to A9.</p> <p>6. Environmental impact to bird life - in context of all neighbouring extensions, approvals, proposals - again 'sum of parts of the whole'</p> <p>7. Proximity to Strathnethy communities and the Cairngorms National Park. Visual impact from the Cairngorm Massif.</p> <p>8. Community benefits - highest Standing Charges in UK but no benefit from wind farm development and proposed heights with associated impact advised required to maximise energy generation and exporting to households and to cheapest uk areas. Contributions seem to be multiple and confusing amongst all developers. Community energy contributions should be 100% or more as % of feed in to grid.</p> <p>9. Concern at difficulties of existing supplier grid connections and payments to not to contribute to grid after development giving sense of confusion and perceived post development lack of accountability to communities.</p> <p>Overall I object to this development currently on basis of where it sits with all other proposals being pursued by individual investing institutions and developers in proximity to one of the most protected and sensitive landscape environments within the UK and Europe,</p>
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## 4.7 Ongoing Engagement

- 4.7.1 In what is thought to be a first-of-its-kind initiative, the Applicant is working with the other developers involved in wind farm proposals in the local area. They have been collaborating to provide opportunities for the local community to engage with all proposals in a friendly, informal setting. Ensuring that everyone can access clear, transparent information at the same time.
- 4.7.2 The Applicant, alongside the other developers arranged a community coffee morning at the Strathdearn Hub, from 10am – 12noon on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November. Advertisements for this event were published by a post on the Applicants Facebook profile on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (see Appendix F).
- 4.7.3 The event was intended to make it easy for residents to engage with the developers, understand each projects progress and get up-to-date information on each proposal prior to an application submission.
- 4.7.4 It is the intention of the Applicant to continue to pursue collaborative working opportunities with other developers in the local area – identifying how they can align on subjects including community benefit, habitat enhancement and traffic and transport.

# 5. Design Iterations

## 5.1 Summary of Design Iterations

- 5.1.1 The layout of the Proposed Development has been an iterative process which started in 2019, each time taking into consideration information gathered at the site or comments from consultees, as well as the professional judgement of technical experts.
- 5.1.2 Since the submission of the EIA Scoping Report and the receipt of the EIA Scoping Opinion the Applicant has undertaken design iterations to maximise the capacity of the Proposed Development while minimising the environmental impacts.
- 5.1.3 **Chapter 4: Approach to EIA** of the EIA Report also provides specific details on where the EIA has responded to advice and comments received from the EIA Scoping process. **Chapter 2: Site Selection and Design** provides further information on the overall rationale behind the design evolution.

## 5.2 Turbine Layout

- 5.2.1 An initial design layout was developed through a desk-based study, the design comprised 29 turbines and sought to maximise wind yield. After further desk-based and on-site research, including peat depth surveys, landscape visual reviews and consideration of environmental constraints the initial design evolved. From the data gathered, the final design of a nine turbine layout with tip height of 200 m has been chosen with micro-siting done to several of the turbines to minimize impacts on peat. **Chapter 2: Site Selection and Design** of the EIAR discusses this in further detail.
- 5.2.2 The main iterations are described below within Table 5.1 and shown on Figure 8. These iterations have taken into consideration the existing tracks and on-site environmental and engineering constraints to reduce the impacts on the wider landscape and avoid watercourses and sensitive habitats. The current Proposed Development Layout is shown on Figure 9.

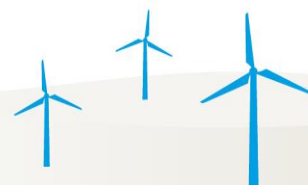


Table 5.1 – Design Iterations to date

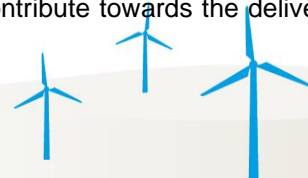
Design Iteration	No. Turbines	Date	Description
A (Figure 8)	29	Nov 2020	Initial turbine layout, comprising 29 turbines and seeking to maximise wind yield. This layout was informed through a 'Gate B' feasibility assessment, including a landscape and visual review, peat probing surveys and consultation with NS and the Cairngorm National Park (CNP).
B (Figure 8)	23	April 2021	T1, T2, T3, T4, T7 & T28 excluded from initial assessment due to being outside of the turbine development area. The turbine development area was established following the initial landscape and visual review.
C (Figure 8) Scoping Layout	9	2021	Following a 'Gate C' feasibility assessment which involved detailed consideration of environmental constraints identified through observations on site and desk-based background information, a 9-turbine layout was produced, largely driven by landscape and visual assessment. This layout, with an associated on-site battery energy storage system (BESS), was taken forward for Scoping in 2023, with a maximum tip height of 200 m. Turbine numbers were renumbered from T1-T9 to avoid confusion.
D (Figure 8)	9	April 2024	Micrositing of T2, T3, T5, T6, T8, and T9 to shallower areas of peat based on Stage 1 100 m grid peat probing data. Access route via B9007 was taken forward. New access track to connect the site to the existing track between Tom nan Clach Wind Farm and the B9007 produced. This layout was considered a 'design chill'.
E (Figure 9)	9	July 2024	During a design meeting with the EIA Technical Team, T2, T3, T5, T6 and T7 were microsited to avoid areas of deeper peat using Stage 2 peat



			probing data completed on the design chill layout. T1 and T4 moved to areas with greater wind yield. Access route from Tom nan Clach was microsited to avoid areas of deeper peat where possible following peat survey of previous route in design chill. This layout is the current Proposed Development layout.
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## 6. Community Benefit

- 6.1.1 The Applicant is focussed on ensuring that its wind farms are an asset to the local area, supporting the local economy and helping the local community to realise its ambitions. Every year the applicant provides over £600,000 to eligible communities surrounding its wind farms, amounting to more than £7m to date.
- 6.1.2 The Proposed Development would deliver a community benefit package of £5,000 per MW of installed capacity (index linked). This would be for the 35-year lifetime of the project, approximately £324,000 per year – almost £10m in a 35-year period.
- 6.1.3 The Applicant is committed to working closely with the communities surrounding the wind farm to ensure that the community benefit can help to address identified local challenges. Strathearn and Carrbridge are both communities very experienced in the management and delivery of community benefit funds. In addition, it is apparent from the feedback gathered throughout the pre-application consultation process that there are many strong feelings locally about the delivery of any community benefit funding.
- 6.1.4 In response to feedback from the local community, the applicant committed to undertaking consultation locally, in advance of an application, to understand the wider views of the community to ensure that any future community benefit fund can help to support their aspirations.
- 6.1.5 Information relating to the opportunities for community benefit were included, in detail, in the leaflet which was delivered to households locally ahead of the second round of public exhibitions. This information explained a variety of options, including:
- Creating a community benefit fund that is managed locally and compliments existing funds in operation;
  - Delivering a Local Energy Discount Scheme;
  - Creating a Home Energy Efficiency Programme; and
  - Delivering something entirely new – decided by local residents
- 6.1.6 Accompanying the information was a survey asking a series of questions about preferences for uses relating to the community benefit fund. The findings are presented in Table 6.1.
- 6.1.7 It is anticipated that the Applicant, should the project be consented, will work with the local communities to bring forward a community benefit fund that helps to support a sustainable community deliver their own aspirations.
- 6.1.8 The Applicant acknowledges that community benefit is only one economic and social driver of an application and has been exploring the ways by which it can contribute towards the delivery of a





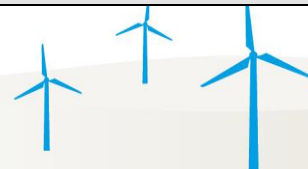
sustainable Highland economy. This is presented in detail in **Chapter 13: Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation** of the EIAR and includes:

- Exploring the potential to construct a private wire of electricity to Tomatin Distillery – supporting the operations to reduce cost, improve sustainability and continue to operate economically; and
- Joining the Highland Tourism Community Interest Company as a sponsor of its Highland Renewables Activity.

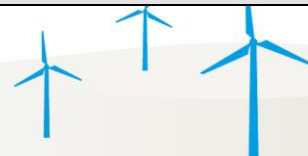
6.1.9 Overall, the Application and its associated benefits focus on achieving a lasting legacy for the local community and the Highland economy.

Table 6.1 – Summary of responses to community benefit survey

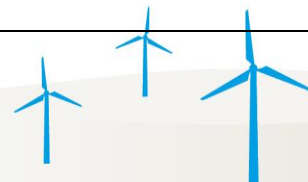
Question	Public Response		
Q1	Yes	No	Unsure
Would you like to see a community benefit fund designed to complement existing funding?	13	10	1
Any Comments	<p>Depends on what the funds will be used for</p> <p>If it includes new initiatives - local energy discount scheme and energy efficiency programme. If not no</p> <p>If the wind farm is unavoidable</p> <p>It is frittered away on grandiose schemes</p> <p>Should be a supplement to existing schemes already in area and be designed to have minimal extra admin for those managing/applying</p> <p>no because the benefit money is currently administered by 'our community' company who operate behind closed doors and do not represent the community</p> <p>The money would be best suited to being distributed to households individually to help with energy bills (gas, electric or for solar panels or improvements to their home)</p> <p>We have two children locally at school primary age and would benefit greatly from grand fund assistance for them to attend local activities with expenses attached to them, sports, music lessons, arts, child care and extra curricular</p>		



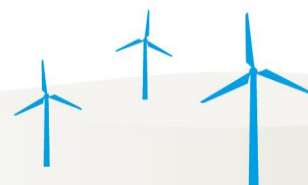
	Cancel as visual affects us badly		
	Combine both community benefit fund (25%) and energy discount scheme (75%)		
	Definitely not as we have difficulty in using up our existing funding		
	There is an already existing community benefit fund and infrastructure as a result of Tom Nan Clach windfarm. It would not need any new structures other than an additional element of booking by Carrbridge Ahead.		
	Discount on electricity bills		
	The community has more money floating around its bank account than it knows what to do with. Only certain people seem to benefit. A better use of funds would be much more beneficial to most if it was direct to individual houses to help with oil/gas/electricity bills.		
Q2	Yes	No	Unsure
Would you like to see an energy discount scheme delivered locally?	25		
Any Comments	More benefit to all households equally		
	If the wind farm is unavoidable		
	That would be of a true benefit		
	Extend the radius to 20km. Make sure application to join is simple. Bring into effect from project commencement not completion as folk deserve compensation for construction related disruption.		
	The Community Council has had lots of funding over the years and I think its about time the local residents benefited directly.		
	Great initiative to help local people working and children in school locally and despite having two jobs due to the cost of the living increases very much feel the impact of energy costs.		
	This would be more suitable use of windfarm money delivered direct to residents		
	Energy prices remain high & winter temperatures are lower in the area so an energy discount scheme for all residents would be of benefit.		
	see above		



Q3	Yes	No	Unsure
Would you like to see an energy efficiency scheme delivered locally?	21	2	4
Any Comments	More sustainable for the longer run compared to an energy discount scheme. However as I live in a new build, not of that much value to myself		
	If this is in addition to energy discount scheme. Yes. No otherwise.		
	If the wind farm is unavoidable		
	Again keep application process simple. Make available to all regardless of income status		
	This might help lots of households		
	Not to get permission as bribe		
	Open to everyone, not just means tested top ups. As previous, everybody will be visually impacted by the wind farm and ongoing operations and maintenance		
	National schemes seem to be an 'all or nothing' option whereas a local scheme could be more flexible enabling local traders to deliver what a household agrees to		
Means tested			
Q4	Locally	Regionally	Both
Where would you like to see a community benefit fund delivered?	23		2
Any Comments	Could see the possibility of the three Straths joining together to create projects for the community that don't overlap. E.g. Funding for arts/music as joint project workshops over the summer period, learning new instrument or painting or singing for adults and children		
	All communities impacted should have access to funds		
	Not at all cancel project		
	Local impact therefore local decision making similar to Hadyard Hill W/F Community Fund. Local improvements (5G masts, DAB Radio coverage and other local shortfalls)		



	Impact local residents in the area			
	To individual households			
Q5		1	2	3
Can you please rank the following in order of importance to you with 1 being the most important and 3 being the least?	Energy Efficiency Scheme	3	14	6
	Energy Discount Scheme	17	3	2
	Community Benefit Fund	3	5	11
	Other			
Q5				
Do you have any other ideas for utilising the community benefit from Balnespick Wind Farm?	Consider creating a local energy efficiency officer role to help folk access funds. Install public EV chargers.			
	Maybe the chance for young school leavers to gain employment as trainee technicians or similar with local wind farms			
	Our electric use is high because we have just bought an electric car to replace high emission cost diesel car. However, despite us both working due to increases in cost of living, household costs are high and anything that can be offered to alleviate this would be of great value and appreciated at this time. We are just about to pay for charge point installation for an EV. Although from an energy and environmental perspective this is the right thing to do compared to continuing to run diesel or petrol cards there is no grant application scheme to help with high installation costs in highland for people living and working locally.			
	See comments above. Subsidise and enable local investment. 5G Blackspots, telephone blackspots, Community Resilience Funding - snow, power cuts, village hall, hotel, catering, warm centres			
	Tree planting (indigenous), planted strategically to absorb and dissipate noise from the turbines			



## 7. Summary and Conclusion

- 7.1.1 The Applicant has carried out meaningful engagement and appropriate times with key stakeholders regarding the Proposed Development. Successful community consultation and information events were held where feedback on the proposals was gathered, analysed, and taken into consideration.
- 7.1.2 The final layout has been directly informed by this consultation and a robust design iteration process, exemplified by the reduction in the number and height of turbines across the site.
- 7.1.3 As with any development, a balance needs to be struck in terms of the ability to incorporate suggested comments received during PAC, whilst being able to bring forward a viable and deliverable proposal. The potential effects on the surrounding area were identified as a fundamental design consideration during consultation and the Applicant is committed to addressing any impacts via the implementation of mitigation measures as set out in the EIA Report.
- 7.1.4 From the outset, the Applicant has undertaken comprehensive and inclusive consultation and has sought to ensure that all those with an interest in the proposals have had an opportunity to review and comment through appropriate and varied channels. The Applicant is committed to ongoing engagement and consultation with key stakeholders throughout all phases of the development process.

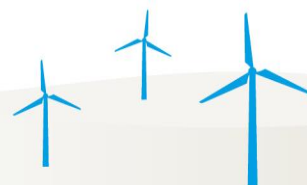
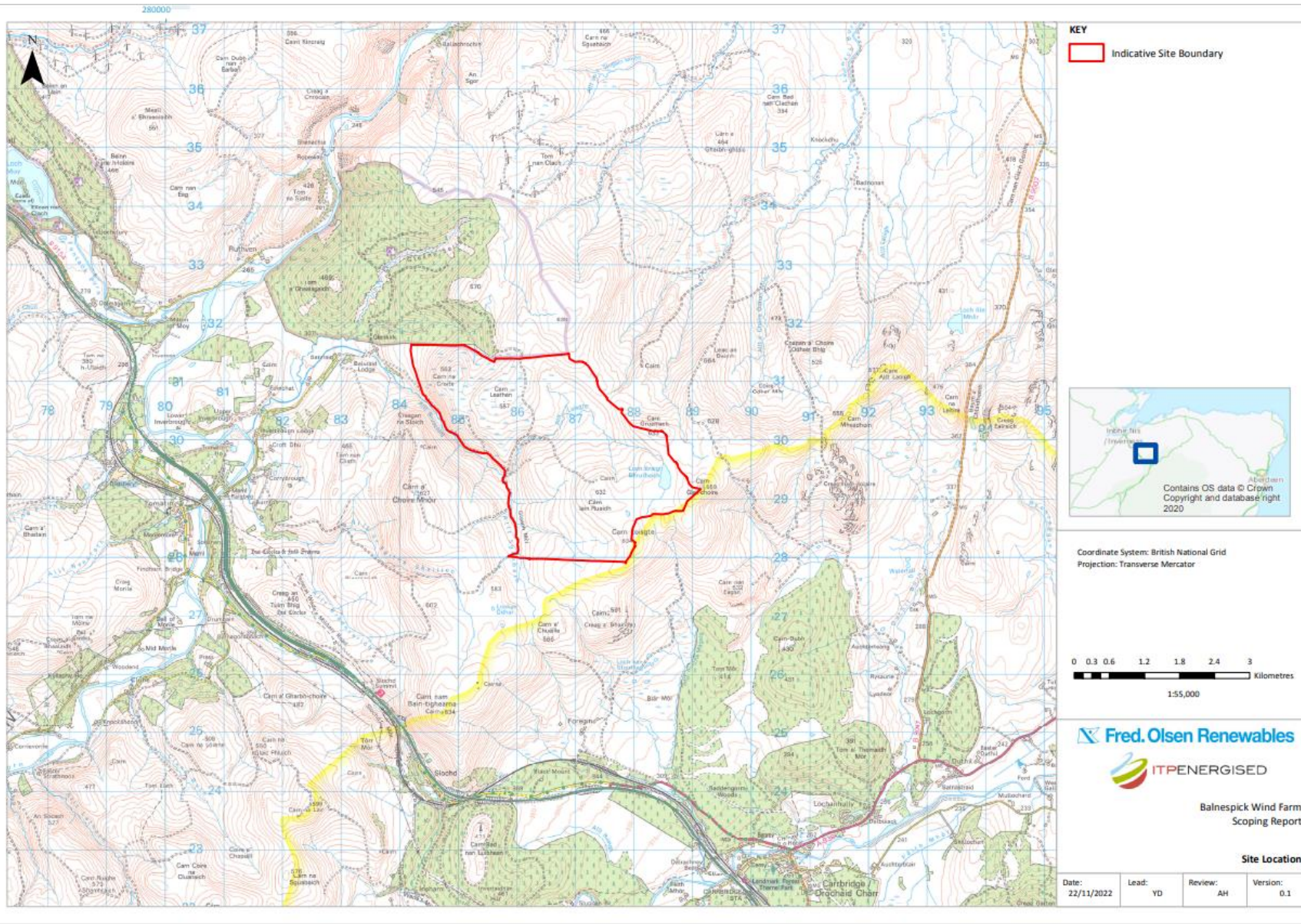


Figure 7



# Figure 8

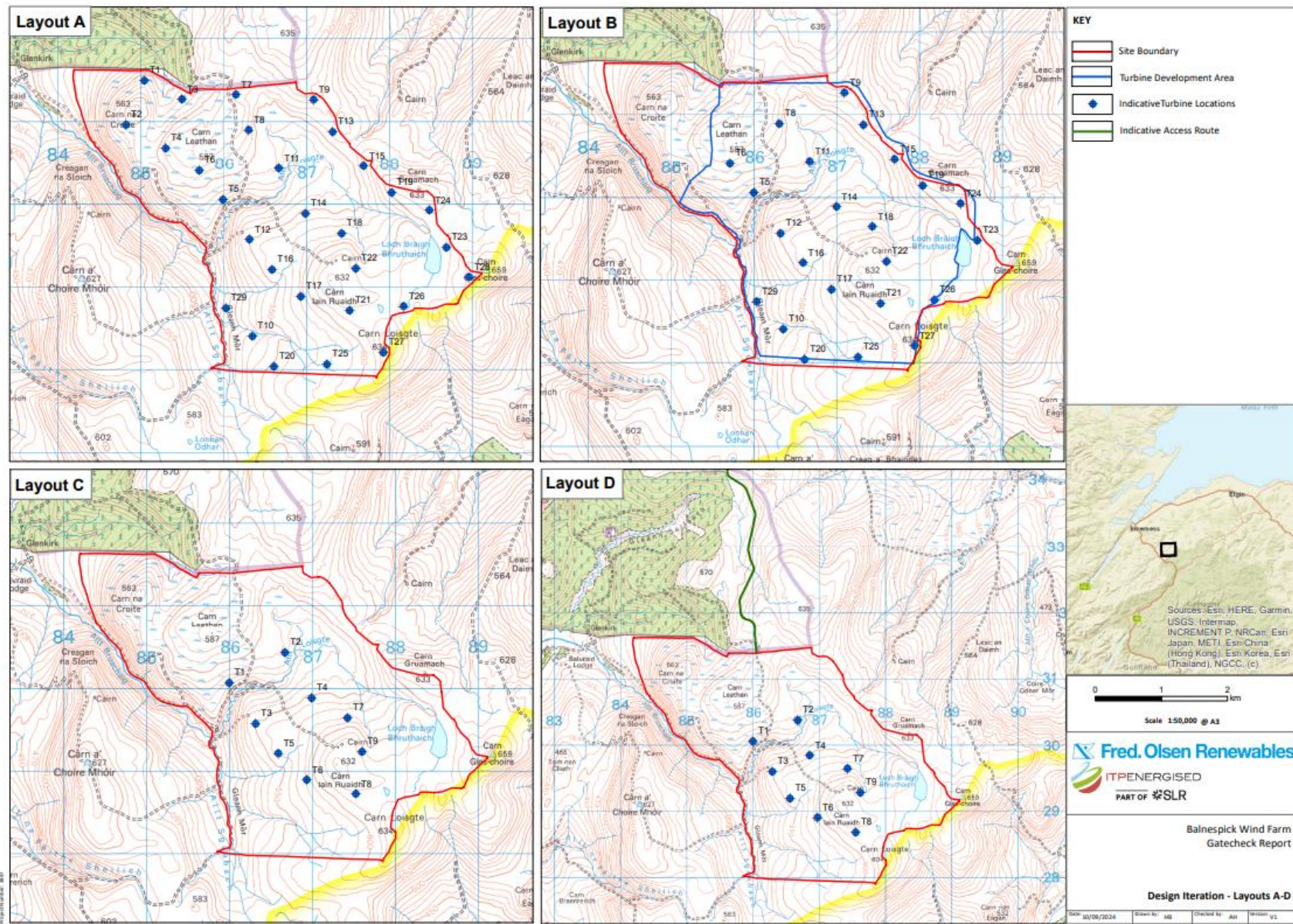
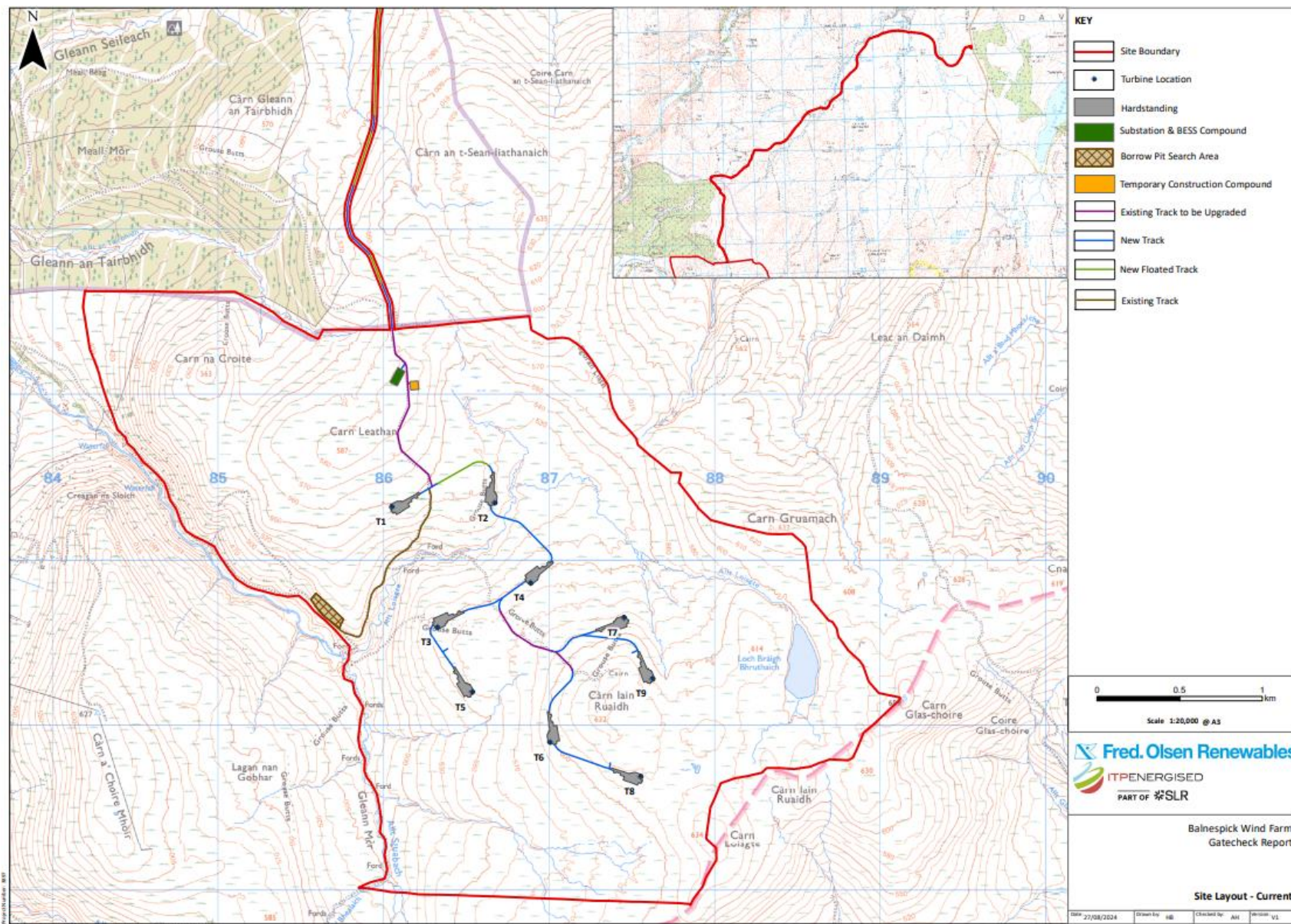


Figure 9





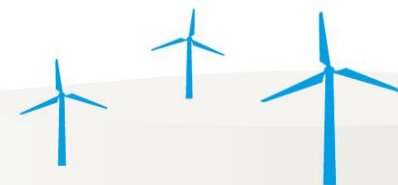
## Appendix A: Project Website



### Project key stats

9 Number of turbines	200m Turbine height (to tip)	64.8MW Wind capacity	10MW Battery storage
35years Operating period	£324,000 Annual community benefit		

[FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT CAN BE FOUND HERE →](#)



# Our Proposals

**We are proposing to develop Balnespick Wind Farm, which is located 5.6km to the east of Tomatin and 6.6km north-west of Carrbridge.**

We have been undertaking a range of consultation with local residents and statutory consultees. This has involved two rounds of public events – gathering feedback that will, alongside the results of our technical assessments, inform the final design of the wind farm.

[VIEW CURRENT DOCUMENTATION →](#)

We hope to submit an application to the Scottish Government in late 2024. We will make sure to inform local residents and stakeholders of our application submission and work closely with them throughout the determination process.



# Community



We want to work with the communities closest to the wind farm to ensure that the community benefit package can be designed to support ongoing initiatives and address identified local challenges, such as:



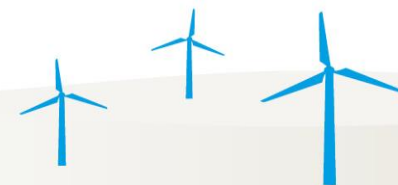
Fuel Poverty



Energy Efficiency



Connectivity



# Supply Chain

We always seek to employ local services during the construction and operation of our wind farms – helping to maximise local economic opportunities.

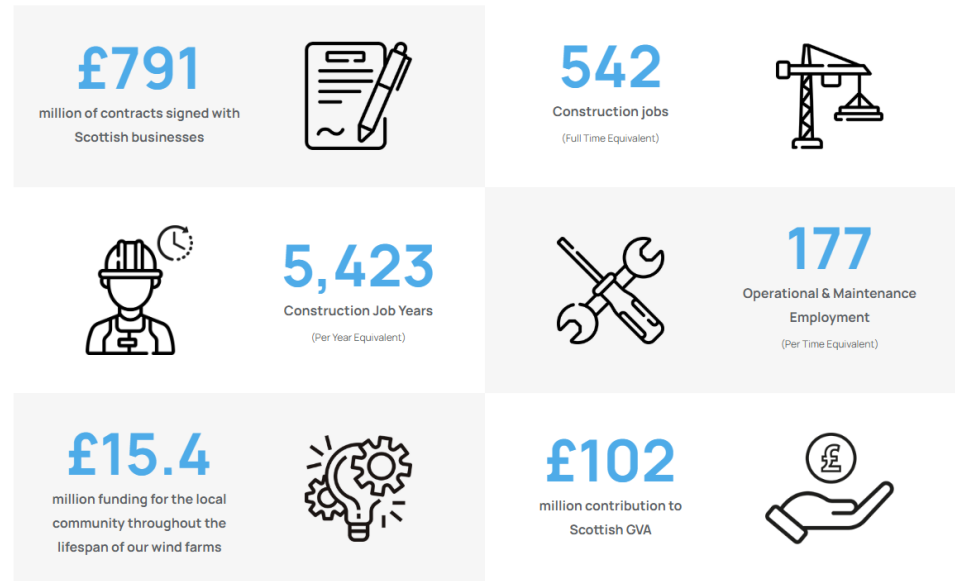
**We are committed to:**

- Supporting our contractors to spend up to 30% of the contract value locally
- Incentivising all contractors to use local content

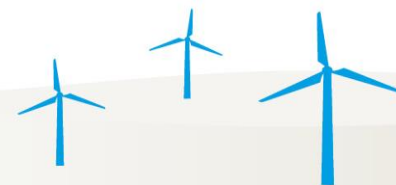
**Services that we have previously employed include:**

- Local accommodation
- Plant hire
- Caterers
- Groundworks
- Fencers
- Concrete and aggregate


Our projects, to date, have delivered:




Our projects, to date, have delivered:





# Document Library


 Site location


 Site layout


 Scoping report


 All scoping documents

 Exhibition Poster (Oct '23)


 Exhibition Boards (Oct '23)


 Leaflet (Oct '23)

 Exhibition Brochure (Oct '23)

 Exhibition Leaflet (August '24)

 Exhibition Boards (August '24)

 Exhibition Brochure (August '24)

 Community Benefit Feedback Form (Aug' '24)



# Latest News

## Strathdearn Primary School Pupils Explore Renewable Energy at Rothes Wind Farm

Last week, pupils from Strathdearn Primary School in Tomatin joined the Fred. Olsen Renewables team and experienced an exciting educational visit to Rothes Wind Farm,

[READ MORE »](#)

15 October 2024



## Local Residents Invited to View Plans for Balnespick Wind Farm

Leading independent renewable energy producer, Fred. Olsen Renewables will be returning to Tomatin and Carrbridge on the 27th and 28th August to display plans for

[READ MORE »](#)

6 August 2024



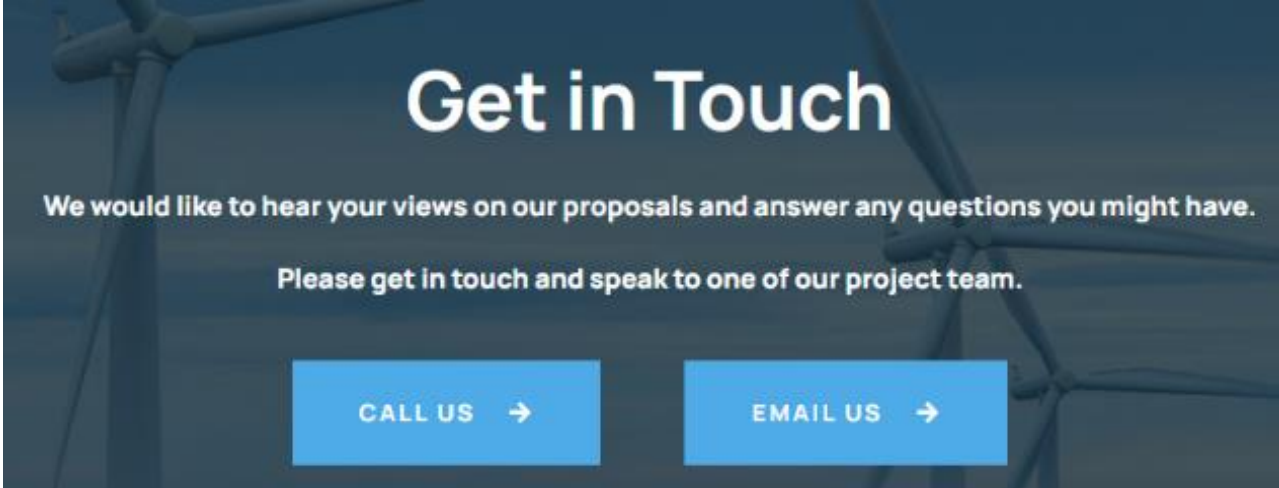
## Community Consulted on Plans for Balnespick Wind Farm

Residents from across Strathspey attended events held in October in Tomatin and Carrbridge to learn more about the proposals to develop Balnespick Wind Farm, 5km

[READ MORE »](#)

23 November 2023





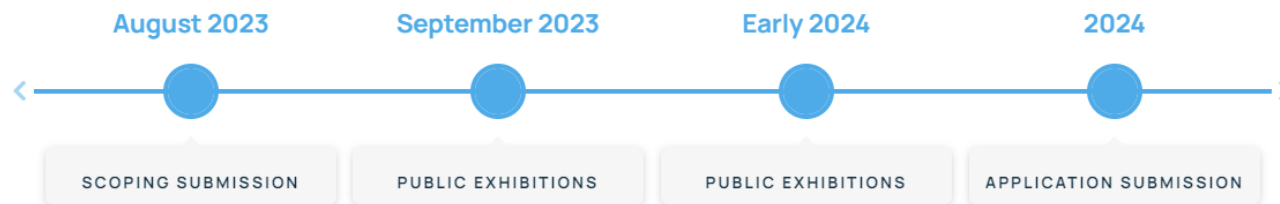
# Get in Touch

We would like to hear your views on our proposals and answer any questions you might have.

Please get in touch and speak to one of our project team.

[CALL US →](#) [EMAIL US →](#)

## Timeline



We have submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) (August 2023). This describes our proposals and invites the views of consultees on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

[VIEW SCOPING REPORT →](#)



# Appendix B: Round 1 of Public Consultation Advertisements

## Newspaper Advertisement: 2023

22 The Inverness Courier  
www.inverness-courier.co.uk  
Tuesday, September 26, 2023

**Outdoors**  
Sign up to the Active Outdoors newsletter at [inmedia.co.uk/activeoutdoors](mailto:inmedia.co.uk/activeoutdoors)

# BROCH PATH IS LIKE STEPPING BACK IN TIME

**By John Davidson**  
[john.davidson@inverness-courier.co.uk](mailto:john.davidson@inverness-courier.co.uk)

FIVE years ago I visited Ousdale Broch on a wild walk along the John O'Groats Trail between Helmsdale and Berriedale, one of the most exciting stretches of that route.

What a lot has changed in that time! Back in 2018, the remains of the broch's walls were bulging and in danger of collapse, while a decades-old rowan tree was growing sideways through the network.

The path that got us there wasn't much of a path. It led along the old Ord Road which was designed in 1802 for horse-drawn carriages, then diverted off through the

moors to reach the lonely broch. Now a newly built path leads you from the modern A9 down to the Iron Age structure, thanks in no small part to the Caithness Broch Project.

The broch project is a Scottish charity dedicated to the promotion, preservation and conservation of Caithness archaeological and heritage sites. It has grand plans to build a full-size replica broch and is close to selecting a suitable site in Caithness.

The work would be done using traditional methods as closely as possible, to help increase the understanding of how these incredible structures were made. As well as becoming a premier visitor attraction, it will also give an insight into the past and offer employment and skills training

in Iron Age crafts. It's an exciting and ambitious plan, but what a fantastic vision to have – and the determination to see the idea through to fruition is clearly there. He had done to the broch at Ousdale because, as well as creating the path and car parking area, the broch itself had been conserved by the charity, too.

On the short walk down to the broch, there are a series of information panels full of fascinating facts not just about the broch and its renovation but also about the history of the area.

The path crosses the former Ord Road, and the old horse-and-carriage route can be clearly seen – in fact, the John O'Groats Trail south from here still follows that route to enter Sutherland.

The crossing of the Ord is described as an "emotional experience for Caithnessians and is one that has clearly been a challenge for road builders over the last few centuries. Further down the path you reach the remains of Borg village, which was built with stone taken from the ruined broch. The remains of various homes can be seen among the thick heather and a site leads into the field for anybody interested in taking a closer look.

This crafting community was cleared in the early 19th century, like so many others. Those with an adventurous spirit might be



28 The Inverness Courier  
www.inverness-courier.co.uk  
Friday, September 22 to Monday, September 25, 2023

# Reduce, return, recycle – how you can play your part

**Health Matters**  
By Dr Kate Arrow

EVERY next 20 years, it is estimated that the burden of disease in Scotland will increase by one-fifth. Over the same period, the consequences of climate change will make life increasingly difficult for communities across the world.

We want to support our community to live long and healthy lives, while minimising our impact on the planet. To achieve this, we must radically change the way we prevent, manage and treat disease.

We know that there are many 'simple' things we can do to improve our health. In practice, exercise, healthy eating and quitting unhealthy habits, can be difficult for many people and require time and support. Many diseases can be prevented or improved through lifestyle changes, but medicines are often needed to treat illness or help manage long term conditions.

These returned medicines are incinerated at a cost of £700 per tonne and a CO2 equivalence of 6000 car journeys around the world.

Medicines make up a quarter of the NHS carbon footprint and cost £1.9 billion per year in Scotland. Evidence shows that around half of medicines are not taken as prescribed and one in 10 medicines prescribed in Scotland are returned to pharmacies, unused.

These returned medicines are incinerated at a cost of £700 per tonne and a CO2 equivalence of 6000 car journeys around the world. In Scotland, around one tonne of medicines is collected from community pharmacies per day and incinerated at a cost of £250,000 per year.

This is in addition to the initial cost of buying, prescribing and dispensing the medicines. Imagine what else this money could be spent on?

Every one of us has the power to reduce this waste and save our vital resources. Here are three steps you can take to support us in reducing medicine waste and harm to our environment:

**Reduce**  
Remember it is always OK to ask. Contact your GP surgery or pharmacist if you are unsure of what medicines you take or why they have been prescribed; you are still receiving a medicine which you no longer take or would like to stop.

They will be able to discuss the benefits, risks and alternatives to your medicines as well as what might happen if you do nothing/stop taking them. Some medicines are vital to keeping you healthy so you should always talk to a health professional before stopping them. There are many services available across Highland which can support you to improve your health and reduce the need for medicines through supported activity and lifestyle changes. You can register for a virtual one-to-one advice service with the Active Health Link Workers at Velocity Care in Inverness at [www.velocityfore.co.uk/projects/activehealthreturn](http://www.velocityfore.co.uk/projects/activehealthreturn).

All unused and out-of-date medicines should be returned to your community pharmacy. Empty inhalers should also be returned to a pharmacy as they release harmful gases when left in landfill. It is important that you never flush medicines down the toilet as these can end up in our water supplies. This is dangerous for ocean marine and plant life and can mean that these medicines enter our food chain.

We are working within NHS Highland to increase what we can recycle. At present you can recycle all the paper and cardboard packaging which comes with medicines. Remember to remove or blank out any confidential information. Some pharmacies will recycle empty blister packs but this is only being trialled in some large retailers at present. You can also recycle some tins/pens by post by following the advice here: [www.penicyle.co.uk](http://www.penicyle.co.uk).

It is easy to feel powerless when we see the impact of climate change and the increasing pressures on our health and social care service. Ensuring you fully understand the benefits, risks and alternatives to the treatments and medicines you are offered is the most powerful step you can take to reduce unnecessary or unwanted interventions and their inherent climate cost.

**Dr Kate Arrow is a consultant anaesthetist and real-time medicine clinical lead at NHS Highland.**



## Balsespick Wind Farm

### PUBLIC EXHIBITION

VIEW THE PLANS | LEARN ABOUT THE PROPOSALS | HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

[www.balsespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balsespickwindfarm.co.uk) | [communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com) | 07435 763 900

We are proposing to develop Balsespick Wind Farm, which is located 5.6km to the east of Tomatin and 6.6km north-west of Carbridge.

We are at the very early stages of our proposals and we are working to gather feedback that will help to inform the final design of the wind farm.

We are holding two events where you will be able to:

- Speak to the project team
- View the current plans
- Have your questions answered
- Submit your views

If you can't attend, please:

- View the materials online
- Request printed materials
- Get in touch to set up a discussion
- Submit your questions and comments

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11am – 7.30pm  
The Auditorium, The Strathdearn, Tomatin, IV13 7YN

**4th October**  
11am – 7.30pm  
Carbridge Village Hall, Main Street, Carbridge, PH23 3AA

Fred. Olsen Renewables

66

## The path crosses the former Ord Road, and the old horse-and-carriage route – designed in 1802 – can be clearly seen.

This crafting community was cleared in the early 19th century, like so many others. Those with an adventurous spirit might be described as an "emotional experience for Caithnessians and is one that has clearly been a challenge for road builders over the last few centuries. Further down the path you reach the remains of Borg village, which was built with stone taken from the ruined broch. The remains of various homes can be seen among the thick heather and a site leads into the field for anybody interested in taking a closer look.

This crafting community was cleared in the early 19th century, like so many others. Those with an adventurous spirit might be



A digital reconstruction for the proposed Caithness replica broch. Image © Bob Marshall

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## THE GLASGOW PHOENIX CHOIR

Scottish Charity SC 002904



HIGHLAND RESIDENCY 2023

**STRATHPEFFER**  
The Pavilion - IV14 9DW  
Friday 22 September 8.00pm  
Tickets: £12.50 / £10 Conc.  
Guests: EADARAIN: Dingwall & Inverness Gaelic Choirs

**ELGIN**  
St Giles Church - IV30 1DS  
Saturday 23 September 2.30pm  
Tickets: £10

**INVERNESS**  
Ness Bank Church - IV2 4SA  
Sunday 24 September 2.30pm  
Tickets: £10

All proceeds to Marie Curie Concert Sponsored by Ark Estates  
From usual outlets, at the Door, or on line at [www.wegotickets.com](http://www.wegotickets.com)

## BLYTHSWORDS

For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

1 Timothy 6:7

Nothing, nada, zilch. It's not what you leave with, it's who you leave with.

[blythswords@blythswood.org](mailto:blythswords@blythswood.org)

Christian care for body & soul



**DOES YOUR JOB FEEL ROBOTIC?**

Jobs North offers the best service for employers, recruitment agencies and job seekers searching for jobs in Inverness, Highland and Moray. Visit [Jobs-north.co.uk](http://Jobs-north.co.uk)

**HNM** **jobsnorth**





Máiri McAllan

# McAllan votes against Ewing

TRANSPORT secretary Máiri McAllan has admitted that she voted for Fergus Ewing to be suspended from the SNP over rebelling against the party, with the pair at loggerheads with over the A9 dualling.

The SNP's Holyrood group voted 48 for, nine against with four abstentions to suspend Mr Ewing for one week, which will come into effect after 14 days if there is no appeal.

Now despite the party considering the issue an internal disciplinary matter, Ms McAllan told the BBC when asked how she voted. Ms McAllan started to answer before changing tack, saying: "I don't think it is fair to ask us... In full transparency, yes I did. "It is something I certainly would expect to be the outcome if I had done what Fergus did, of course I wouldn't. It is part of a normal party mechanism in a democratic system."

# 'I will not be gagged in any way'

By Scott MacLennan

A DEFIANT Fergus Ewing has told 'The Inverness Courier' that "I will not be gagged in any way, I will carry on."

He was speaking after the SNP Holyrood group voted to suspend him for rebelling against the party line to back Greens minister Lorna Slater.

Mr Ewing described the meeting as "pretty uncomfortable, tense and at times I felt pretty unpleasant actually" - but he was not without support as nine voted against suspension, four abstained but 48 backed his punishment.

But following the statement he released, it may be SNP bosses who are feeling "unpleasant" and regret not taking Kate Forbes' advice to be "extraordinarily careful".

into thinking they have been treated fairly when they clearly have not? "Or am I rather to speak out fearlessly and apply the same pressure which has already janked the bottle rule scheme and the damaging fishing proposals to the madcap boiler ban and honouring pledges on our vital roads."

"I choose to defend my conviction and let the cards fall as they will." In an extensive interview with The Inverness Courier, Mr Ewing made it clear that his objection to Ms Slater was based on the Deposit Return Scheme being one of the worst policies since devolution - he has sat in the parliament since it was introduced by his mother Winnie Ewing in 1999.

"It cost Scotland £86 million at least, the public purse lost about £8 million from the Scottish Investment Bank and it was universally opposed by businesses - believe it or not I had 41 meetings with businesses over two years", he said.

So far, Mr Ewing has made no decision about his future but would take the next two weeks to think it over - the same amount of time he has lodged an appeal against the suspension.

He said: "One of the things that doesn't matter at all is the personal fate of Fergus Ewing but what does matter, and matters deeply, if we are to have a Parliament that is worthy of its name then the members of that Parliament cannot simply be creatures of the party whip."

carry on. I don't really have any regrets. Had I voted to keep the minister in place, I would not have been able to live with myself.

"I will continue to be the best MSP that I can possibly be and, in fact, I am about to go to First Minister's Questions to ask about the A96."

"What is uppermost in my mind is how I can exert maximum pressure on the party of government to provide the same standard and safety of roads that the central belt population take for granted."

And he did so, just an hour later he stood up undaunted in Holyrood to secure either a ministerial update or a written update on the progress made or otherwise on the A86 dualling project.

Mr Ewing considers what he did as being less about rebelling and more about keeping the party on track.



Inverness and Nairn MSP Fergus Ewing MSP is undaunted.

rebellion and more about keeping the party on track. "One of the very real sadnesses is that when the SNP chose Humza Yousaf, and this is not personal, over Kate Forbes we made the biggest mistake in our party's history. Were she to become the First Minister that may well be the lever that persuades people that an independent Scotland is the better option and the only long-term successful option for Scotland."

"I am afraid that task of persuasion appears to me to be impossible."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Hoax calls rise

THE Scottish Ambulance Service has received more than 200 malicious hoax calls so far this year.

Between January and August, a total of 219 malicious calls were received compared to 191 over the entire 2022.

This year's malicious calls resulted in 236 vehicles being allocated, with crews spending 130 hours at these calls - an average of 33 minutes for each call.

The Greater Glasgow and Clyde area experienced the highest number of hoax calls (87).

There were 15 hoax calls during the same period in the Highlands amounting to nearly eight hours of wasted time.

### Taken away

A bid for a new house on Granttown's High Street has been withdrawn. William Gallacher, of The Royal Fish Bar, had lodged the proposal for 19 High Street with Highland Council planners.

The application stated Mr Gallacher lives in an apartment above the chip shop and wanted to vacate it for a general manager as he looks to retire, and move into the new property at a site to the rear of the takeaway.

# Spey Bank studio is at 'art' of Granttown

Owner is full of praise for the support venture has received from town during first year

THE Spey Bank Studio in Granttown is celebrating its first anniversary next month with a new exhibition.

The studio opened on the Strathpey capital's High Street in October last year following a nine-month renovation.

The premises previously housed the Bank of Scotland which was controversially axed as part of cost-savings in March 2021.



GOING POTTY: The ceramic side of the businesses - including pottery making - has proven to be particularly popular at the Spey Bank Studio during its first year.

Meanwhile, there is a sense of fun and imagination in Malcolm Tyson's colourful pieces, which develop the idea of doodles. And there will be several pieces by Claire Blois, the well-known Highlands artist.

The exhibition opens on Saturday, 10am to 5pm.

Wilson, an award-winning painter whose work references cartographical lines and organic shapes, including figurative compositions. Photographer less Greaves turns her focus on nature, using multiple exposures and darkroom techniques to explore the inter-connectedness of humans and the natural world.

Meanwhile, there is a sense of fun and imagination in Malcolm Tyson's colourful pieces, which develop the idea of doodles. And there will be several pieces by Claire Blois, the well-known Highlands artist.

## Balnespick Wind Farm

### PUBLIC EXHIBITION

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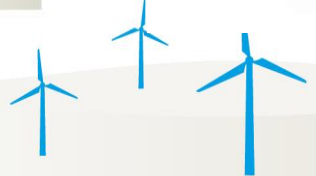
## STOCKISTS OF

ZANUSSI Miele BOSCH SIEMENS

**THAIN ELECTRICAL**

Aviemore, PH22 1SD  
**01478 810744**  
email: info@thainelectrical.com

SALES AND SERVICE



## Round 1: Posters

# Balnespick Wind Farm

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Main Street, Carrbridge,  
PH23 3AA

Fred. Olsen Renewables

# Round 1: Brochure



## Balnespick Wind Farm

EXHIBITION BROCHURE

October 2023



### Welcome

**We are exploring the potential to develop Balnespick Wind Farm, located 5.6km east of Tomatin and 6.6km north-west of Carrbridge.**

We are at the very early stages of our proposals and we would like to start a conversation with the local community and key stakeholders about how we can develop a project that:

- Is shaped by community feedback
- Supports local aspirations
- Allows us to explore delivering local initiatives, such as:
  - Connectivity
  - Recreation
  - Tourism
- Will deliver local and regional supply chain opportunities


We hope that these materials provide you with useful information. We welcome your feedback and opinions. Please complete a feedback form or contact the team to discuss the plans further.

There are many ways for you to get in touch with us:


- 🌐 [www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk)
- ✉ [communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com)
- ☎ **07435 763 900**

### About Fred. Olsen Renewables


**Fred. Olsen Renewables is one of the longest standing renewable energy developers in Scotland.**



**Developing**




**Constructing**



**Operating**

Our portfolio consists of 258 operational turbines, alongside a further 76 consented. This, combined with our projects in Norway and Sweden, brings our total operational capacity to 787.7 MW – providing enough power for 586,190 homes.

We are excited about the future. With a pipeline of more than 1GW, central to our success will be collaboration with communities, committing to local businesses and contributing towards Scotland's sustainable future.



### Our Proposal

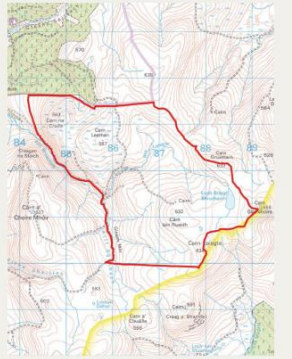
**We are at the early stages of our proposals and we still have a significant amount of information to gather prior to submitting an application.**

We have submitted a scoping request to the Scottish Government, which will allow us to gather stakeholder feedback that will help to shape our plans. We are embarking upon consultation with the community and key stakeholders and the feedback that we gather throughout the consultation process will help to inform our final plans.

All of our activity will be supported by a range of public consultation, including this exhibition.


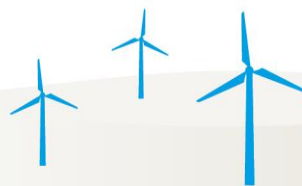
**We hope that this event will:**

- Help to start a conversation with the local community
- Provide information on our initial proposals and timelines
- Detail the opportunities that Balnespick Wind Farm will present locally
- Help us to understand local priorities
- Provide the opportunity for you to ask any questions and provide feedback



**At this stage it is anticipated that the project will involve:**

- Up to nine wind turbines with a height of up to 200m to tip
- Battery Storage
- Turbine foundations and hardstandings
- External transformers
- A network of new and upgraded access tracks
- An anemometry mast for wind monitoring
- An onsite substation and control building
- Temporary construction compounds, laydown areas and car parking
- Temporary borrow pits

## Layout and Design Process

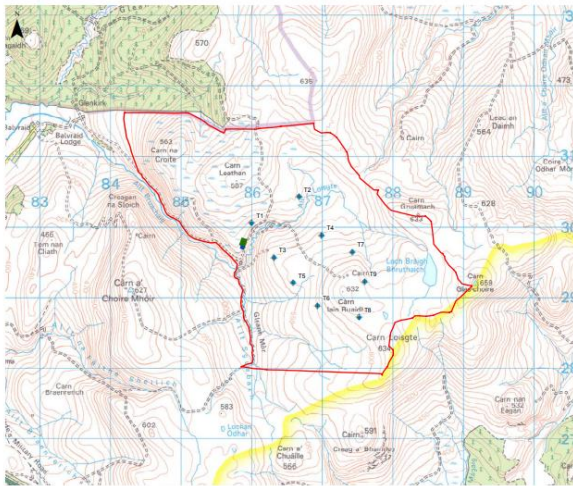
Many factors will determine the final layout of Balnespick Wind Farm, and the location of turbines.

This include:

- Visual impact
- Impact on sensitive habitats
- Proximity to areas of ecological interest
- Wind resource
- Engineering constraints
- Community comments

Some of these issues will not be fully identified until the technical assessments are finished. This means that the layout you see today may be different from the layout submitted with the application for consent.

We will ensure that the local community and key stakeholders are consulted throughout the development of our proposal and on the final layout.



## The Development Process

We are currently undertaking the scoping and consultation of our development process for the proposed development.

We submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in August 2023. This described our draft proposal and invited the views of consultees on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

The Scoping Opinion that we receive will determine the scope of the EIA.

Baseline surveys are ongoing for the proposed development. These surveys will inform the final layout of the site ensuring that it minimises effects on the local environment. We will then evaluate and present the effects of the project in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The EIAR will accompany the application for consent to the ECU.

The EIAR will consider:

- Ornithology
- Ecology
- Landscape and visual
- Noise
- Hydrology, geology and hydrogeology
- Cultural heritage
- Access, traffic and transport
- Socioeconomics, recreation and tourism
- Telecommunications
- Aviation and Existing Infrastructure
- Climate change

### Our Development Timeline



## Environmental Impact Assessment

### Environmental Considerations

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is being undertaken to identify and assess the potential significant environmental effects of the proposal. The information gathered through the EIA process will help to shape the design and layout of the proposed development and required mitigation measures.

This includes, amongst others:

#### Ornithology

This assessment considers any potential effect on local bird assemblages. Extensive ornithology surveys have been completed.

#### Ecology

This assessment considers the local flora and fauna, except for birds which are assessed separately. Habitat and protected species surveys have been undertaken within the site which include bats, water vole, otter, badger, red squirrel, and pine marten.

#### Cultural Heritage

This assessment considers the cultural heritage assets near the site and helps to inform the design of the proposal and appropriate mitigation techniques.

#### Hydrology, Geology and Hydrogeology

This assessment considers the hydrological, geological and hydrogeological characteristics of the proposed development site, and helps to inform appropriate mitigation proposals, if they are required.

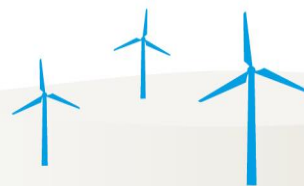
There are mapped areas of peat on the site and whilst considering other constraints, the layout will be designed to avoid deep peat as far as possible.

#### Aviation and Existing Infrastructure

This assessment will consider the potential effects of the proposed development on civil and military aviation interests. Telecommunications operations will also be considered.

#### Socioeconomics, Recreation and Tourism

Predicted socioeconomic, recreational and tourism effects of the proposed development will be outlined within the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). This includes benefits on local, regional and national levels during the construction and operational periods of the proposed development.



**Noise**

This assessment will consider the effects of both construction and operational noise on nearby sensitive receptors, including in combination with other nearby wind farms. No perceptible ground-borne vibration is expected from the operation of the proposed development.

**Traffic and Transport**

This assessment considers the impact on traffic volumes and the transport network during the construction period, operational phase and decommissioning phase of the proposed development.

**Climate Change**

Wind farms have the potential to make savings on greenhouse gas emissions compared to electricity that is generated using fossil fuels.

We will assess the magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions of the proposed development throughout its lifetime, including assessing the potential impacts on peat, and the period of time it takes to payback for those carbon emissions compared with a scenario where there is no development.

**Landscape and Visual Impact**

Once the design layout has been finalised, a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the proposed development will be carried out. This will consider effects on:

- **Landscape fabric** – changes to the physical form of the landscape and its elements

- **Landscape character** – changes in the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape
- **Visual amenity** – changes in the appearance of the landscape

The proposed development will be analysed to identify elements with the potential to cause an effect on the landscape within the specified study area.

**Photomontages and ZTV**

The images presented at this exhibition have been prepared to illustrate the visual impact of the proposed draft wind turbine layout from four viewpoint locations. Photomontages from each of these viewpoints have had wind turbines added using computer generated software.

A preliminary Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) diagram has been generated for the proposed development that indicates the number of turbines theoretically visible from any location within the study area.

This means that from those areas that are coloured you may be able to see the proposed development. The different colours let you know how many wind turbines you may be able to see.

The ZTV does not consider trees and buildings. These can often screen views so that fewer or no turbines are actually visible. The ZTV gives an initial idea of those areas from which you may be able to see the proposed development. This is checked by landscape architects during site visits.



**Why Renewable Energy?**

A substantial amount of carbon emissions come from energy used across power, heating and transport.

Renewable energy such as wind power, does not emit greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Therefore, by using renewable energy technologies like wind turbines, solar panels and hydro we are reducing carbon emissions created by traditional energy consumption.

**By bringing forward more renewable energy in Scotland, we are:**

-  **Reducing our reliance on fossil fuels**
-  **Improving energy security by reducing imports**
-  **Meeting government targets**
-  **Tackling climate change**

**Renewable Energy and Climate Change**

**What is Climate Change?**

Climate is the average weather we experience over many years, climate change is the change we are seeing in these averages conditions. The rapid climate change we are now seeing is caused by humans using oil, gas and coal for their homes, factories and transport.

Average global temperatures have risen by more than 1°C since the 1850s. 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 were the hottest years ever recorded. Scotland, and the rest of the world is in the midst of a global climate emergency.

We are already seeing the negative impact of climate change. Unless action is taken, temperatures will continue to rise and we will experience catastrophic impacts such, with worsening droughts, greater sea level rise and mass extinction of species. We all have a role to play.

**The Impact of Climate Change Environment**

We are already witnessing changes to our environment such as the melting of ice caps and glaciers with low lying and coastal cities at particular risk of flooding.

Climate change is expected to worsen the frequency, intensity, and impacts of some types of extreme weather events. For example, increases in temperatures have resulted in a greater risk of wildfires like those recently seen in the USA, Australia and Europe.

**People**

Climate change is affecting people in far-reaching ways. Things that we all depend upon and value – water, energy, wildlife, agriculture, ecosystems, and human health – are experiencing the effects of a changing climate.

These extreme weather events (floods, storms and wild fires) will become more common and intense, threatening lives and livelihoods.

**Nature**

There is already evidence that animals, birds and plants are being affected by climate change in both their distribution and behaviour.

Changes are happening so fast that many species do not have time to adapt to the loss of habitats or food and will soon become extinct.

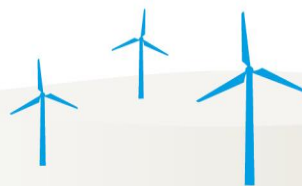
For example, the loss of sea ice has already seen large reductions in the numbers of Polar Bear species whilst increasing sea temperatures has dramatically impacted coral reefs – a vital habitat for many sea creatures.

**Impact in the UK**

Changes to the climate are also being felt in the UK.

Our winters are becoming warmer and wetter resulting in increased flooding. Whilst our summers will become hotter and drier meaning the likelihood of droughts will increase.

People, nature, and infrastructure are already vulnerable to a range of climate impacts today and these will only increase in the coming years as the climate continues to change.



## Community Benefit

We believe that there are many opportunities for local residents to benefit from Balmespick Wind Farm.

We are proposing that the development will deliver community benefit equating to:

### £5,000 PER MW OF INSTALLED CAPACITY

This has the potential to provide over £9.7m throughout the lifetime of the project.

We want to work closely with the communities surrounding the proposed development to ensure that the community benefit fund is structured to be able to address local and regional needs, meeting challenges such as:

- Fuel poverty
- Energy efficiency
- Housing stock
- Recreation
- Connectivity
- Tourism

### Our experience

We believe that our wind farms can be an asset to the local area, supporting the local economy and helping to meet local aspirations. Each year Fred. Olsen Renewables provides over £600,000 to eligible communities surrounding our wind farms, amounting to more than £6m to date.

### Duns Swimming Pool

The community benefit funds from Crystal Rig Wind Farm have helped many local children master the important life skill of swimming. The funding provides children with access to free swimming lessons from birth. In addition, all local residents benefit from subsidised pool membership. Helping to build confidence in the water, provide a social outlet and keep kids active.

This initiative has also helped to support Duns Swimming Pool, a local charity, allowing it to reinvest in the facilities and provide a valuable service.



## Supply Chain

We always seek to employ local services during the construction and operation of our wind farms. If you, or your company, would like to register your services please contact [suppliers@fredolsen.co.uk](mailto:suppliers@fredolsen.co.uk).

**£317**

million of contracts signed with Scottish businesses



**246**

Construction jobs (Full Time Equivalent)



**2,458**

Construction Job Years (Per Year Equivalent)



**50**

Operational & Maintenance Employment (Per Time Equivalent)

**£3.0**

million funding for the local community throughout the lifespan of our wind farms



**£29**

million contribution to Scottish GVA


*Mostly figures, correct November 2021*

[www.balmespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balmespickwindfarm.co.uk)

[communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com)

07435 763 900

# Round 1: Feedback Form



## Community Benefit Survey Feedback Form

**Name**

**Address**

**Email**

**Telephone**



**Would you like to see a community benefit fund designed to complement existing funding?**  
 Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

**Would you like to see an energy discount scheme delivered locally?**  
 Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

>>>

**Would you like to see an energy efficiency scheme delivered locally?**  
 Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

**Where would you like to see a community benefit fund delivered?**  
 Locally  Regionally  Both



Comments

**Can you please rank the following in order of importance to you, with 1 being the most important and 3 being the least?**  
 Energy Efficiency Scheme  Energy Discount Scheme  Community Benefit Fund  Other

**Do you have any other ideas for utilising the community benefit from Balmespick Wind Farm?**

**Any other comments?**

Fred. Olsen Renewables Limited (registered office is at 2nd Floor, 36 Broadway, London, W1H 1BE) - number 02672430 is a leading developer, owner and operator of renewable energy assets primarily onshore wind farms. We are committed to safeguarding the privacy of individuals with whom we interact. We process your personal data as a data controller in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR). We collect, store and use the following kinds of personal data when you complete our feedback form: **Identity & Contact:** This includes your title, name, email address, postal address, and telephone number. **Marketing & Usage:** Information about your marketing and communication preferences, and information you provide for the purpose of subscribing to email notifications and/or newsletters. **Being your personal information:** We will use your information to send you email notifications which you have requested and/or our newsletter and other marketing communications and for legal and compliance purposes. **Disclosure of your personal data:** We do not share your personal data with any other party. **Data transfer outside the EEA:** We will not transfer your data outside the UK. **Your Rights:** This page has rights under UK GDPR. Please visit [www.fredolsen.co.uk/privacy-policy](https://www.fredolsen.co.uk/privacy-policy) for full details. You may at any time exercise any of the above rights by contacting our Data Protection Officer by post to the registered office, or by email at [dataprotection@fredolsen.co.uk](mailto:dataprotection@fredolsen.co.uk). **How long we keep your personal data:** We will keep your data for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes we collected it for, including for satisfying any legal and compliance requirements.

## Round 1: Leaflet

# BALNESPICK WIND FARM



### Community Benefit

If consented, Balnespick Wind Farm could provide over £9m in community benefit throughout the lifespan of the project.

We appreciate that the communities closest to the wind farm are very experienced at managing community benefit and bringing forward successful initiatives. We would like to learn from this and identify how we can work together to ensure that Balnespick Wind Farm can help to support local aspirations.



### Exhibitions

As part of our ongoing consultation, we will be holding a range of local events. Our first events are on:

**3rd October**  
**The Auditorium,**  
**The Strathdearn, Tomatin, IV13 7YN**  
**11am – 7.30pm**

**4th October**  
**Carrbridge Village Hall,**  
**Main Street, Carrbridge, PH23 3AA**  
**11am – 7.30pm**

We hope that these events allow everyone the opportunity to view and comment on the current proposals and have their questions answered.

If you are unable to attend, we would encourage you to:

- View the materials online
- Request printed materials
- Submit your questions and comments

### Supply chain

We always seek to employ local services during the construction and operation of our wind farms – helping to maximise local economic opportunities.

Services that we have previously employed include:

- Local accommodation
- Plant hire
- Caterers
- Groundworks
- Fencers
- Concrete and aggregate

**If you, or your company, are able to provide any of these services, and more, please get in touch by emailing [suppliers@fredolsen.com](mailto:suppliers@fredolsen.com).**



### Hello,

**We are exploring the potential to develop Balnespick Wind Farm, located 5.6km east of Tomatin and 6.6km north-west of Carrbridge.**

We are at the very early stages of our proposals, and we would like to start a conversation with the local community and key stakeholders about how we can develop a project that:

- Is shaped by community feedback
- Supports local aspirations
- Allows us to explore delivering local initiatives such as:
  - Connectivity
  - Recreation
  - Tourism

There are many ways for you to get in touch with us:

- [www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk)
- [communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com)
- 07435 763 900












## About the Proposal

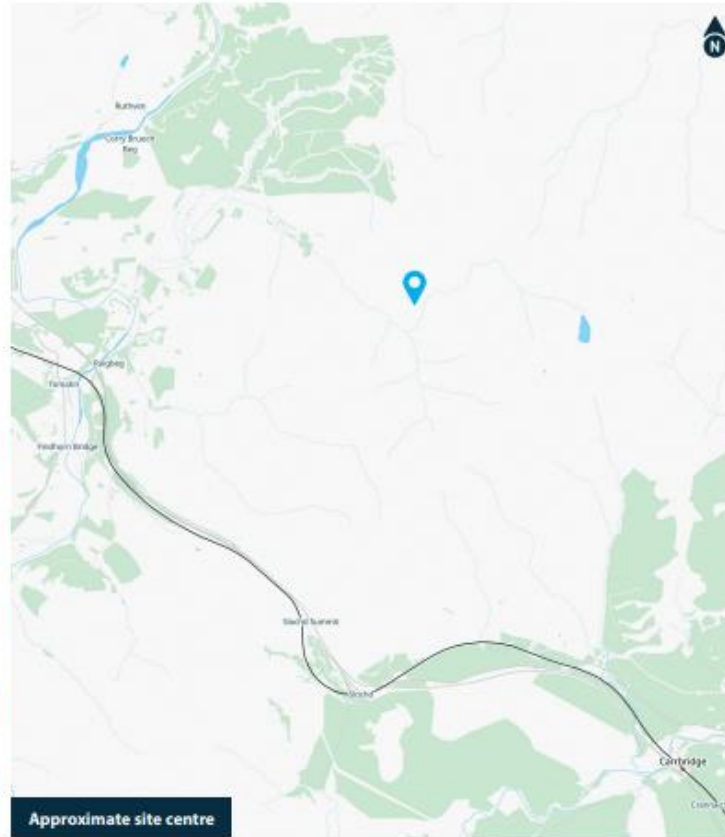
**We are at the early stages of our proposals and we still have a significant amount of information to gather prior to submitting an application.**

We have submitted a scoping request to the Scottish Government, which will allow us to collect stakeholder feedback that will help to shape our plans.

We are embarking upon consultation with the community and key stakeholders. The feedback that we receive throughout the consultation process will help to inform our final plans.

At this stage it is anticipated that the project will involve:

-  **9 turbines up to 200m to tip**
-  **10MW energy storage facility**
-  **55.8MW wind farm capacity**
-  **35 year lifespan**
-  **£5,000 per MW community fund**



## About us

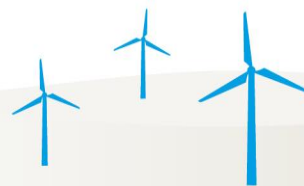
**Fred. Olsen Renewables is one of the longest standing renewable energy developers in Scotland.**

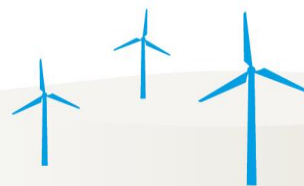
Our portfolio consists of 258 operational turbines, alongside a further 76 consented. This, combined with our projects in Norway and Sweden, brings our total operational capacity to 787.7 MW – providing enough power for over half a million homes.

We are excited about the future. With a pipeline of more than 1GW, central to our success will be collaboration with communities, committing to local businesses and contributing towards Scotland's sustainable future.



## Appendix C: Round 1 Exhibition Pictures





# Appendix D: Round 2 of Public Consultation Advertisements

## Newspaper Advertisement: 2024



GRHAM LEADBITTER: instead of change it's more of the same!

### SNP MP's warning on winter energy

THE Labour party has failed to protect people from rising energy prices ahead of what could be another 'biter and expensive winter', local SNP MP Graham Leadbetter has claimed.

It comes as energy consultancy, Cornwall Insight, projected a 9.3 per cent rise in the energy price cap, which is set to be updated tomorrow (Friday) by Ofgem.

"The warnings, which come just weeks after Labour ended the winter fuel payment for pensioners across the UK, show annual energy bills could rise to £1714 before another expected rise to the cap in January."

Commenting, the Moray West, Na h-Eileanan Siar and Strathclyde MP said: "The Labour party, through their inaction and continuation of Tory austerity, has failed to protect people from what could be yet another bitter and expensive winter for people in this area."

"Massive energy price rises, a hallmark of the last Tory government, are now returning under Labour rule."

"The promises of 'change' have evaporated as we return to the austerity-driven policies a Labour government should have been an end to."

"Instead of 'change' we have more of the same."

"That was made crystal clear with Labour's callous decision to end the Winter Fuel Payment for millions-cutting crucial funding for the Scottish Government in the process."

"Targeted action must be taken to ensure families aren't forced into making decisions over whether to heat or eat again this winter. We must see a return of the £500 energy bill rebate, at a minimum."

"My SNP colleagues and I will work with Labour to deliver that support - but they must first show a willingness to offer it."

## Family's delight at memorial for Jack

By Iain Ramsay  
iain.ramsay@hmedia.co.uk

THE widow and the mother of former Strathclyde reporter Jack Calvert have given thanks to those who in his name are raising thousands to fight the disease that so cruelly took him two years ago.

Jack, after serving his apprenticeship as a reporter with Scottish Provincial Press before a career switch and marriage to Eilidh took him to Aberdeen as a young police officer, died in July 2022 at just 32 after a brave fight with bowel cancer.

To help keep his memory alive, his colleagues launched The Jack Calvert Memorial Games and on Saturday August 10 at Deeside Rugby

Club in Banochory colleagues, friends and family gathered for a special event which raised a wonderful £7,100 for charity.

A Grampian Police spokesperson explained that the initial idea had grown since its inception and Jack's family told the Strathclyde week they were grateful for the way things had turned out.

Always superb, Jack had been an all-round sportsman and his memory was being kept in the perfect way, through sport for charity.

Always superb, Jack had been an all-round sportsman and his memory was being kept in the perfect way, through sport for charity.

The family event saw the Scottish Police Rugby women's team go head-to-head against Garloch Ladies' teams as the North Police Scotland battled for victory against the Scottish Police men's squad.



**TALENTED, ATHLETIC AND GENEROUS:** Jack Calvert was a hugely popular member of our staff as he learned his trade before joining the police and starting a family with Eilidh, with whom he had a daughter, Nina.

Spectators enjoyed an afternoon of placings bids at the raffle and silent auction while sampling a host of delicacies on offer.

Proceeds are being split between The Archie Foundation, Maggie's Aberdeen and Burnside House, which were all selected by Jack's wife Eilidh.

She told the Strathclyde: "The game epitomises what Jack stood for - healthy competition, fitness, family and friends, good food and doing your bit for charity to help the local community."

His mother Amanda, said: "We are so grateful to Grampian Police Rugby Football Club and Scottish Police Rugby for their continued support."

"All their time and effort makes the Jack Calvert Memorial Games the amazing event that it is."

It gifts us this opportunity for everyone to remember Jack every year.

Thursday, August 15, 2024

## Green light despite 'disgraceful' claim

Balavil Estate has been granted retrospective permission for a borrow pit described as being more akin to a quarry but owners deny any ancient woodland has been destroyed writes Gavin Musgrove

THERE has been dispute over claims that part of an ancient woodland had been lost on a Balavil estate as part of a 'green' scheme of tree planting.

Balavil Estate was denounced by several members of the Cairngorms National Park Authority's planning committee for further excavating a borrow pit without permission.

A picture presented at the meeting on Friday at the CNPA's headquarters showed the large extent by which the works had grown in the past decade in the southwest corner of Craigmachrie forest.

Later the material has been used to create a track - again carried out in part without consent - in order to reach woodlands being grown as a restoration scheme.

Committee members reluctantly agreed to both retrospective applications but will just allow the borrow pit temporary works to continue for six months rather than the two years being recommended by their planning officers before an agreed tree compensation planting scheme has to start.

Gavin Miles, the park authority's head planner, told the committee the lost ancient woodland was irreparable: "This site was in an ancient woodland area and we would never have approved this application had it not been undertaken beforehand."

"However, it has been done and the loss of that habitat has happened. There is no way for us to remedy this in a way that would be satisfactory."

He confirmed to a committee question that there was no punitive action that could be taken against the estate by Kinrosshire.

But Mr Miles said that "satisfactory restoration" of such sites was a relatively easy undertaking.

"Once it is left alone, trees will start to spread pretty quickly," he remarked.

Mr Miles said it was impossible to know what if any disturbance had been caused to wildlife by the further excavation of the historic borrow pit.

He concluded: "This is the best outcome we can achieve through the planning system but clearly this has been a real breach and problem. We do not have any other choice other than to approve with the conditions."

Planning committee member John Kirk came to the estate's defence.

He said: "Borrow pits always seem to be a thorn in the side of this park but I can understand why they have done it. The amount of accidents that there have been at the Balavil site with lorries turning off, is of drugs on August 29, 2022.

His reading was 2.2microgrammes of a cannabis metabolite when the safe driving limit is 2microgrammes.

Ritchie was ordered to carry out 80 hours unpaid community work by Sheriff David Sutherland.

He also banned him from driving for a year at the court on Wednesday (August 7).



**PARKED UP:** Works vehicles in the borrow pit gives an indication of the size of the excavations that have taken place on Balavil Estate.

net zero as they are using stuff that is on site so I do not see why it can not be used.

"But I question the term ancient pine forest when you look at the trees - these are 1900s and 1970s trees not ancient pine woods... God knows what age that makes me Ancient."

Follow committee member Eleanor Mackintosh responded: "I am in no way against the borrow pit but I am against how this estate has conducted this application. They have had two years for the borrow pit and it is project specific and they have done the project without permission and should now reinstate the borrow pit. It has to be done in the proper fashion surely?"

And she was backed up by Fiona McLean who said: "This is a serious breach and loss of ancient woodland which I think is disgraceful. Are there any sanctions we can impose?"

Mr Miles said there are not. "The purpose of planning is not to punish people," he explained.

Planning committee member Derek Ross was more scathing: "I do not know if colleagues recall but we went to this estate with this expressed purpose and they told us they wanted to liaise with the CNPA, they wanted to cooperate with the CNPA and what do we see here? A breach. I think it is disgraceful."

The application for the retrospective works at the borrow pit were unanimously backed - but just for six months - in light of their planners saying this was the 'best outcome' achievable.

The planning committee heard that the track on Balavil had been used informally by estate vehicles and was extended after 2020 with material from the borrow pit.

Approval was also agreed for the upgrade and widening of 800 metres of the 4x4 access track. The estate had disputed whether an application was even needed

Thursday, August 15, 2024



**DEREK ROSS:** Blasted estate for its actions.

for the track running north west from the main estate road and is located north of Craig Bhauidhe woodland and north west of Luachair Mhor.

A Balavil spokesperson said after the meeting: "We want to be clear that although there is ancient woodland on the Balavil Estate, the borrow pit itself is situated in an area of plantation forestry dating from the 1900s and 1970s."

The estate takes forest and wildlife management seriously and liaises closely with the Cairngorms National Park Authority.

"Over the last five years we have planted 350,000 native trees improving the habitats of hundreds of species including ospreys and red kites."

"We have also been working closely with conservation teams seeking to protect critically endangered Scottish wildcats and to reintroduce beavers to the area, and we have improved paths for walkers who wish to enjoy the estate."

"Using stone from our own borrow pit was the most environmentally sensitive way to improve access to the site where new trees have been planted, reducing our carbon footprint to almost zero and improving safety."

## Flood or no flood?

THE Met Office is warning that the remains of Hurricane Ernesto are set to bring a deluge of rain and strong winds to parts of the Highlands, but the local weather buff says the strath will not see the worst of it, indeed if any at all.

The Met Office issued a yellow weather warning for today (Thursday) when the storm, which has already downgraded from a tropical storm and will weaken further, is expected to make its presence felt in the UK.

The Met Office forecasts: "This will bring heavy rain and strong winds."

The warning is really for the West Highlands.

"Up to 150mm of rain is possible on some hills, and wind gusts of up to 60mph are being predicted on coasts and islands."

The warning is set to remain in place until 6pm: "In the Highlands the alert extends as far south as Brodick on Arran and extends as far as Aviemore, and covers most of the A9 south of Inverness as far as Pitlochry."

But Carbridge-based Highland Islands Weather's forecaster Lee Schofield told the Strathclyde: "There are no flood warnings for the strath."

"The warning is really for the West Highlands."



**STORMY WEATHER:** But here...?

### Balnespick Wind Farm

#### PUBLIC EXHIBITION

VIEW THE PLANS | LEARN ABOUT THE PROPOSALS | HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

[balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://balnespickwindfarm.co.uk) | [communities@fredolsen.co.uk](https://www.facebook.com/communities@fredolsen.co.uk) | 07435 763 900

We would like to invite you to learn more about our plans to develop **Balnespick Wind Farm**, located 5.6km east of Tomatin and 6.6km north-west of Carbridge.

We hope to submit our application to the Scottish Government later this year and our exhibitions will be able to tell you more about:

- How our plans have evolved
- The opportunities that they present locally
- How we have listened to your feedback

If you can't attend, please:

- View the materials online
- Get in touch to set up a discussion
- Provide your comments

**Tuesday 27th August**  
12noon - 8pm  
The Auditorium, The Strathdearn, Tomatin, IV13 7YN

**Wednesday 28th August**  
11am - 6pm  
Carbridge Village Hall, Main Street, Carbridge, PH23 3AA

**Fred. Olsen Renewables**

## Motorist with bloodshot eyes tested positive for cannabis

POLICE officers pulled over a Boac of Garmen motorist because the vehicle did not have a road tax.

But Inverness Sheriff Court heard that when officers approached 31 year old Dylan Ritchie of Craige Avenue, they saw his eyes were bloodshot and he was tested positive for cannabis.

He admitted driving under the influence

## HAVEN CENTRE - 1ST ANNIVERSARY

# a difference



**Dawn Walker** SNAP CEO, **Kirstin Mackay** programme manager, **Elsie Northington** Foundation patron and development officer **Rona Matheson**. Picture: Catrini Mackay

She knows what she wants." And although Sioux is non-verbal it does not mean she has not got a voice and communicates by signing.

The staff at SNAP, who espouse the core values of fun, friendship, experiences and respect, have also got to know Sioux.

Lindsay praises them for their team spirit and hard work in getting to know the people in their care as well as offering support to the families and making good use of the space at the Haven.

"It is that relationship between SNAP and the Haven Centre which makes a difference," she says. "Since the centre opened a year ago, it has developed and grown."

The Elsie Northington Foundation staff team has grown from two to five while SNAP has also seen its own staff team grow.

The Haven Suites have provided short breaks, overnight stays, emergency respite and independent skills sessions with families from Inverness-shire, Nairn, the Isle of Lewis, Brora and Fort Augustus and many other places in between.

The café, open five days a week and staffed mainly by volunteers, has welcomed centre users, members of the public and the local community to enjoy home-made treats, coffees, lunches and snacks.

All the money made is invested back into the charity to help the services. The café will soon develop supported work placements for young people with



**Dawn Walker** SNAP CEO, **Kirstin Mackay** programme manager, **Elsie Northington** Foundation patron and development officer **Rona Matheson**. Picture: Catrini Mackay

## Helping hand for parents of children with complex needs

ONCE a week, Beth Williamson (14) has a sleepover in one of the suites at the Haven Centre in Inverness.

It means she can get her hair washed and enjoy some pampering while it gives her parents, Amelia and Andy, time to themselves and to focus on their 16-year-old son Arthur.

Beth has a rare genetic disorder, resulting in an intellectual disability and epilepsy but two years ago started to lose her mobility and now uses a wheelchair.

Although she cannot speak very well, she communicates using signing and has an iPad but still gets frustrated.

Beth, a pupil at Drummond School, was one of the first to use one of the three to use one of the three fully-adapted suites at the centre for young people with complex needs after it opened a year ago.

"Unfortunately, our house is not designed for someone with mobility issues," says Amelia, a child psychotherapist.

"It is getting harder and harder to get her into the shower or bath."

She ponders what they would do without the centre.

"We would probably have to take her to the local swimming pool to wash her," she says. "We would have to think creatively and not get desperate."

She outlined the practical realities faced by families living with a child with complex needs.

"I can never just go to the shop, or go for a walk, or meet a friend," she says. "Someone has to be with Beth 24/7."

"We have to plan around each other all the time, around our jobs, and there are moments it is quite stressful."

"It is getting harder and harder to get her into the shower or bath."

of mind, knowing their daughter is enjoying herself and having a bit of independence in a safe environment with carers who know her.

Beth also takes part in activities she might not otherwise have tried when she attends sessions run by the Special Needs Action Project (SNAP) each week and in the school holidays.

"In my whole experience there has never been something she looks forward to as much as SNAP," Amelia says.

"I'm so grateful. It feels we are making progress towards some of her skills otherwise she would just be sitting at home watching TV with her mum."

She describes Elsie Northington who campaigned for 10 years to achieve the £4.8 million centre as an amazing lady and says what it delivers is "really exceptional."

She feels the centre has created a sense of community.

"I think belonging is so important for young people," she says. "They feel excluded from so much."



**Beth Williamson** relaxes in a bean bag at the Haven Centre.

## We all don't have to be Olympians but we could be active

**W** e have seen a large amount of world-class sport and physical activity recently.

At the start of the summer, we saw the European football championship where many people showed their support for the Scotland team by travelling to Germany. More recently the Olympics have come to an end but then we have the Paralympics to follow in Paris.

The dedication of those taking part is huge, both for the gold medalists who may be household names but also for the thousands of others who are lesser known.

Many have faced adversity and injury and have had to dedicate their lives to their sport knowing that a simple mishap could end their sporting hopes.

Yet we continue to see new records being set. I was delighted to be able to see a couple of events at the Olympics from the stands, at one stage sitting next to an inflatable



**Health Matters**  
By Dr Tim Allison



*Physical activity is important at all ages but there are certain times when we can pay particular attention to the need to keep active.*

kangaroo brought by Australian fans, but what stood out was the immense commitment from everyone taking part.

For every Olympic and Paralympic competitor there are hundreds of other dedicated competitors and coaches, and it would be easy to assume that physical activity is on the increase throughout the world, especially given how beneficial being active is for our physical and mental health at all ages.

However, a recent report from the World Health Organization shows that this is not the case and across the world the proportion of people who are physically active is decreasing and it is a particular concern among older people.

The good news for the vast majority of us for whom high-level sport will only ever be a dream is that we can all improve our health through physical activity. From children at school and nursery to people who live in care homes, there are opportunities to move more and even small increases in activity can be important for our health.

Physical activity is important at all ages but there are certain times when we can pay particular attention to the need to keep active. One is in teenage years when many young people take less interest in sport and another is for older people, for example when retiring from more active work.

For some, sport remains the answer and there are many different activities for ourselves, we may want to be active with others; we may want to compare what we do with our past activity or with others. But whether we are interested in the great global sports events and are inspired by their stories or if we just want to get out in the countryside, let us all do our bit to increase physical activity and improve our own physical health, mental health and wellbeing.

**Dr Tim Allison** is NHS Highland's director of public health and policy.



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**Dr Tim Allison** is NHS Highland's director of public health and policy.

## Park set for major upgrade

HIGHLAND Council has clarified the Whin Park work schedule after public concerns at the loss of a play area which the local authority earlier said was removed due to health and safety concerns.

A member of the public wrote to the The Inverness Courier expressing their "huge disappointment" at the condition of the park.

But work is due to begin soon after the contractor - Jupiter Play & Leisure - was appointed last month.

Last year, the Inverness city council granted the Whin Park revamp scheme £156,000 of Common Good funding, then in February this year it got another £100,000 - it was already in receipt of £234,988 from the Scottish Government.

The council, recognising the park's importance to locals and visitors, announced a special programme of events over the summer. Works are set to begin in October and run to April next year.

## Balnespick Wind Farm

### PUBLIC EXHIBITION

VIEW THE PLANS | LEARN ABOUT THE PROPOSALS | HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

balnespickwindfarm.co.uk communities@fredolsen.com 07435 763 900

We would like to invite you to learn more about our plans to develop Balnespick Wind Farm, located 5.6km east of Tomatin and 6.6km north-west of Carrbridge.

Tuesday 27th August  
12noon - 8pm  
The Auditorium,  
The Strathdean, Tomatin, IV13 7YN

Wednesday 28th August  
11am - 6pm  
Carrbridge Village Hall,  
Main Street, Carrbridge, PH23 3AA

We hope to submit our application to the Scottish Government later this year and our exhibitions will be able to tell you more about:

- How our plans have evolved
- The opportunities that they present locally
- How we have listened to your feedback

If you can't attend, please:

- View the materials online
- Get in touch to set up a discussion
- Provide your comments

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## Long story

# SHORT

To celebrate Miele's 125th anniversary purchase an eligible appliance and you could win a staggering

**£125,000\***

PLUS with each eligible purchase you also qualify for a chance to win a voucher worth up to £250 in our monthly prize draws

**WE'LL DRINK TO THAT**

\*£125,000 cash prize. £250 up to £2500. For full details visit www.miele.co.uk/125-years-of-miele

## Miele



## THAIN ELECTRICAL

Unit 1, Myrtlefield Business Park, Aviemore PH22 1SD  
**01479 810744**  
email: thain@thainelectrical.com  
www.thainpliances.com

SALES AND SERVICE

## Round 2: Poster



# Balnespick Wind Farm

## PUBLIC EXHIBITION

VIEW THE PLANS | LEARN ABOUT THE PROPOSALS | HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

[balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://balnespickwindfarm.co.uk) [communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com) 07435 763 900

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 Fred. Olsen Renewables



# Round 2: Brochure



## Balnespick Wind Farm

EXHIBITION BROCHURE  
August 2024

 Fred. Olsen Renewables

### Welcome

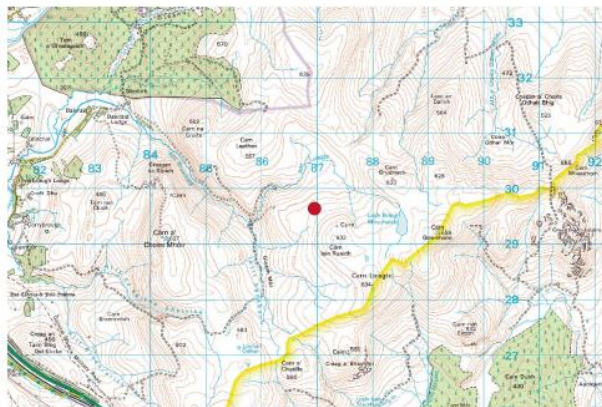
Welcome to our second set of public exhibitions about our proposals to develop Balnespick Wind Farm, located on the Balnespick Estate, approximately 5km east of Tomatin and 6km north west of Carrbridge.

We are keen to continue our conversation with the community about how we can develop a project that will:

- Deliver local and regional supply chain opportunities
- Make a positive contribution to the local economy
- Provide around £279,000 in community benefit
- Actively support Scotland's net zero ambitions

Your feedback and opinions are very important. Please complete a feedback form or speak to the team to discuss the plans further.

-  [communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com)
-  07435 763 900
-  [www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk)



● Site location

 Fred. Olsen Renewables

### About Us

Fred. Olsen Renewables is one of the longest standing renewable energy developers in Scotland.

Our portfolio consists of 258 operational turbines, alongside a further 76 consented.

This, combined with our projects in Norway and Sweden, brings our total operational capacity to 805 MW.

We are excited about the future. With a pipeline of more than 1GW, central to our success will be collaboration with communities, committing to local businesses and contributing towards Scotland's sustainable future.



Developing



Constructing



Operating

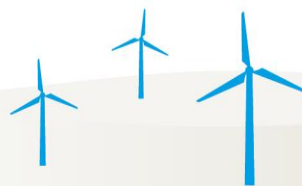
### Our Proposals

We have undertaken a range of environmental and technical assessments and have been gathering feedback from statutory consultees and the local community.

We hope that these exhibitions will help to provide an update on how this feedback, alongside the findings of our assessments have influenced design.

The plans for Balnespick Wind Farm consist of:

- Nine wind turbines, with a tip height of up to 200m
- Up to 10MW of battery storage
- Turbine foundations and hardstandings
- External transformer housing
- Onsite substation and control building
- Underground electricity cables between the turbines
- Access tracks
- Crane pads
- Anemometry mast



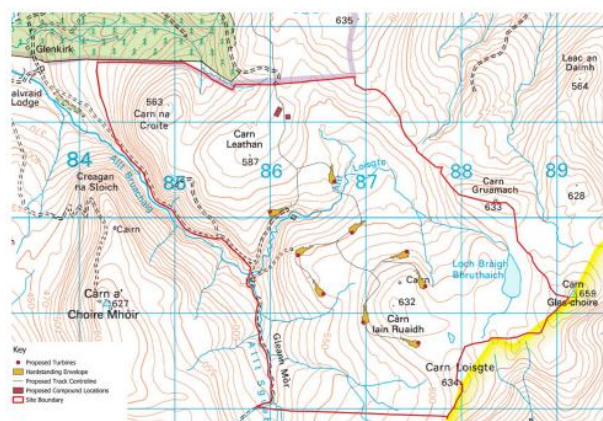
## Layout and Design Process

To determine the location of the wind turbines many factors have been considered. These include:

- Wind resource
- Engineering constraints
- Visual impact
- Impact on sensitive habitats
- Proximity to areas of ecological interest
- Location of heritage assets
- Telecommunication infrastructure

Following our first round of exhibitions the location of the turbines has been altered slightly.

The layout in the plan shown details the location of the proposed nine turbines.



## The Development Process

Having submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in August 2023 we have received a range of feedback from consultees. Some of the stakeholders included:

- The Highland Council
- NatureScot
- RSPB
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
- Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
- Community Councils

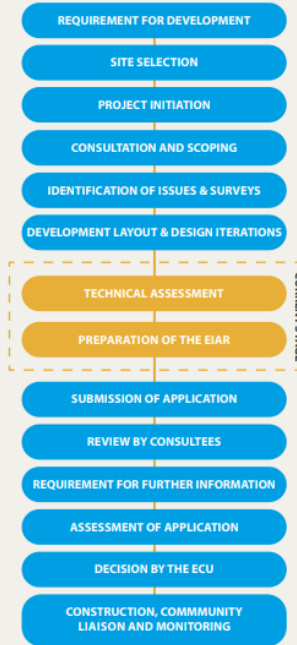
This feedback has determined the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and informed the extent of our surveys and assessments. These have helped to influence the layout of the site to ensure that it minimises effects on the local environment.

We have evaluated any potential significant effects of the proposed development, and these will be presented within the EIA Report (EIAR). The EIAR will accompany the application for consent to the Scottish Government.

The EIAR will consider:

- Ornithology
- Ecology
- Cultural Heritage
- Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Peat
- Aviation and Telecommunications
- Socioeconomics and Tourism
- Noise and Vibration
- Traffic and Transport
- Landscape and Visual

### Our Development Timeline



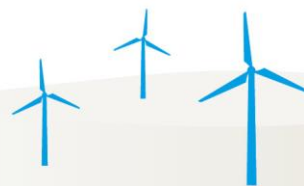
## Environmental Impact Assessment

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is being finalised. This identifies and assesses the potential significant environmental effects of the proposed development. The information gathered through the EIA process helps to shape the design and layout of the proposed development and required mitigation measures. This includes, amongst others:

### Ornithology

A desk-based study was conducted in Autumn 2019. This was prior to the commencement of baseline surveys. It provided background information on protected sites designated for their ornithological interest and protected species either known or likely to be present within the site and its surrounding area. The desk-study findings were used to advise on the ornithological field survey programme.

The site has undergone a suite of baseline ornithology surveys between March 2020





and February 2022 (inclusive). A range of surveys have been undertaken, including:

- Vantage Point surveys in two breeding seasons and two non-breeding seasons
- Moorland Breeding Bird Surveys
- Black Grouse Surveys
- Breeding Raptor Surveys
- Eagle Surveys

All surveys have been undertaken in line with the latest guidance from NatureScot and the extent of the baseline surveys were agreed in consultation with NatureScot.

VP surveys recorded flights from a total of nine target species (comprising wader, wildfowl and raptor species). In addition, the dedicated raptor surveys (excluding eagles) recorded sightings of six target raptor species, but no evidence of breeding within the surveyed area.

The breeding bird surveys recorded a typical community of upland bird species. Red grouse and golden plover were the species most found across the site.

It was highlighted by NatureScot that capercaillie will likely form an important part of the assessment as there may be dispersion of birds between Darnaway Forest SPA and the Strathspey SPAs which could cross the proposed site. Discussions will be held with the RSPB Capercaillie Project Officer and further information will be gathered to inform a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA).

### Ecology

A desk-based study was undertaken in Autumn 2019 prior to the commencement of baseline surveys. This provided background information on protected sites designated for their ecological interest and protected species either known or likely to be present within the site and its surrounding area. These findings were used to direct the ecological field survey programme.

The site has undergone a suite of baseline ecology surveys between May 2020 and October 2023 (inclusive).

The following surveys were undertaken:

- Phase 1 Habitat Survey
- Badger Survey
- Wildcat Survey
- Otter Survey
- Water Vole Survey
- Bat Roost Assessment
- Static Bat Detector (bat activity) Surveys
- National Vegetation Classification (NVC) Survey
- Freshwater Habitat Assessment Survey

All surveys were undertaken in line with the latest guidance from NatureScot and the extent of the baseline surveys were agreed in consultation with NatureScot.

The majority of the development area consists of dry modified bog. There is a large area of dry dwarf shrub heath to the north-west and scrub habitat which borders the estate tracks and watercourses.



There are no habitats present on site that have the potential to support red squirrels or pine marten.

The moorland habitat which dominates the site is of low suitability for badger and wildcat and no signs of badger or wildcat activity were recorded within the survey area. Few signs of otter and water vole were recorded along watercourses within the site.

The bat roost assessment found that there was low potential for bats to be roosting within the survey area, as very few good quality mature trees or other potential roosting sites (e.g. buildings, bridges) are present.

Bat activity across the site was relatively low, possibly due to the lack of available forested habitat. The most frequently recorded bat species was common pipistrelle.

The freshwater habitat assessment identified that none of the watercourses within the site are connected to the River Spey SAC or any other protected areas in the vicinity of the site. The survey found presence of habitat suitable to support Atlantic salmon, sea trout, resident brown trout, eel and lamprey.



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### Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage assessment considers the archaeological and cultural heritage assets within the proposed development site, and in the wider area according to potential impacts.

A desk-based assessment was carried out which comprised a review of data sources including the Highland Council Historic Environment Record, Historic Environment Scotland records, historical and modern mapping and any available LIDAR data. In addition, a detailed walkover survey across the footprint of the proposed development has been undertaken. Assessment of key heritage assets in the wider area is ongoing and designated assets within 10km of the proposed development site are being visited to assess potential impacts on their settings.

Within the proposed development site, there are identified 25 heritage assets. These assets comprise 21 modern shooting butts; a mound formed at least partially of stones; a square cut into a hillside which may be evidence of post-medieval livestock management; a marker stone; and a marker cairn (Asset 48). These assets likely reflect husbandry activities in the post-medieval period, and the modern use of the proposed development area, which Ordnance Survey mapping indicates has been associated with shooting since at least the 1970's.

Throughout the design process close consideration is given to any potential impacts upon cultural heritage assets: turbines and associated infrastructure elements have been located away from known cultural heritage assets within the site, and data from the walkover survey and desk-based assessment has fed into the on-going design process. Consultation is ongoing with stakeholders to discuss the potential effects of the proposed development on the settings of heritage assets both within and outwith the proposed development site; care will be taken to identify and assess the potential to avoid adversely affecting an asset's setting and thereby the ability to understand, appreciate and experience the asset in its wider context.

### Biodiversity Net Gain

Our EIA will consider how we can deliver biodiversity net gain. Making sure that we leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than pre-development.

We hope to improve the biodiversity in and around the site. This can involve:

- Taking steps to mitigate potential negative impacts
- Enhancing, creating and restoring habitats in and around the site

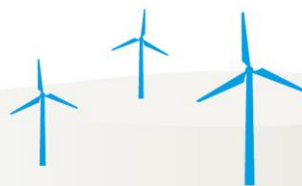


### Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Peat

This assessment considers the hydrological, geological and hydrogeological characteristics of the proposed development site, and helps to inform appropriate mitigation proposals. Areas of peat are found to be extensive across the site with depths ranging from less than 0.5m to between 3m and 5m depth.

The turbine layout has taken into consideration the habitats and watercourse across the site and looked to keep outwith any areas of deep peat and away from watercourses.

Site work is ongoing, and the second stage of the surveys will be to complete detailed peat depth surveys at site and a watercourse crossing assessment based on the design freeze layout. Given the sensitivity of the site and the peat depths encountered to date, consultation will be ongoing with SEPA with regards to the site layout prior to EIAR reporting.



**Aviation and Telecommunications**

Assessments and consultation have been undertaken to assess whether the turbines could adversely affect the operation of commercial and military aviation interests and infrastructure.

Work to date and scoping consultations have established that no impacts to civil or military radars are expected. There are also no anticipated impacts to other infrastructure such as radio communications, navigational aids and landing systems. There is ongoing dialogue with Inverness Airport to ensure that turbines will not affect approach procedures, requiring a full assessment of the finalised design.

**Socioeconomics and Tourism**

Predicted socioeconomic benefits of the proposed development will be outlined within the EIA Report. This will include the potential benefits on local, regional and national levels during the construction and operational periods of the proposed development. The tourism assessment will consider the drivers of tourism in the locality and whether there is any potential for positive or negative effects associated with the proposed development that could lead to changes in tourist behaviour and so the tourism economy.



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**Noise and Vibration**

This assessment will consider the potential effects of operational noise from wind turbines and any other items of fixed plant (such as batteries and substations) on nearby sensitive receptors. The noise levels from operation of the wind turbines and associated plant will be predicted and compared against the adopted noise limits. The noise limits for wind turbines will be set in accordance with appropriate standards and guidance, taking account of noise limits set for cumulative developments.

Noise from the construction phase will be addressed through production of a CEMP. Appropriate noise limits for the construction phase will be identified in accordance with the appropriate standards and guidance and reported within the EIAR.

**Traffic and Transport**

This assessment considers the impact on traffic volumes and the transport network during the construction period, operational phase and decommissioning phase of the proposed development. The initial route review and the site visit has identified that blades will be delivered to Inverness Port.

**Landscape and Visual Amenity**

A full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the proposed development is being carried out to consider effects on:

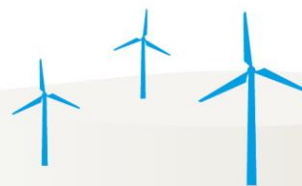
- Landscape fabric - changes to individual landscape features and elements
- Landscape character - changes in the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape as a result of the development
- Visual amenity - changes to views experienced by people

The proposed development would be located within Landscape Character Type (LCT 221) Rolling Uplands within the south western corner of Drynahan, Lochindorb and Dava Moors Special Landscape Area (SLA). The site lies approximately 0.6 km north west of the Cairngorms National Park and 15 km north of the Cairngorms National Scenic Area (NSA).

The study area for the LVIA has been defined with reference to a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) map. This has been produced to understand the geographical area where views of the proposed development are theoretically possible. This was modelled to the blade tip height of the proposed turbines and to a 45 km radius.



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The LVIA will include an assessment of the sensitivity of landscape character and assess the potential for the proposed development to result in significant effects to landscape character.

The LVIA will assess the potential effects of the proposed development on different visual receptors comprising settlements, footpath users, recognised tourist routes, long distance walking routes, cycle routes, centres for tourism and road and rail routes.

The LVIA will include an assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposed development when considered along with other operational, approved or in planning wind energy schemes.

Under Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Regulations structures over 150m in height are required to be lit with visible aviation lighting. The LVIA will also assess the additional visual effects of the proposed aviation lighting.

Since the Scoping Opinion for the proposed development was published in December 2023, we have analysed the feedback received and are proposing to include several additional LVIA viewpoints that have been requested. We continue to work with Highland Council and NatureScot to agree the scope of the LVIA and the final list LVIA viewpoints.

## Community Benefit

**If consented, Balnespik Wind Farm could provide over £9m in community benefit throughout the lifespan of the project.**

We are eager to hear the views of the local community on how they would like to utilise the community benefit fund. This could include:

- Local Energy Discount Scheme
- Local Energy Efficiency Programme
- Local or Regional Community Benefit Fund

We want to hear your feedback on these suggestions and your ideas, if you have any more opportunities, you would like us to explore.

**Get in touch by emailing [communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com)**

### CASE STUDY - Carsphairn Local Energy Discount Scheme

Carsphairn Local Energy Discount Scheme (LEDS) has been operational since 2018. One of the first LEDS in Scotland, it is administered by Carsphairn Community Council and fully funded by Windy Standard Wind Farm.

The initiative supports local residents to pay for their energy related bills and addresses the challenge of rising energy costs, helping the fuel poor and minimising fuel poverty.

The scheme is open to all properties that are lived in full time (excluding holiday

homes and second homes). Local residents are encouraged to apply into the scheme annually. Since its inception the LEDS has provided over £127,000 in direct payments. In 2022 alone, 101 houses were provided with £400 towards their energy costs.

Liz Holmes, Chair, Carsphairn Community Council, commented:

*"The scheme has been very well received by the community and has helped residents to meet their energy costs, which has become increasingly*

*important with the huge increase in these over the last few years.*

*"As a remote rural community, it is very important that this is an energy, rather than electricity scheme, allowing those who use oil, solid fuel or LPG for heating and those who are not connected to the electricity grid to continue to benefit.*

*"The LEDS helps to demonstrate the positive impact that wind farms can bring to the area, reaching residents who might not benefit from funding otherwise."*

## Delivering Energy Directly, Locally

We are working closely with Caldera, a specialist in transforming solar and wind power into reliable industrial heat, and Tomatin Distillery to explore the opportunity for Balnespik Wind Farm to deliver a private wire of electricity directly to the distillery.

We believe that this could provide the opportunity to help the Distillery to:

- Reduce its energy costs
- Reduce its greenhouse gas emissions
- Increase its use of non-fossil fuels
- Support a low carbon economy

If this proves to be viable, we hope that it could bring forward further opportunities for the local community, including:

- A direct supply of electricity to community facilities
- Facilitate further EV charging points locally



## Wind Farms and Climate Change

### What is Climate Change?

Climate is the average weather we experience over many years, climate change is the change we are seeing in these averages conditions. The rapid climate change we are now seeing is caused by humans using oil, gas and coal for their homes, factories and transport.

Average global temperatures have risen by more than 1°C since the 1850s. 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 were the hottest years ever recorded. Scotland, and the rest of the world is in the midst of a global climate emergency.

We are already seeing the negative impact of climate change. Unless action is taken, temperatures will continue to rise and we will experience catastrophic impacts such, with worsening droughts, greater sea level rise and mass extinction of species. We all have a role to play.



## Supply Chain

We are pleased that our projects have managed to employ a range of local services- helping to maximise the local economic opportunities of our projects.

If our application is successful we will look to local businesses to provide services to the proposed development. Services that we have previously employed include:

Services that we have employed include:

- Local accommodation
- Plant hire
- Caterers
- Groundworks
- Fencers
- Concrete and aggregate

If you, or your company, are able to provide any of these services, and more, please get in touch by emailing [suppliers@fredolsen.com](mailto:suppliers@fredolsen.com)

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### The impact of Climate Change?

#### Environment

We are already witnessing changes to our environment such as the melting of ice caps and glaciers with low lying and coastal cities at particular risk of flooding.

Climate change is expected to worsen the frequency, intensity, and impacts of some types of extreme weather events. For example, increases in temperatures have resulted in a greater risk of wildfires like those recently seen in the USA and Australia.

#### People

Climate change is affecting people in far-reaching ways. Things that we all depend upon and value – water, energy, wildlife, agriculture, ecosystems, and human health – are experiencing the effects of a changing climate.

These extreme weather events (floods, storms and wild fires) will become more common and intense, threatening lives and livelihoods.

#### Nature

There is already evidence that animals, birds and plants are being affected by climate change in both their distribution and behaviour.

Changes are happening so fast that many species do not have time to adapt to the loss of habitats or food and will soon become extinct.

For example, the loss of sea ice has already seen large reductions in the numbers of Polar Bear species whilst increasing sea temperatures has dramatically impacted coral reefs – a vital habitat for many sea creatures.

#### Impact in the UK

Changes to the climate are also being felt in the UK.

Our winters are becoming warmer and wetter resulting in increased flooding. Whilst our summers will become hotter and drier meaning the likelihood of droughts will increase.

People, nature, and infrastructure are already vulnerable to a range of climate impacts today and these will only increase in the coming years as the climate continues to change.



## Why Wind Farms?

A substantial amount of carbon emissions come from energy used across power, heating and transport.

Renewable energy such as wind power, does not emit greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Therefore, by using renewable energy technologies like wind turbines, solar panels and hydro we are reducing carbon emissions created by traditional energy consumption.

Wind power, as the most advanced renewable technology available at a large scale, has a vital role to play in achieving our zero-carbon electricity system

By bringing more wind turbines forward in Scotland, we are:

- Reducing our reliance on fossil fuels
- Improving energy security by reducing imports
- Meeting government targets
- Tackling climate change

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IN 2018

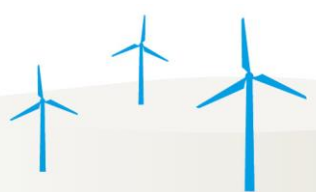
RENEWABLES  
DISPLACED  
11.9 MILLION TONNES  
OF CO<sup>2</sup>  
THE EQUIVALENT OF  
TAKING EVERY  
VEHICLE OFF  
SCOTLAND'S ROADS

Wind power has a carbon footprint:

99% less that coal-fired power plans

98% less than natural gas

75% less than solar



## Next Steps

**We want to apply to the Scottish Government for consent by late 2024.**

Ahead of then we will continue to undertake a range of public consultation and seek to gather as much feedback as possible.

When we submit our application the full suite of documents will be available on our website and there will be the opportunity to make representations directly to the Scottish Government.


We would welcome your comments on our proposals. Please take a moment to complete a feedback form or get in touch.


 [communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com)


 07435 763 900


 [www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk)

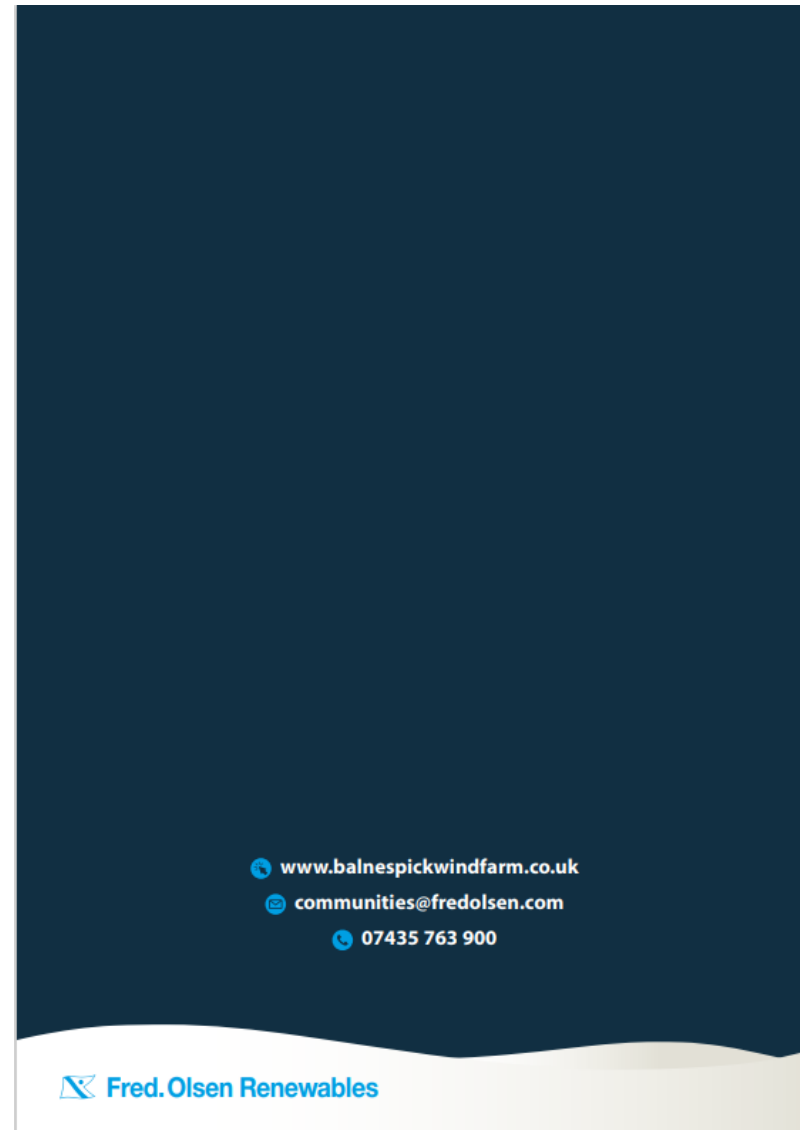


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 [communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com)

 07435 763 900

 **Fred. Olsen Renewables**



## Round 2: Feedback Form



### Community Benefit Survey Feedback Form

**Name**

**Address**

**Email**

**Telephone**

**Would you like to see a community benefit fund designed to complement existing funding?**

Yes  No  Don't know



Comments

**Would you like to see an energy discount scheme delivered locally?**

Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

>>>

**Would you like to see an energy efficiency scheme delivered locally?**

Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

**Where would you like to see a community benefit fund delivered?**

Locally  Regionally  Both

Comments



**Can you please rank the following in order of importance to you, with 1 being the most important and 3 being the least?**

Energy Efficiency Scheme  Energy Discount Scheme  Community Benefit Fund  Other

**Do you have any other ideas for utilising the community benefit from Balespick Wind Farm?**

**Any other comments?**

Fred. Olsen Renewables Limited (registered office is at 2nd Floor, 30 Beaufort Way, London, W11 1BB) - number 02672430) is a leading developer, owner and operator of renewable energy assets primarily onshore wind farms. We are committed to safeguarding the privacy of individuals with whom we interact. We process your personal data as a data controller in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). We collect, store and use the following kinds of personal data when you complete our feedback form: **Identity & Contact:** This includes your title, name, email address, postal address, and telephone number. **Marketing & Usage:** Information about your marketing and communication preferences, and information you provide for the purpose of subscribing to email notifications and/or newsletters. **Being your personal information:** We will use your information to send you email notifications which you have requested and/or our newsletter and other marketing communications and for legal and compliance purposes. **Disclosure of your personal data:** We do not share your personal data with any other party. **Data transfer outside the EEA:** We will not transfer your data outside the UK. **Your Rights:** This has rights under UK GDPR. Please visit [www.fredolsen.com/uk/en/privacy-policy](https://www.fredolsen.com/uk/en/privacy-policy) for full details. You may, at any time, exercise any of the above rights by contacting our Data Protection Officer by post to the registered office, or by email at [dataprotection@fredolsen.com](mailto:dataprotection@fredolsen.com). **How long we keep your personal data:** We will keep your data for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes we collected it for, including for satisfying any legal and compliance requirements.

# Round 2: Leaflet

## BALNESPICK WIND FARM



### Hello,

Following our exhibitions in October 2023, we would like to invite you to attend further events to learn more about our plans to develop Balnespick Wind Farm, located 5.6km east of Tomatin and 6.6km north-west of Carrbridge.

We hope to submit our application to the Scottish Government later this year and our exhibitions will be able to tell you more about:

- How our plans have evolved
- The opportunities that they present locally
- How we have listened to your feedback

If you have any questions, please get in touch.

- 🌐 [www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk)
- ✉ [communities@fredolsen.com](mailto:communities@fredolsen.com)
- ☎ 07435 763 900

### Exhibitions

We would like to invite you to drop in to one of our local events.

**Tuesday 27th August**  
12noon – 8pm  
The Auditorium,  
The Strathdearn, Tomatin,  
IV13 7YN

**Wednesday 28th August**  
11am – 6pm  
Carrbridge Village Hall,  
Main Street, Carrbridge,  
PH23 3AA

Our exhibition materials will be available online at [www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk).

Fred. Olsen Renewables

### About the proposal

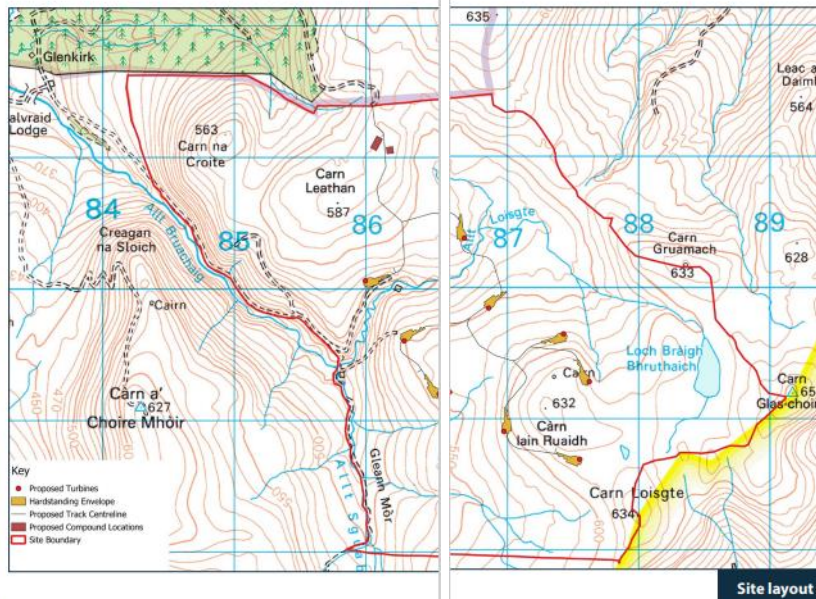
We have undertaken a range of environmental and technical assessments.

The findings from these surveys, alongside feedback from the community and stakeholders has helped to inform our final designs.

The plans that we expect to submit to the Scottish Government involve:

- 9 turbines up to 200m to tip
- 10MW energy storage facility
- 55.8MW wind farm capacity
- 35 year lifespan
- £5,000 per MW community fund

Fred. Olsen Renewables



### About us

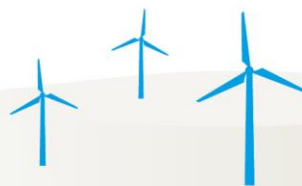
**Fred. Olsen Renewables is one of the longest standing renewable energy developers in Scotland.**

Our portfolio consists of 258 operational turbines, alongside a further 76 consented.

This, combined with our projects in Norway and Sweden, brings our total operational capacity to 804.9 MW – providing enough power for 698,344 homes.

We are excited about the future. With a pipeline of more than 1GW, central to our success will be collaboration with communities, committing to local businesses and contributing towards Scotland's sustainable future.

- Developing
- Constructing
- Operating





## Community Benefit

If consented, Balnespick Wind Farm will provide around £270,000 per year to the local community. This equates to over £9m in community benefit throughout the 35 year lifespan of the project.

We want to work closely with the communities surrounding Balnespick Wind Farm to ensure that the community benefit can be utilised to strategically address identified local challenges, such as energy consumption, sustaining local facilities, recreation and tourism.

We are very aware of the exciting projects that are currently being delivered locally.

We need your ideas and feedback about what you want to see happen locally. This will allow us to design a community benefit package that reflects your views and aspirations.

**Fred. Olsen Renewables pioneered community benefit funds in Scotland, and we have many operational funds in place. We recognise that each fund is different and needs to be responsive to local needs.**

We understand that the communities closest to Balnespick have a lot of experience in managing community benefit funds.

The funding from Balnespick Wind Farm can be used by the community to deliver a variety of initiatives. This could include:

- Creating a community benefit fund - managed locally. This could complement existing community benefit funds and be managed in a similar manner, supporting existing community projects and identified future projects.
- Deliver new initiatives such as:
  - A Local Energy Discount Scheme
  - An Energy Efficiency Programme
- Deliver something entirely different - as decided by local residents

 Fred. Olsen Renewables

**We have had many conversations about what opportunities the community benefit fund could present locally. This includes:**

### Local Energy Discount Scheme

A Local Energy Discount Scheme would provide local residents with an annual discount on their electricity bills. This could be designed in partnership with the community. It could:

- Be open to all residential properties within an approximate 10km radius of the wind farm (c900 properties, this could be up to £277 per annum)
- Be designed to be specific to individual community council areas

- Provide an annual discount to each home
- Make payment directly to the electricity supplier

This scheme is voluntary and does not require any change of supplier or tariff.

As a fixed amount this does not reward higher electricity users over lower users or encourage energy wastefulness.

### Local Energy Efficiency Programme (LEEP)

A Local Energy Efficiency Programme (LEEP) could help households install energy efficiency measures.

This fund could:

- Complement existing energy efficiency schemes / financial incentives
- Plug the gap where capital investment can prevent homeowners from progressing

- Support the installation of home energy efficiency measures, such as:

- Insulation
- Improved glazing
- EV chargers
- Heat pumps
- Solar technology

This fund could focus on supporting those in need in their own homes, providing direct support for residents and helping them onto a path of zero carbon.

### Community Benefit Fund

Establishing a community benefit fund that is designed to support community-wide initiatives and is compatible with existing funding structures and application mechanisms.

This fund could:

- Provide an annual percentage of the funding directly to community council areas that fall within a 10km radius of the site
- Involve the opportunity to split the fund between a regional and a local element – with local communities able to apply to both elements
- Be designed in partnership with the community and have a local decision-making structure

**We want to hear your feedback on these suggestions and your ideas. Please complete a feedback form or get in touch directly.**

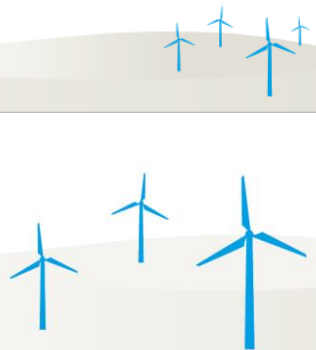
### Case Study

Carsphairn Local Energy Discount Scheme (LEDS) has been operational since 2018. One of the first LEDS in Scotland, it is administered by Carsphairn Community Council and fully funded by Windy Standard Wind Farm.

The initiative supports local residents to pay for their energy related bills and addresses the challenge of rising energy costs, helping the fuel poor and minimising fuel poverty.

The scheme is open to all properties that are lived in full time (excluding holiday homes and second homes). Local residents are encouraged to apply into the scheme annually. Since its inception the LEDS has provided over £127,000 in direct payments. In 2022 alone, 101 houses were provided with £400 towards their energy costs.

 Fred. Olsen Renewables







## Supply chain

We always seek to employ local services during the construction and operation of our wind farms – helping to maximise local economic opportunities.

Services that we have previously employed include:

- Local accommodation
- Plant hire
- Caterers
- Groundworks
- Fencers
- Concrete and aggregate

Liz Holmes, Chair, Carsphairn Community Council, commented:

*"The scheme has been very well received by the community and has helped residents to meet their energy costs, which has become increasingly important with the huge increase in these over the last few years.*


*"As a remote rural community, it is very important that this is an energy, rather than electricity scheme, allowing those who use oil, solid fuel or LPG for heating and those who are not connected to the electricity grid to continue to benefit.*

*"The LEDS helps to demonstrate the positive impact that wind farms can bring to the area, reaching residents who might not benefit from funding otherwise."*



**We hope that this information has been useful and we look forward to discussing our plans further with you at the forthcoming events.**


Visit [www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk) for further information.





**www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk**

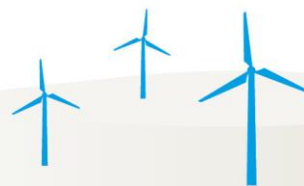
**communities@fredolsen.com**

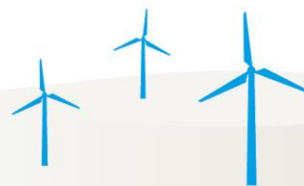
**07435 763 900**

 **Fred. Olsen Renewables**

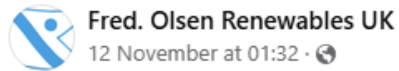


## Appendix E: Round 2 Exhibition Pictures





## Appendix F: Social Media Promotions



Fred. Olsen Renewables UK

12 November at 01:32 · 🌐

We are really excited to be a part of what we believe to be a first of its kind initiative.

For our Balnespick Wind Farm ([www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk)) project in the Highlands, we are coming together with the other wind farm developers in the Strathdearn Community Council area — Kyllachy, Highland, Clune, and Lynemore – to host a community coffee morning at the Strathdearn Hub, Tomatin on Saturday 30th November.

We hope that this will provide local residents with another opportunity to engage with developers in a friendly, informal setting.

Taking place from 10am – 12noon - everyone that pops in can pick up a cuppa and a cake, take a look at all of our stands and have a chat with the teams.

Hope to see you there!



Fred. Olsen Renewables UK is at The Strathdearn.

August 27 · Tomatin · 🌐



Today we are in The Strathdearn exhibiting our proposals for Balnespick Wind Farm. Tomorrow we will be in Carrbridge.

Pop in to take a look and talk to the team. Hope to see you soon!

<https://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk/local-residents.../>



Like



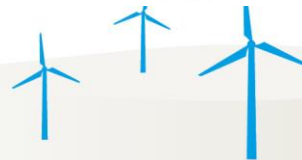
Comment



Send



Share





**Fred. Olsen Renewables UK**

August 6 · 🌐



We will be returning to Tomatin and Carrbridge on the 27th and 28th August to display plans for Balnespick Wind Farm.

The project, located just 5km east of Tomatin, will comprise nine wind turbines capable of generating over 50MW of clean electricity.

Local residents are encouraged to attend the events and meet with members of the Fred. Olsen Renewables project team. They will also be able to learn about how the plans have evolved since the last series of exhibitio... **See more**



BALNEPICKWINDFARM.CO.UK

**Balnespick Wind Farm | Balvraid Lodge, Tomatin**

We hope this website helps to provide information on Balnespick ...



**Fred. Olsen Renewables UK** created an **event**.

August 6 · 🌐



Tue, Aug 27

**Balnespick Wind Farm Exhibitions**

1 person went

☆ Interested





Fred. Olsen Renewables UK

September 13, 2023 · 🌐

...

We are planning to develop Balnespick Wind Farm, located 5km east of Tomatin.

Local residents are encouraged to attend our events in October, where they will have the opportunity to meet with members of the Fred. Olsen Renewables project team, examine visual representations of the project, and provide their valuable feedback.

Further information can be found at [www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk)

# Balnespick Wind Farm

## PUBLIC EXHIBITION

VIEW THE PLANS | LEARN ABOUT THE PROPOSALS | HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

[www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk)
✉ communities@fredolsen.com
☎ 07435 763 900

**We are proposing to develop Balnespick Wind Farm, which is located 5.6km to the east of Tomatin and 6.6km north-west of Carrbridge.**

We are at the very early stages of our proposals and we are working to gather feedback that will help to inform the final design of the wind farm.

We are holding two events where you will be able to:

- Speak to the project team
- View the current plans
- Have your questions answered
- Submit your views

**If you can't attend. Please:**

- View the materials online
- Request printed materials
- Get in touch to set up a discussion
- Submit your questions and comments

3rd October

11am – 7.30pm

The Auditorium,  
The Strathdearn, Tomatin, IV13 7YN

4th October

11am – 7.30pm

Carrbridge Village Hall,  
Main Street, Carrbridge, PH23 3AA

