

3 CONSULTATION

3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1 Consultation has been integral to the design and development of the Proposed Development, identification of existing environmental constraints and sensitivities, and identification and assessment of the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Development.
- 3.1.2 Consultation with statutory and non-statutory organisations commenced in February 2024 and has taken a number of forms. Consultation with the general public began in March 2024. Overall, the consultation has been carried out through a number of forms, including:
- stakeholder liaison;
 - public information events; and
 - informal discussions.

3.2 Stakeholder Liaison

- 3.2.1 Consultation with statutory consultees and other organisations has been undertaken throughout the EIA process to obtain environmental information, to discuss and agree the scope of individual environmental assessments and the adopted methods of assessment, and to develop appropriate environmental mitigation measures.
- 3.2.2 EIA topic-specific consultation and associated actions/responses included how they were addressed are summarised in each chapter of this EIA Report where relevant.
- 3.2.3 A Scoping Report was submitted to the ECU in January 2024, and the Scoping Opinion was received on 11 April 2024. Copies of the Scoping Report and Scoping Opinion are available on the ECU portal¹¹.
- 3.2.4 A Gatecheck Report was sent to the ECU on 27 February 2024. The report provides detail on how consultee responses have been addressed by the EIA process and the iterative design process of the Proposed Development. A copy of the Gatecheck Report is contained in **Technical Appendix 2.3**.

3.3 Community Engagement

- 3.3.1 A summary of the community engagement and public information events is provided in the following sections of this chapter. Further details, documentation, and feedback are included within the PAC Report, that is submitted with the Section 36 application for consent.
- 3.3.2 The Applicant understands the value of engaging with and seeking to involve local communities, both prior to and following the submission of the application. Whilst not a

¹¹ <https://www.energyconsents.scot/ApplicationDetails.aspx?cr=ECU00005013>

statutory requirement for s36 applications, the Applicant is committed to undertaking meaningful public consultation.

- 3.3.3 The Applicant has undertaken a multifaceted public consultation approach, including two in-person public consultation events, providing an up to date project website and posting cards out to addresses within 10 km of the Proposed Development to inform local residents of the public consultation events. The Applicant hosted the first round of in-person public consultation events in March 2024, at Fort Augustus and Invermoriston. The second round of in-person public consultation events took place in September 2024, at Fort Augustus, Invermoriston, and Dalchreichart.

Public Information Events

- 3.3.4 Exhibitions and forums were held at key stages in the development process to inform the general public and other interested parties of project alternatives and the emerging findings of the EIA, and to elicit comment and feedback on the Proposed Development.

First Round of Public Consultation Events (March 2024)

- 3.3.5 During the first round of public consultation, the first in-person event was held on 26th March 2024, from 2:00 – 8:00 pm at the Caledonian Canal Centre, Fort Augustus. The second public consultation event was held on 27th March 2024, from 1:30 – 7:30 pm at the Glenmoriston Millennium Hall, Invermoriston. The consultation period was open until 3 May 2024 to allow for feedback, comments and questions to the project team and to give residents time to review the material and ask questions after the in-person event.
- 3.3.6 The consultation was publicised in various ways, including newspaper adverts in the Inverness Courier and Press and Journal, giving advance notice of the consultation event and contact details. Invite postcards were distributed to approximately 974 homes and businesses within 10 km of the Site Boundary and included a summary of the then current design layout of the Proposed Development and the event details. Event invitations were issued to local Community Councils, councillors, MP and MSP.
- 3.3.7 At the in-person public event, A1 boards containing project information were set up for public display. The boards included information about the project, the EIA process, environmental surveys and studies being undertaken, and community benefits. Visualisations and ZTV plans based on the Scoping Layout were also on display to give an impression of the proposed turbines from several key viewpoints.

Second Round of Public Consultation Events (September 2024)

- 3.3.8 During the second round of public consultation, the first in-person event was held on 10th September 2024, from 2:00 – 7:30 pm at the Caledonian Canal Centre, Fort Augustus. The second public consultation event was held on 11th September 2024, from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm at the Glenmoriston Millennium Hall, Invermoriston, and from 4:30 – 7.30 pm at Dalchreichart, Glenmoriston.

- 3.3.9 As with the first round of public consultation events, an advert was placed in Inverness Courier and Press and Journal, invitation postcards were distributed, and the local Community Councils, Councillors, MP and MSP contacted in advance in the same manner.
- 3.3.10 At the second in-person public consultation event, A1 banners containing updated project information were set up for public display. These included photomontage and wireline visualisations with the Final Layout, as shown in **Figure 2.2**. Attendees were given the opportunity to observe how the proposed turbines would appear from any specific point around the area, through location-specific wireline visualisations created live, by generating viewpoints through ReSoft Software.
- 3.3.11 This event informed the public and other interested parties of how the design of the Proposed Development had evolved and responded to emerging findings since the first public consultation event, outlined the EIA process and to request comments and feedback on the Proposed Development.
- 3.3.12 Public consultation material was made available on the project-specific website for online view and download.

Public Consultation Feedback – Pre-Application Consultation

- 3.3.13 A PAC Report is submitted with the s36 application, and it describes in detail the consultation requirements for the Proposed Development, the consultation measures undertaken by the Applicant, the feedback received, and any resultant modifications to the Proposed Development.

Informal Discussions

- 3.3.14 Discussion was undertaken with interested parties and landowners during the design and development of the Proposed Development and the EIA process.
- 3.3.15 EIA topic-specific consultations are summarised in each chapter of this EIA Report where relevant.

3.4 References

Energy Consents Unit (2024). Scoping Opinion April 2024. Dated 11 April 2024 Available at: <https://www.energyconsents.scot/ApplicationDetails.aspx?cr=ECU00005013>

RSK Environment Ltd (2024). Millennium East Wind Farm - Scoping Report. Dated 24 January 2024 Available at: <https://www.energyconsents.scot/ApplicationDetails.aspx?cr=ECU00005013>