

1 The Brief

- To construct a Framework based on a spreadsheet format, that can be populated with existing information and added to as required. This will enable comparative review of separate submissions and associated documentation for each of the six large-scale renewable energy applications (see front page map) expected to be submitted to Scottish Ministers in 2025. The framework should also be able to accept any infrastructure planning applications so that an overview of these developments is available in one place.
- A separate spreadsheet developed for each application with entries to include (though not limited to):
 - What each application is proposing
 - Material issues
 - Gaps in evidence
- It will also incorporate a summary of the views expressed by the local community from the consultation carried out in 2024.
- It will be written in plain English with a series of hyperlinks detailing documentation and specialist analyses.
- Strathdearn Windfarm Advisory Group will act as the client and their views and knowledge will be captured as part of this project.
- It is anticipated that the project will be completed by the end of January 2025.

2 Background

There are twelve existing wind farms in the Strathdearn area (see front page map) with an installed capacity of 966 MW, theoretically capable of supplying enough energy for 35% of all homes in Scotland.

Strathdearn Community Council area is currently facing six further major wind farm development proposals which are each of such scale (Section 36 developments) that they will be decided by Scottish Ministers. If all were granted, this would increase the installed capacity for the Strathdearn CC area by up to a further 1,032 MW (including battery storage), bringing the potential total installed capacity to 1,998 MW. Table 1 puts this into a Scottish context.

Table 1: Current and planned wind farm capacity for Strathdearn in a Scottish context

	Currently installed capacity (MW) of onshore wind energy	% of capacity located in or near Strathdearn community	Planned installed capacity (MW) of onshore wind energy	% of capacity located in or near Strathdearn community
Scotland - Q3 2023	9,593 MW			
Strathdearn area - Q3 2023	966 MW	10%		
Scotland target by 2030			20,000 MW	

Strathdearn area - planned		1,032 MW (plus 966 MW)	10%
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A summary of each application is given in **Appendix 1**, backed up with a detailed spreadsheet that is available from Strathdearn Community Council on request. Three of these applications are expected to be submitted in late January/early February 2025 (Highland, Clune, and Balnespick); another before the end of March 2025 (Lynemore); another in April 2025 (Kyllachy); and the final one probably towards the end of 2025 (Carn na Saobhaidh). Each developer must complete an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) that identifies in detail the potential environmental effects (both positive and negative) and demonstrates how the developer will prevent, reduce, and mitigate any adverse effects and meet their planning obligations for Biodiversity Net Gain. The EIAs will be available for viewing online once the applications have been formally submitted to Scottish Ministers.

The developers have each held local community events and a joint community event during 2024. Information on each of these events is available online, except for the joint event. This has enabled each developer to submit a Scoping Report, which are available to view online.

Strathdearn Community Council also carried out an online consultation in May 2024, seeking community views on the scope of the EIA for four of the applications (Highland, Clune, Balnespick, and Lynemore). The outcome of this consultation is detailed in the report.

Following submission of each Section 36 application to Scottish Ministers, a significant number of statutory consultees will be invited to give their opinion, such as, Highland Council, NatureScot, CNPA etc. Highland Council (as the local Planning Authority) will seek the views of Strathdearn Community Council. If there is an objection from the local Planning Authority, there may be a public enquiry before the final decision is made. Typically, an application for a Section 36 consent will take 9-12 months. Where a public enquiry takes place, the timescale has been more in the order of 36 months.

3 Outcomes of the Community Consultation on Scope of the EIA (May 2024)

All comments and analyses have been captured in the main spreadsheet, which is available from Strathdearn Community Council on request. In total, 22 responses to the consultation were received, plus several responses by direct email. People were asked to respond to four questions about the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), with the responses shown in Table 2 below.

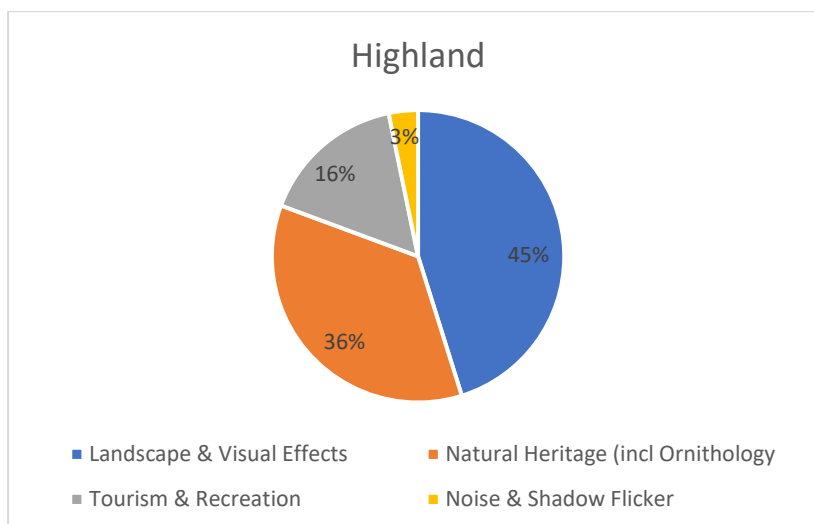
Table 2: Responses to EIA Questions in the Survey and Emails

Wind Farm	Highland	Clune	Lynemore	Balnespick
Agree EIA measures are acceptable	5	3	3	5
Disagree EIA measures are acceptable	16	16	13	11
Don't know	1	1	3	1
Need more information	2	3	3	3

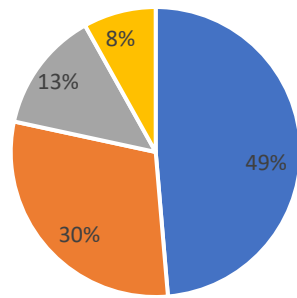
Issues raised by the community

The main issues raised in this consultation have been summarised in the four pie charts below, showing the volume of concern at community level for each Wind Farm under the following Key Criteria headings (an explanation for each Key Criteria is shown in **Appendix 2**):

- Landscape and Visual Effects
- Natural Heritage (including Ornithology)
- Water, Flood Risk, Drainage, and Peat
- Tourism and Recreation
- Roads and Access
- Noise and Shadow Flicker

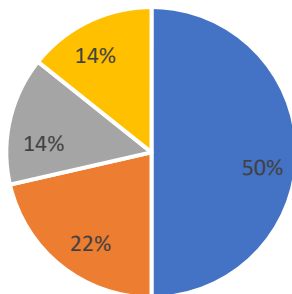


Clune



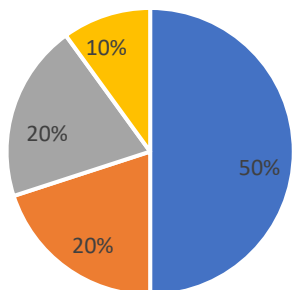
- Landscape & Visual Effects
- Natural Heritage (incl Ornithology)
- Tourism & Recreation
- Noise & Shadow Flicker

Lynemore



- Landscape & Visual Effects
- Natural Heritage (incl Ornithology)
- Tourism & Recreation
- Noise & Shadow Flicker

Balnespick



- Landscape & Visual Effects
- Natural Heritage (incl Ornithology)
- Tourism & Recreation
- Noise & Shadow Flicker

4 Scoring Each Wind Farm Development

Taking the six Key Criteria (**details in Appendix 2**) in turn; each has been scored on Sensitivity Rating of Low to High based on the likelihood of it occurring against the impact should it occur, using the sensitivity ratings in Table 3.

Table 3: Sensitivity Rating for Scoring Key Criteria

		IMPACT				
		1 Negligible	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Significant	5 Severe
L I K E L I H O O D	5 V Likely	5 Medium Low	10 Medium	15 High Medium	20 High	25 High
	4 Likely	4 Low	8 Medium Low	12 Medium	16 High Medium	20 High
	3 Possible	3 Low	6 Medium Low	9 Medium	12 High Medium	15 High Medium
	2 Unlikely	2 Low	4 Medium Low	6 Medium Low	8 Medium	10 High Medium
	1 V Unlikely	1 Low	2 Low	3 Medium Low	4 Medium	5 Medium

Sensitivity Ratings explained

Low

The key criteria are unlikely to be adversely affected by the introduction of the development. The development relates well to the key criteria and change may be accommodated without widespread significant adverse impacts.

Medium Low

Fewer elements of the key criteria are vulnerable to change from the development. There are opportunities to accommodate the development without widespread or severe effects.

Medium

Some elements of the key criteria are vulnerable to change from the development. There is some ability to accommodate the development in some situations without widespread or severe effects.

High Medium

Several elements of the key criteria are subject to change from the development. The development would conflict with some aspects of the key criteria but may be able to be accommodated.

High

Key elements of the key criteria are highly vulnerable to change from the development. The development would conflict with several aspects of the criteria with severe and potentially widespread adverse impacts likely to arise.

Scoring Matrix for Key Criteria

Scores have been applied primarily from the information captured and recorded in the main spreadsheet and from the community consultation. In the short timeframe for this project, interviews also took place with each member of the Strathdearn Windfarm Advisory Group; discussions with all six developers; discussions with the Findhorn Watershed Initiative; and discussions with Highland Council planners. Based on all this information, the consultant has applied scores to each wind farm. Given the significance of Landscape and Visual Effects in the area, this key criteria has been split into three elements, effectively giving this an additional weighting. The scores are reflected in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Scores for each Wind Farm

Key Criteria	Windfarms Under Consideration – Scoring Matrix					
	Highland	Clune	Balnespick	Lynemore	Kyllachy	Carn na Saobhaidh
Landscape and Visual Effects						
1 Visibility, Encirclement, Lighting	6 ML	12 M	12 M	16 HM	16 HM	8 ML
2 Space, Clustering, Cumulative	9 M	16 HM	16 HM	16 HM	20 H	16 HM
3 Landscape character	25 H	20 H	16 HM	9 M	6 ML	12 M
Natural Heritage (inc Ornithology)	25 H	25 H	20 HM	9 M	9 M	12 M
Water, Flood Risk, Peat, and Drainage	12 M	12 M	9 M	6 ML	6 ML	9 M
Tourism and Recreation	12 M	12 M	9 M	9 M	12 M	12 M
Roads and Access	6 ML	9 M	6 ML	6 ML	9 M	9 M
Noise and Shadow Flicker	2 L	9 M	6 ML	12 M	20 H	6 ML
Overall Score	97	115	94	83	98	84

5 Conclusions

People living in the Strathdearn Community Council area are surrounded by a high volume of existing wind farms, as shown on the map at the start of this report. Significant Community Benefit has been delivered as part of these developments and the funds have been invested wisely in the local area. However, many people living in the community now believe that the Strathdearn area has delivered more than its fair share in helping reach the Scottish Government's renewable energy targets. Should the six applications currently seeking approval be granted, this would more than double the installed capacity from this small area of the Highlands. Combined with existing wind farms in the Strathdearn area, this would create enough energy to power approximately 70% of the homes in Scotland, delivering 10% of Scotland's 2030 target.

The report concentrates on facts, policies and reports as far as possible, rather than anecdotal evidence, to gather information for the scoring applied to the key criteria in the scoring matrix. Detail for each of the key criteria for each windfarm is in Appendix 1, which helped shape the scoring. The scoring is not designed to show if a community is for or against a wind farm; rather it is designed to show the impacts each development may have on a selected number of key criteria and on the local area overall.

Looking at the total scores across all key criteria; none of the wind farms score in the Low or Medium Low categories. Clune wind farm overall scores highest, with particularly high scores in landscape and visual effects, and natural heritage. Highland, Balnespick and Kyllachy all deliver high scores, but the scores are not consistently high across all key criteria. Highland scores highest in landscape and natural heritage, which is not surprising given its location within the Monadhliath Wild Land Area. Balnespick also scores high in landscape and visual effects, and natural heritage. Kyllachy scores highest on landscape and visual effects, and noise and shadow flicker. This is not surprising given its proximity to Tomatin. Lynemore and Carn na Saobhaidh each score overall in the medium category, with clustering a key consideration and noise and visibility an issue from Lynemore for Moy.

The overall cumulative impact of these proposed developments needs to be considered in the context of the high volume of wind farms already in situ and located in proximity. It is important that any future representation from Strathdearn Community Council to either the Energy Consents Unit or Highland Council features cumulative impact. Scoring for this is consistently High Medium across the scoring matrix. It is a matter of record that wind farm applications tend to be considered on their individual merits, but having six applications all being submitted in such a short time from one small area of Highland may well be unprecedented. As a result, it is important that any letter of representation from Strathdearn Community Council majors on the cumulative impact, whilst outlining concerns regarding each development, as detailed in appendix 1.

Several key recommendations are outlined in section 6.

6 Recommendations

It is recommended that Strathdearn Community Council:

1. Maintain a live version of the main spreadsheet and update this following release of each Environmental Impact Assessment and other information as it becomes available.
2. Circulate this report (or an abridged version) to the wider community sharing the key findings in the report and directing people to where they can access the detailed spreadsheet.
3. Plan and deliver an exhibition summarising the outcomes from this report, followed on the same date by a Special Community Council meeting, including a Q&A session.
4. Commission the creation of a series of layered maps that uses, as its base layer, the map entitled 'Cumulative Wind Farms Centred on Strathdearn Community Council area'. Base layers could include the following:
 - Special Landscape Areas
Drynachan, Lochindorb and Dava Moor
 - Monadhliath Wild Land Area
 - Landscape Characters:
Rolling Uplands AU (Assessment Unit)
Strath in Rolling Uplands AU
Upper Farmed Strath AU
 - National Scenic Area
 - Locations of key infrastructure:
Known – substation, grid connections
Assumed – grid connections (could simply be shown as a shaded area on the map layering)
5. Prepare a response to Highland Council on Strathdearn Community Council's position regarding each wind farm proposal. Given the number of applications being lodged in such a short time frame, a single response may be the best approach, though referencing specifics in each application.
6. Invite Highland Council's South Planning Applications Committee (SPAC) to attend a site visit to better understand, in particular, the environmental and cumulative impacts of these developments. (Members of SPAC are unlikely to attend a site meeting prior to receiving their committee papers. Members can ask for a site meeting at committee before coming to a decision; this to avoid any conflict of interest).
7. Invite key Scottish Ministers and officials from the Energy Consents Unit to attend a site meeting to better understand, in particular, the environmental and cumulative impacts of these developments,
8. Request that developers erect picture boards at a range of key locations in the Strathdearn Community Council area showing the heights and visibility of the turbines at each location. Key locations to be agreed with Highland Council's relevant Landscape Officer.

9. Write to NatureScot inviting them to facilitate an objective and independent look at the use of the Monadhliath's by eagles of all ages through examining and quantifying both Golden Eagle and White-Tailed Eagle satellite data.

7 Appendix 1 – Short Summaries for each Wind Farm Development

A separate detailed spreadsheet has been developed, which takes an in-depth evidence-based approach to the key elements expected within an Environmental Impact Assessment (and likely to be planning considerations), with links to supporting documentation, including policies and publications. This is available from Strathdearn Community Council on request.

	Highland
Status	Scoping Approved. Application due to be submitted to Scottish Government in Jan 2025. Following submission, the Environmental Impact Assessment (which investigates and mitigates potential effects of the development on the natural, physical, and human environment) will be available for scrutiny.
Location	Approximately 4.2 km west of Aviemore on Dalmigavie, Dunachton, and Alvie Estates, with the turbines located on open upland peatland and montane habitats in the upper reaches of the River Dulnain and the River Findhorn within the designated Monadhliath Wild Land Area. The River Dulnain flows north-easterly through the centre of the Site (south of the proposed turbine area) and is part of the River Spey Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designation. There are several watercourses which intersect the site, the larger of these flow in a north-north-westerly direction, and south-easterly direction before connecting to the River Findhorn and the River Dulnain, respectively.
Operator	Ampyr Energy, ESB Asset Development UK, and four Highland estates.
Size and Scale	Installation of up to 24 wind turbines, each with a maximum tip height of 230m, collectively generating up to 168MW of electricity. Plans include the integration of a 30 MW Battery Energy Storage.
Grid Connection	Will be subject to a separate application under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. Proposed to export its power across the Upper Findhorn to the substation at Garbole. Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance: Additional overhead transmission lines should be avoided particularly in the adjacent Upper Farmed Strath AU where a plethora of lines has created a cluttered effect in places.
Consultation	Two rounds of consultation took place in 2024
Relevant National and Regional Policies	National Planning Framework 4 – key policies: - Policy 1 – Global climate and nature crises - 3 – Biodiversity protection - 4 – Impact – type, diversity, scale of development - 5 – Peat disturbance - 6 – Impact – woodlands - 14 – Improve qualities of the area - 18 – Infrastructure improvements - 20 – Soils and water management - 25 – Local and regional wealth creation - 29 – Benefits from tourism Highland-wide Local Development Plan – key policies: - Policy 58 – Protected species - Policy 63 – Water environment - Policy 67 – On-shore wind energy

Landscape & Visual Effects <i>Landscape character, Visibility, Lighting, Clustering</i>	17 viewpoints selected (Scoping Report). Visual impact low from A9 and Tomatin. Impact greater when viewed from CNP with visibility from Mountain Massif (within 20km); summits and plateaux (within 20km); Cairngorms NSA (within 20km). Visible aviation lighting required on turbines over 150m. Lighting of turbines would extend and intensify effects on the dark skies which are a key quality of this area (Dava Moor Landscape Sensitivity report, 2021). Turbines of this size sited close to the NW boundary of this AU (Assessment Unit) could affect dramatic views of Great Glen, diminishing the sense of vast scale and containment, and affect the intimate scale and intricate landscape mosaic found in the Duntelchaig area east of Loch Ness which are key qualities of the SLA (Dava MoorLandscape Sensitivity report, 2021). Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance: Additional overhead transmission lines should be avoided particularly in the adjacent Upper Farmed Strath AU where a plethora of lines has created a cluttered effect in places. Potential for highly detrimental impact with proposed overhead line options. Proximity to proposed Clune Wind Farm. Highland Council's Scoping Response stated: 'The development will further extend the number of proposals of this type in the surrounding area, necessitating an appropriate cumulative impact assessment. It is considered that cumulative impact will be a significant material consideration in the final determination of any future application'. Note: The proposed site lies adjacent to the previous application for the Allt Duine windfarm, which was refused Section 36 consent in 2015, in part, due to the negative landscape and visual impacts on the Cairngorms National Park (CNP); on the setting of the CNP; and in combination with the impact on the Monadhliath Wild Land Area.
Natural Heritage <i>Including Ornithology</i>	May extend beyond Spatial Framework for Onshore Wind Energy. The Monadhliath Wild Land Area (WLA) covers the southern part of the Rolling Uplands AU (Assessment Unit) and the Cairngorms National Park abuts the southern boundary of this AU. The proximity to the National Park, where wind energy development sited closer to the boundary (and/or larger turbines) could breach the containment provided by the higher ridge and pronounced summits which form a distinctive backdrop to the Spey valley. Onshore Wind Supplementary Guidance - Wind energy developments within mapped areas of wild land are unlikely to be supported unless it can be demonstrated that significant effects on the qualities of these areas can be substantially overcome by siting, design and other mitigation. Wildlands raptor monitoring initiative (Jan 2025) shows clear visuals of radio tagged raptors and their movements between the National Park and the Monadhliath's – noting the regular flight paths of Hen Harrier and Golden Eagle. Ornithological survey work undertaken and presented in the scoping report does not meet current NatureScot guidance. Biodiversity Net Gain – developer states that the site has the potential to improve biodiversity locally by strengthening and expanding on existing habitat corridors, improving connectivity, restoring peatland and enhancing upland plant species. Part of the sites nationally important peatland was recently restored and funded under NatureScot's/ Scottish Government's

	Peatland Action Fund. What recompense would be due to NatureScot/ Scottish Government should this development be approved? Seek more detail in the EIA.
Water, Flood Risk, Peat & Drainage	HwLDP Policy 63, Water Environment - In assessing proposals the Council will consider associated Area Management Plans. River Findhorn Initiative have such plans in place - cumulative hydrological changes to rivers impacting highly vulnerable Atlantic Salmon and other fish population. Specific concern about extinction events of unique resident Trout populations. Concern about how the cumulative effect of hard surfaces and drainage changes, impact an already unresilient river system. Published priority peatland mapping by NatureScot, Carbon and Peatland Map 2016, indicates that the north and centre of the Site primarily comprises Class 1 peatland which is 'nationally important carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat'.
Tourism & Recreation	Scoping Report – developer has proposed to scope socioeconomics, tourism and recreation out of the EIA Report. A separate report on socioeconomics and tourism will be provided and submitted alongside the EIA. Findhorn Watershed Initiative - Upper Findhorn catchment area known as 'Raptor Valley' is already a popular destination for wildlife tourism, which would be compromised by wind farm developments. Activities include - sporting activities (shooting, stalking, fishing), walking, sightseeing, wildlife watching and photography, cycling (on and off road), wild swimming, paragliding, cross country skiing. Tomatin Distillery reported a 40% increase in visitor numbers in recent years. In 2022, the distillery welcomed 35,000 visitors, and together with people visiting the Strathdearn Hub, has seen visitor numbers increase to an estimated 80,000 (excluding A9 and rail travellers). The Glen Road does not have a traffic counter. Cycle counters capture 9000 movements at the north and 5000 at the south, estimating 4000 are using the Glen Road from Farr. Glen Road estimated use: - Wildlife Tour Minibuses - 5 times a week for 40 weeks carrying 8 passengers (1600) - Casual day trippers out for a run in the car – 100 per week for 50 weeks carrying two passengers (10,000) - Cyclists (4000) - Overnight guests - bed capacity in self-catering pods and lodges = 100, annual occupancy 40%, (14,600) There are ongoing plans for further development of the distillery with visitor numbers estimated to increase to 100,000. In addition, Braemore Estates has plans for a 'House of Bruar' style development, estimating 500,000 visitor numbers. Outdoor Access Management Plan to mitigate impact on recreational routes during construction and enhance during operation.
Roads & Access	It will be accessed from within the Cairngorms National Park off the A9 at Kincaig via the existing junction leading to Leault Farm. This junction would be used to accommodate Abnormal Loads for wind farm traffic, Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) and Cars and Light Goods Vehicles (LGV). Access from the public road would then be by private tracks. See increase in vehicle numbers and potential increase in the area under Tourism & Recreation.

Noise & Shadow Flicker	Highland Council's expectation is that all proposals will seek to achieve noise limits at sensitive locations that are at the lower end of the range indicated in national guidance. Assessment will focus on the nearest properties to the proposed development. A cumulative assessment will also consider neighbouring wind farms that could contribute to combined noise effects. The evaluation will cover potential noise effects during both construction and operation phases. Considered low impact for this site.
Community Benefits	Committed to an equivalent of up to £5,000 per installed MW per annum (more than £17m over the lifetime of the wind farm) to be delivered locally. Potential for shared ownership in the wind farm. Current Scottish Government consultation on CB. Linked to Strathdearn Community Action Plan – potential job creation for Ranger-type role in the community. Remit could include monitoring numbers and types of visitors; raptor monitoring; management of resources; maintenance work; reporting back to community. Potential negative impact on local property prices.

	Clune
Status	Scoping Approved. Application due to be submitted to Scottish Government in Jan 2025. Following submission, the Environmental Impact Assessment (which investigates and mitigates potential effects of the development on the natural, physical, and human environment) will be available for scrutiny.
Location	On Clune Estate on elevated, open and managed grouse moorland, located approximately 3km south of Tomatin. The highest point is 750m, at Carn Dubh'Ic an Deoir.
Operator	RES
Size and Scale	Installation of up to 26 wind turbines, each with a maximum height of 200m, collectively generating up to 187.2MW of electricity. Plans include the integration of up to 50MW Battery Energy Storage.
Grid Connection	Will be subject to a separate application under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. Proposed to export its power across the Upper Findhorn to the substation at Garbole. Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance: Additional overhead transmission lines should be avoided particularly in the adjacent Upper Farmed Strath AU where a plethora of lines has created a cluttered effect in places.
Consultation	Two rounds of consultation took place in 2024
Relevant National and Regional Policies	National Planning Framework 4 – key policies: - Policy 1 – Global climate and nature crises - 3 – Biodiversity protection - 4 – Impact – type, diversity, scale of development - 5 – Peat disturbance - 6 – Impact – woodlands - 14 – Improve qualities of the area - 18 – Infrastructure improvements - 20 – Soils and water management - 25 – Local and regional wealth creation - 29 – Benefits from tourism

	Highland-wide Local Development Plan – key policies: - Policy 58 – Protected species - Policy 63 – Water environment - Policy 67 – On-shore wind energy
Landscape & Visual Effects <i>Landscape character, Visibility, Lighting, Clustering</i>	19 viewpoints selected (Scoping Report). Visibility high from Tomatin and high through Slochd area. Visible aviation lighting required on turbines over 150m. Lighting of turbines would extend and intensify effects on the dark skies which are a key quality of this area (Dava Moor Landscape Sensitivity report, 2021). Turbines of this size sited close to the NW boundary of this AU could affect dramatic views of Great Glen, diminishing the sense of vast scale and containment, and affect the intimate scale and intricate landscape mosaic found in the Duntelchaig area east of Loch Ness which are key qualities of the SLA (Dava MoorLandscape Sensitivity report, 2021). Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance: Additional overhead transmission lines should be avoided particularly in the adjacent Upper Farmed Strath AU where a plethora of lines has created a cluttered effect in places. Proximity to proposed Highland and Kyllachy wind farms. Highland Council's Scoping Response stated: 'The development will further extend the number of proposals of this type in the surrounding area, necessitating an appropriate cumulative impact assessment. It is considered that cumulative impact will be a significant material consideration in the final determination of any future application'. The development occupies a moderately isolated location, and the cumulative impact is considered to be medium.
Natural Heritage <i>Including Ornithology</i>	The Monadhliath Wild Land Area (WLA) covers the southern part of the Rolling Uplands AU and the Cairngorms National Park abuts the southern boundary of this AU. The proximity to the National Park, where wind energy development sited closer to the boundary (and/or larger turbines) could breach the containment provided by the higher ridge and pronounced summits which form a distinctive backdrop to the Spey valley. One of the proposed wind turbines is located within the MWLA (Scoping Report). Onshore Wind Supplementary Guidance - Wind energy developments within mapped areas of wild land are unlikely to be supported unless it can be demonstrated that significant effects on the qualities of these areas can be substantially overcome by siting, design and other mitigation. May extend beyond Spatial Framework for Onshore Wind Energy May 2020 - Inner Moray Firth LDP Area. Wildlands raptor monitoring initiative (Jan 2025) shows clear visuals of radio tagged raptors and their movements between the National Park and the Monadhliath's – noting the regular flight paths of Hen Harrier and Golden Eagle. Nature Scot state that the proposed development site is on the edge of a wildcat priority area. Adjacent to Capercaillie habitat. Biodiversity Net Gain - Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan will be prepared and submitted with the Section 36 application and include peatland restoration, Kinveachy Forest enhancement, and water course enhancement, including to improve fish migration. Seek more detail in EIA.

Water, Flood Risk, Peat & Drainage	HwLDP Policy 63, Water Environment - In assessing proposals the Council will consider associated Area Management Plans. River Findhorn Initiative have such plans in place - cumulative hydrological changes to rivers impacting highly vulnerable Atlantic Salmon and other fish population. Specific concern about extinction events of unique resident Trout populations. Concern about how the cumulative effect of hard surfaces and drainage changes, impact an already unresilient river system. Scoping Report - Phase 1 peat probing has been undertaken for the Site, comprising of 1,775 probe locations across the Proposed Development area and potential access route. The results show that peat is present across much of the Site, with areas of deeper peat (up to 3m) interspersed with shallower areas of peat and areas where no peat is present.
Tourism & Recreation	Scoping Report – developer has proposed to scope socioeconomics, tourism and recreation out of the EIA Report. A separate report on socioeconomics and tourism will be provided and submitted alongside the EIA. Activities include - sporting activities (shooting, stalking, fishing), walking, sightseeing, wildlife watching and photography, cycling (on and off road), wild swimming, paragliding, cross country skiing. Tomatin Distillery reported a 40% increase in visitor numbers in recent years. In 2022, the distillery welcomed 35,000 visitors, and together with people visiting the Strathdearn Hub, has seen visitor numbers increase to an estimated 80,000 (excluding A9 and rail travellers). The Glen Road does not have a traffic counter. Cycle counters capture 9000 movements at the north and 5000 at the south, estimating 4000 are using the Glen Road from Farr. Glen Road estimated use: - Wildlife Tour Minibuses - 5 times a week for 40 weeks carrying 8 passengers (1600) - Casual day trippers out for a run in the car – 100 per week for 50 weeks carrying two passengers (10,000) - Cyclists (4000) - Overnight guests - bed capacity in self-catering pods and lodges = 100, annual occupancy 40%, (14,600) There are ongoing plans for further development of the distillery with visitor numbers estimated to increase to 100,000. In addition, Braemore Estates has plans for a ‘House of Bruar’ style development, estimating 500,000 visitor numbers. New parking area proposed at Slochd site entrance giving access to the unofficial walking routes currently being promoted by local interest groups. Outdoor Access Management Plan to mitigate impact on recreational routes during construction and enhance during operation.
Roads & Access	Construction traffic access will be directly from the U2856 (Slochd – Tomatin road) from a new priority access junction and realigned railway bridge. Loads will then proceed to the proposed turbine locations using upgraded and new access tracks. Abnormal Loads for turbine components will access the Site via the U2856 and A9. Scoping Report - A detailed Route Survey Report will support the application and will identify the necessary access improvements that will be required to enable loads to access the Site.

	Proposals for the distillery and Braemore Estates would impact the north end of Tomatin and both developments could have a major impact on roads/access and increased numbers of people wishing to visit up the Glen. See increase in vehicle numbers and potential increase in the area under Tourism & Recreation.
Noise & Shadow Flicker	Highland Council's expectation is that all proposals will seek to achieve noise limits at sensitive locations that are at the lower end of the range indicated in national guidance. Assessment will focus on the nearest properties to the proposed development. The evaluation will cover potential noise effects during both construction and operation phases. Cumulative assessment will also consider neighbouring wind farms that could contribute to combined noise effects. Considered medium impact for this site.
Community Benefits	Package worth £5,000 per installed MW capacity per annum (based on the scoping layout, this would amount to nearly £950,000 annually). Could include RES's Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS), offering annual discounts on electricity bills to properties closest to the wind farm. Current Scottish Government consultation on CB. Linked to Strathdearn Community Action Plan – potential job creation for Ranger-type role in the community. Remit could include monitoring numbers and types of visitors; raptor monitoring; management of resources; maintenance work; reporting back to community. Potential negative impact on local property prices.

Balnespick	
Status	Scoping Approved. Application has been submitted to Scottish Government the last week in January, though at the time of writing this report it was not yet live on the Energy Consents Unit website. Once live, the Environmental Impact Assessment (which investigates and mitigates potential effects of the development on the natural, physical, and human environment) will be available for further scrutiny.
Location	The site is located on Balnespick Estate approximately 5 km east of Tomatin and 6 km north-west of Carrbridge. The site is approximately 1,020 ha of upland moorland, currently managed as a sporting estate. A previous 26-turbine proposal for Balnespick by Eurus Energy UK Ltd, was rejected in 2013.
Operator	Fred. Olsen Renewables
Size and Scale	Installation of 9 wind turbines, each with a maximum height of 200m, collectively generating up to 55.8MW of electricity. Plans include the integration of up to 10MW Battery Energy Storage.
Grid Connection	Will be subject to a separate application under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. Proposed to export its power across the Upper Findhorn to the substation at Garbole. Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance: Additional overhead transmission lines should be avoided particularly in the adjacent Upper Farmed Strath AU where a plethora of lines has created a cluttered effect in places.
Consultation	Two rounds of consultation took place in 2024

Relevant National and Regional Policies	National Planning Framework 4 – key policies: - Policy 1 – Global climate and nature crises - 3 – Biodiversity protection - 4 – Impact – type, diversity, scale of development - 5 – Peat disturbance - 6 – Impact – woodlands - 14 – Improve qualities of the area - 18 – Infrastructure improvements - 20 – Soils and water management - 25 – Local and regional wealth creation - 29 – Benefits from tourism Highland-wide Local Development Plan – key policies: - Policy 58 – Protected species - Policy 63 – Water environment - Policy 67 – On-shore wind energy
Landscape & Visual Effects <i>Landscape character, Visibility, Lighting, Clustering</i>	16 viewpoints selected (Scoping Report). Turbines would be visible from Tomatin and the distillery, having medium impact. Highly visible from Blackmount in CNP Visible aviation lighting required on turbines over 150m. Lighting of turbines would extend and intensify effects on the dark skies which are a key quality of this area (Dava Moor Landscape Sensitivity report, 2021). HwLDP, Policy 67, Renewable Energy Developments – Highland Council will support proposals where it is satisfied that they are located, sited and designed such that they will not be significantly detrimental overall, either individually or cumulatively with other developments. There is limited spacing relative to the existing wind farm at Tom nan Clach and those further to the east.
Natural Heritage <i>Including Ornithology</i>	The site lies within the rolling uplands landscape character type, which consists of large, smooth rounded hills with summits of a similar height. May extend beyond Spatial Framework for Onshore Wind Energy May 2020 - Inner Moray Firth LDP Area. Cose proximity to the National Park, where wind energy development sited closer to the boundary (and/or larger turbines) could breach the containment provided by the higher ridge and pronounced summits which form a distinctive backdrop to the Spey valley. Wildlands raptor monitoring initiative (Jan 2025) shows clear visuals of radio tagged raptors and their movements between the National Park and the Monadhliath's – noting the regular flight paths of Hen Harrier and Golden Eagle. Biodiversity Net Gain - A significant biodiversity enhancement plan will accompany the application. Over 90% of the surveyed bog habitat has the potential for enhancement. In addition, riparian woodland planting, enhancing juniper habitat and encouraging dwarf birch. The riparian woodland was brought forward following engagement with a local organisation that was proposing broad leafed riparian woodland as part of a broader watershed initiative to improve the conditions within the catchment. Seek more detail in EIA.
Water, Flood Risk, Peat & Drainage	HwLDP Policy 63, Water Environment - In assessing proposals the Council will consider associated Area Management Plans. River Findhorn Initiative have such plans in place - cumulative hydrological changes to rivers

	impacting highly vulnerable Atlantic Salmon and other fish population. Specific concern about extinction events of unique resident Trout populations. Concern about how the cumulative effect of hard surfaces and drainage changes, impact an already unresilient river system. Carbon and Peatland Map (2016) - the peat deposits found at the Proposed Development are primarily Class 1 (Nationally important) and Class 5 (No peatland vegetation).
Tourism & Recreation	Activities include - sporting activities (shooting, stalking, fishing), walking, sightseeing, wildlife watching and photography, cycling (on and off road), wild swimming, paragliding, cross country skiing. Tomatin Distillery reported a 40% increase in visitor numbers in recent years. In 2022, the distillery welcomed 35,000 visitors, and together with people visiting the Strathdearn Hub, has seen visitor numbers increase to an estimated 80,000 (excluding A9 and rail travellers). The Glen Road does not have a traffic counter. Cycle counters capture 9000 movements at the north and 5000 at the south, estimating 4000 are using the Glen Road from Farr. Glen Road estimated use: - Wildlife Tour Minibuses - 5 times a week for 40 weeks carrying 8 passengers (1600) - Casual day trippers out for a run in the car – 100 per week for 50 weeks carrying two passengers (10,000) - Cyclists (4000) - Overnight guests - bed capacity in self-catering pods and lodges = 100, annual occupancy 40%, (14,600) There are ongoing plans for further development of the distillery with visitor numbers estimated to increase to 100,000. In addition, Braemore Estates has plans for a 'House of Bruar' style development, estimating 500,000 visitor numbers. Outdoor Access Management Plan to mitigate impact on recreational routes during construction and enhance during operation.
Roads & Access	Construction traffic will be accessed from the Dava Moor (B9007) using the first part of the Tom nan Clach wind farm access. Operational access will be taken from Balvraid Rd. Little disruption up the Glen Rd. Proposals for the distillery and Braemore Estates would impact the north end of Tomatin and both developments could have a major impact on roads/access and increased numbers of people wishing to visit up the Glen. See increase in vehicle numbers and potential increase in the area under Tourism & Recreation.
Noise & Shadow Flicker	Shadow flicker scoped out of EIA. Highland Council's expectation is that all proposals will seek to achieve noise limits at sensitive locations that are at the lower end of the range indicated in national guidance. Assessment will focus on the nearest properties to the proposed development. A cumulative assessment will also consider neighbouring wind farms that could contribute to combined noise effects. The evaluation will cover potential noise effects during both construction and operation phases. Considered low impact for this site.
Community Benefits	Could provide over £9 million in community benefits throughout its lifespan. Creation of a Community Benefit Fund managed locally to complement

	existing CB funds. Deliver new initiatives such as a Local Energy Discount Scheme and an Energy Efficiency Scheme. Current Scottish Government consultation on CB. Linked to Strathdearn Community Action Plan – potential job creation for Ranger-type role in the community. Remit could include monitoring numbers and types of visitors; raptor monitoring; management of resources; maintenance work; reporting back to community. Potential negative impact on local property prices.
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	Lynemore
Status	Scoping Approved. Application due to be submitted to Scottish Government by end of March 2025. Following submission, the Environmental Impact Assessment (which investigates and mitigates potential effects of the development on the natural, physical, and human environment) will be available for scrutiny.
Location	On Lynemore Estate on the hills 2 km west of the A9 at Moy, the site is mostly open moorland, managed primarily for field sport. Carn na h-Easgairn (616m) is located within the southern edge of the site boundary. Areas of open deciduous woodland and commercial plantation lie to the north of the Site. The Farr/ Glen Kyllachy Wind Farm complex lies some 2km to the south west.
Operator	Galileo Empower UK Ltd
Size and Scale	Installation of up to 14 wind turbines, each with a maximum height of 200m, collectively generating up to 72MW of electricity. Plans include the integration of up to 50MW Battery Energy Storage.
Grid Connection	Grid connection will be to the Garbole substation through the Farr/Glen Kyllachy Wind Farms.
Consultation	Two rounds of consultation took place in 2024
Relevant National and Regional Policies	National Planning Framework 4 – key policies: - Policy 1 – Global climate and nature crises - 3 – Biodiversity protection - 4 – Impact – type, diversity, scale of development - 5 – Peat disturbance - 6 – Impact – woodlands - 14 – Improve qualities of the area - 18 – Infrastructure improvements - 20 – Soils and water management - 25 – Local and regional wealth creation - 29 – Benefits from tourism Highland-wide Local Development Plan – key policies: - Policy 58 – Protected species - Policy 63 – Water environment - Policy 67 – On-shore wind energy
Landscape & Visual Effects <i>Landscape character,</i>	18 viewpoints selected (Scoping Report). Potentially significant landscape effects on the ‘host’ landscape character of the Rolling Uplands – Inverness. Potentially significant visual effects on:

<i>Visibility, Lighting, Clustering</i>	- views from residential properties within 2 km of the proposed turbines - views from transport routes including the A9, main railway line and the Highland Tourist Route as well as from recreational routes including the Sustrans National Cycle Network, the Great Glen Way (one of Scotland's Great Trails), General Wade's Military Road (Moy to Inverness) Heritage Path and the core path network - recreational and tourist/ visitor attractions including a number of hill walking summits - on night-time views from surrounding visual receptors selected as being representative of locations where there are likely to be people at night, including settlements and roads. Visible aviation lighting required on turbines over 150m. Lighting of turbines would extend and intensify effects on the dark skies which are a key quality of this area (Dava Moor Landscape Sensitivity report, 2021). HwLDP, Policy 67, Renewable Energy Developments – Highland Council will support proposals where it is satisfied that they are located, sited and designed such that they will not be significantly detrimental overall, either individually or cumulatively with other developments. There is limited spacing relative to the existing wind farm at Farr. Highland Council policy on spacing between wind farms - proximity to Farr wind farm breaks agreed boundary spacing between wind farms.
<i>Natural Heritage Including Ornithology</i>	The site lies within the rolling uplands landscape character type, which consists of large, smooth rounded hills with summits of a similar height. May extend beyond Spatial Framework for Onshore Wind Energy May 2020 - Inner Moray Firth LDP Area Biodiversity Net Gain - the proposed development will introduce appropriate, site-specific measures to conserve, restore, and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. Seek more detail in EIA.
<i>Water, Flood Risk, Peat & Drainage</i>	HwLDP Policy 63, Water Environment - In assessing proposals the Council will consider associated Area Management Plans. River Findhorn Initiative have such plans in place - cumulative hydrological changes to rivers impacting highly vulnerable Atlantic Salmon and other fish population. Specific concern about extinction events of unique resident Trout populations. Concern about how the cumulative effect of hard surfaces and drainage changes, impact an already unresilient river system. The SNH Carbon and Peatlands 2016 mapping shows that the Site mostly has Class 1 peat (nationally important carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitats). Aerial imagery shows the extensive and degraded nature of the peat on site which has been heavily managed and subjected to muirburn.
<i>Tourism & Recreation</i>	Activities include - sporting activities (shooting, stalking, fishing), walking, sightseeing, wildlife watching and photography, cycling (on and off road), wild swimming, paragliding, cross country skiing. Tomatin Distillery reported a 40% increase in visitor numbers in recent years. In 2022, the distillery welcomed 35,000 visitors, and together with people visiting the Strathdearn Hub, has seen visitor numbers increase to an estimated 80,000 (excluding A9 and rail travellers). The Glen Road does not have a traffic counter. Cycle counters capture 9000 movements at the

	north and 5000 at the south, estimating 4000 are using the Glen Road from Farr. Glen Road estimated use: - Wildlife Tour Minibuses - 5 times a week for 40 weeks carrying 8 passengers (1600) - Casual day trippers out for a run in the car – 100 per week for 50 weeks carrying two passengers (10,000) - Cyclists (4000) - Overnight guests - bed capacity in self-catering pods and lodges = 100, annual occupancy 40%, (14,600) There are ongoing plans for further development of the distillery with visitor numbers estimated to increase to 100,000. In addition, Braemore Estates has plans for a 'House of Bruar' style development, estimating 500,000 visitor numbers. Outdoor Access Management Plan to mitigate impact on recreational routes during construction and enhance during operation.
Roads & Access	Site access is currently gained via a track running southwest through the site from the A9 Alt na Slannach haul road junction, leading to the Garbole substation through the Farr/Glen Kyllachy Wind Farms. Proposals for the distillery and Braemore Estates would impact the north end of Tomatin and both developments could have a major impact on roads/access and increased numbers of people wishing to visit up the Glen. See increase in vehicle numbers and potential increase in the area under Tourism & Recreation.
Noise & Shadow Flicker	Highland Council's expectation is that all proposals will seek to achieve noise limits at sensitive locations that are at the lower end of the range indicated in national guidance. Assessment will focus on the nearest properties to the proposed development. A cumulative assessment will also consider neighbouring wind farms that could contribute to combined noise effects. The evaluation will cover potential noise effects during both construction and operation phases. Considered medium impact for this site.
Community Benefits	Proposed community wealth fund in the region of £350,000 per annum. Establishment of a Lynemore Renewable Energy Discount Scheme (REDS) for those people living and working closest to the wind farm. Community Shared Ownership (up to 10% ownership) offered to community surrounding the scheme. Current Scottish Government consultation on CB. Linked to Strathdearn Community Action Plan – potential job creation for Ranger-type role in the community. Remit could include monitoring numbers and types of visitors; raptor monitoring; management of resources; maintenance work; reporting back to community. Potential negative impact on local property prices.

	Kyllachy
Status	Scoping Approved. Application due to be submitted to Scottish Government in April 2025. Following submission, the Environmental Impact Assessment (which investigates and mitigates potential effects of the development on the natural, physical, and human environment) will be available for scrutiny.
Location	On Kyllachy Estate approximately 3.5km south-west of Tomatin and 5km south-west of Invereen, with the nearest major road being the A9, located approximately 3.5km east of the site
Operator	Wind Estate
Size and Scale	Installation of 13 wind turbines (increased from 11 to offset loss of production in reducing tip height), each with a maximum height of 180m (reduced from 200m following second consultation event). Collectively generating up to 80MW of electricity. Plans include the integration of 20MW Battery Energy Storage.
Grid Connection	Grid connection will be to the Garbole substation
Consultation	Two rounds of consultation took place in 2024
Relevant National and Regional Policies	National Planning Framework 4 – key policies: - Policy 1 – Global climate and nature crises - 3 – Biodiversity protection - 4 – Impact – type, diversity, scale of development - 5 – Peat disturbance - 6 – Impact – woodlands - 14 – Improve qualities of the area - 18 – Infrastructure improvements - 20 – Soils and water management - 25 – Local and regional wealth creation - 29 – Benefits from tourism Highland-wide Local Development Plan – key policies: - Policy 58 – Protected species - Policy 63 – Water environment - Policy 67 – On-shore wind energy
Landscape & Visual Effects <i>Landscape character, Visibility, Lighting, Clustering</i>	15 viewpoints selected (Scoping Report) – viewpoints have some extra information on developer’s website. Visibility considered high from Tomatin and through the Slochd. Visible aviation lighting required on turbines over 150m. Lighting of turbines would extend and intensify effects on the dark skies which are a key quality of this area (Dava Moor Landscape Sensitivity report, 2021). Turbine height differential between existing Glen Kyllachy wind farm (blade tip height 110m) and Kyllachy wind farm (180m). Significant visual impact could be partially mitigated by purchase of community woodland by local community to act as a buffer between Tomatin (2.1km away) and the site. HwLDP, Policy 67, Renewable Energy Developments – Highland Council will support proposals where it is satisfied that they are located, sited and designed such that they will not be significantly detrimental overall, either individually or cumulatively with other developments. Highland Council policy on spacing between wind farms - proximity to Glen Kyllachy and Farr wind farm breaks agreed boundary spacing between wind farms.

Natural Heritage <i>Including Ornithology</i>	The site lies within the rolling uplands landscape character type, which consists of large, smooth rounded hills with summits of a similar height. The closest Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) are at Loch Ness and Duntelchaig (5km to the west) and Drynachan, Lochindorb and Dava Moors (8km to the east). Local community seeking purchase of community woodland – could act as a visibility and sound buffer to wind farm. Biodiversity Net Gain - includes measures to create and enhance habitats for local wildlife, such as planting native vegetation and creating wetland areas. The design incorporates wildlife corridors to allow animals to move freely between different habitats, reducing the risk of habitat fragmentation. net biodiversity gain, via new planting and peatland restoration works. The developer states they are working with the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie River Trust to identify opportunities that also fit with their aspirations and projects in the area. Seek more detail in EIA.
Water, Flood Risk, Peat & Drainage	HwLDP Policy 63, Water Environment - In assessing proposals the Council will consider associated Area Management Plans. River Findhorn Initiative have such plans in place - cumulative hydrological changes to rivers impacting highly vulnerable Atlantic Salmon and other fish population. Specific concern about extinction events of unique resident Trout populations. Concern about how the cumulative effect of hard surfaces and drainage changes, impact an already unresilient river system.
Tourism & Recreation	Activities include - sporting activities (shooting, stalking, fishing), walking, sightseeing, wildlife watching and photography, cycling (on and off road), wild swimming, paragliding, cross country skiing. Tomatin Distillery reported a 40% increase in visitor numbers in recent years. In 2022, the distillery welcomed 35,000 visitors, and together with people visiting the Strathdearn Hub, has seen visitor numbers increase to an estimated 80,000 (excluding A9 and rail travellers). The Glen Road does not have a traffic counter. Cycle counters capture 9000 movements at the north and 5000 at the south, estimating 4000 are using the Glen Road from Farr. Glen Road estimated use: - Wildlife Tour Minibuses - 5 times a week for 40 weeks carrying 8 passengers (1600) - Casual day trippers out for a run in the car – 100 per week for 50 weeks carrying two passengers (10,000) - Cyclists (4000) - Overnight guests - bed capacity in self-catering pods and lodges = 100, annual occupancy 40%, (14,600) There are ongoing plans for further development of the distillery with visitor numbers estimated to increase to 100,000. In addition, Braemore Estates has plans for a ‘House of Bruar’ style development, estimating 500,000 visitor numbers. Outdoor Access Management Plan to mitigate impact on recreational routes during construction and enhance during operation.
Roads & Access	Access from the A9 Alt na Slannach Forestry & Land Scotland (FLS) haul road junction. Note FLS access agreement exclusively with Farr wind farm operator - Ventient.

	Proposals for the distillery and Braemore Estates would impact the north end of Tomatin and both developments could have a major impact on roads/access and increased numbers of people wishing to visit up the Glen. See increase in vehicle numbers and potential increase in the area under Tourism & Recreation.
Noise & Shadow Flicker	Highland Council's expectation is that all proposals will seek to achieve noise limits at sensitive locations that are at the lower end of the range indicated in national guidance. Assessment will focus on the nearest properties to the proposed development. A cumulative assessment will also consider neighbouring wind farms that could contribute to combined noise effects. The evaluation will cover potential noise effects during both construction and operation phases. Considered high impact for this site.
Community Benefits	Community benefits package over its lifetime, including potential reduction in electricity bills. Current Scottish Government consultation on CB. Linked to Strathdearn Community Action Plan – potential job creation for Ranger-type role in the community. Remit could include monitoring numbers and types of visitors; raptor monitoring; management of resources; maintenance work; reporting back to community. Potential negative impact on local property prices.

Carn na Saobhaidh	
Status	Scoping Approved. Application currently on hold. Following submission, the Environmental Impact Assessment (which investigates and mitigates potential effects of the development on the natural, physical, and human environment) will be available for scrutiny.
Location	On Glenmazeran Estate in the Monadhliath mountain range. Adjacent to and just north-east of, Aberarder Wind Farm, south-east of the B851, approximately 10 km south of Farr and 14 km west-south-west of Tomatin. The area is known for its expansive, peaty moorlands and is a popular destination for walkers, with routes such as the one via Dunmaglass providing access to the summit of Càrn na Saobhaidhe.
Operator	RES
Size and Scale	Installation of 29 wind turbines, each with a maximum height of 200m, collectively generating up to 209MW of electricity. Plans include the integration of 50-100MW Battery Energy Storage.
Grid Connection	Grid connection will be to the Garbole substation
Consultation	Consultation has taken place with local community
Relevant National and Regional Policies	National Planning Framework 4 – key policies: - Policy 1 – Global climate and nature crises - 3 – Biodiversity protection - 4 – Impact – type, diversity, scale of development - 5 – Peat disturbance - 6 – Impact – woodlands - 14 – Improve qualities of the area

	- 18 – Infrastructure improvements - 20 – Soils and water management - 25 – Local and regional wealth creation - 29 – Benefits from tourism Highland-wide Local Development Plan – key policies: - Policy 58 – Protected species - Policy 63 – Water environment - Policy 67 – On-shore wind energy
Landscape & Visual Effects <i>Landscape character, Visibility, Lighting, Clustering</i>	17 viewpoints are mentioned in Scoping Report. Visibility considered low from Tomatin and the A9. Visible aviation lighting required on turbines over 150m. Lighting of turbines would extend and intensify effects on the dark skies which are a key quality of this area (Dava Moor Landscape Sensitivity report, 2021). Highland Council policy on spacing between wind farms - proximity to Dunmaglass and Aberarder wind farms breaks agreed boundary spacing between wind farms.
Natural Heritage <i>Including Ornithology</i>	The site lies within the rolling uplands landscape character type, which consists of large, smooth rounded hills with summits of a similar height. May extend beyond Spatial Framework for Onshore Wind Energy May 2020 - Inner Moray Firth LDP Area. Wildlands raptor monitoring initiative (Jan 2025) shows clear visuals of radio tagged raptors and their movements between the National Park and the Monadhliath's – noting the regular flight paths of Hen Harrier and Golden Eagle. Biodiversity Net Gain - on majority of the site the peatland is heavily degraded. Opportunity for some major peatland restoration works and potential for montane woodland to be planted. Seek more detail in the EIA.
Water, Flood Risk, Peat & Drainage	HwLDP Policy 63, Water Environment - In assessing proposals the Council will consider associated Area Management Plans. River Findhorn Initiative have such plans in place - cumulative hydrological changes to rivers impacting highly vulnerable Atlantic Salmon and other fish population. Specific concern about extinction events of unique resident Trout populations. Concern about how the cumulative effect of hard surfaces and drainage changes, impact an already unresilient river system. On majority of the site the peatland is heavily degraded.
Tourism & Recreation	Activities include - sporting activities (shooting, stalking, fishing), walking, sightseeing, wildlife watching and photography, cycling (on and off road), wild swimming, paragliding, cross country skiing. A popular destination for walkers, with routes such as the one via Dunmaglass providing access to the summit of Càrn na Saobhaidhe. Tomatin Distillery reported a 40% increase in visitor numbers in recent years. In 2022, the distillery welcomed 35,000 visitors, and together with people visiting the Strathdearn Hub, has seen visitor numbers increase to an estimated 80,000 (excluding A9 and rail travellers). The Glen Road does not have a traffic counter. Cycle counters capture 9000 movements at the north and 5000 at the south, estimating 4000 are using the Glen Road from Farr. Glen Road estimated use: - Wildlife Tour Minibuses - 5 times a week for 40 weeks carrying 8 passengers (1600)

	- Casual day trippers out for a run in the car – 100 per week for 50 weeks carrying two passengers (10,000) - Cyclists (4000) - Overnight guests - bed capacity in self-catering pods and lodges = 100, annual occupancy 40%, (14,600) There are ongoing plans for further development of the distillery with visitor numbers estimated to increase to 100,000. In addition, Braemore Estates has plans for a 'House of Bruar' style development, estimating 500,000 visitor numbers. Outdoor Access Management Plan to mitigate impact on recreational routes during construction and enhance during operation.
Roads & Access	Access was originally considered from the A9 Alt na Slannach haul road junction, through Glen Kyllachy wind farm across the Garbole to Farr public road and enter site on east side. However, this is now under review (and the reason why the project is on hold) with other access options being considered through Glenmazeran Estate. Proposals for the distillery and Braemore Estates would impact the north end of Tomatin and both developments could have a major impact on roads/access and increased numbers of people wishing to visit up the Glen. See increase in vehicle numbers and potential increase in the area under Tourism & Recreation.
Noise & Shadow Flicker	Highland Council's expectation is that all proposals will seek to achieve noise limits at sensitive locations that are at the lower end of the range indicated in national guidance. Assessment will focus on the nearest properties to the proposed development. A cumulative assessment will also consider neighbouring wind farms that could contribute to combined noise effects. The evaluation will cover potential noise effects during both construction and operation phases. Considered low impact for this site.
Community Benefits	Community benefits package over its lifetime, including potential reduction in electricity bills. Current Scottish Government consultation on CB. Linked to Strathdearn Community Action Plan – potential job creation for Ranger-type role in the community. Remit could include monitoring numbers and types of visitors; raptor monitoring; management of resources; maintenance work; reporting back to community. Potential negative impact on local property prices.

Appendix 2 - Description of Key Criteria

Landscape and Visual Effects (weighted in importance to community)

- 1 Perception of settlements or key locations being encircled by wind energy development; level of visibility of turbines prominent from settlements and key access routes; lighting on turbines
- 2 Existing pattern of wind energy development is respected, including turbine height and proportions; density and spacing of developments. Need for separation between developments and/or clusters is respected (cumulative impact)
- 3 Distinctiveness of landscape character is respected - extent to which a proposal affects the distinction between neighbouring landscape character types, in areas where the variety of character is important to the appreciation of the landscape.

Natural Heritage (including Ornithology)

Effects on the qualities of a mapped area of wild land and potential impact on wider natural heritage beyond the confines of designated sites.

Seek to avoid significant adverse effects on siting, context or setting of historic environment assets.

Proximity to the National Park, where wind energy development sited closer to the boundary (and/or larger turbines) could breach the containment provided by the higher ridge and pronounced summits which form a distinctive backdrop to the Spey valley.

Concern for areas which support habitats of naturally occurring wild birds, particularly those on Annex 1 of the Birds Directive, migratory species and birds of conservation concern on the Red and Amber Lists.

Water, Flood Risk, Drainage, Peat

Designed to avoid impacts upon the water environment wherever possible.

Includes ground water, surface water (including water supplies), and groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems.

Tourism and Recreation

Potential for socio-economic benefits to be derived from development proposals, for example, evidence of community benefit discussions.

Effects on industries for which Highland's landscape is important - for example related to tourism and recreation.

Roads and Access

Avoid significant adverse effects on the public road network individually and cumulatively. Road network has suitable alignment, width and strength to carry abnormal loads and the construction traffic.

Impacts of the construction traffic associated with the development, the suitability of the existing road network, the impact on existing road users and adjacent communities, and the requirements for any mitigation works.

Noise and Shadow Flicker

Highland Council's expectation is that all proposals will seek to achieve noise limits at sensitive locations that are at the lower end of the range indicated in national guidance and may seek limits lower than that in certain circumstances. (National guidance addresses an average and therefore does not account for Highland's generally lower level of background noise).

Shadow flicker may occur under certain combinations of geographical position and time of day when the sun passes behind the rotors of a wind turbine and casts a shadow over neighbouring properties.