

Swarclett Wind Farm

Pre-Application Consultation Report

Swarclett Wind Energy Limited

wind2



June 2024

Contents

1	Introduction	3
1.1	The Proposal	3
1.2	The Applicant	3
1.3	Legislative Context	4
1.3.1	Primary legislation	4
1.3.2	Best Practice Guidance	4
1.4	Purpose of Report	5
1.5	Proposal of Application Notice	5
2	Pre-Application Consultation	6
2.1	The Highland Council (THC)	6
2.2	Key Stakeholders	6
2.3	Project Webpage	6
2.4	Public Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy	7
2.4.1	Public Exhibition Events	7
2.4.2	Advertising	8
2.4.3	Feedback Forms	9
3	Comments and Feedback	10
3.1	Public Exhibitions	10
3.2	Public Opinion	10
4	Summary	11
5	References	12
	Appendices	13
	Appendix A. Proposal of Application Notice	13
	Appendix B. Newspaper Adverts	18
	Appendix C. Mailshot Consultation Letters	22
	Appendix D. Online Feedback Form	32
	Appendix E. Exhibition Event Photographs and Exhibition Boards	39

Tables

None

Figures

1 Introduction

This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) report has been prepared in support of a Planning Application by Swarclett Wind Energy Limited ('the Applicant') for a renewable energy development consisting of two wind turbines and a battery energy storage system (BESS) near Thurso, Highlands, Swarclett Wind Farm, hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'.

This PAC report outlines the consultation process undertaken by the Applicant in relation to the submission of a major planning application under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) ('the Planning Act') for consent of the 'Proposed Development'.

This PAC report identifies the relevant national and local policy as well as the approach that the Applicant has taken to inform and consult with the local community throughout the project timeline. In line with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 and in accordance with Circular 3/2022 Development Management Procedures.

The PAC report covers the consultation required under a Major Application to The Highland Council (THC) and includes details of:

- Those who have been consulted;
- The statutory PAC and Highland Council requirements and how these have been complied with;
- Evidence of the PAC process and how it has been undertaken;
- Details of feedback from consultees including how the Applicant has responded to the feedback and incorporated this into the Proposed Development scheme; and
- Evidence of the steps the Applicant has taken to provide the opportunity for comments directly to the Council pre- and post- Application submission.

1.1 The Proposal

The Proposed Development, comprising of two wind turbines up to 149.9 meters (m) tip height, a grid scale BESS installation, plus ancillary infrastructure, is proposed to be located 1km southeast of Mains of Durran, Castletown, Thurso, Highlands (Central Grid Reference ND 21032 62606) (the 'Proposed Development Site') and is illustrated in Figure 1-1.

The Proposed Development is categorised as a 'Major' application under the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 as the Proposed Development will exceed an installed generating capacity of 20 megawatts (MW).

1.2 The Applicant

The Applicant, Swarclett Wind Energy Limited, is a subsidiary of Wind2 Limited, a specialist wind developer founded in 2016. Wind2 Limited has staff based in Cromarty, Perth, Edinburgh, and Wales, with significant expertise in renewable energy, and a track record of successfully developing onshore wind farms throughout the UK.

Wind2 Limited is working on the development of a number of renewable energy projects and is committed to investing in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

1.3 Legislative Context

1.3.1 Primary legislation

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 requires all applicants intending to submit a planning application for a national or major development with a capacity of over 20MW, to undertake public consultation prior to submitting the planning application.

For a Major development, the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (Part 2, 7(1)) state that consultation should be undertaken with community councils whose area is within or adjoining the land where the Proposed Development would be located.

The prospective applicant is required to hold a minimum of two public events where members of the public may make comments to the prospective applicant on the Proposed Development; and details of this event are to be advertised in a local newspaper at least seven days prior to the event.

1.3.2 Best Practice Guidance

Best practice guidance on community engagement is provided in Planning Advice Note 3/2010 Community Engagement, which details 10 National Standards for Community Engagement that can be used to plan, monitor and evaluate the consultation process:

- Standard 1: Involvement: identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of the engagement;
- Standard 2: Support: identify and overcome any barriers to involvement;
- Standard 3: Planning: gather evidence of need and resources to agree purpose, scope and actions;
- Standard 4: Methods: agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose;
- Standard 5: Working together: agree and use clear procedures that enable participants to work together effectively and efficiently;
- Standard 6: Sharing information: ensure necessary information is communicated between the participants;
- Standard 7: Working with others: work effectively with others with an interest;
- Standard 8: Improvement: develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of the participants;
- Standard 9: Feedback: feed results back to the wider community and agencies affected; and
- Standard 10: Monitoring and evaluation: monitor and evaluate whether engagement achieves its purpose and meets the national standards for community engagement.

1.4 Purpose of Report

This PAC Report has been submitted as a supporting document with the planning application for the Proposed Development. It demonstrates the scope of consultation undertaken with the community and other stakeholders in accordance with legislation as noted above.

1.5 Proposal of Application Notice

A Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) was submitted to The Highland Council (THC) on 12 February 2024, providing notification of the intention to submit a planning application for the Proposed Development and outlining the pre-application consultation to be undertaken. A copy of the PAN is provided in Appendix A.

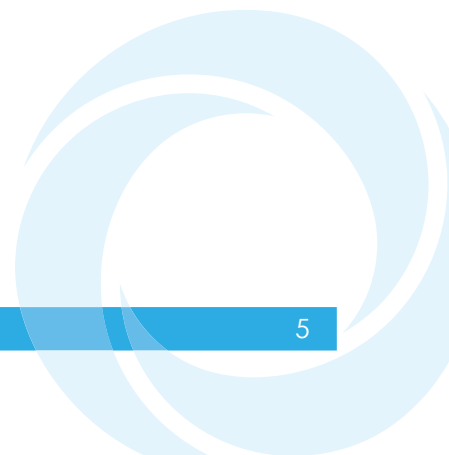
The PAN detailed:

- Public exhibitions (four in-person events);
- Implementation of a dedicated project webpage;
- Local newspaper adverts advertising the application and inviting the public to the exhibitions;
- Letters mailed to local residents inviting feedback on the proposed development and providing details of how to find out more, including project contact details and an invitation to the public exhibitions; and
- Consultation with Community Councils, Councillors and key stakeholders.

The scope of consultation promoted early and open discussions between the Applicant and the local communities to allow them to be informed about the Proposed Development and to be given an opportunity to contribute their views before the formal submission of the planning application.

The Applicant has sought to make public consultation an integral part of the project and design process, informing the design development.

The Applicant has been consulting regularly with THC throughout the pre-application process.



2 Pre-Application Consultation

2.1 The Highland Council (THC)

Prior to submitting the PAN, the Applicant undertook formal Pre-Application Consultation with THC. The Proposed Development is located on the boundary of Castletown Community Council and Bower Community Council area. Given the nature of the Proposed Development, it was recommended that adjacent community councils be consulted.

within Castletown Community Council and that given the nature of the Proposed Development it was recommended that adjacent community councils be consulted.

Following correspondence with THC consultation was extended to include all community councils within 10km of the Proposed Development as follows:

- Castletown Community Council;
- Bower Community Council;
- Dunnet and Canisbay Community Council;
- Watten Community Council;
- Halkirk and District Community Council;
- Thurso Community Council;
- Caithness West Community Council;
- Sinclairs Bay Community Council; and
- Tannach and District Community Council.

2.2 Key Stakeholders

As the Proposed Development was determined to be an EIA Development; further formal consultation was required under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the 'EIA Regulations').

Relevant consultees, including Historic Environment Scotland and NatureScot were engaged with as part of the pre-application consultation process. A list of the consultees, details of the consultation responses and how and where these have been considered by the Applicant can be found in Chapter 2: EIA Approach and Methodology of the EIA Report submitted alongside this PAC report.

2.3 Project Webpage

A dedicated project webpage was set up with the web address: <https://swarclettwindturbines.co.uk/> and has been kept regularly updated with information about the proposals and the associated community consultation process.

The webpage has been designed with easily accessible navigation tools to view the relevant project material, to get in touch with the project team directly and to submit feedback.

Information provided on the project webpage includes details of the Applicant and an overview of the Proposed Development, as well as details of when and where public consultation events would be held.

2.4 Public Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy

This section provides information on the ways in which the Applicant has engaged with the community throughout pre-application consultation. This section only details the engagement process with the public and THC rather than engagement with technical consultees. Further information on technical consultations can be found in the EIA Report.

The Applicant used their previous experience from other wind farm projects elsewhere to develop an engagement strategy for the Proposed Development. This strategy focused on a dynamic approach using public exhibition events and targeted engagement with community councils to generate useful feedback that has informed the design evolution of the project (as detailed in the EIA Report).

The Applicant worked with THC and key residents to identify areas in which aspects of the Proposed Development can be used for the benefit of the public.

Throughout the engagement strategy, the Applicant has employed a variety of methods of consulting with the public, including;

- Hosting a series of in-person public exhibition events;
- Attendance and direct engagement (through meeting and via email correspondence) with relevant Community Councils and groups;
- Local press advertisements;
- Letters mailed to local residents inviting feedback on the Proposed Development and providing details of how to find out more, including project contact details and an invitation to the public exhibitions;
- Public notices;
- Production of technical reports, exhibition materials and editorial content; and
- The creation of a dedicated project webpage.

Further details of the engagement strategy are explored in this Section.

2.4.1 Public Exhibition Events

All four public exhibition events were hosted in person, as follows:

1. 11th July 2023, 4-7pm, Castletown Drill Hall, Castletown, KW14 8TU;
2. 26th July 2023, 4-7pm, Bower Community Hall, Bower, Caithness, KW1 4TT
3. 28th February 2024, 4-7pm, Bower Community Hall, Bower, Caithness, KW1 4TT; and
4. 14th March 2024, 4-7pm, Castletown Drill Hall, Castletown, Caithness, KW14 8TU

The exhibition boards and materials presented at the events included the following aspects:

- Project context, status and overview of the Proposed Development Site;
- Information about the Applicant representative body (Wind2);
- Main components of the Proposed Development;
- A timeline of the Project;
- Community benefits of the Proposed Development;

- Environmental effects on a variety of topics, including landscape and visual, ecology, ornithology, noise, traffic and transport; and
- Visualisations to demonstrate the Proposed Development in the context of the existing landscape.

Some visualisations and location and site plans were printed out and included on tables around the exhibition hall in various sizes to accommodate attendees with visual impairment.

The public exhibition events were staffed at all times by members of the Applicant team to field questions regarding the status of environmental assessments, the context of the EIA Report and to answer any questions related to the Proposed Development.

Attendees were allowed time to view the exhibition materials and given the opportunity to ask questions. The attendees were also encouraged to complete the feedback forms printed out and provided at the public exhibition event. There was also a QR code available to allow feedback to be provided digitally.

In the event attendees were unable to stay for long, the attendees were advised that all exhibition materials can be viewed on the Project webpage.

The second event was held on Wednesday 26th July between 4pm and 7pm in much the same way as the first. The aims of this event were to:

- Allow for an opportunity to present the same variety of information as the first event to attendees local to the location;
- Allow for the opportunity to present the same variety of information as the first event to those who were unable to attend on 11th July;
- To provide further materials that attendees at the first event made clear would be helpful, including differing view point visualisations; and
- To outline any changes to the Proposed Development as a result of feedback from the first exhibition event as well as technical input.

The 3rd and 4th events were held on 28th February 2024 and 14th March 2024. These events were held primarily to:

- Provide further information to the public regarding the expected grid connection and traffic access route as well as community benefit and near neighbour funding opportunities.
- Confirm the findings of aspects of the EIA;
- Provide a project timeline update; and
- Engage further with the communities on any concerns they may have.

2.4.2 Advertising

Details of the public exhibition events were advertised in the local newspapers, The John o Groats Journal and the Caithness Courier, both online and on paper at least seven days prior to both the events. Copies of the adverts are provided in Appendix B.

Letters providing an invitation to the second round of public exhibitions were also mailed to local residents at least seven days in advance of the public consultation events.

For the second exhibition, letters were sent to all properties within 10km of the site where there will be theoretical visibility of the wind turbines as advised on THC Major

Developments, Public Consultation and Engagement webpage (THC 2024). Copies of the letters are provided in Appendix C.

All advertising for the public exhibitions also promoted the project webpage address as an additional channel for providing feedback on the project proposals.

2.4.3 Feedback Forms

Feedback forms were available on the project webpage and at the public exhibition events.

The feedback form included a short questionnaire and section for comments. In total 11 feedback forms were received across all four events. A period greater than 21 days was allowed to provide feedback after both events, although any feedback received after the initial 21 days was also taken into consideration.

The feedback forms were designed to explore the opinions or concerns of members of the public arising from the Proposed Development. The feedback form also provided an option to provide an email address to be kept informed about further progress of the proposal.

Comments provided at the public exhibitions were compiled and are presented in Section 4 and a blank template of the feedback form is provided in Appendix D.

3 Comments and Feedback

3.1 Public Exhibitions

Attendance at the public exhibitions was as follows:

- Public Exhibition event 1: 24 people;
- Public Exhibition event 2: 6 people;
- Public Exhibition event 3: 10 people;
- Public Exhibition event 4: 11 people;

3.2 Public Opinion

In total 11 feedback forms were received following the public exhibition events.

Following the first exhibition event, common feedback included requests for attendance at a meeting with the community council, to enable further in-depth discussion with the local community. Following receipt of this feedback, the Applicant reached out to both Community Councils with which the Proposed Development lies within to request a slot at a Community Council meeting.

Bower Community Council is currently not sitting therefore a meeting with this entity wasn't possible. Castletown Community Council and the Applicant tried on many occasions to arrange attendance at a meeting however on each occasion, Castletown Community Council cancelled the meetings where slots had been arranged due to organisational issues with the Community Council members.

Informal public feedback during the in-person exhibitions was positive in relation to the presentation of materials used at the exhibition events. Attendees particularly praised the willingness of the Applicant to engage in conversations and answer any questions.

Areas of opposition were raised in relation to local residents included the saturation of Caithness and Sutherland landscape with wind turbines, impact to local wildlife, visual impact to those living closest to the Proposed Development, financial contributions to local communities (distribution of community benefit funding) and the distribution of generated electricity into the national grid outwith the local area.

Photographs of the public exhibitions and the exhibition boards are provided in Appendix E.

4 Summary

This report demonstrates the scope of consultation undertaken with the community.

An interim design was presented to local residents at the first public exhibition event held in February 2023. The interim design was based on the proposed layout for the Proposed Development.

Comments raised through consultation have assisted in the progression of the final project design and amendments have been made to the proposals and the assessment where necessary.

Topics that were of concern to local residents included the saturation of Caithness and Sutherland landscape with wind turbines, impact to local wildlife, visual impact to those living closest to the Proposed Development, financial contributions to local communities (distribution of funding) and the distribution of generated electricity into the national grid outwith the local area.

It can be concluded following feedback from consultees that there appears to be a mixture of views from members of the local community and Community Councils.

5 References

Scottish Government (2006). The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. OQPS

Scottish Government (2009). Planning circular 5/2009: Hierarchy of Developments [online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-planning-series-circular-5-2009-hierarchy-developments/> [Accessed: 28/04/2024].

Scottish Government (2010). Planning Advice Note 3/2010 Community Engagement. OQPS

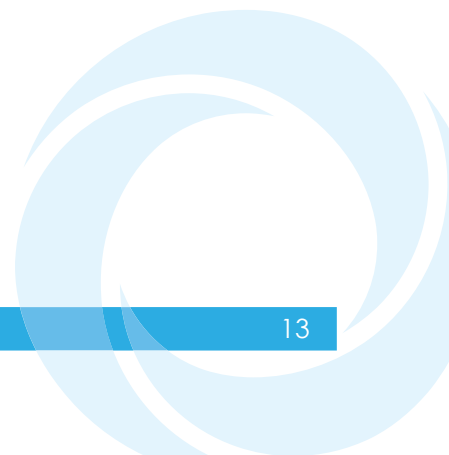
Scottish Government (2022). Planning circular 3/2022: development management procedures [online], Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-circular-3-2022-development-management-procedures/> [Accessed: 28/04/2024].

UK Government (1997) Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/8/contents> [Accessed: 28/04/2024].

THC (2024). Major Developments, Public Consultation and Engagement. Available at: https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/180/planning_-_applications_warrants_and_certificates/579/major_developments/5 [Accessed: 28/04/2024].

Appendices

Appendix A. Proposal of Application Notice





PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE MOLADH BRATH IARRTAIS

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and Planning (Scotland) Act 2019

Town and Country Planning (Pre-Application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2021

The Council will respond within 21 days of validation the Notice. It will advise whether the proposed Pre-application Consultation is satisfactory or if additional notification and consultation above the statutory minimum is required.

Please note that a planning application for this proposed development cannot be submitted less than 12 weeks from the date the Proposal of Application Notice is received by the Council and without the statutory consultation requirements having been undertaken. The planning application must be accompanied by a Pre-application consultation report.

The Proposal of Application Notice will be valid for a period of 18 months from the date of validation of the notice by the Council

Contact Details

Applicant	Swarclett Wind Energy Limited	Agent	Atmos Consulting Ltd
Address	Wind 2 Office The Hub Cromarty IV11 8YL	Address	CBC House 24 Canning Street Edinburgh EH3 8EG
Phone	07778129856	Phone	0131 346 9100
Email	hannah.brown@wind2.co.uk	Email	office@atmosconsulting.com

Address or Location of Proposed Development

Please state the postal address of the prospective development site. If there is no postal address, please describe its location. Please outline the site in red on a base plan to a recognised metric scale and attach it to this completed Notice

The Proposed Development would be located approximately 1km South East of Mains of Durran, Castletown (ND 21032 62606). Please see Figure 1 attached.

Description of Development

Please include detail where appropriate – eg the number of residential units; the gross floorspace in m² of any buildings not for residential use; the capacity of any electricity generation or waste management facility; and the length of any infrastructure project. Please attach any additional supporting information.

The Proposed Development consists of 2 turbines up to a maximum 149.9m tip height and battery storage. The wind turbine generators will have an indicative output of approximately 9.6MW and an indicative battery storage capacity of up to 12MW, resulting in a total capacity of 21.6MW. Please see Figure 1 attached.

Pre-application Screening Notice

Has a Screening Opinion been issued on the need for a Proposal of Application notice by the Highland Council in respect of the proposed development?

Yes

If yes, please provide a copy of this Opinion.

A Scoping Opinion was provided by The Highland Council on 28 March 2022. Please see Appendix A 22/00790/SCOP attached.

Community Consultation

State which other parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice.

Community Council/s	Date Notice Served
Bower Community Council (<i>bowercommunitycouncil@gmail.com</i>)	11/08/2023; 05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Castletown Community Council (<i>info@castletowncommunitycouncil.co.uk</i>)	11/08/2023; 05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Dunnet and Canisbay Community Council (<i>dandccommunitycouncil@gmail.com</i>)	05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Watten Community Council (<i>wattenc@gmail.com</i>)	05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Halkirk and District Community Council (<i>secretary@halkirkcommunitycouncil.org</i>)	05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Thurso Community Council (<i>ccthurso@gmail.com</i>)	05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Caithness West Community Council (<i>chair@caithnesswestcc.co.uk</i>)	05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Sinclair Bay Community Council (<i>sinclairbaycc@hotmail.co.uk</i>)	05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Tannach and District Community Council (<i>tannachanddistrictcc@outlook.com</i>)	05/09/2023; 12/02/2024

Local Elected Members	Date Notice Served
Cllr. Ron Gunn (<i>Ron.Gunn.cllr@highland.gov.uk</i>)	11/08/2023; 05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Cllr. Struan Mackie (<i>struan.mackie.cllr@highland.gov.uk</i>)	11/08/2023; 05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Cllr. Matthew Reiss (<i>Matthew.Reiss.cllr@highland.gov.uk</i>)	11/08/2023; 05/09/2023; 12/02/2024
Cllr. Karl Rosie (<i>karl.rosie.cllr@highland.gov.uk</i>)	11/08/2023; 05/09/2023; 12/02/2024

Members of Scottish Parliament and Members of Parliament	Date Notice Served
Maree Todd MSP for Caithness, Sutherland and Ross (Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot)	11/08/2023; 05/09/2023; 12/02/2024

Names / details of other parties	Date Notice Served
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Details of Proposed Consultation

Proposed Public Event 1	Venue	Date and Time
	Castletown Drill Hall, Thurso KW14 8TU	11/07/2023 4-7pm

Proposed Public Event 2	Venue	Date and Time
(at least 14 days after Public Event 1)	Bower Community Centre, Bower, Caithness, KW1 4TT	26/07/2023 4-7pm

Proposed Public Event 3	Venue	Date and Time
	Bower Community Centre, Bower, Caithness, KW1 4TT	28/02/2024 4-7pm

Proposed Public Event 4	Venue	Date and Time
(at least 14 days after Public Event 1)	Castletown Drill Hall, Thurso KW14 8TU	14/03/2024 4-7pm

Publication of Event

Newspaper Advert	Name of Newspaper	Advert Date
Please see Appendix B1, B2 and D2 attached.	John o Groats Journal	30/06/2023, 21/07/2023, 23/02/2024, 08/03/2024
	Caithness Courier	28/06/2023, 19/07/2023 21/02/2024, 06/03/2024

Details of any other consultation methods (date, time and with whom)

Mailshots for Public Event 3 and Public Event 4 will be distributed at least seven days in advance of the public consultation events to all properties within 10km of the site where there will be theoretical visibility of the wind farm as advised on THC Major Developments, Public Consultation and Engagement webpage (Appendix D1)

Mailshots: Distributed prior to each public consultation event on 28/06/2023 and 18/07/2023 (Appendix C1 and Appendix C2)

Historic Environment Scotland – 27/06/2023 09:35 via email - Urszula Szupczynska

The Highland Council Archaeologist – 27/06/2023 09:40 via email - Kirsty Cameron

The Highland Council Case Officer- 27/06/2023 14:11 via email, 18/07/2023 11:44 via email, 08/08/2023 14:48 via email – Peter Wheelan

Nature Scot – 27/06/2023 14:11 via email - Karen Reid

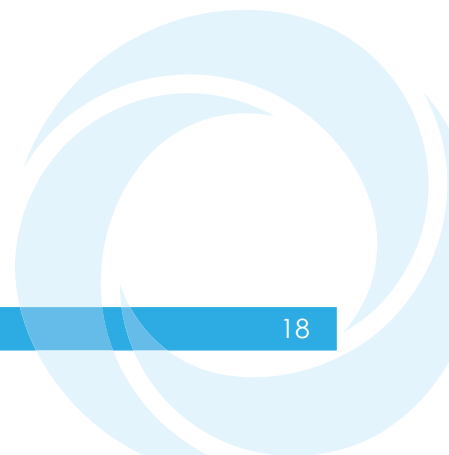
Signed

Date 12/02/2024



Martina Tully
Project Manager
Atmos Consulting Ltd.

Appendix B. Newspaper Adverts



wind2

Wind2 invite you to attend a Public Exhibition event on the draft proposals for the two turbine Swarclett Wind Farm. The proposed turbines are located on land approximately 1km to the southeast of Durran Mains, Castletown.

The Exhibition will be held as follows:

Tuesday 11th July 2023

4pm to 7pm

Castletown Drill Hall

Any person wishing to make comments relating to the proposals, or wishing to obtain further information, may do so by emailing: hannah.brown@wind2.co.uk. Alternatively, you can write to the Swarclett Wind Farm project team at: Wind2 Limited, The Hub, Cromarty, IV11 8YL.

Please note that comments made to the project team are not representations made to The Highland Council. There will be the opportunity to make direct representations to The Highland Council's Planning Services when the planning application is submitted.

This advert and consultation event are being held in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 under Regulation 7.

Up-to-date information about the project can also be found at the dedicated project website:

www.swarclettwindturbines.co.uk

Further events will be scheduled for later in the summer.

wind2

Wind2 invite you to attend a second Public Exhibition event on the draft proposals for the two turbine Swarclett Wind Farm. The proposed turbines are located on land approximately 1km to the southeast of Durran Mains, Castletown.

The Exhibition will be held as follows:

Wednesday 26th July 2023
4pm to 7pm
Bower Community Centre

Any person wishing to make comments relating to the proposals, or wishing to obtain further information, may do so by emailing: hannah.brown@wind2.co.uk. Alternatively, you can write to the Swarclett Wind Farm project team at: Wind2 Limited, The Hub, Cromarty, IV11 8YL.

Please note that comments made to the project team are not representations made to The Highland Council. There will be the opportunity to make direct representations to The Highland Council's Planning Services when the planning application is submitted.

This advert and consultation event are being held in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 under Regulation 7.

Up-to-date information about the project can also be found at the dedicated project website:

www.swarclettwindturbines.co.uk

wind2

Wind2 invite you to attend Public Exhibition events on the draft proposals for the two turbine Swarclett Wind Farm. The proposed turbines are located on land approximately 1km to the southeast of Durran Mains, Castletown. Please join us to discuss the environmental impact assessment findings ahead of submitting the planning application. This event is an opportunity to provide your thoughts on the proposed community benefit distribution for the scheme.

The Exhibitions will be held as follows:

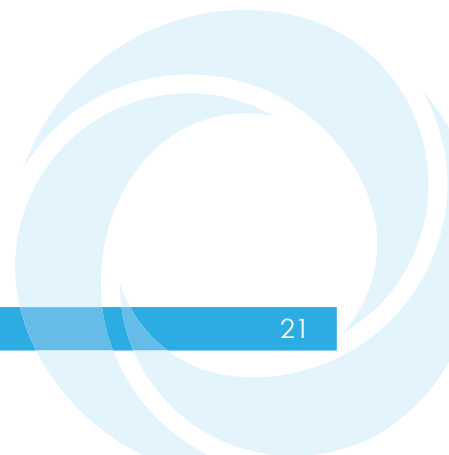
<p>Wednesday 28th February 2024 4pm to 7pm Bower Community Centre</p>	<p>Thursday 14th March 2024 4pm to 7pm Castletown Drill Hall</p>
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Any person wishing to make comments relating to the proposals, or wishing to obtain further information, may do so by emailing: hannah.brown@wind2.co.uk. Alternatively, you can write to the Swarclett Wind Farm project team at: Wind2 Limited, The Hub, Cromarty, IV11 8YL.

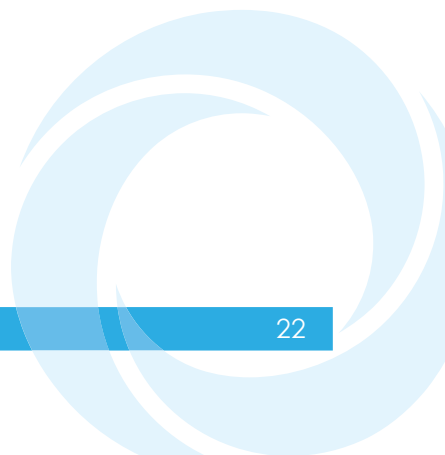
Please note that comments made to the project team are not representations made to The Highland Council. There will be the opportunity to make direct representations to The Highland Council’s Planning Services when the planning application is submitted.

This advert and consultation event are being held in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 under Regulation 7.

Information about the project can also be found at the dedicated project website: www.swarclettwindturbines.co.uk



Appendix C. Mailshot Consultation Letters





Owner/Occupier
Address Line 1
Address Line 2
Address Line 3
Address Line 4

CBC House
24 Canning Street
Edinburgh
EH3 8EG

T: 0131 346 9100
E: edinburgh@atmosconsulting.com
www.atmosconsulting.com

Our Ref: 40422-11L1 280623

Date: 28/06/2023

Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed Swarclett Wind Turbines (previously Corsback Hill) – Durran, Caithness

I am writing to you on behalf of Wind2 Limited to inform you of two proposed wind turbines located approximately 1km South East of Mains of Durran, Castletown. Enclosed with this letter is the development boundary for your reference.

Wind2 Limited is a specialist wind developer founded in 2016. The company has staff based in Cromarty, Perth, Edinburgh, and Wales, with significant expertise in renewable energy and a track record of successfully developing onshore wind farms throughout the UK. Wind2 Limited is working on the development of a number of renewable energy projects and is committed to investing in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Wind2 Limited is seeking planning permission for the construction and operation of a two turbine wind farm with battery storage. A Scoping Report was submitted to The Highland Council in February 2022 which sought to agree the areas to be considered as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

A Scoping Opinion was issued by The Highland Council in March 2022 which confirmed the scope of the EIA which can be viewed on the council's planning section of the website: <https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/> (Reference: 22/00790/SCOP).

The proposed wind farm would benefit the community, making an annual contribution of £5,000 for every megawatt of installed wind capacity during the period of operation to a local community benefit fund. Based on a wind turbine installed capacity of approximately 9.6MW, this would provide an estimated annual community benefit fund of up to £48,000.

Assuming a typical operational lifetime of up to 30 years, this would translate into an estimated total community benefit fund of up to £1.4 million to be invested in local priorities and projects over that period. Additionally, wider positive effects on the local and national economy are anticipated, including local supply chain and employment opportunities.

Atmos Consulting Ltd, as agent for Wind2 Limited, is currently in the process of preparing a full planning application for submission to the Highland Council. This will include supporting information including an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). This will present the findings of the EIAR conducted in accordance with the Scoping Opinion.

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These environmental assessments will include but are not limited to ecology, ornithology, hydrology, landscape and visual impact, noise, socio-economics and transportation.

Wind2 Limited are committed to holding in person events to ensure that we are able to hear as much feedback from the local community as possible. We are holding public consultation events, with one event scheduled in July and others planned for later in summer 2023. The first event is scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday 11th July 2023, (4pm – 7pm), Castletown Drill Hall, Thurso KW14 8TU

We would be happy to discuss the proposal further and answer any queries that you may have about the development at the public consultation events.

If you are interested in attending our public consultation or to meet further, please do contact my colleague Hannah Brown at hannah.brown@wind2.co.uk or on 0777 812 9856 to pre-register.

If you cannot attend this event, we would still welcome your feedback. Please scan the QR code to be taken directly to the feedback form:



Alternatively, you can contact me on the below details.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Martina Tully
Assistant Project Manager
Atmos Consulting Ltd.
Phone: 0131 346 9100
office@atmosconsulting.com

On behalf of Wind2 Limited

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Address Line 3
Address Line 4

CBC House
24 Canning Street
Edinburgh
EH3 8EG

T: 0131 346 9100
E: edinburgh@atmosconsulting.com
www.atmosconsulting.com

Our Ref: 40422-11L2V1 180723

Date: 18/07/2023

Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed Swarclett Wind Turbines (previously Corsback Hill) – Durran, Caithness

As per my previous correspondence, and in relation to the two proposed wind turbines located approximately 1km South East of Mains of Durran, I am writing to you on behalf of Wind2 Limited, to advise you of a further public exhibition now scheduled.

Wind2 Limited is a specialist wind developer founded in 2016. The company has staff based in Cromarty, Perth, Edinburgh, and Wales, with significant expertise in renewable energy and a track record of successfully developing onshore wind farms throughout the UK. Wind2 Limited is working on the development of a number of renewable energy projects and is committed to investing in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Wind2 Limited is seeking planning permission for the construction and operation of a two turbine wind farm with battery storage. The project lies within both the Castletown and Bower Community Council areas and a map indicating the development boundary is included with this letter for your reference.

Following submission of a Scoping Request to The Highland Council in February 2022, a Scoping Opinion was issued by The Highland Council in March 2022 which confirmed the scope of the EIA which can be viewed on the council's planning section of the website: <https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/> (Reference: 22/00790/SCOP).

The proposed wind farm would benefit the community, making an annual contribution of £5,000 for every megawatt of installed wind capacity during the period of operation to a local community benefit fund. Based on a wind turbine installed capacity of approximately 9.6MW, this would provide an estimated annual community benefit fund of up to £48,000.

Assuming a typical operational lifetime of up to 30 years, this would translate into an estimated total community benefit fund of up to £1.4 million to be invested in local priorities and projects over that period. Additionally, wider positive effects on the local and national economy are anticipated, including local supply chain and employment opportunities.

Atmos Consulting Ltd, as agent for Wind2 Limited, is currently in the process of preparing a full planning application for submission to the Highland Council. This will include supporting

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information including an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). This will present the findings of the EIAR conducted in accordance with the Scoping Opinion.

These environmental assessments will include but are not limited to ecology, ornithology, hydrology, landscape and visual impact, noise, socio-economics and transportation.

Wind2 Limited are committed to holding in person events to ensure that we are able to hear as much feedback from the local community as possible. We are holding our second public consultation event as follows:

- Wednesday 26th July 2023, (4pm – 7pm), Bower Community Centre, Bower, Caithness, KW1 4TT

We would be happy to discuss the proposal further and answer any queries that you may have about the development at the public consultation events.

If you are interested in attending our public consultation or to meet further, please do contact my colleague Hannah Brown at hannah.brown@wind2.co.uk or on 0777 812 9856 to pre-register, or just turn up on the day.

If you cannot attend this event, we would still welcome your feedback. Please scan the QR code to be taken directly to the feedback form:



Alternatively, you can contact me on the below details.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Martina Tully
Assistant Project Manager
Atmos Consulting Ltd.
Phone: 0131 346 9100
office@atmosconsulting.com

On behalf of Wind2 Limited

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www.atmosconsulting.com

Our Ref: 40422-11L1 140224

Date: 15/02/2024

Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed Swarclett Wind Turbines (previously Corsback Hill) – Durran, Caithness

As per my previous correspondence, and in relation to the two proposed wind turbines located approximately 1km South East of Mains of Durran, I am writing to you on behalf of Wind2 Limited, to advise you of further public exhibitions now scheduled.

Wind2 Limited is a specialist wind developer founded in 2016. The company has staff based in Cromarty, Perth, Edinburgh, and Wales, with significant expertise in renewable energy and a track record of successfully developing onshore wind farms throughout the UK. Wind2 Limited is working on the development of a number of renewable energy projects and is committed to investing in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Wind2 Limited is seeking planning permission for the construction and operation of a two turbine wind farm with battery storage. The project lies within both the Castletown and Bower Community Council areas and a map indicating the development boundary is included with this letter for your reference.

Following submission of a Scoping Request to The Highland Council in February 2022, a Scoping Opinion was issued by The Highland Council in March 2022 which confirmed the scope of the EIA which can be viewed on the council's planning section of the website: <https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/> (Reference: 22/00790/SCOP).

The proposed wind farm would benefit the community, making an annual contribution of £5,000 for every megawatt of installed wind capacity during the period of operation to a local community benefit fund. Based on a wind turbine installed capacity of approximately 9.6MW, this would provide an estimated annual community benefit fund of up to £48,000.

Assuming a typical operational lifetime of up to 30 years, this would translate into an estimated total community benefit fund of up to £1.4 million to be invested in local priorities and projects over that period. Additionally, wider positive effects on the local and national economy are anticipated, including local supply chain and employment opportunities.

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information including an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). This will present the findings of the EIAR conducted in accordance with the Scoping Opinion.

These environmental assessments will include but are not limited to ecology, ornithology, hydrology, landscape and visual impact, noise, socio-economics and transportation.

Wind2 Limited are committed to holding in person events to ensure that we are able to hear as much feedback from the local community as possible. We are holding our third and fourth public consultation events as follows:

- Wednesday 28th February 2024, (4pm – 7pm), Bower Community Centre, Bower, Caithness, KW1 4TT; and
- Thursday 14th March 2024, (4pm – 7pm), Castletown Drill Hall, Thurso KW14 8TU.

We would be happy to discuss the proposal further and answer any queries that you may have about the development at the public consultation events.

If you are interested in attending our public consultation or to meet further, please do contact my colleague Hannah Brown at hannah.brown@wind2.co.uk or on 0777 812 9856 to pre-register, or just turn up on the day.

If you cannot attend this event, we would still welcome your feedback. Please scan the QR code to be taken directly to the feedback form:



Alternatively, you can contact me on the below details.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Martina Tully
Assistant Project Manager
Atmos Consulting Ltd.
Phone: 0131 346 9100
martina.tully@atmosconsulting.com

On behalf of Wind2 Limited

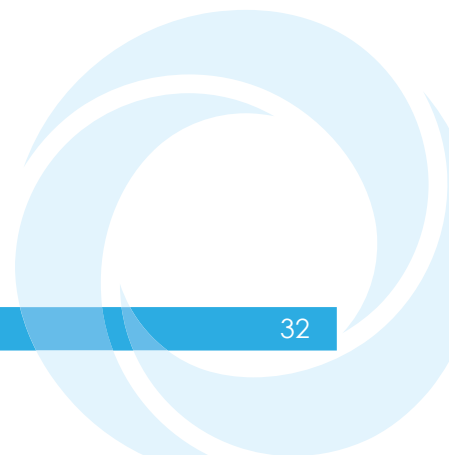
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Appendix D. Online Feedback Form



Feedback

Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk

Tell us about yourself?

Which do you consider yourself to be?*

- A local resident (living within approx. 10km/6 miles of the proposed wind turbine site (please indicate below which community you live within)
- A local business owner (operating within approx. 10km/6 miles of the proposed wind farm (please indicate below which community your business is located within)
- A community council member (please indicate below which community council you are a member of)
- A local council representative (please expand in the box below)
- Other:
(Please tick as appropriate and provide additional detail if desired)

Please expand your answer here:

Next

Progress

Feedback

Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk

How satisfied are you with the information provided about Swarclett Wind Turbines?*

- Very satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Quite dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Please expand your answer here:

'How did you find out about the Public Exhibition event?*

- Leaflet posted through my door
- Poster displayed in the local area
- Newspaper advert
- Community Council
- Word of mouth
- Wind 2 website
- Other:

Please tick as appropriate

Previous

Next

Progress

Feedback

Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk



Which of the following best describes your view of the proposals for Swarclett Wind Turbines? *

- Strongly supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Undecided
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

Previous

Next

Progress

Feedback

Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk



Which of the following best describes your view of the proposals for Swarclett Wind Turbines? *

- Strongly supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Undecided
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

You selected "somewhat supportive" or "strongly supportive", please indicate what you would see as being the main benefits of the proposed Swarclett Wind Turbines. *

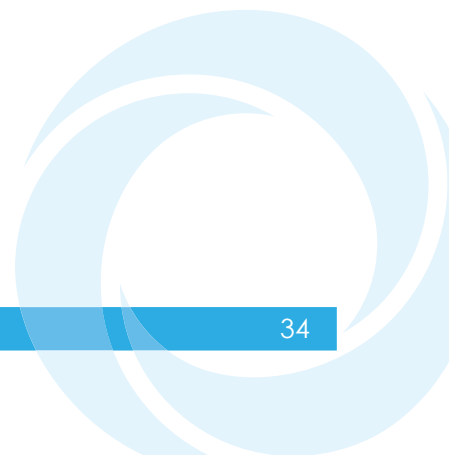
- Production of renewable energy
- Visual appeal
- CO2 savings
- Reduced reliance on imported energy
- Community benefit fund
- Potential for community ownership
- Local energy generation and use
- Creation of local employment
- Other:

Please tick all that apply

Previous

Next

Progress



Feedback

Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk



Which of the following best describes your view of the proposals for Swarclett Wind Turbines? *

- Strongly supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Undecided
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

Previous

Next

Progress

Feedback

Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk



Which of the following best describes your view of the proposals for Swarclett Wind Turbines? *

- Strongly supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Undecided
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

You selected "somewhat opposed" or "strongly opposed", please indicate which of the following concerns you have about the proposed Swarclett Wind Turbines. *

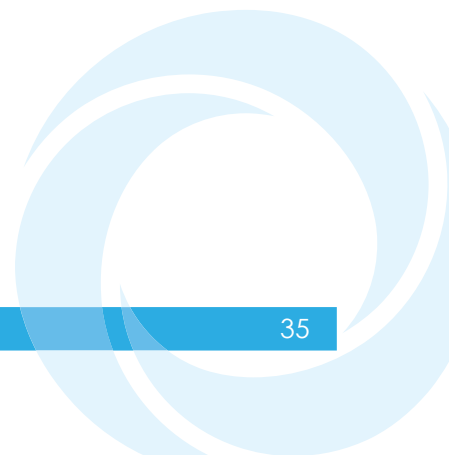
- Landscape and visual impact
- Impact on tourism
- Noise
- Impact on wildlife
- Impact on habitats
- Impact on the land
- Impact on road infrastructure
- Impact on Cultural Heritage
- Other:

Please tick all that apply

Previous

Next

Progress



Feedback

Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk

If proposals for Swarclett Wind Turbines are approved, Wind2 is committed to providing a community benefit fund equivalent of up to £5,000 per megawatt of installed capacity per year. We would like to hear suggestions from the local community about local priorities and projects for the fund. Please indicate your top five priorities for investment of the community benefit fund, numbering them from 1 (top priority) to 5.

Public Transport	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Skills & Education	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Tourism Infrastructure	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Social Amenities	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Affordable Housing	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Employment Opportunities	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Maintaining local Services	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Tackling Fuel Poverty	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Improved Broadband	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Support for younger people	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
A long-term legacy fund	<input type="text" value="Please Select"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

Previous

Next

Progress

Feedback

Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk

As part of the community benefit fund, Wind2 are proposing a 'near neighbour electricity contribution scheme' for residents living in proximity to the proposed Swarclett Wind Turbines. This could offer residents within the catchment area the opportunity to receive a contribution of £100 towards their annual electricity bills during the lifetime of the wind farm, or convert this into a single lump sum payment of £4,500 to fund or part fund measures to improve the energy efficiency and decarbonisation of their home.

- Which of the following best describes your view of the proposed 'near neighbour electricity contribution scheme'?*
- Strongly supportive
 - Somewhat supportive
 - Undecided
 - Somewhat opposed
 - Strongly opposed
- Please tick as appropriate

Please expand on your choice(s) here:

Previous

Next

Progress

Feedback

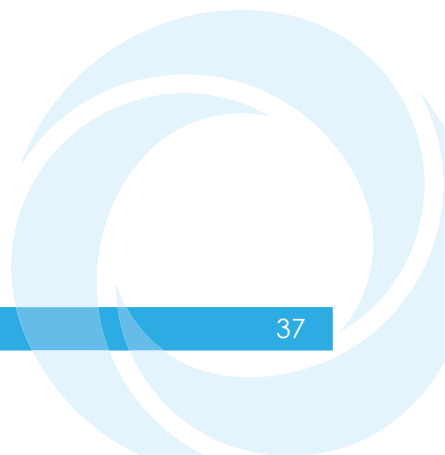
Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk

Do you have any comments on the Swarclett Wind Turbines proposal or the public consultation process?

Previous

Next

Progress



Feedback

Please get in touch with us if you wish to discuss the project further. You can reach us using the following email address: info@wind2.co.uk

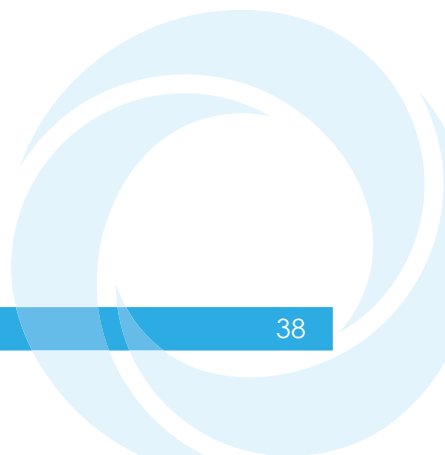
Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.
If you would like to be kept informed about further progress of the Swarclett Wind Turbines proposal, please provide your contact details here.

Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	First Name	Last Name
Address	<input type="text"/>	
	Address Line 1	
	<input type="text"/>	
	Address Line 2	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	City	County/Region
		Postcode
Email	<input type="text"/>	
Phone Number	<input type="text"/>	

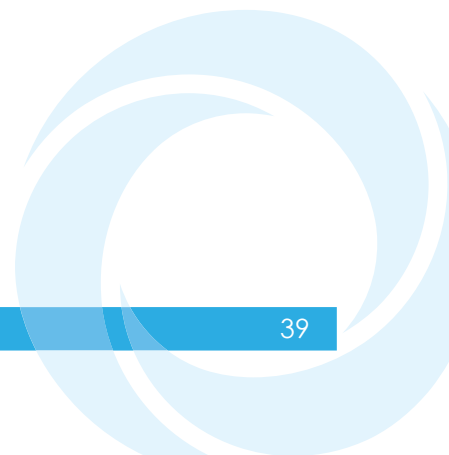
Previous

Submit Form

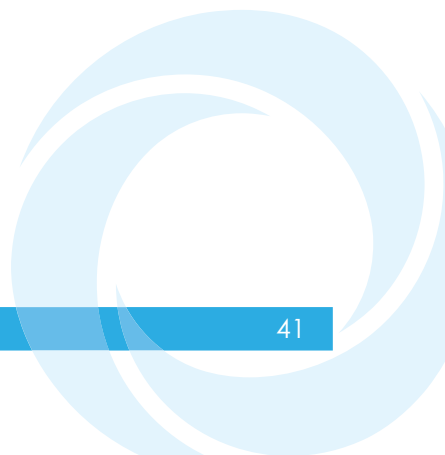
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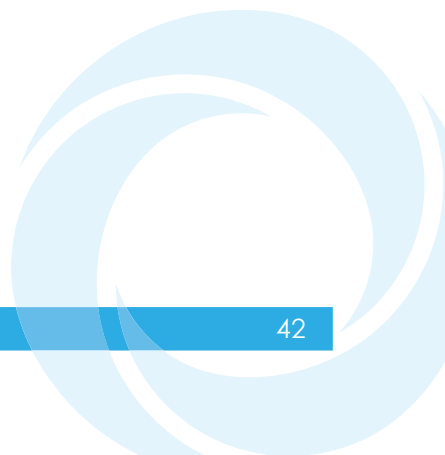


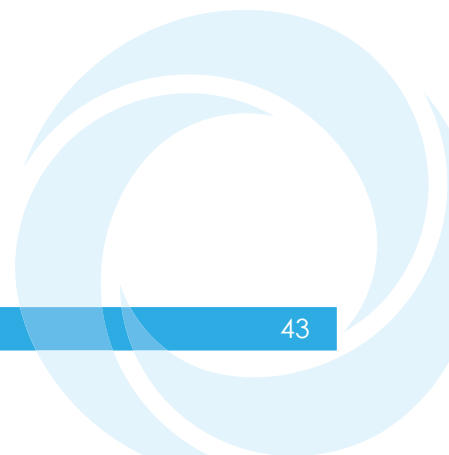
Appendix E. Exhibition Event Photographs and Exhibition Boards

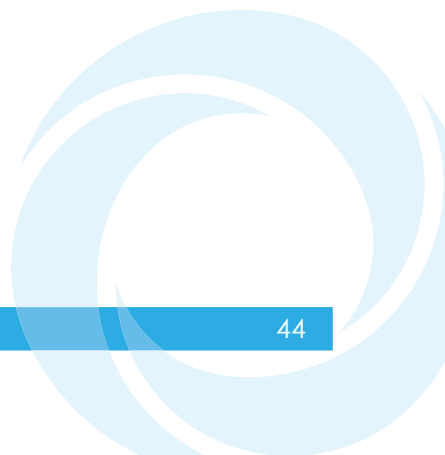


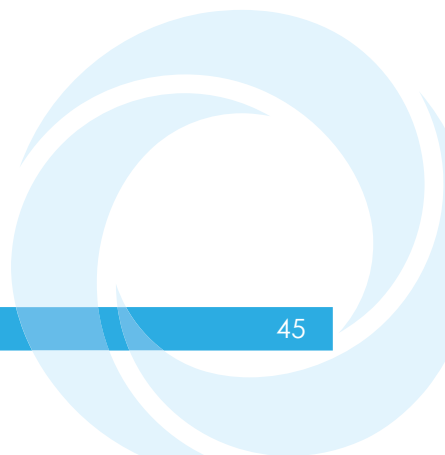












welcome

This exhibition sets out the status of the project, including findings from the environmental impact assessment and detailed proposals on the community benefit fund linked to the wind farm.

Please take as much time as you need to review the information presented and the visual representations of the wind farm.

Key members of the project team are on hand to provide you with the opportunity to discuss our proposals or answer any questions you may have.

We value your feedback and would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to share your views via the feedback form available on the website or using the paper copies available here today.

ABOUT THE APPLICANT

The Applicant is Swarclett Wind Energy Ltd, a subsidiary of Wind2 Ltd. Wind2 is a specialist wind developer founded in 2015. The company has staff based in Cromarty, Perth, Edinburgh, Somerset and Wales, with significant expertise in renewable energy and a track record of successfully developing onshore wind farms throughout the UK.

Wind2 is working on the development of a number of renewable energy projects and is committed to investing in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.



wind2

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed Swarclett Wind Turbines are predominantly located on land at Hoy and Swarclett Farms, by Durness, Caithness.

The proposal for the project comprises up to two turbines each with a blade tip height of up to 138.9m and a rating of around 4.8MW, and a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). If consented, it is anticipated that the project would be constructed in 2029. We hope to submit the planning application in April 2024.

If you can, please take a few minutes to fill out a feedback form using the below QR code or contact us at www.swarclettwindturbines.co.uk after the exhibition.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – RESULTS


The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is now complete and ready to be submitted to the local authority along with the planning application in support of the wind farm. Following our previous events, we understand noise and impact to birds were two of the main concerns. Therefore, we have included the below overview from the EIA for information.

ORNITHOLOGY

Surveys by qualified ornithologists were carried out and breeding Curlew, Lapwing, Barn Owl and Osprey were all recorded in the vicinity of the wind farm. Flocks of Greylag geese, Pink footed geese and Whooper swan were seen regularly during the winter months, and flocks of Lapwing were also recorded. Foraging surveys for geese and swans carried out in the winter months mapped the occurrence of these species in the wider area but recorded no use of the wind farm site and occasional variable use of the surrounding area.

The following important ornithological receptors were assessed in detail: Caithness Lochs SPA, Barn Owl, Whooper swan, Greylag goose, Pink-footed geese, Lapwing and Curlew.

Potential impacts assessed were habitat loss and disturbance/displacement during construction and during operation of the wind farm, additional mortality as a result of collision risk and displacement and barrier effects on commuting geese and swans.



wind2

Mitigation was identified which would protect ornithological receptors during the construction and operational phases. These included monitoring of breeding birds with buffer zones to protect sensitive bird species from disturbance if encountered during construction. Habitat management to improve habitat for Lapwing and Curlew was also identified.

The results of this assessment determined there would be no significant adverse effects on ornithological receptors (birds) on or in the vicinity of the wind farm.

NOISE

Noise during the construction phase of the development will arise from construction vehicles accessing the wind farm site and from construction activities within it, including track construction, foundation excavation and piling and turbine erection. Noise during the operational phase of the development will arise from the installed wind turbines as they rotate to generate energy and from the electrical plant associated with the battery facility (BESS).

Construction noise impacts have been assessed with regard to relevant guidance BS 5228:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites.

The results of the construction noise impact assessment indicated that no significant effects will arise from the construction of the wind farm as the relevant noise limits set out in BS 5228 will be met. Construction noise may be audible at noise sensitive properties in the vicinity of the wind farm, particularly from construction vehicles accessing the site. Although the relevant noise limits will be met, noise during the construction phase will be controlled and minimised through a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), an Outline Construction Management Plan (OCMP) is included in the planning application documents.

Operational wind turbine noise impacts have been assessed in line with ETSU-R-97. The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms, and the associated guidance provided by the Institute of Acoustics (IOA) document, A Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU R 97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise.

Operational BESS impacts have been assessed in line with BS 4142. Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound.

Predicted operational noise levels from the development meet the relevant noise limits set out in ETSU-R-97 and proposed criteria derived from methodology set out in BS 4142, and therefore the noise impact is considered to be not significant. Noise during the operational lifespan of the wind farm and battery will be controlled by noise limits that will be applied via planning conditions.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT AND NEAR NEIGHBOURS ELECTRICITY CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

The wind farm will generate around £48,000 of community benefit annually, depending on final turbine procurement.

The wind farm proposes to split this between Castletown and Bower Community Council areas as the project lies in both geographical areas. We acknowledge the residents in the identified area in the figure shown here will receive impacts from the wind farm.

It is therefore proposed that, before the funds are split 50/50, that a portion around 35% is utilised for our Near Neighbours Electricity Contribution Scheme (NNEC).

Utilising 35% of £48,000 works out at up to £500 provided to each property in the identified area, per annum, to assist in covering electricity bills.

The remaining 65% (£31,000) would be split, 50/50 between Castletown and Bower Community Council areas.

We welcome feedback on this proposal from the community members.

GRID ROUTE AND ABNORMAL DELIVERY LOAD ACCESS ROUTE