

THE ELECTRICITY WORKS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017

RESPONSE OF SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL TO A REQUEST FOR A SCREENING OPINION SUBMITTED UNDER THE ELECTRICITY WORKS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE IS LOCATED AT CHIMORIE WIND FARM, NEAR BARRHILL, SOUTH AYRSHIRE

The proposal is for variation of the wind farm development previously consented under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 and a direction that planning permission is deemed to be granted. The amendment involves change to the proposed access route for construction traffic. The proposal is to access the wind farm from the A714 public road south of Barrhill village at Wheeb Bridge, via approximately 12 km of existing forestry/wind farm track and 1km of new wind farm track. The amendments also include extension to the substation and its adjacent temporary construction compound. These amendments fall within Schedule 2 and require to be screened in order to determine whether the proposal constitutes 'EIA development'.

This determination is referred to as a '**screening opinion**'. In each case, the basic question to be asked is: 'would this particular development be likely to have significant effects on the environment?'

For many types of development, perhaps the majority, it will be necessary to consider the characteristics of the development in combination with its proposed location in order to identify the potential for interactions between a development and its environment and therefore determine whether there are likely to be significant environmental effects. In determining whether a particular development is likely to have such effects, the Council has taken account of the selection criteria in Schedule 3 to the Regulations. Three categories of criteria are listed:-

- Characteristics of the development
- Location of the development
- Characteristics of the potential impact

Consideration of the third of these categories is designed to help in determining whether any interactions between the first two categories (i.e. between a development and its environment) are likely to be significant.

The content of this checklist meets the requirements of the Electricity Works (Environment Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (as amended) – Schedule 3 selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development.

	Yes/No	Briefly describe	Is effect likely to be significant? Significance should be considered in terms of the extent, transboundary nature, magnitude and complexity, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of any impact(s).
1. Characteristics of the Development			

	Yes/No	Briefly describe	Is effect likely to be significant? Significance should be considered in terms of the extent, transboundary nature, magnitude and complexity, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of any impact(s).
(a) Scale of the development			
Will the development be out of scale with the existing environment?	No	The proposed 1km length of access track and extended substation area and construction compound area are small in scale in comparison with the surrounding commercial forestry plantation and associated access tracks and areas of hard standing	It is not considered that the scale of proposed development would be significant in the context of the EIA Regulations
Will it lead to further consequential development or works (e.g. new roads, extraction of aggregate, generation or transmission of power)?	Yes	A borrow pit will be required to provide aggregate for construction of the new track.	The borrow pit will be small in scale and not visually intrusive and the impact is not considered to be significant.
(b) Cumulation with other development			
Are there potential cumulative impacts with other existing development or for proposed development in the planning system?	Yes	The additional track forms part of the much larger Chimorie Wind Farm development with its associated turbines and access tracks.	The environmental effects of the wider Wind Farm development were assessed through an EIA and found to be acceptable with mitigation. The track is a very small additional element and it is not considered that it will result in any significant cumulative impact.
Should the application for this development be regarded as an integral part of a more substantial project? If so, can related developments which are subject to separate applications proceed independently?	Yes	The additional track forms part of the much larger Chimorie Wind Farm development with its associated turbines and access tracks. The additional track would not serve any other purpose and would not therefore be developed independently of the wider wind farm proposal.	The consented wind farm development could proceed independently of the current proposal.
(c) Use of natural resources			
Will construction or operation of the development use natural resources i.e. land (especially undeveloped or agricultural land)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water or fisheries? • minerals or aggregates? • agriculture, forests and timber? • energy including electricity and fuels? • any other resources? 	Yes	The proposed development will utilise land that is currently in agricultural (rough grazing) use and used for forestry. The loss of the agricultural land (rough grazing) is not significant.	Proposal to develop on land which is currently undeveloped is not considered sufficient for the purposes of giving rise to significant effects under the terms of the EIA Regulations
(d) Production of waste			

	Yes/No	Briefly describe	Is effect likely to be significant? Significance should be considered in terms of the extent, transboundary nature, magnitude and complexity, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of any impact(s).
Will the development produce wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	No		
(e) Pollution and nuisances			
Will the development cause noise and vibration or release of leachates, light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation during construction, operation or decommissioning?	No		
(f) Risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances technologies used			
Will there be a risk of accidents during construction or operation of the development which could have effects on people or the environment?	No		
(g) Other characteristics: potential physical changes (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies etc) from construction, operation or decommissioning of the development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permanent or temporary change in land use, landcover or topography including increases in intensity of land use? 	Yes	Land previously used for agriculture and forestry will be converted to transport use.	No. The loss of land used for these uses is not considered to be significant given the small area involved and the nature of the agricultural land (low grade)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peat land disturbance and/ or degradation leading to: carbon release, damage to habitats, affecting land stability or hydrology? 	No		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pre-construction investigations e.g. boreholes, soil testing? 	No		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • construction, demolition, reclamation or excavation works? 	No		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • underground works ? 	No		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilities for storage of goods or materials? 	No		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new road, rail, air or sea traffic or infrastructure during construction or operation or decommissioning? 	Yes	The proposal includes the construction of an access for construction traffic	No. The effects of the access are assessed elsewhere through this screening opinion and are not considered to be significant.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new or diverted transmission lines or pipelines? 	No		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any works requiring an authorisation under the Water 	Yes	A bridge crossing is required across a minor	No. The crossing design incorporates mitigation to

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Environment (Controlled Activities)(Scotland) Regulations 2005		watercourse. The proposed bridge design takes cognisance of the Water Framework Objectives	avoid damage to the watercourse concerned.
• long-term/ongoing activity during restoration or decommissioning which could have an impact on the environment?	no		
• influx of people to an area either temporarily or permanently?	no		
• any other changes?	no		
2. Location of the Development			
(a) Existing land use			
Are there existing land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the development, e.g. undeveloped land, greenfield land, homes, other private property, industry, commerce, tourism and recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, water catchments, functional floodplains, mining or quarrying?	yes	Part of the access track will be constructed on agricultural land and forestry land.	No. The land take is not significant and the agricultural land is of low value in terms of productivity.
(b) Relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area			
Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the development?	No		
(c) Absorption capacity of the natural environment			
Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape and visual, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the development? Particular attention should be paid to wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, nature reserves and parks.	No		
Are there any groundwater source protection zones or areas that contribute to the recharge of groundwater resources?	No		
Are there protected species in or around the location, for example	No		

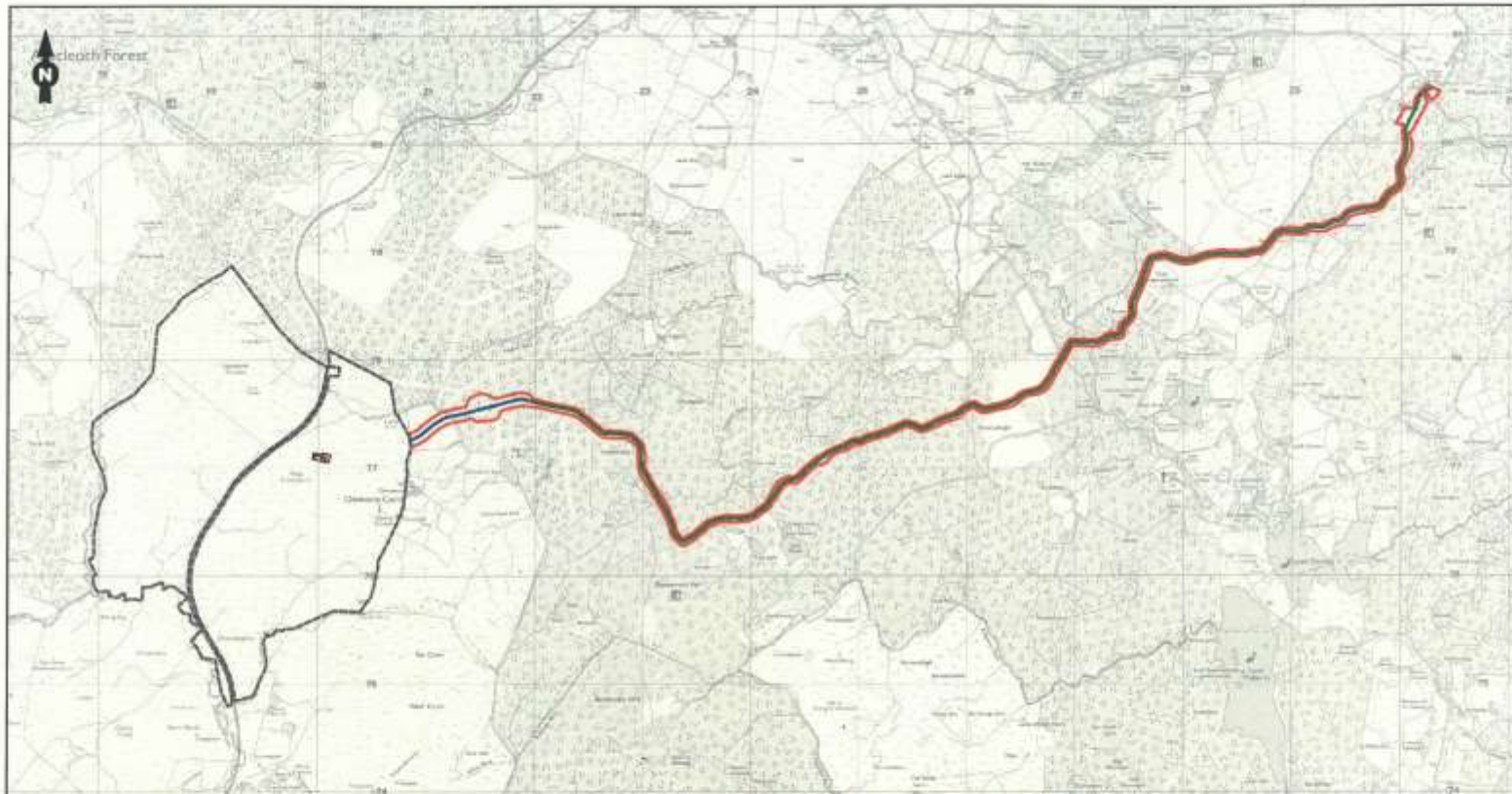
	Yes/No	Briefly describe	Is effect likely to be significant? Significance should be considered in terms of the extent, transboundary nature, magnitude and complexity, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of any impact(s).
European Protected Species, which could be affected?			
Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected?	No		
Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected?	No		
Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected?	No		
Is the development in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	No		
Is the location of the development susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions which could cause the development to present environmental problems?	No		

Conclusions

The checklist is a useful tool for the purposes of identifying the wide range of environmental receptors which could be affected by proposed development. The main issues which have emerged from the checklist are:

- Minor loss of low quality agricultural land and non-native forestry land

From the assessment undertaken in accordance with the Regulations and taking into account the submitted screening report, the Council concludes that the proposed development at Chimorie Farm, Barrhill, South Ayrshire, as shown on the map attached to this document, is **not** likely to result in effects on the environment which are sufficiently significant to require the submission of an environmental statement.



Key:

Existing/ Consented Development

- Chimorie Wind Farm Boundary
- Consented CWF Substation Compound
- Consented CWF Temporary Construction Compound

Variation Application Proposals

- Proposed Access Boundary
- Proposed Access - Existing Track
- Proposed Access - New Track
- Proposed Extension to CWF Substation Compound
- Proposed CWF Temporary Compound Extension

0 1 2 km



Figure Title Site Location	Project Number R1700002445	Figure No. 1
	Date March 2019	Prepared By AG
	Scale 1:35,000 @ A3	Issue 1
	Client Chimorie Wind Farm Limited	

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Coordinate System: British National Grid. Projection: Transverse Mercator. Datum: OSGB 1936.