

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017  
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CIRCULAR 1/2017**

**RESPONSE OF SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL TO A REQUEST FOR A SCREENING OPINION SUBMITTED UNDER  
THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017  
THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE IS LOCATED AT LAND AT DARNACONNAR, APPROXIMATELY 4KM TO THE EAST OF BARRHILL**

The proposed development is for two wind turbines to be located on an area of land approximately 4km to the north east of Barrhill. The proposed turbines are to be up a maximum height of 150 metres to the tip and are proposed to be located on an area of land approximately 170 metres AOD.

The proposal is Schedule 2 development under the terms of the above regulations and must therefore 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 (reproduced at Annex A to Circular 1/2017). 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 Town and Country Planning (Environment Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 – 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).
<b>1. Characteristics of the Development</b>			
<b>(a) Scale of the development</b>			
Will the development be out of scale with the existing environment?	Yes	The turbines would be tall structures, located on	Due to the scale of the structures there is potential for

	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).
		an area of land approximately 170 metres above ordnance datum on agricultural land surrounded by forestry.	significant landscape, visual and cumulative impacts
Will it lead to further consequential development or works (e.g. new roads, extraction of aggregate, generation or transmission of power)?	Yes	Yes. There will be other modest development to service the wind turbines.	No.
<b>(b) Cumulation with other development</b>			
Are there potential cumulative impacts with other existing development or for proposed development in the planning system?	Yes	<p>South Ayrshire is under increasing pressure for wind energy development and it is important to continue to monitor the cumulative impacts upon the landscape from sporadic turbine developments.</p> <p>In this case it is noted that the site is located approximately 2km from existing turbines at Mark Hill and approximately 10km from Arecleoch Windfarm (and its future extension). As such, there could be a significant cumulative impact on the landscape.</p>	There are potential cumulative impacts on the landscape, visual amenity and in terms of noise creation which taken together with the nearby Mark Hill and Arecleoch Windfarms and could be significant due to the scale of the proposed turbines. Any application should contain details of the cumulative effects of the proposed development.
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?	No		
<b>(c) Use of natural resources</b>			
<p>Will construction or operation of the development use natural resources i.e. land (especially undeveloped or agricultural land)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• water or fisheries?</li> <li>• minerals or aggregates?</li> <li>• agriculture, forests and timber?</li> <li>• energy including electricity and fuels?</li> <li>• any other resources?</li> </ul>	Yes	One turbine would be sited on agricultural land suited only to improved grassland and rough grazing and the other turbine on land capable of producing a narrow range of crops.	No. The footprint of the development would be small.
<b>(d) Production of waste</b>			

	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?	Yes	Any waste will be minimal.	No.
<b>(e) Pollution and nuisances</b>			
Will the development cause noise and vibration or release of leachates, light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes	<p>The operation of the blades will generate noise. Consultation with the Council's Environmental Health section and external noise consultant will be necessary in this regard.</p> <p>The nearest residential property is that at Balmalloch, located approximately 800m from the proposed development site. However, it is understood that this property is a ruin and is not inhabited.</p> <p>Shadow flicker is another issue of concern in relation to wind turbines. As a general rule of thumb there should be no occupied properties located within 10 rotor diameters of the site. In this instance there should therefore be no occupied properties within approx. 400m of the proposed development site.</p>	There are potential cumulative impacts in terms of noise creation which taken together with the nearby Mark Hill and Arecleoch Windfarms and could be significant due to the scale of the proposed turbines. Any application should contain details of the cumulative effects of the proposed development.
<b>(f) Risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances technologies used</b>			
Will there be a risk of accidents during construction or operation of the development which could have effects on people or the environment?	Yes	There will always be risks associated with the erection and operation of wind turbines.	Any risks in this regard, should be managed by the developer.
<b>(g) Other characteristics: potential physical changes (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies etc) from construction, operation or decommissioning of the development</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>permanent or temporary change in land use, landcover or topography including increases in intensity of land use?</li> </ul>	Yes	The land is currently agricultural land and therefore if consented, the use of the land would change.	No. The footprints of the proposed structures are relatively small.

	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).
• peat land disturbance and/ or degradation leading to: carbon release, damage to habitats, affecting land stability or hydrology?	Unkn own	Unknown	No. The proposed development is of a relatively small scale. However, this matter would need to be addressed in any documentation accompanying a planning application
• pre-construction investigations e.g. boreholes, soil testing?	No		
• construction, demolition, reclamation or excavation works?	Yes	There will be construction works.	No. The proposed development is of a relatively small scale.
• underground works ?	Yes	Underground works would be required in order to install the necessary cabling to support the operation of the turbine.	No
• facilities for storage of goods or materials?	No		
• new road, rail, air or sea traffic or infrastructure during construction or operation or decommissioning?	No	The transportation of materials to the site will utilise existing roads.	No
• new or diverted transmission lines or pipelines?	No		
• any works requiring an authorisation under the Water Environment (Controlled Activities)(Scotland) Regulations 2005	Unkn own	Unknown	No. The proposed development is of a relatively small scale.
• 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		
<b>2. Location of the Development</b>			
<b>(a) Existing land use</b>			
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	There are isolated residential properties and properties within Barrhill which could be potentially affected  Development would take place on agricultural land.	Potentially significant landscape, visual, noise and cumulative impacts due to the height of the proposed turbines taken together with nearby Mark Hill and Arecleoch Windfarms.
<b>(b) Relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity</b>			

	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).
<b>of natural resources in the area</b>			
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		
<b>(c) Absorption capacity of the natural environment</b>			
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.	Yes	The site is located within Shentulloch Knowe and Black Clauchrrie Wildlife Site. Feoch meadows (Biological) SSSI located approximately 150 metres to the south. The site is located within the locally designated scenic area within which impacts upon the landscape character of the area form one of the key considerations.	Due to the scale and location of the proposed development near to Mark Hill windfarm there is potential for significant cumulative impacts on natural heritage
Are there any groundwater source protection zones or areas that contribute to the recharge of groundwater resources?	Unkn own		
Are their protected species in or around the location, for example European Protected Species, which could be affected?	Unkn own		
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?	Yes	The proposed development site is located in close proximity to a local path network which is a right of way.	Potential significant cumulative impacts on walkers using the public path close to the site
Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected?	Yes	There are scheduled monuments and listed buildings within the wider locality	There is no information to suggest that potential impacts would be of such significance to require assessment through EIA.
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?	unkno wn		
Is the development in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes	Although this is a remote part of South Ayrshire, the proposed turbines could be viewed from a wide area including residential properties, Barrhill village, road users and recreational walking routes	Cumulative landscape, visual and noise impacts taken together with the adjacent Mark Hill and Arecleoch Windfarms could be significant.
Is the location of the development susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse	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).
climatic conditions which could cause the development to present environmental problems?			

### **Conclusions**

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

- The potential cumulative landscape, visual, noise and natural heritage impacts relative to the adjacent Mark Hill and Arecleoch Windfarms mean that it is considered appropriate to adopt the precautionary principle and that the effects are therefore potentially considered sufficiently significant to require an environmental statement covering these topics. The EIA should therefore focus on cumulative landscape, visual, noise and natural heritage impacts.
- The remaining topics outlined above may be addressed through the submission of appropriate supporting documentation with any forthcoming planning application.

From the assessment undertaken in accordance with the Regulations and Circular 1/2017, the Council concludes that the proposed development at Darnaconnar as shown on the map forming part of the screening request and attached to this document, has the potential to result in effects on the environment which are sufficiently significant to require the submission of an environmental statement.

It is therefore the opinion of the planning authority that the development, as proposed, is EIA development.



DRAWING TITLE Turbine Location Land at Knock	
NOTES ● Turbine Location	
Map scale: 1:10,000 when printed at A3	
 CleanEarth Unit 2A Bess Park Road Tenant Industrial Estate Wadebridge Cornwall PL27 6HT	
CA NUMBER CE7333	SHEET 1 of 1
DATE 015/10/19	SCALE 1:10,000
DRAWING CE7333-SC-TL	
CLIENT A Zhang	
INSTALLATION ADDRESS Land at Darnaconnar Barhill, Girvan KA26 ORD	
DRAWN BY FT	DATE 15/10/19
CHECKED BY RJ	DATE 15/10/19
APPROVED BY RJ	DATE 15/10/19