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By email to: KieranS@arcusconsulting.co.uk

10 November 2020

Our Reference: ECU00002086
Your Reference: K793/KS

Dear Kieran,

ELECTRICITY ACT 1989

THE ELECTRICITY WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017

SCREENING OPINION IN RESPECT OF A PROPOSED BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE EXTENSION AT DERSALLOCH WIND FARM, SOUTH AYRSHIRE

Thank you for your letter dated 27 May 2020 requesting, on behalf of Scottish Power Renewables, a screening opinion in respect of a proposed application under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 ('the Electricity Act') to construct and operate an extension to Dersalloch Wind Farm, located in the planning authority area of South Ayrshire Council ('the proposed development'). The proposed development consists of a battery energy storage system, the purpose of which would be for use directly related to the generation of electricity at the existing Dersalloch Wind Farm, which was granted consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act by Scottish Ministers on 23 July 2014.

The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017

The request was made under regulation 8(1) of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 ('the Regulations').

The Regulations set out (at 8(2)) the information that must accompany any screening request. The screening request was accompanied by a description of the location of the proposed development and surrounding area, a description of the proposed development and its physical characteristics, and a description of the extent to which aspects of the environment would be affected by the development. The request was also accompanied by a site location plan and site layout plan.

Statutory Consultation

Under regulation 8(5) of the Regulations, Scottish Ministers are required to consult the planning authority within whose land the proposed development would be located. South Ayrshire Council (SAC) provided its consultation response on 22 October 2020 and advised that, in its view, the proposed development does not constitute EIA development.

In its response, SAC advised that further consideration should be given to the potential for landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development, and supporting information should be included in any forthcoming application to demonstrate the extent to which the structures would be visible from the B741 road and surrounding open hillsides. SAC also advised that proposed suitable landscaping mitigation should be included within the application. Please see attached SAC's consultation response which sets out this advice in detail.

Scottish Ministers' EIA Considerations

EIA development is defined the Regulations, in respect of an application for Electricity Act consent, as Schedule 1 development or Schedule 2 development likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

The proposed development falls under Schedule 2 development.

In adopting a screening opinion as to whether the proposed development is EIA development, Scottish Ministers must in all cases take into account such of the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the Regulations as are relevant to the development, and the available results of any relevant assessment.

Scottish Ministers have taken the selection criteria and all of the information submitted in respect of the screening request into account, and have also taken account of the views of the planning authority. Scottish Ministers adopt the opinion that the proposed development **does not constitute EIA development, and that any application submitted for this development does not require to be accompanied by an EIA Report.**

The planning authority's response to the screening consultation is attached to this letter. In accordance with regulation 7(2), this opinion is accompanied by the following written statement with reference to the selection criteria within Schedule 3 of the Regulations as are relevant to the development. In accordance with the Regulations, a copy of the screening opinion has been sent to the planning authority.

Any future application submitted for the proposed development must be accompanied by sufficient information and supporting documentation to allow Scottish Ministers and consultees to fully assess the application and to allow Scottish Ministers to reach a determination. The supporting information shall include, but not limited to, an Environmental Appraisal assessing the effects of the proposed development on all the relevant environmental matters set out in the applicant's screening request letter dated 27 May 2020. Information requires to be provided to demonstrate the extent to which the proposed development will be visible from the B741 road and the surrounding open hillsides, and set out any proposed mitigation measures.

Written Statement

The proposal is for the development of a battery energy storage system which will operate alongside and within the site of Dersalloch Wind Farm, in close proximity to the existing operational electrical control building for the wind farm.

Characteristics of the Development

The proposed development will have an operating capacity of up to 50MW, and will be comprised of the following main components:

- 40 battery storage units;
- Modular, containerised substation containing switchgear and control room);
- 16 power conversion units, which house the inverter/converters and transformers;
- Containerised “spares store”;
- Vehicular access/parking; and
- Security fencing.

The development will be situated on land which is already disturbed due to originally being the location used for the wind farm’s construction compound, and it is not considered to be of such a scale as to have a cumulative impact with the wind farm. Existing electrical infrastructure and the existing grid connection for the wind farm will be used.

Location of the Development

The land surrounding the proposed development is rural in nature, consisting largely of open moorland and forestry together with Dersalloch Wind Farm. The nearest settlement to the site are Dalmellington, located 4.65km east, Straiton, located 4.8km west, and Patna, located 4.9km north. The two closest residential properties are located approximately 1.7km and 1.8km east of the site, in the village of Gass.

The location is situated in a landscape with similar features to what is proposed as part of the development, and is in close proximity to the substation into which the grid connection is connected, therefore avoiding the requirement of lengthy transmission cables. There are no natural or cultural designations either within the site or surrounding area.

Taking into account the characteristics of this proposed development, its location on already disturbed land, and the distance from sensitive receptors, it is considered that the effects arising as a result of the proposed development will be very limited both in magnitude and in spatial extent. On this basis it is not considered likely that significant effects on the environment will occur.

This screening opinion does not constitute pre-application advice, and is provided without prejudice to the assessment of any future application under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 and section 57 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Tosun
A member of the staff of the Scottish Government

Cc South Ayrshire Council

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 DERSALLOCH WIND FARM, B741 DALMELLINGTON ROAD STRAITON - COUNCIL BOUNDARY STRAITON SOUTH AYRSHIRE

The proposal is for Battery Energy Storage System facility for the operational Dersalloch wind farm near Straiton in South Ayrshire. The proposed development site extends to 1.2 hectares. 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. 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 – 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			
(a) Scale of the development			
Will the development be out of scale with the existing environment?	N	The site forms part of a large scale upland plateau moorland landscape. The landform is undulating	No. The proposal is relatively small in scale in comparison with the landscape within which it is located. In particular the small vertical scale of the proposed

	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).
		being comprised of a series of small hillocks and minor valleys containing small streams	portable housing units is noted. Any adverse landscape and visual impact effects can be adequately assessed through supporting information and are unlikely to be of a magnitude that merits assessment through EIA.
Will it lead to further consequential development or works (e.g. new roads, extraction of aggregate, generation or transmission of power)?	N	All components of the development are contained within the Screening Opinion request.	
(b) Cumulation with other development			
Are there potential cumulative impacts with other existing development or for proposed development in the planning system?	Y	The site is close to existing buildings and an access track associated with the Dersalloch wind farm.	No. The scale of the proposal will not result in any significant increase in the environmental impact of the existing wind farm 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?	Y	The site forms an extension to the existing wind farm and its associated infrastructure. However, the wind farm and associated infrastructure are existing.	No. the related development has been implemented.
(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? 	y	Minerals and energy (from fossil fuels) will be required to construct the development.	No The scale of development is not considered to be significant in terms of EIA.
(d) Production of waste			
Will the development produce wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Y	In common with all construction projects, minor quantities of general waste will be produced.	No. The potential quantities of waste are not significant in EIA terms.
(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?	Y	There is potential for noise and vibration during the construction period. There will be noise associated with the air conditioning units that are required during the operational phase.	No. There are no sensitive noise receptors in proximity to the development that would be affected.

	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).
(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?	Y	There is potential for release of sediment to the water environment and emissions to air from construction vehicles.	No. The scale of the development is not considered to be significant in terms of EIA.
(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? 	Y	The proposed portable buildings will be retained long term at the site. The site is currently a hard standing previously used as a construction compound. The proposal will result in the hard standing being retained for a longer duration than previously granted permission.	No. the scale of the development and change in land use is not considered to be significant in terms of EIA.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peat land disturbance and/ or degradation leading to: carbon release, damage to habitats, affecting land stability or hydrology? 	Y	The area of the wind farm site within which the proposal is located is known to contain shallow peat (<0.5m depth). The site of the development has previously been disturbed to form the construction compound and consequently it is unlikely that any further loss of peat resources will occur.	No. Whilst areas of deeper peat may be encountered within the site, the area of land affected by construction of the pad foundations is not significant in EIA terms.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pre-construction investigations e.g. boreholes, soil testing? 	N		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • construction, demolition, reclamation or excavation works? 	Y	The development will require construction of foundation pads for the siting of the portable housing units.	The area of land involved and potential environmental effects are not considered to be significant in terms of EIA.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • underground works ? 	Y	A cable will be laid underground to connect the development to the existing substation	The area of land involved and potential environmental effects are not considered to be significant in terms of EIA.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilities for storage of goods or materials? 	N		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new road, rail, air or sea traffic or infrastructure during construction or operation or decommissioning? 	N		

	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).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> new or diverted transmission lines or pipelines? 	Y	An underground cable is required to connect the battery storage system with the wind farm sub-station.	The area of land involved and potential environmental effects are not considered to be significant in terms of EIA.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> any works requiring an authorisation under the Water Environment (Controlled Activities)(Scotland) Regulations 2005 	N		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> long-term/ongoing activity during restoration or decommissioning which could have an impact on the environment? 	N		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> influx of people to an area either temporarily or permanently? 	N		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> any other changes? 	N		
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?	N		
(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?	N		
(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.	Y	The site is located within the South Ayrshire Local Scenic Area and the development is potentially visible from the B741 public road and from the surrounding open hillsides. Given the appearance and scale of the development there is potential for adverse landscape and visual impact.	No. The scale of the development and therefore the magnitude of LVIA are not considered to be significant in EIA terms. The impact of the development can be assessed through the normal S37 process.

	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).
Are there any groundwater source protection zones or areas that contribute to the recharge of groundwater resources?	N		
Are there protected species in or around the location, for example European Protected Species, which could be affected?	N		
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?	N		
Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected?	N		
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?	N		
Is the development in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	N		
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?	N		

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:

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 Dersalloch Wind Farm, South Ayrshire, as shown on the map attached to this document, is unlikely to result in effects on the environment which are sufficiently significant to require the submission of an environmental statement.



 Site Boundary

1:35,000 Scale @ A3



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Ref: 3793-REP-001.

Checked By: KS

Date: 07/05/2020

Site Location
Figure 1

Dersalloch BESS
Screening Report