Chapter 14

Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism

SCOTTISHPOWER RENEWABLES

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Chapter 14
Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism

14.1 Executive Summary

1. This Chapter assesses the potential socio-economic effects of the proposed Earraghail Renewable Energy Development ('the proposed Development') and the likely significance of these on tourism, recreation, land use economic output, employment generation and other indirect effects.

2. The assessment has been undertaken by RSK Environment Ltd, on the basis of the proposed Development consisting of up to 13 wind turbines each with a generating capacity of around 6 megawatts (MW) and with a rated output of around 78 megawatts, ground mounted solar arrays with a generating capacity of around 5 MW, and a battery energy storage system (BESS) of around 25 MW, all of which offer opportunities for provision of goods and services from the local area as well as direct, indirect and induced employment during construction and operation of the proposed Development.

3. Based on the installed capacity, the assessment of the proposed Development's economic impact found that:

- the capital expenditure during the construction phase is estimated to be approximately £117.1 million (including solar), approximately £13.78 million spent in the local economy and approximately £43 million spent in Scotland as a whole;
- during the approximate 24 months' construction phase, the proposed Development is expected to support, in net terms, 53 person-years of employment benefiting local residents and approximately 215.4 person-years of employment for Scotland as a whole;
- during the operational phase, the proposed Development is expected to support, in net terms, 9 permanent person-years of employment benefiting local residents, and 12 permanent person-years of employment for Scotland as a whole; and
- the local economy would be expected to be boosted by a total of £4.2 million of net Gross Value Added (GVA)[1] during the construction period. The Scottish economy would benefit by £17.4 million net GVA.
- This application has a 40-year life of operation, the proposed Development would be expected to contribute lifetime GVA of some £26.4 million to the local economy through direct, indirect and multiplier effects, and just around £35.6 million to the economy of Scotland as a whole.

4. NOTE: estimates of expenditure within Scotland assume that turbine towers are not purchased in Scotland. If this option is available, there would be a substantially increased benefit to Scottish jobs and GVA.

5. Experience from other renewable energy projects developed and constructed by the Applicant indicates that a wide selection of supply chain businesses could expect to benefit from the investment in the local and Scottish economy, including haulage, aggregates supply, forestry services, building services, fencing, plant hire and security. ScottishPower Renewables (SPR) is committed to employing good practice measures regarding maximising local procurement. It is considered likely that the proposed Development would operate in combination with other renewable energy projects in the area to encourage the development of the relevant skills and longer term business opportunities as Argyll and Bute continues to capitalise on its natural energy resources as part of its commitment to economic recovery and response to climate change. Therefore, for both construction and operational phases, the socio-economic effects at the level of Argyll and Bute are considered beneficial.

6. In terms of the tourism and visitor economy, numerous published studies have been reviewed which indicate a general consensus showing that the presence of the proposed Development would not have a deterrent effect on people visiting the area. This is supported by the fact that tourism in Argyll and Bute has increased in recent years during a period of growth in

[1] GVA measures the contribution to the economy of an individual producer, an industry, sector or region

renewable energy development in the region. With regard to recreation and tourism assets, no significant effects are expected during construction of the proposed Development, subject to appropriate good practice management of construction traffic effects along the access road (A83) to the Site and within the Site. Beneficial effects (also not significant) may be experienced by some businesses, such as accommodation businesses and shops that supply goods and services to construction workers.

7. The proposed Development includes a creative and considered package of enhancement measures to support recreational and tourism uses within the Site during the operational phase based on consultation with stakeholders. In particular, measures would focus on users of, and connections to, The Kintyre Way with a new circular walking route being proposed, the provision of a new bothy for recreational users of the Kintyre Way, close to the southern extent of the Site, and a viewpoint location. Taking account of the proposed mitigation measures, no significant adverse effects have been identified during the operational phase. Whilst the primary use would remain commercial forestry, the potential to enhance the existing recreational and tourism uses of the Site is considered to be beneficial.

8. The Tarbert Holiday Park will be directly affected by the construction activities; however, SPR are in discussions with the landowner, to ensure that any impacts on the activity are appropriately mitigated.

9. SPR is working with communities throughout Scotland and is committed to offering a package of community measures to local communities that would include the opportunity for benefit payments to be made and for communities to invest in the proposed Development. To date, SPR has voluntarily awarded more than £2 million in community benefit funding arising directly from renewable energy projects to communities in Argyll and Bute, supporting initiatives such as community facilities, environmental projects, heritage projects, health and wellbeing equipment and skills and employment support. It is expected that any proposed income streams would provide a long-term, flexible revenue which could be used to support community projects within the Kintyre area.

10. Benefits accruing from the scale and nature of the proposed income streams could, as on previous projects, have a long-lasting positive effect on access to resources, improvements to local amenities and quality of life of local residents as well as economic benefits. The long-term nature of the income would allow the local communities to plan ahead, to draw in other sources of match funding to maximise the benefits and investment projects could be designed to match local priorities.

11. Overall, the proposed Development is expected to have positive employment and economic effects, and no significant adverse effect on land use, tourism and recreation. Benefits arising through spending by construction workers and operational staff, as well as through enhancement measures and benefits packages (including potential for investment) would support local businesses and communities as part of a wider cumulative benefit to the economy through the development of renewables and green jobs.

14.2 Introduction

12. This Chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report evaluates the effect of the proposed Earraghail Renewable Energy Development ('the proposed Development') on socio-economics, recreation and tourism and was prepared by RSK Environment Ltd.

13. The assessment has been undertaken on the basis of the proposed Development comprising up to 13 turbines (each with a blade tip height of up to 180 m and a generating capacity of around 6 MW), ground mounted solar arrays (with a generating capacity of around 5 MW) and a battery energy storage system (BESS) (with a capacity of around 25 MW).

14. The proposed Development is located on the Kintyre Peninsula, between the village of Tarbert, to the north east, and the village of Skipness, to the south, with the nearest turbines approximately 5.7 km south of the village of Tarbert and 3 km north of the village of Skipness. The Site is located within the forestry areas of Skipness and Corranbuie.

15. The Kintyre Way, recognised as one of Scotland's Great Trails by NatureScot, traverses parts of the Site.

14.3 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

14.3.1 Background

16. There are no specific statutory guidelines or requirements in terms of a method for the assessment of socio-economic impacts set out by the relevant Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, or in any other statutory or advisory guidance on preparation of EIAs. However, there are a number of key relevant legislation, policy and guidance drivers relating to socio-economics (national, regional and local) which provide a framework within which potential socio-economic effects can be assessed.

14.3.2 Legislation

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

17. The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 establish in broad terms what is to be considered when determining the effects of development proposals. There is no specific legislation however that prescribes or dictates methods that should be used to assess the socio-economic impacts of a proposed renewable energy development.

14.3.2.2 Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019

18. This act sets out a legally binding target of achieving net zero by 2045 and an interim target of a 75% reduction in baseline emissions by 2030. Although not directly applicable to the assessment of potential socio-economic, recreation and tourism impacts, this act emphasises the importance of a just transition. According to section 35C, the transition to net zero should create work in a way that does not negatively affect the current workforce and economy.

14.3.2.3 Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018-2032 (Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero)

19. On 16th December 2020 the Scottish Government published an update to the Scotland's 2018-2032 Climate Change Plan and sets out the Scottish Government's pathway to achieve targets set by the Climate Change Act 2019. The Report recognises the profound impact of COVID-19 and the difficulties of meeting the targets has become more difficult. The Scottish Government have committed to a 'Green Recovery' from COVID-19 by creating green jobs and delivers a thriving sustainable economy.

14.3.3 Policy

14.3.3.1 Scottish Planning Policy (2014) (SPP)

20. It is clear from SPP that the Scottish Government is committed to developing further renewable energy projects and paragraph 153 of SPP advises that:

21. "*Efficient supply of low carbon and low-cost heat and generation of heat and electricity from renewable energy sources are vital to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and can create significant opportunities for communities. Renewable energy also presents a significant opportunity for associated development, investment and growth of the supply chain*" (page 36).

22. Paragraph 80 states that, "*Where it is necessary to use good quality land for development, the layout and design should minimise the amount of such land that is required. Development on prime agricultural land, or land of lesser quality that is locally important should not be permitted except where it is essential:*

….to meet an established need, for example for essential infrastructure, where no other suitable site is available; or…

for the generation for energy from a renewable source or the extraction of minerals where this accords with other policy objectives and there is secure provision for restoration to return the land to its former status."

23. SPP Paragraph 29 requires that policies and decisions should, amongst other matters, give 'due weight to net economic benefit'.

24. SPP Paragraph 169 requires that the planning system supports the transformational change to a low carbon economy, consistent with national objectives and targets. Considerations in respect of proposals for onshore wind that are relevant to this assessment include:

- net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities;
- the scale of contribution to renewable energy generation targets;
- public access, including impact on long distance walking and cycling routes and scenic routes identified in the national policy framework (NPF); and
- impacts on tourism and recreation.

25. Paragraph 79 also requires that the planning system promotes economic activity and diversification including, where appropriate, sustainable development linked to renewable energy developments.

14.3.3.2 National Planning Framework 3 (2014) (NPF3)

26. NPF3 is the spatial expression of the Government's Economic Strategy and sets out a long-term vision for where development and investment are needed across Scotland to support sustainable and inclusive growth. NPF3 aims "*to share the benefits of growth by encouraging economic activity and investment across all of Scotland's communities, whilst protecting our natural and cultural assets*".

27. NPF3 states that in order to help make Scotland a low carbon place, the spatial strategy suggests: "…*to retain the benefits of renewable energy development in Scotland by supporting investment at key sites across the country*."

28. A sustainable, economically active rural area, which attracts investment and supports vibrant, growing communities, is said to be essential to the Government's vision. NPF3 indicates that the future of the renewables sector in Scotland will be key to bringing new employment to Scotland's remote areas and that rural communities will benefit from well-planned renewable energy development.

29. NPF3 also sets out that development of a national long-distance walking and cycling network will link key outdoor tourism locations across the country and will be an important tourism asset in its own right; as such, it is identified as a National Development.

14.3.3.3 National Planning Framework 4 (2020) (NPF4)

30. The NPF4 Position Statement was published by the Scottish Government on 26 November 2020, the Position Statement aims to inform further discussions and is not itself a document setting out policy. The Position Statement highlights onshore renewables as a development priority. **Table 14.1** provides an overview of the key draft policies most relevant to the Proposed Development.

31. The framework also provides policies that encourage the sustainable development and economic growth of rural areas. The main strategy is to increase the population of rural Scotland and the Islands by building low carbon rural communities and promoting local jobs and businesses.

Table 14.1: Draft NPF4 policies most relevant to the Proposed Development

Policy reference	Title	Relevant Policy Summary
Policy 2	Climate Emergency	When considering all development proposals significant weight should be given to the Global Climate Emergency. All development should be designed to minimise emissions over its lifecycle Development proposals for national, major or EIA development should be accompanied by a whole-life assessment of greenhouse gas emissions from the development. Development proposals for new, infrastructure should be designed to be adaptable to the future impacts of climate change.
Policy 3	Nature Crisis	Development proposals should contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, including restoring degraded habitats and building and strengthening nature networks and the connections between them. Potential adverse impacts of development proposals on biodiversity, nature networks and the natural environment should be minimised through careful planning and design. Design should take into account the need to reverse biodiversity loss, safeguard the services that the natural environment provides and build the resilience of nature by enhancing nature networks and maximising the potential for restoration. Development proposals for national, major and of EIA development or development for which an Appropriate Assessment is required should only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will conserve and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks within and adjacent to the site, so that they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention, including through future management.

Policy 19	Green Energy	Development proposals for all forms of renewable energy and low-carbon fuels, together with enabling works such as transmission and distribution infrastructure, and energy storage such as battery storage, should be supported in principle. Development proposals for wind farms in National Parks and National Scenic Areas should not be supported. Outwith National Parks and National Scenic Areas, and recognising the sensitivity of any other national or international designations, development proposals for new wind farms should be supported unless the impacts identified (including cumulative effects), are unacceptable. To inform this, site specific assessments including where applicable Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) are required. Areas identified for wind farms should be suitable for use in perpetuity. Consents may be time-limited but wind farms should nevertheless be sited and designed to ensure impacts are minimised and to protect an acceptable level of amenity for adjacent communities. Specific considerations will vary relative to the scale of the proposal and area characteristics but development proposals for renewable energy developments must take into account: • net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities; • the scale of contribution to renewable energy generation targets; • effect on greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets; • cumulative impacts – taking into account the cumulative impact of existing and consented energy development; • impacts on communities and individual dwellings, including visual impact, residential amenity, noise and shadow flicker; • landscape and visual impacts, including effects on wild land; • effects on the natural heritage, including birds; • impacts on carbon rich soils; • public access, including impact on long distance walking and cycling routes and scenic routes; • impacts on historic environment assets, including

		scheduled monuments, listed buildings and their settings; • impacts on tourism and recreation; • impacts on aviation and defence interests including seismological recording; • impacts on telecommunications and broadcasting installations, particularly ensuring that transmission links are not compromised; • impacts on road traffic and on adjacent trunk roads; • effects on hydrology, the water environment and flood risk; • the need for conditions relating to the decommissioning of developments, including ancillary infrastructure, and • site restoration, opportunities for energy storage; and • the need for a robust planning obligation to ensure that operators achieve site restoration.

14.3.3.4 Scotland Outlook 2030

32. Scotland Outlook 2030 sets the vision of the future of tourism in Scotland, the strategy focuses on four core priorities:

- People;
- Places;
- Diverse businesses; and
- Experiences.

33. The vision also concentrates on investment, training, accessibility and sustainability.

14.3.3.5 Scotland's Economic Strategy

34. Scotland's Economic Strategy (Scottish Government, 2015) sets out how the Scottish Government will provide support for businesses and individuals to grow in an economically sustainable way with the dual objectives of boosting competitiveness and tackling inequality. As part of these objectives, the document aims to direct investment in order to maximise opportunities for employment, business, leisure and tourism and also to join up planning policy to facilitate this. The document identifies four strategic priorities which are critical to economic growth:

- investing in our people, infrastructure and assets in a sustainable way;
- fostering a culture of innovation;
- promoting inclusive growth; and
- internationalisation.

14.3.3.6 Scotland's Economic Action Plan 2018-20

35. The Scottish Government's Economic Action Plan (Scottish Government, 2018) sets out how it plans to make Scotland a leader in technological and social innovations. It aims to deliver higher productivity and greater competitiveness, while transitioning to a carbon neutral economy through measures that support business, and encouraging investment, innovation and upskilling.

36. At the heart of this strategy is inclusive growth, combining increased prosperity with greater equity, which requires getting the fundamentals right. These include:

- investment: boosting private and public investment and delivering world-class infrastructure;
- enterprise: ensuring a competitive business environment;

- international: growing exports and attracting international investment;
- innovation: supporting world-leading innovation;
- skills: providing a highly skilled workforce;
- place: supporting thriving places;
- people: ensuring a sustainable working population where everyone can participate in and benefit from increased
- prosperity; and
- sustainability: seizing the economic opportunities in the low carbon transition.

14.3.3.7 Scottish Energy Strategy

37. In December 2017, the Scottish Government published the Scottish Energy Strategy (Scottish Government, 2017), which sets out the Government's vision for Scotland's energy future, for the period to 2050.

38. In 2016, 54.4 % of all electricity in Scotland was generated renewably, with a target of producing 100 % from renewable sources by 2020. This increased to 73.9 % in 2018. The overall share of energy consumption, which includes heat and transport, produced by renewables was 19.8 % (Scottish Government, 2019). By 2030, the Scottish Government wants the proportion of all energy, including heat and transport, supplied from renewable sources to increase to 50 %.

39. The policy also advises that onshore wind development is essential to Scotland's transformation to a fully decarbonised energy system by 2050, and brings opportunities which underpin our vision to grow a low carbon economy and build a fairer society.

40. The Scottish Government has also highlighted that renewables present an economic opportunity as an expanding market which will continue to support Scottish economic growth. The Scottish Government will continue to support businesses in this sector.

41. Additionally, the Scottish Government has emphasised the importance of communities benefitting from renewable energy generation, including through community benefit funds and shared ownership/community investment

42. In October 2021, the Onshore wind - policy statement refresh 2021 consultative draft was published by the Scottish Government outlining areas for economic opportunity such as supply chain, manufacturing, waste, skills and tourism. Local Planning Policy.

14.3.3.8 Adopted Local Development Plan 2015

43. The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan (the Plan) was adopted on 26th March 2015 and provides the local planning framework for the Council area, it also sets out the following economic objectives for the region:

- to make Argyll and Bute's bigger settlements increasingly attractive places for people to live, work and invest;
- to secure the economic and social regeneration of smaller rural communities; and
- to support the continued diversification and sustainable growth of Argyll and Bute's economy with a particular focus on sustainable assets in terms of renewables, tourism, forestry, food and drink.

44. The Plan indicates that "*The Council will support renewable energy developments where these are consistent with the principles of sustainable development and it can be adequately demonstrated that there would be no unacceptable significant adverse effects, whether individual or cumulative, including on local communities, natural and historic environments, landscape character and visual amenity, and that the proposals would be compatible with adjacent land uses*." Renewable energy applications will be reviewed against specific criteria which include:

- net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities;
- public access, including impact on long distance walking and cycling routes and those scenic routes identified in the NPF; and
- impacts on tourism and recreation.

45. The Plan is accompanied by Supplementary Guidance, which was adopted in March 2016.

14.3.3.9 Proposed Local Development Plan 2

46. The Adopted Local Development Plan is currently being reviewed and a new plan is being prepared and once adopted will replace the existing plan. The Proposed Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2 was drafted in 2019 (PLDP2) and was published for consultation until January 2020. The Council is currently analysing the responses to the PLDP2 consultation process.

14.3.3.10 Economic Development Action Plan 2016-2021

47. Argyll and Bute Council has developed five-year Economic Development Action Plans (EDAPs) focussing on the territory's resources and economic development activities that will have the greatest beneficial impact on the sustainable economic growth of the Council area. The plans highlight the key priority sectors for the sustainable growth of Argyll and Bute, which include tourism and renewable energy. The plans provide a framework for sustainable economic growth, according to the four priorities presented in Scotland's Economic Strategy:

- investment;
- innovation;
- internationalisation; and
- inclusive growth.

14.3.3.11 Argyll and Bute Economic Strategy 2019-2023

48. The Argyll and Bute Economic Strategy 2019-2023 sets several economic development objectives for the region, based on 3 pillars:

- critical economic infrastructure – improving connectivity for residents, visitors and access to goods and services;
- place and people – attracting external funding, promotion of sustainable employment and skills; and
- smart growth – supporting the growth of the local priority sectors including tourism and renewables.

14.3.3.12 Guidance

49. The following documents have been considered for the assessment of potential effects of the proposed Development on socio-economics, recreation and land-use:

- Scottish Government (2019) Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments
- Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2011) The State of Environmental Impact Assessment in the UK
- Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (2014) A Handbook on Environmental Impact Assessment
- Wind Farms and Tourism Trends in Scotland: BiGGAR Economics (2017)
- Onshore Wind and Tourism in Scotland (2021)
- SNH (2019) Good Practice During Windfarm Construction
- Argyll and Bute Renewable Energy Action Plan (2018)
- Argyll and Bute Economic Development Action Plan (2016)

14.4 Consultation

50. Consultation with stakeholders has principally been conducted by way of a request for a Scoping Opinion, as described in **Chapter 6**. This, together with additional communication on socio-economic issues, is summarised in **Table 14.1** In addition to the Consultees included in **Table 14.1**, VisitScotland, Mountaineering Scotland, Ardrishaig Community Council, Bute and Cowal Community Council, East Kintyre Community Council, Gigha Community Council, Kilfinnan Community Council, South Knapdale Community Council, West Kintyre Community Council, The Kintyre Way and John Muir Trust, were also consulted at the Scoping stage but did not provide a response. Details of the public consultation processes undertaken for the proposed Development are summarised in **Section 6.5**. As the period overlapped with the COVID-19 pandemic, these were held online between November 2020 and January 2021, following discussion and agreement with the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU). A Public Information Event (PIE) was also organised in June 2020, however, the event was cancelled following feedback from the local community.

51. **Table 14.2** below sets out the responses received during consultation and shows where they have been addressed in this Chapter. The responses have helped to determine the scope of the assessment and the baseline conditions

Table 14.2: Scoping Responses

Consultee	Date of correspondence	Comments	Action	Reference within EIA Report
Argyll and Bute Council	25 June 2020	Socio-economics, tourism and recreation – the assessment should consider what possible deterrent influence the proposed Development might have as well as any attractive influence it might create. The proposed Development should not result in the unacceptable loss of amenity to those who enjoy recreational pursuits on land or at sea. Consideration should be given to recreational watercraft in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). There is no mention of a specific tourism impact assessment, VisitScotland should be consulted on this matter. The proposed scope and study area of the assessment area is considered appropriate.	All comments received have been factored into the appropriate section of the EIAR.	Socio-economic effects assessed in **Section 14.7**. Effects on land use and access assessed in **Section 14.7.3.2.** Impacts on tourism and recreation assessed in **Section 14.7**.
ScotWays	16 June 2020	The National Catalogue of Rights of Way (CROW) does not show any rights of way directly affected by the Site. There is no definitive record of rights of way in Scotland though, so there may be routes that meet the criteria that have not been recorded because they have not yet come to Scotways notice. If the applicant is interested in rights of way and other recreational routes in the vicinity of the Site in order to inform their Environmental Impact Assessment, they should contact Scotways. The Kintyre Way, a long-distance route used by walkers, runners and cyclists, crosses the Site. This route is promoted by NatureScot as one of Scotland's Great Trails. There may be general access rights over any property under the terms of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The applicant should consult	All comments received pertinent to socio-economics have been factored into this Chapter.	Impacts on recreation are assessed in **Section 14.7**. **Figure 14.1** shows turbine locations in relation to recreational routes.

Consultee	Date of correspondence	Comments	Action	Reference within EIA Report
		the Core Paths Plans, prepared by access authorities as part of their duties under this Act.		
Tarbert and Skipness Community Council (TSCC)	4 September 2020	TSCC would like to know if the general economic stats for Argyll and Bute will be used to assess economic impacts or will a study be done that is specific to Tarbert and Skipness. TSCC would like to know what measures would be taken to ensure the safety of users the holiday parks located by the site entrance and minimise the effect of dust, noise and spray from construction and operational traffic. Leisure cycling is important to Tarbert's economy, TSCC would like to know what measures would SPR be taking to ensure that the increase in traffic does not prove fatal or injurious to cyclists using this stretch of road. TSCC would like to know if there is that SPR could do to improve the cyclist experience of the area. TSCC would like to know what SPR could do to improve the visitor experience of the Kintyre Way. Skipness is a small community which has an unspoilt, historic landscape. TSCC would like to know how SPR would ensure that this reputation is maintained. TSCC would like to know what the applicant could do to enhance the visitor and resident experience in Skipness and Tarbert. TSCC would like to know what the comparative baseline socio-economic statistics for Kintyre and Mid-Argyll are.	All comments received pertinent to socio-economics have been factored into this Chapter.	Socio-economic effects are assessed in **Section 14.7**. Effects on land use and access are assessed in **Section 14.7.3.2**. Impacts on tourism and recreation are assessed in **Section 14.7**. Impacts caused by traffic are assessed in **Chapter 12**.

Consultee	Date of correspondence	Comments	Action	Reference within EIA Report
		TSCC would like to know if SPR are willing to enter into a legally binding agreement to continue paying the amount agreed for community benefit for the entire operational life of the proposed Development on behalf of themselves and any future owner. TSCC would like to know if the EIAR will provide a firm commitment to a minimum number of local jobs generated by the proposed Development or just express a preference for sourcing jobs locally. It is stated that professional judgement will be used in determining the effects on tourism. TSCC would like to know if this mean the developer will be employing professional tourism experts. TSCC would like to know why is the study limited to effects up to 5 km. Not only is the TSCC area a hub for activities well beyond 5 km but is also a day trip attraction for visitors staying more than 5 km away. TSCC would like to know if the developer will be prepared to extend the measurement of indirect effects to businesses within 50 km (roughly an hour's drive) in order to get more relevant information. TSCC would like to know: • what measures would be taken to ensure local businesses are able to obtain work associated with the project; • what guarantees is the developer prepared to make regarding local employment opportunities; and • if the developer is prepared to improve the visitor experience in Tarbert and Skipness.		

14.5 Approach to Assessment and Methods

52. The assessment of effects will consider socio-economic effects separately from tourism, recreation and land use, addressing both the construction and operational phase effects of the proposed Development.

14.5.1 Study Area

14.5.1.1 Socio-economic Study Area

53. The socio-economic effects will be considered on three different levels: local, regional and national. This is intended to encompass the areas where significant effects, as a result of the proposed Development, on employment and the economy could occur. The 'local level' Study Area is based on Tarbert and Skipness. The 'regional level' Study Area is based on the Argyll and Bute Council (A&BC) administrative area. The 'national level' Study Area is based on Scotland as a whole.

14.5.1.2 Recreation, Tourism and Land Use Study Area

54. A three-tiered approach to the study area for tourism, recreation and land use effects has been adopted. A Study Area of 15 km from the application boundary has been used to identify tourism receptors, including accommodation, attractions and events. A study area of 5 km from the application boundary has been used to identify recreational receptors; however, direct effects have only been assessed for receptors within the application boundary as all recreational impacts occurring outside the application boundary are deemed to be indirect. The Study Area for land use covers all the land taken by the proposed Development either temporarily during construction or permanently during operation.

14.5.2 Scope of Assessment

14.1.1.1 Effects Assessed in Full

55. The assessment will consider potential employment and economic (direct, indirect and induced), tourism, recreation, land use, and cumulative effects during construction and operation of the proposed Development.

56. The significance of the socio-economic, recreation, land use and tourism effects resulting from the proposed Development have been assessed in accordance by combining the magnitude of impact and the sensitivity of receptor, as delineated in **Section 14.5.5.1**.

Employment Effects

57. The assessment of employment effects includes a quantitative assessment of the likely direct, indirect and induced effects on the Socio-economic Study Area (defined in **Section 14.4.1.1**) generated by the proposed Development. The economic output will be measured by estimating capital and operational expenditure within the Study Area. Additionally, gross value added (GVA)[2] arising from increased employment will be included.

58. The employment effects that are attributable to the proposed Development will be divided into three components:

- **Direct:** the employment and other economic outputs that are directly attributable to the delivery of the proposed Development. These include any new jobs that are created to manage and supervise the construction and operational phases of the proposed Development and that are filled by employees of SPR or the appointed Contractor (or subcontracted employees) as well as any direct construction jobs;
- **Indirect:** employment and other outputs created in other companies and organisations that provide services to the proposed Development (i.e. procurement and other supply chain effects); and
- **Induced:** additional jobs and other economic outputs that are created in the wider economy as a result of the spending of employee incomes on locally produced goods and services (i.e. personal vehicle maintenance, food and drink etc.) and other ripple effects that occur as a result of direct and indirect effects of the proposed Development.

59. There is potential for job creation through the investment of community benefit funds, but this will not be factored into the assessment because it is not possible to predict what communities will decide to invest in.

[2] Gross value added (GVA) measures the contribution to an economy of an individual producer, industry, sector or region.

Recreation, Tourism and Land Use Effects

60. Recreation, tourism and land use effects have been assessed qualitatively with reference to evidence from research and comparable renewable energy developments and using professional judgement and experience.

14.1.1.2 Effects Scoped Out

61. As the construction phase of the proposed Development would be relatively short term (24 months) it is not expected that construction workers from outside the local/regional level Study Area would have a significant effect on the demand for housing, health or educational services. Effects on demand for such community services have therefore been scoped out.

14.5.3 Baseline Determination

62. Baseline conditions have been determined using desk-based survey techniques, including publicly available statistics and information from Geographical information System (GIS), databases.

14.5.4 Data Sources

63. The assessment uses desk-based information sources to assess the likely effects, supplemented by consultation with relevant stakeholders where necessary and professional judgement based on previous experience. Data sources referred to in undertaking this assessment are referenced in full in this Chapter and provided in **Section 14.11**.

14.1.1.3 Field Surveys

64. No specific field survey has been undertaken with regard to socio-economic, recreation and tourism effects, although information has been gathered where relevant from surveys undertaken in respect of other disciplines, notably landscape and visual (see **Chapter 7**).

14.5.5 Consultation

14.5.6 Approach to Assessment of Effects

65. There are no published standards or technical guidelines that set out a preferred methodology for assessing the likely socio-economic, recreation, tourism or land use effects of onshore windfarms solar developments or other renewable energy developments. However, there is a series of commonly used methodologies and recognised approaches to quantifying economic effects both during the construction and operation of a development that have been widely used in other major infrastructure projects. These have been adopted here and are briefly described below.

66. This approach is considered industry best practice in the assessment of the socio-economic effects of the onshore wind sector. This model has been used by BiGGAR Economics to assess the socio-economic effects of numerous windfarms across the UK, with the results being accepted as robust at several public inquiries. However, it must be noted that these models are wind turbine development specific and currently, there is no equivalent model for solar PV or BESS.

67. The assumptions used as the basis of assessment have been based on two main sources:

- the analysis undertaken in the 2015 report on behalf of RenewableUK, which uses evidence from previous windfarms around the UK. This report examined the size and location of contracts for their development, construction, and operation and maintenance phases; and
- assessment of the economies of the relevant study areas undertaken, based on analysis of local, regional and national statistics.

14.5.6.1 Effects Evaluation Methodology

Sensitivity of Receptor

68. There are no published standards that define receptor sensitivity relating to socio-economic assessment. As a general rule, the sensitivity of each receptor or receptor group is based on its importance or scale and the ability of the baseline to absorb or be influenced by the identified effects. For example, a receptor (such as a public footpath or a supply chain business) is considered less sensitive if there are alternatives with capacity within the Study Area. In assigning receptor sensitivity, consideration has been given to the following:

- the importance of the receptor e.g. local, regional, national, international;
- the availability of comparable alternatives;
- the ease at which the resource could be replaced;
- the capacity of the resource to accommodate the identified impacts over a period of time; and

- the level of usage and nature of users (e.g. sensitive groups such as people with disabilities).

Based upon professional judgement and experience on other large-scale projects, four levels of sensitivity are used: high; medium; low; and negligible. These are defined in **Table 14.3**.

Table 14.3: Socio-economic Sensitivity Criteria

Sensitivity	Description
High	The receptor: • has little or no capacity to absorb change without fundamentally altering its present character; or • is of high socio-economic, recreational, or tourism value; or • is of national or international importance; or • is accorded priority in national policy; or • has no alternatives with available capacity within its catchment area; or • is a destination in its own right (as regards tourism and visitor attractions).
Medium	The receptor: • has moderate capacity to absorb change without fundamentally altering its present character; or • has a moderate socio-economic, recreational or tourism value; or • is of regional importance; or • is accorded priority in local policy; or • has some alternatives with available capacity within its catchment area; or • is a destination for people already visiting the area (as regards tourism and visitor attractions); or • forms a cluster of low sensitivity receptors.
Low	The receptor: • is tolerant of change without detriment to its character; or • is of low socio-economic, recreational or tourism value; or • is of local importance; or • is accorded low priority in policy; or • has a choice of alternatives with available capacity within its catchment area; or • is an incidental destination for people already visiting the area (as regards tourism and visitor attractions).
Negligible	The receptor is resilient to change and is of low socio-economic, recreational or tourism value or there is a wide choice of alternatives with available capacity within its catchment area.

In considering the sensitivity of a receptor it is important to remember that, in the case of socio-economic assessment, the sensitivity is often subjective and different receptors have differing sensitivities depending on matters such as the economic profile of the local area, perception of the type of development and attitude to the potential benefits of a development.

Magnitude of Impact

71. There are no published standards that define thresholds of magnitude for socio-economic, tourism or recreation impacts. In order to aid clear and robust identification of significant effects, specific and targeted criteria for defining the magnitude of impacts have been developed for this assessment based on experience on other similar projects. The following four levels of magnitude have been adopted using professional judgement: high; medium; low and negligible. These impacts can be beneficial, adverse or neutral. Criteria for each of these levels of magnitude for each receptor group are set out in **Table 14.4**.

Table 14.4: Magnitude of Impact

Receptor Group	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Economy (regional and local)	An impact that would dominate over baseline economic conditions by >10 %.	An impact that would be expected to result in a moderate change to baseline economic conditions by >5 %.	An impact that would be expected to result in a perceptible difference from baseline economic conditions by >0.5 %.	An impact that would not be expected to result in a measurable variation from baseline economic conditions.
Employment (regional and local)	An impact that would dominate over baseline labour market conditions and/or would affect a large proportion (>10 %) of the existing resident workforce.	An impact that would be expected to result in a moderate change to baseline labour market conditions and/or would affect a moderate proportion (>5 %) of the existing resident workforce.	An impact that would be expected to result in a perceptible difference from baseline labour market conditions and/or would affect a small proportion (>0.5 %) of the existing resident workforce.	An impact that would not be expected to result in a measurable variation from baseline labour market conditions.
Tourism and Visitor economy (regional and local)	An impact that would dominate over baseline tourism and visitor economy conditions.	An impact that would be expected to result in a moderate change to baseline tourism and visitor economy conditions.	An impact that would be expected to result in a perceptible difference to baseline tourism and visitor economy conditions	An impact that would not be expected to result in a measurable variation from baseline tourism and visitor economy conditions
Tourism and Visitor receptors	An impact that would be expected to cause a major restriction of access to or availability of tourism and visitor assets in the study area or would result in a major change to existing patterns of use.	An impact that would be expected to have a moderate restriction of access to or availability of tourism and visitor assets in the study area or would result in a moderate change to existing patterns of use.	An impact that would be expected to have a small restriction of access to or availability of tourism and visitor assets in the study area or would result in a small change to existing patterns of use.	An impact that would be unlikely to result in a noticeable difference to tourism and visitor assets in the study area.
Land Use	An impact that would lead to a major restriction on the operation of a receptor, e.g. forestry business, or complete closure of receptor.	An impact that would lead to a moderate to major restriction on the operation of the receptor.	An impact that would lead to a minor restriction on the operation of the receptor.	An impact that would lead to a negligible restriction on the use of the receptor.
Cumulative	An impact that would lead to a major change to baseline conditions.	An impact that would lead to a moderate change to baseline conditions.	An impact that would lead to a minor change to baseline conditions.	An impact that would lead to a negligible change to baseline conditions.

Potential Effects

72. The level of effects matrix presented in **Table 14.5** provides a guide to how magnitude of impact and sensitivity of receptor were combined but is not a substitute for professional judgement.

Table 14.5: Level of Effects Matrix

Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact			
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

73. Effects may be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) and this would be specified where applicable. Where an effect is classified as major, this is considered to represent a 'significant effect' in terms of the EIA Regulations. Where an effect is classified as moderate, this may be considered to represent a 'significant effect' but should always be subject to professional judgement and interpretation, particularly where the sensitivity or impact magnitude levels are not clear or are borderline between categories or the impact is intermittent. Effects classified as either minor or negligible may be considered as not having a 'significant effect'.

74. The level of effects matrix shown in **Table 14.5** provides a guide to decision making but is not a substitute for professional judgement. Impacts and effects can be beneficial, neutral or adverse and these would be specified where applicable. It should be noted that significant effects need not be unacceptable or irreversible. This assessment is based on the assumption of a worst-case which assumes that there is a negative perception of the proposed Development.

Mitigation

75. The assessment takes account of any environmental principles that are incorporated into the design of the proposed Development. These include good practice measures with regard to traffic management, control of noise and dust, signage and provisions for maintaining access for walkers, details of which are set out in **Technical Appendix 3.1.** Any additional mitigation measures that would reduce the level of any significant effects are set out and considered prior to assessing residual effects.

14.5.6.2 Residual Effects

76. Residual effects, which are the effects that would remain following implementation of proposed mitigation measures, will be outlined in the text and a summary table and statement of significance has been provided in **Section 14.10**. will be presented at the end of the Chapter.

14.5.7 Assessment Limitations

77. Data has been collated using a combination of desk-based studies from publicly available sources, and information provided by relevant stakeholders. It is assumed this information is accurate, relevant and up-to-date.

78. There is no specific guidance for the assessment and therefore, this assessment has been based on professional judgement and comparable experience of similar developments. No surveys specific to the proposed Development and in support of assessment have been completed.

79. While a significant effort has been made to ensure that the key tourism and recreation facilities in the area have been identified, it is possible that there are a number of small attractions that will not have been identified through the data collection process.

80. A certain level of economic engagement will be required in order to maximise the proposed Development economic effect, e.g. it will be necessary for local contractors to engage with the opportunities that arise and increase awareness of these opportunities. Based on prior experience of construction of such developments, it is assumed that this will be the case for the purposes of this assessment.

81. In order to maximise the economic effects associated with the proposed Development, it will be necessary for local contractors to engage with the opportunities that arise and increase awareness of these opportunities.

14.6 Baseline Conditions

82. The proposed Development is located on the Kintyre Peninsula, between the village of Tarbert, to the north east, and the village of Skipness, to the south, with the nearest turbines approximately 5.7 km south of the village of Tarbert and 3 km north of the village of Skipness. The Site is located within the forestry areas of Skipness and Corranbuie. The Site is located across the two forestry areas of Skipness and Corranbuie, both owned by Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS). The Site lies wholly within the administrative boundary of Argyll and Bute Council.

83. The site is located near several Landscape designations, nature conservation sites. The site is located near the A83 trunk road which serves the Kintyre peninsula between Tarbert and Campbeltown and the B8001, which runs along the western end of the Site The A83 passes the north-western end of the Site, Islay and Jura can be accessed by ferry at Kennacraig Ferry Terminal, approximately 3.8 km west of the Site. The Isle of Arran can be accessed by ferry at Claonaig Ferry Terminal, approximately 4.2 km south west of the Site.

84. The Kintyre Way walking route traverses parts of the Site.

85. There are no roads on the eastern or western ends of the Site.

14.6.1 Socio-Economic Baseline

14.6.1.1 Geography and Population

86. The Argyll and Bute Council is the second largest local authority area in Scotland covering a land area of 690,946 hectares equalling to almost 9 % of the total Scottish land area (Scotland's Census, 2011).

87. The Council area covers the southwestern Grampian Mountains and stretches to the Atlantic Ocean and North Channel. Its coasts are characterised by peninsulas separated by sea inlets. The Council boundaries also include several islands of the Inner Hebrides, the most notable of which are notably Mull, Islay, and Jura. The largest settlement is Helensburgh, with a population of 15,610 based on mid-2016 population estimates for settlements and localities in Scotland (National Records of Scotland, 2018).

88. Argyll and Bute had the 27th highest population in 2019, out of all 32 council areas in Scotland, with 85,870 people[3]. Consultation of the Office for National Statistics[4] population density data for mid-2020 indicated that 12 people per km^2 are present in the Argyll and Bute. This figure is significantly lower than the overall figure for Scotland of 70 persons per km^2.

14.6.1.2 Population

89. The proposed Development is located in the electoral ward of Kintyre and the Islands. Data from the Scottish Government Statistics for 20195 are presented in **Table 14.6.**

Table 14.6: Population Data (2019)

	Kintyre and the Islands (Ward)	Argyll and Bute (Council Area)	Scotland
Total Population	6,459	85,870	5,463,300

Population Estimates

[3] National Records of Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council Area Profile https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/argyll-and-bute-council-profile.html (accessed July 2021)
[4] Office for National Statistics, Population Density Data https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland (Accessed July 2021)
[5] Scottish Government Statistics, Electoral Ward Kintyre and the Islands https://statistics.gov.scot/atlas/resource?uri=http%3A%2F%2Fstatistics.gov.scot%2Fid%2Fstatistical-geography%2FS13002517&collection-uri=http%3A%2F%2Fstatistics.gov.scot%2Fdef%2Ffoi%2Fcollection%2Fwards (Accessed July 2021)

90. On 30 June 2019, the population of Argyll and Bute was 85,870. **Figure 14.2** shows a decrease of 0.5 % from 86,260 in 2018. Over the same period, the population of Scotland increased by 0.5 %.

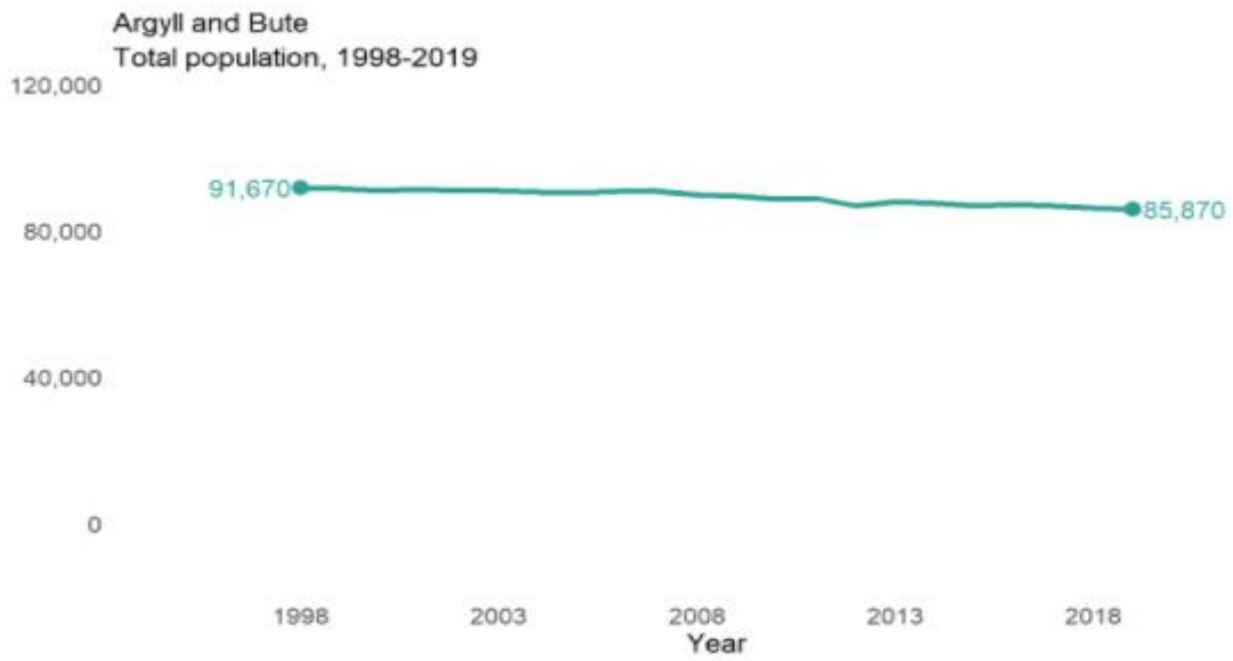

Figure 14.2: Argyll and Bute total population, 1998-2019
Source: National Records of Scotland (updated April 2020)

91. Argyll and Bute had the 27th highest population in 2019, out of all 32 Council areas in Scotland. Between 2018 and 2019 (as illustrated in **Figure 14.3**), eight councils including Argyll and Bute saw a population decrease and 24 councils saw a population increase.

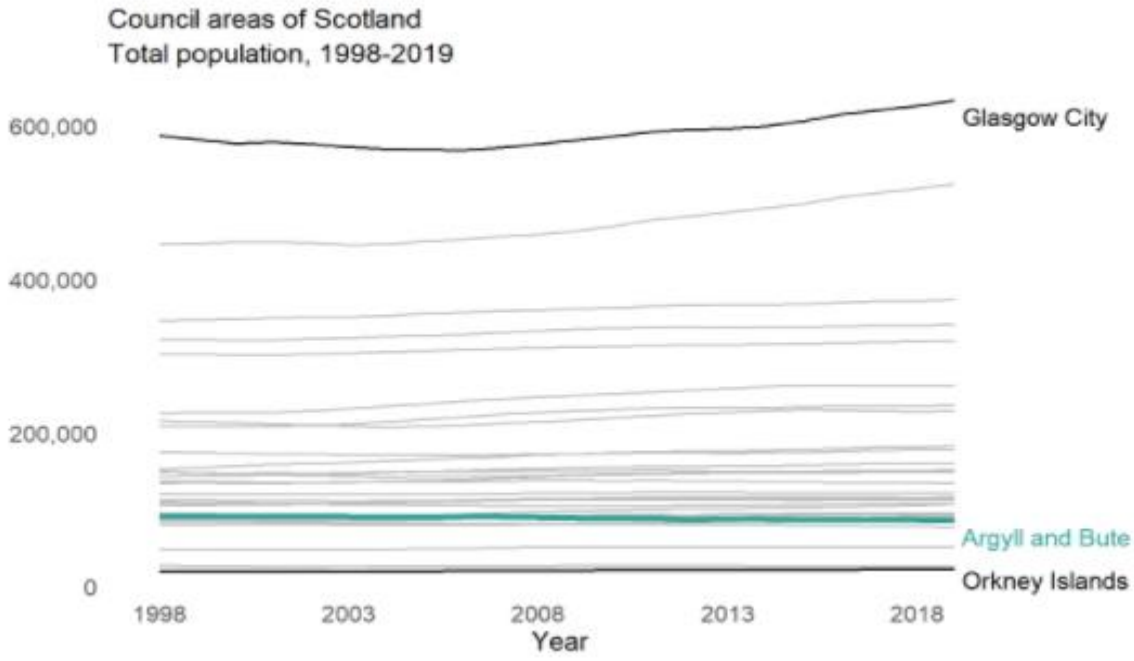

Figure 14.3: Council areas of Scotland total population, 1998-2019
Source: National Records of Scotland (updated April 2020)

As shown on **Figure 14.4** between 1998 and 2019, the population of Argyll and Bute has decreased by 6.3 %. This is the 2nd lowest percentage change out of the 32 council areas in Scotland. Over the same period, Scotland's population rose by 7.6 %.

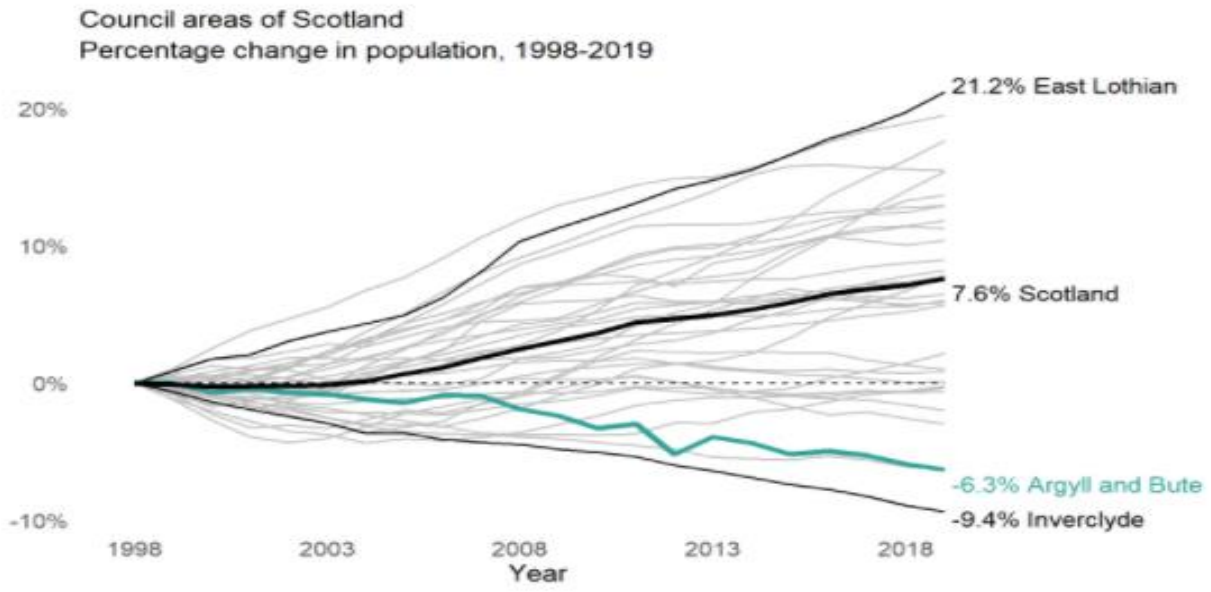

Figure 14.4: Council areas of Scotland Percentage Change in Population, 1998-2019
Source: National Records of Scotland (updated April 2020)

92. As shown on **Figure 14.5** in 2019, the balance of the sexes was more or less equal with marginally more females (50.2 %) than males (49.8 %) living in Argyll and Bute. There were also more females (51.3 %) than males (48.7 %) living in Scotland overall. The demographic baseline pattern for Argyll and Bute reflects the decreasing population of working age currently present in the region.

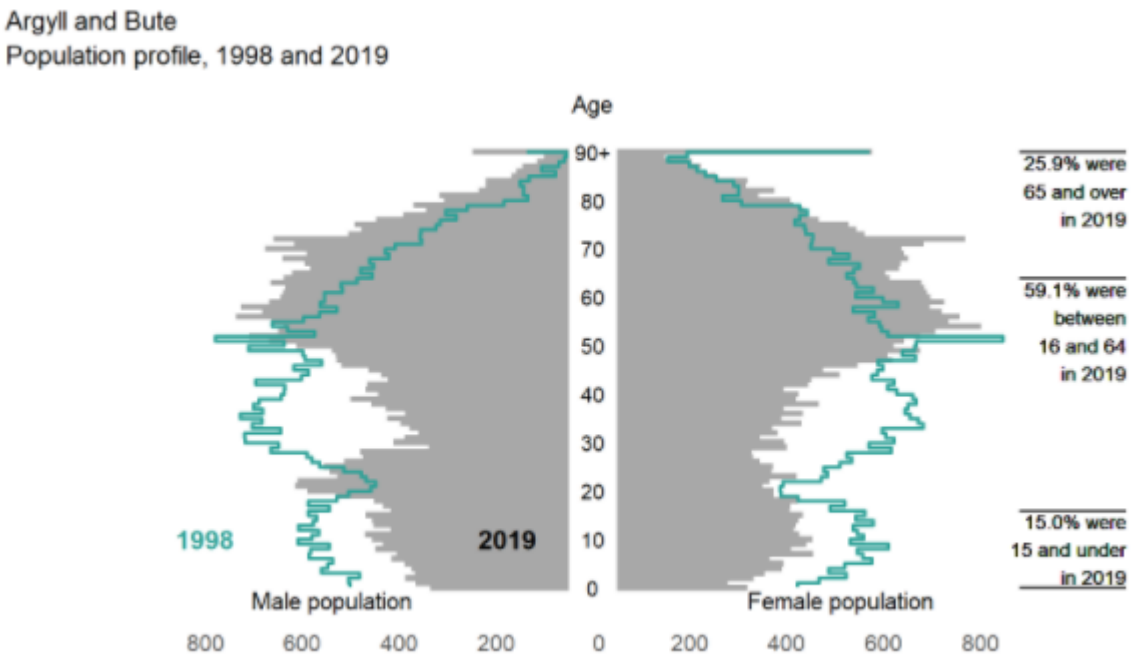

Figure 14.5: Argyll and Bute Population profile, 1998 and 2019
Source: National Records of Scotland (updated April 2020)

93. Between 1998 and 2019, the 25 to 44 age group saw the largest percentage decrease (-34.1 %). The 65 to 74 age group saw the largest percentage increase (+38.6 %), as shown by **Figure 14.6**.

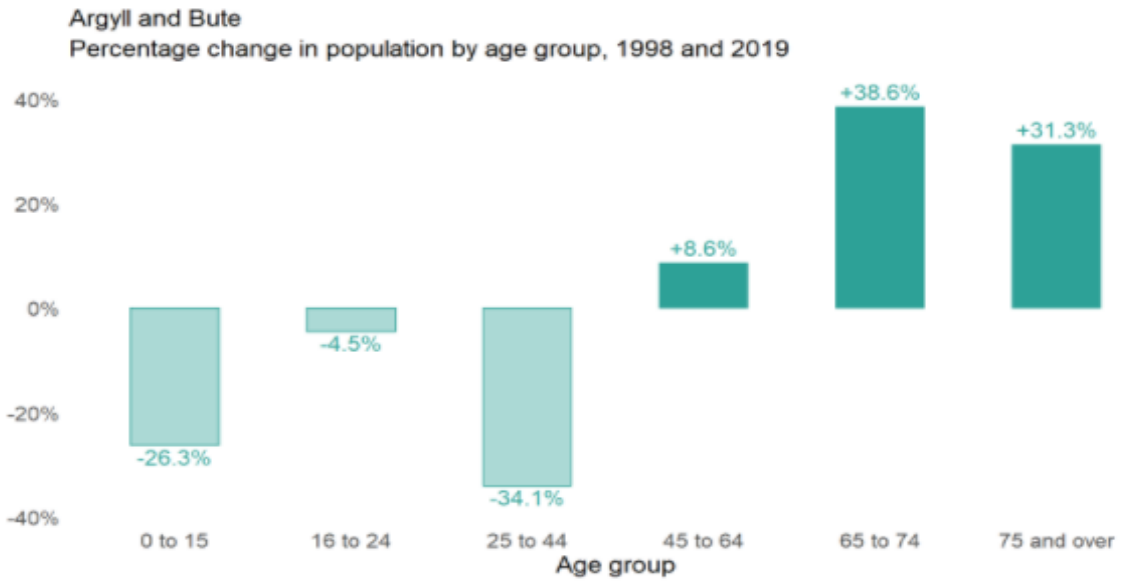

Figure 14.6: Argyll and Bute Percent change in population by age group, 1998 and 2019
Source: National Records of Scotland (updated April 2020)

Population Projections

94. Between 2018 and 2028, the population of Argyll and Bute is projected to decrease from 86,260 to 81,197. This is a decrease of 5.9 %, which compares to a projected increase of 1.8 % for Scotland as a whole, as shown in **Figure 14.7**. This

decrease is possibly linked to the lack of employment opportunities in the region, as shown in **Figure 14.5**, illustrating a decrease in the population of working age.

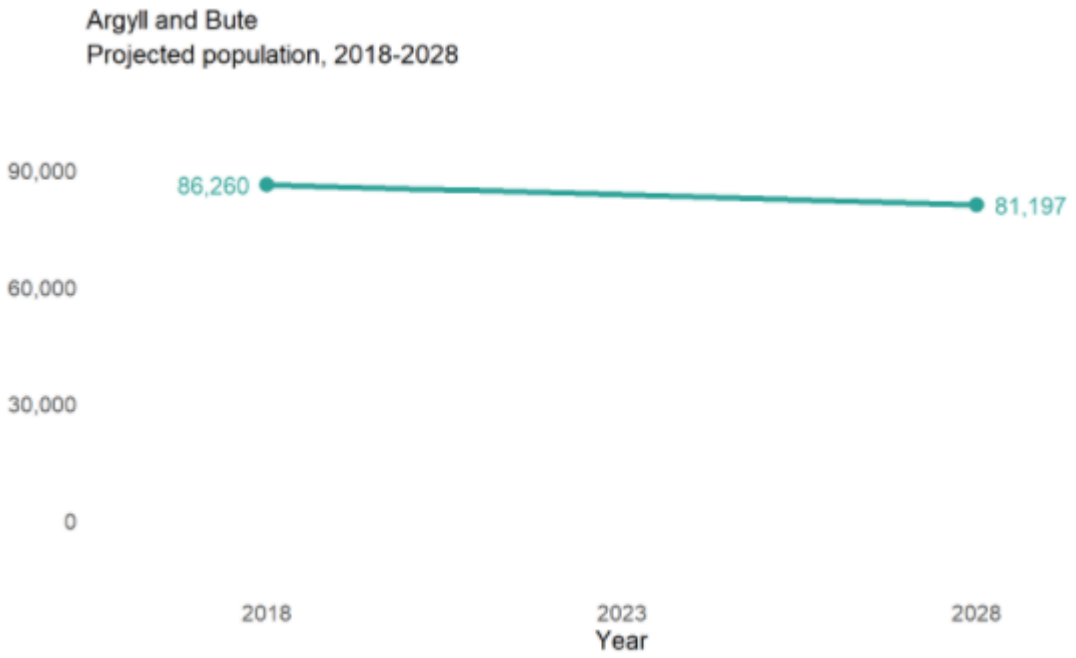

Figure 14.7: Argyll and Bute Projected population, 2018-2028
Source: National Records of Scotland (updated March 2020)

95. As shown in **Figure 14.8** Argyll and Bute is projected to have the 30th highest percentage change in population size out of the 32 council areas in Scotland.

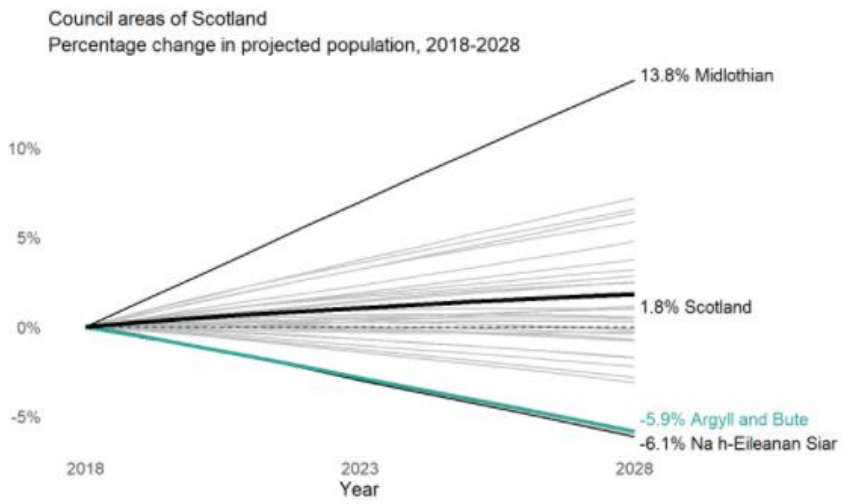

Figure 14.8: Council areas of Scotland Percentage change in projected population, 2018-2028
Source: National Records of Scotland (updated March 2020)

14.6.1.3 Employment

96. In 2020, Argyll and Bute presented a slightly higher rate of economically active people (16-64-year olds), 77.2 % compared to the national Scottish average of 76.8 %[6].

97. The principal employment sectors within Argyll and Bute are:

- accommodation and food services (16.2 %);
- health and social work (13.5 %);
- public administration (12.2 %);
- wholesale and retail (10.8 %);
- education (8.1 %); and
- construction (5.4%).

14.6.1.4 Unemployment

98. According to the NOMIS Argyll And Bute labour market profile by the Office for National Statistics, the unemployment rate of Argyll and Bute of 3.4 %, in 2020, was slightly lower than the Scottish national rate of 4.3 %. However, it must be noted that seasonality impacts these rates, especially those in the wholesale, retail, accommodation and food services sector, as Argyll and Bute's economy is predominantly service-based.

14.6.1.5 Skills

99. Data from the 2011 census show a slightly lower level of education and skill attainment for Argyll and Bute compared to Scotland as demonstrated in **Table 14.7**. There is also a higher proportion of the population with no qualifications.

Table 14.7: Highest Qualification % of 16-74 Year Olds have attained: 2011 Census Data

Qualification Level	Kintyre and the Islands (Ward 2007) %	Argyll and Bute %	Scotland %
No qualifications	29.1	24.7	26.8
Level 1: 0 Grade, Standard Grade, Access 3 Cluster, Intermediate 1 or 2, GCSE, CSE, Senior Certification or equivalent; GSVQ Foundation or Intermediate, SVQ level 1 or 2, SCOTVEC Module, City and Guilds Craft or equivalent; Other school qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications).	23	23	23.1
Level 2: SCE Higher Grade, Higher, Advanced Higher, CSYS, A Level, AS Level, Advanced Senior Certificate or equivalent; GSVQ Advanced, SVQ level 3, ONC, OND, SCOTVEC National Diploma, City and Guilds Advanced Craft or equivalent.	15	14	14.3
Level 3: HNC, HND, SVQ level 4 or equivalent; Other post-school but pre-Higher Education qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications).	6.9	9	9.7
Level 4 and above: Degree, Postgraduate qualifications, Masters, PhD, SVQ level 5 or equivalent; Professional qualifications (for example, teaching, nursing, accountancy); Other Higher Education qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications).	25.6	30	26.1

100. The Regional Skills Assessment for Argyll and Bute (Skills Development Scotland 2021) the accommodation and food services sector is expected to see the biggest decrease in employment, mainly due to the pandemic. Other sectors forecast to experience decrease in employment are:

- wholesale and retail trade;
- arts, entertainment and recreation;

[6] Labour Market Profile - Argyll And Bute https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157408/report.aspx (Accessed July 2021)

- transport and storage, and
- administration and support services.

101. The sectors forecast to grow include health and social work and professional, scientific and technical activities, due to their high demand during the COVID-19 pandemic.

14.6.1.6 Renewable Energy and Economic Development

National

102. The UK renewables industry plays a central role in the economy by producing, transforming and supplying energy in its various forms to all sectors. UK Government statistics released on the 21st March 2021 show that businesses active in the UK low carbon and renewable energy economy generated £42.6 billion in turnover in 2019, with employment of 202,100 full-time equivalent (FTE) employee. These accounted for around 1 % of total UK non-financial employment in 2019. Turnover from renewable energy activity in Scotland was £5.7 billion in 2019 and 21,400 FTE for employment[7]. Scotland's output from onshore wind totalled £2.4 million in 2019, supporting 8,780 FTE employment[8].

Local

103. SPR has been working alongside communities throughout the UK for nearly two decades and has to date contributed more than £43 million in community benefit funds to support initiatives and projects for communities local to our onshore windfarm sites in the UK. SPR has been generating cleaner power and bringing socio-economic benefits to local communities in Argyll and Bute since 2001 and has provided more than £2 million in community benefit funding to date in the region, as well as the additional socio-economic benefits arising from SPR's investment and operations in the area. The SPR community benefit funding has been supporting initiatives such as community facilities, environmental projects, heritage projects, health and wellbeing equipment and skills and employment support.

14.6.2 Tourism, Recreation and Land Use Baseline

104. With regards to Argyll and Bute, the tourism sector is valued as it forms a critical part of the economy. A&BC considers the tourism sector as an increasingly important component of the economy and its Economic Development Action Plan 2016-2021 supports suitable tourism opportunities throughout the region.

14.6.2.1 Tourism Economy

105. The tourism sector is the second largest economic sector in Argyll and Bute in 2021, its share of total employment is around 11.2 % (Skills Development Scotland, 2021). In 2017 the total direct economic impact of the tourism sector was £341,620 million, with an indirect economic impact of £138,030 million (Argyll and Bute Council, 2019).

106. Given that there are 227,600 sustainable tourism jobs in Scotland the Argyll and Bute area represents 8.3 % of Scottish employment in the sector (Scottish Government, 2021). The level of employment and GVA supported by Sustainable Tourism in these areas is given in **Table 14.8**.

Table 14.8: Sustainable Tourism Employment and Gross Value Added, 2018

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Employment	6,000	227,600
GVA (£m)	114.8	4,141.2

Source: Scottish Government (2012), Scottish Growth Sector Database

14.6.2.2 Visitors

107. VisitScotland[9] indicates that in 2019, Argyll and Bute received 993,000 overnight visits and 5.5 million-day visits, visitors spent £443 million. In the same year, visitor statistics show an increase in both international visitors and domestic visitors, compared to previous years. **Table 14.9** and **Table 14.10** illustrate the number of domestic and international overnight visits and spend during 2019.

[7] Office for National Statistics - Low carbon and renewable energy economy, UK: 2019 https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/finalestimates/2019 (Accessed December 2021)
[8] Scottish Renewables – Industry Statistics https://www.scottishrenewables.com/our-industry/statistics and Scottish Renewables - The Economic Impact of Scotland's Renewable Energy Sector (Accessed December 2021)
[9] VisitScotland Argyll and the Isles - https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/regions/argyll-isles (Accessed July 2021)

Table 14.9: International Overnight Visits, 2019

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Visits (000s)	150	3,460
Spend (£m)	90	2,538

Table 14.10: Domestic Overnight Visits, 2019

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Visits (000s)	1,015	13,810
Spend (£m)	240	3,200

108. The Argyll and the Isles Scotland Visitor Survey 2015-2016 (VisitScotland, 2016) provides tourism data for the Argyll and Bute region. The most popular reason for visiting this combined region is given as for the scenery & landscape (84 %); sightseeing is the most popular activity (79 %) followed by a short walk (61%) and visit to a beach (57 %).

14.6.2.3 Tourism and Recreational Receptors

109. The assessment of tourism and recreational effects considers receptors within 15 km of the Site, but for the more remote parts of the Study Area any effects are expected to be restricted to visual effects during the operation phase. Consequently, the receptors addressed in this Chapter are restricted to those up to 15 km that are shown in the ZTV (**Figure 7.8** of **Chapter 7**) to have visibility of the proposed Development.

Formal Tourism and Recreation Attractions

110. Formal tourism and recreational assets are generally businesses and/or attractions that charge an entry fee for admission or have a significant commercial element. There are a small number of such receptors within 15 km of the Site. Businesses that provide a service to local residents and other businesses, such as shops, fuel stations and public houses may also serve the tourism economy.

111. The major formal tourist attractions within 15 km of the Site, listed on VistScotland and TripAdvisor websites include:

- Skipness Castle;
- Royal Castle of Tarbert;
- Tarbert Golf Club;
- Lochranza Distillery;
- Lochranza Castle; and
- Lochranza Golf Course.

112. The receptors listed above are considered likely to draw visitors from a wide area and as such are considered of regional importance and medium sensitivity in socio-economic terms.

113. Shops and other tourism assets such as restaurants tend to be clustered in settlements such as Skipness,Tarbert, Portavadie and Lochranza. Such groups of receptors can be considered to be of medium sensitivity.

Informal Tourism and Recreation Receptors

114. Informal tourism and recreational assets relate to walking routes and open spaces which aren't commercial in nature. The Site is located within a relatively remote setting with limited recreation opportunity based around the natural environment, with few informally recognised tourist attractions within the 5 km Study Area.

Walking

115. There are 28 Core Paths within the recreational Study Area; the Site is also crossed by The Kintyre Way, as shown in **Figure 14.1**. The nearest Core Paths are C099(e), C099(d), C099(c) and C099(f) which cross the Site and constitute part of The Kintyre Way. A list of the Core Paths within the recreational Study Area is provided in **Table 14.11** below and are shown on **Figure 14.1**.

Table 14.11: Identified Public Rights of Way

Core Path	Route Reference	Approximate Distance to Site
Tarbert to Skipness	C099(e)	0 km
Tarbert to Skipness	C099(d)	0 km
Tarbert to Skipness	C099(c)	0 km
Tarbert to Skipness	C099(f)	0 km
Mealdarroch to Kintyre Way, Tarbert	C464	0 km
Glenreasdell to Kintyre Way, Skipness	C521	0.1 km
Tarbert to Skipness	C099(a)	0.1 km
Oakfield to Eastfield, Tarbert	C444	1.1 km
Big Brae, Tarbert	C478	1.1 km
Tarbert to Skipness	C099(b)	1.2 km
Inverneil to Tarbert via Kilberry NCN	C295(a)	1.3 km
White Shore, Tarbert	C101(a)	1.3 km
Inverneil to Tarbert via Kilberry NCN	C295(b)	1.5 km
White Shore, Tarbert	C101(b)	1.6 km
Birdhide, White shore, Tarbert	C445	1.6 km
Campbells Glen, Skipness	C532	1.6 km
White Shore, Tarbert	C101(c)	1.8 km
Skipness Bay	C103(b)	2.0 km
Skipness Bay	C103(a)	2.0 km
Back road to Skipness	C105	2.1 km
Kennacraig to Skipness	C104(a)	2.2 km
Kennacraig to Skipness	C104(b)	2.9 km
Inverneil to Tarbert via Kilberry NCN	C295(c)	3.0 km
Torinturk circular (Giants grave and Dun)	C106(a)	3.1 km
Torinturk circular (Giants grave and Dun)	C106(b)	3.5 km
Campbeltown to Cloanaig	C088(a)	3.9 km
Portavadie to Stillaig circular	C219(c)	4.5 km
Portavadie to Stillaig circular	C219(d)	4.6 km

Cycling

116. There are two designated cycle routes that fall within the Study area identified by Sustrans National Cycle Network (Sustrans, 2019). Route 78 The Caledonia Way runs along the east coast of the Kintyre peninsula and 5 m from the Site at its closest point. Route 73 runs from Lochranza to Brodick on the Isle of Arran before crossing to Ardrossan. Its most northern section falls within the 15 km buffer (the route is located 9 km away, at its closest point to the application boundary). As both of the routes are promoted nationally, they are considered to be of high importance. The Five Ferries cycling route which totals almost 72 miles runs for 10.5 miles near the site in its branch between Claonaig to Tarbert.

Horse Riding

117. There are no designated horse-riding tracks or trekking stables within the Site. However, parts of The Kintyre Way are used by horse-riders, including sections within the Site, such as by Larachmor Burn.

Tourism Routes

118. To the west of the Site is located the A83, a key route for holidaymakers.

119. Local ferry routes are considered to be key routes and are regularly used by visitors to the area, thereby have been regarded as tourism receptors. The key ferry routes within the tourism Study Area comprise:

- Tarbert to Portavadie ferry;
- Tarbert to Lochranza ferry (winter only);
- Claonaig to Lochranza ferry; and
- Kennacraig to Islay and Jura ports.

120. The Five Ferries cycling route, located near the site makes use of the Calmac Ferries, including the routes between Lochranza to Claonaig and Tarbert to Portavadie.

Accommodation

121. Within the tourism Study Area (15 km from the Site) there are 37 accommodation businesses, summarised as follows.

- two Camping/Caravan sites;
- seven Hotels;
- six Self Catering;
- 21 Guest Houses; and
- one Youth Hostel.

122. These businesses are shown on **Figure 14.1**. The accommodation businesses identified are considered to be of local value and their sensitivity low.

Events

123. The Kintyre Way Ultra takes place annually along 50-60 km stretches of the Kintyre Way. In 2019 and 2021 the section used has been from Tayinloan to Tarbert, including a section that passes through the Site. In 2021 there were approximately 116 entries. The Kintyre Way Ultra is considered to be of regional importance and, therefore, a receptor of medium sensitivity' The 15 km tourism Study Area was applied for events likely to draw in visitors from outside of Tarbert and the Argyll and Bute, these were based on events advertised to a national and international audience on the Visit Scotland and Scotland Info website. The 5 km recreation Study Area was applied for events likely to attract visitors from within Tarbert and Skipness and Argyll and Bute, these were based on events advertised to a local and regional audience on the Tarbert Loch Fyne Festivals website. The review found that there would be several local and regional events hosted within the 5 km Study Area., especially around Tarbert, such as the Tarbert Seafood Festival and the Tarbert Traditional Boat Festival among others.

14.6.2.4 Land Use

124. The current land use is classified as commercial forestry. The Site predominately comprises of commercial coniferous forestry. The area of the Site is 1456 ha. **Appendix 15. 1** identifies the effects on forestry practices.

125. No public roads are located within the Site; although there is some existing forest track and two private tracks. Access will be taken from the A83 public road to the north west of the Site.

126. There are no residential properties within 1 km of the turbine infrastructure. There are no buildings on the Site.

14.6.2.5 Public Attitude to Renewable Energy Developments

127. The potential for impact on tourism is closely linked to public perception of those visiting the area. This section provides an overview of studies undertaken to assess public perception of windfarm developments across the UK.

128. In 2011, as part of their policy update, VisitScotland commissioned research to learn more about UK consumer attitudes to renewable energy developments, especially windfarms. The survey was largely attitudinal based and according to the results, windfarms do not have any significant impacts on the levels of tourism with evidence such as Whitelee Windfarm Visitor Centre which attracted over 120,000 visitors in the first 12 months of opening in 2009. An estimated 200,000 people a year visit Whitelee Windfarm for recreational activities such as walking, running or cycling, and the site has been selected to host various outdoor events including the annual 'Run the Blades' festival and regular charity events, This example demonstrates how onshore renewable energy developments can increase tourism and recreational amenities however, it is acknowledged this is a site-specific case.

129. Based on this research, VisitScotland published a Position Statement in 2014 which stated:

"*VisitScotland understands and supports the drive for renewable energy and recognises the economic potential of Scotland's vast resource, including the opportunities for wind farm development… There is a mutually supportive relationship between renewable energy developments and sustainable tourism*."

130. A Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) survey on public attitudes showed that in March 2014, 80 % of the British public said they supported using renewable energy for electricity, heat and fuel in the UK.

131. More recently, the Public Attitudes Tracker, published by the Department for Business in 2018, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) showed a record 76% of people support the development of onshore wind compared to a previous 74% from the start of 2017. The advance in onshore wind development in Scotland has also been accompanied by an interest in understanding how the impacts of windfarm developments affect local house prices. In recent years, there has been considerable research looking at measurable effects on whether or not properties near, or in sight of, new windfarm developments see price changes that differ from other houses. A topical study conducted by RenewableUK (2014) and the Centre for Economics and Business Research concluded that no adverse impacts were found on house prices from a range of windfarm cases across England and Wales and that there was, in fact, a slight beneficial influence on house prices from the cases analysed.

132. A few studies have been conducted around the impact of wind turbines on house prices (ClimateXChange, 2016; Gibbons. 2015), which have not been conclusive. However, it must be noted that there is no consistent evidence of adverse impacts overall.

133. SPR have sought to raise awareness of the proposed Development within the local community and have encouraged members of the public to engage with the project. The public consultation procedure is detailed in **Chapter 6**. Engagement with and responses to public consultation are documented in the Pre-Application Consultation Report that will form a supporting document to the Section 36 Application. For the purpose of this assessment, the general themes of the feedback are as follows:

- community benefits;
- access into the Site for recreation;
- tourism impact;
- noise disturbance;
- landscape and visual impacts;
- population and human health;
- support for renewables; and
- need to tackle climate change.

14.7 Assessment of Effects

14.7.1 Potential Construction Effects

134. During the 24-month construction phase of the proposed Development there would be economic effects resulting from expenditure on items such as site preparation (including forestry services), access roads, purchase and delivery of materials, (including port fees), plant, equipment and components. Based on experience on other renewable energy developments in Scotland, it is predicted there would be a peak onsite workforce of 150 workers. Some of these workers would be sourced from the local and regional labour market around Tarbert and Skipness and Argyll and Bute, and many more would be sourced from Scotland as a whole. The remainder of this section sets out to quantify the likely benefits to local and national jobs and the economy based on the proportion of construction expenditure that would take place within the local/regional and national economy.

14.7.1.1 Socio-Economics

Capital Expenditure (CAPEX)

135. The assessment has been undertaken on the basis of the proposed Development consisting of up to 13 wind turbines each with a generating capacity of around 6 megawatts (MW) and with a rated output of around 78 megawatts, ground mounted solar arrays with a generating capacity of around 5 MW, and battery energy storage system (BESS) associated energy storage infrastructure of around 25 MW in capacity. The construction costs for the proposed Development were estimated using research undertaken by BiGGAR Economics on behalf of RenewableUK in 2015 (RenewableUK, 2015). On the basis of that methodology, the total construction and development cost was estimated to be up to £114 million[10]. It is predicted the

[10] Based on the sum of development (£150,216) and construction costs (£1,318,875) (i.e. the capital expenditure) per MW, multiplied by 50 MW (i.e. the capacity of the wind turbine element of the proposed Development).

solar element would cost a further £3.1 million including PV panels, electrical infrastructure, and civil engineering works[11]. The cost of BESS has not been included because it is a newer technology with limited employment in the UK so there is not sufficient research into the related expenditure.

136. This expenditure is split into four main categories of contract:

- development and planning;
- turbines;
- balance of plant; and
- grid connection.

137. The proportion of construction and development spend on each of the main categories was also informed by the same report. The analysis in 2015 found that approximately 10% of Capex was on development and planning, and less than 60% was on the turbines (RenwablesUK, 2015); however, developments in the sector, and the transition towards larger turbines, has changed the breakdown of Capex. In their socio-economic assessment as part of the Sheirdrim Renewable Energy Development EIAR (2019) BiGGAR Economics analysed the current Capex components and estimated that turbine related contracts accounted for the majority of Capex (70.0 %), followed by balance of plant (20.5 %), development and planning (4.4%) and grid connection (5.1 %). These values are more similar to those in the BVG report (2017) 'Economic Benefits from Onshore Wind', so the updated values were accepted for the purposes of this assessment. The solar-related Capex has not been disaggregated as there is less data available regarding the split across Capex components. The estimated split of total Capex used in the analysis is shown in **Table 14.12**.

Table 14.12: Development and Construction Expenditure by Type

Item	Description	Cost (£millions)	% of Expenditure
Development and Planning	The processes up to the point of financial close or placing firm orders to proceed with construction, and project management costs incurred by SPR.	5	4.4%
Turbines & Plant	The activity by wind turbine manufacturers and their suppliers, covering nacelle component manufacture and assembly and blade and tower manufacture.	79.8	70%
Civil Works	Includes civil and project management, roads and drainage, substation buildings, turbine foundations and hardstandings, landscaping/ forestry/ fencing, and mechanical and electrical installation.	23.4	20.5%
Grid Connection	Includes engineering services, construction, electrical components, and industrial equipment and machinery.	5.8	5.1%
Sub-total		114	100%
Solar	Includes PV panels, electrical infrastructure, and civil engineering works.	3.1	100%
Total		117.1	N/A

*Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) by Study Area

138. The economic impact of the construction phase was estimated for Tarbert and Skipness, Argyll and Bute, and Scotland as a whole. To do this, it was necessary to estimate the proportion of each type of contract that might be secured in each of the Study Areas. The assumptions were based on the weighted development and construction costs from the RenewableUK research. For development, the percentage of spend within the local area (i.e. Tarbert and Skipness and Argyll and Bute) is predicted to be 13% and for Scotland it is predicted to be 59%. For construction, the percentage of spend within Tarbert and

[11] Based on analysis undertaken by IRENA (2021), which stated that the weighted average Capex cost for utility-scale solar developments in the UK was $846 per KiloWatt (KW) per annum. This has been converted to pounds (£627/KW as of 29/09/21) and multiplied by the capacity of the proposed solar array (5 MW).

Skipness, Argyll and Bute is predicted to be 12 % and for Scotland it is predicted to be 36 %. To estimate the expenditure for each contract in each of the Study Areas these percentages were applied to the estimated size of each component contract.

139. For the solar array of the proposed Development, it is estimated 7.5 % of the construction costs would be spent within Argyll and Bute and 39 % would be spent in Scotland as whole. The estimates of the proportion of expenditure within the Study Areas are based on information on supply chain capabilities and UK content set out in the publication *"Solar Powered Growth in the UK",* September 2014 prepared for the Solar Trades Association by the Centre for Economics and Business Research.

140. On this basis, it was estimated that Tarbert and Skipness and Argyll and Bute could secure contracts worth up to £13.78 million. Scotland was estimated to be able to receive contracts worth up to £43 million. The estimated value of contract type by Study Area are shown in **Table 14.13**.

141. All figures presented in the following tables for Scotland include Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute.

Table 14.13: Development and Construction Expenditure by Study Area and Contract Type

Item	Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute		Scotland**	
	Cost (£millions)	% of item total	Cost (£millions)	% of item total
Development	0.65	13%	2.9	59 %
Construction	12.9	12%	38.9	36 %
Solar	0.23	7.5%	1.2	39 %
Total*	13.78	12%	43	37 %

* Totals may not add up due to rounding. ** the figures for Scotland include Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute.

142. Applying the above assumptions to the breakdown of expected expenditure from SPR set out in **Table 14.12**, it is expected that construction phase expenditure of approximately £13.78 million (approximately 12 % of the overall total) would be spent locally. An estimated £43 million, 37 % of the overall total) would be expected to be spent in Scotland as a whole.

143. For the solar element of the proposed Development, it is estimated that £0.23 million (7.5 %) would be spent locally. An estimated £1.2 million (39 %) would be expected to be spent in Scotland as a whole.

Gross Employment and Gross Value Added (GVA) Estimates

144. The contract values potentially awarded in each Study Area would represent an increase in turnover of businesses in these areas. Estimates of the expected direct construction phase employment implications of the proposed Development have been derived using the information on anticipated project expenditure set out in **Table 14.11**, as well as assumptions obtained from the following sources:

- employment and GVA multipliers for Scotland, obtained from Input-Output tables for Scotland published by the Scottish Government;
- employment and GVA multipliers for the UK obtained from Input-Output tables published by the UK Government (BEIS); and
- ratios of turnover per unit of GVA and GVA per employee have been derived from Scottish and UK Government data.

145. The employment impacts during the construction phase are reported in job years as the contracts would be short-term. Job years measures the number of years of full-time employment generated by a project. For example, an individual working on this project for 18 months would be reported as 1.5 job years.

146. Using all of the sources summarised above, it is estimated that 57 gross person-years of employment could be generated in the Tarbert and Skipness and Argyll and Bute economy during construction of the proposed Development. The equivalent total for Scotland as a whole is 177 person-years.

147. A total of £4.5 million of GVA additional value is expected to be generated during construction in the Tarbert and Skipness, Argyll and Bute economy. The equivalent total for Scotland it is £14.3 million. These figures represent the value created in the economy resulting directly from expenditure in development and construction of the proposed Development

148. **Table 14.14** summarises the estimates of direct gross employment and GVA that have been derived for Tarbert and Skipness, Argyll and Bute and Scotland as a whole.

Table 14.14: Development and Construction Expenditure by Study Area and Contract Type

Area	Person-years	GVA (£ million)
Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute	57	4.5
Scotland	177	14.3

Net Employment and GVA Estimates

149. The focus in the assessment set out above has been on gross effects, at both local and national level. In order to understand the potential net effects, it is necessary to take into account a number of 'additionality' concepts. Additionality takes account of the fact the full range of goods and services required for a proposed development may not be available within a certain area or, if available, there may be capacity constraints that result in displacement of availability for other businesses. The net effects of the proposed Development on employment and GVA would be lower than the gross effects as a result of applying the additionality factors.

150. The estimation of net effects takes into account the following additionality factors:

- **Leakage**: is the proportion of project outcomes that benefit individuals or organisations located beyond the relevant area of impact. Leakage is generally higher at a local level, although it also varies by the nature of development type; and
- **Displacement**: is an estimate of the economic activity hosted by the Site that would be diverted from other businesses in the spatial impact area (e.g. Argyll and Bute). This again varies by the nature of development type. However, construction projects of relatively limited duration are usually regarded as having very little if any displacement impact.

151. With respect to leakage, the specific assumption used her is derived from local commuting data obtained from the 2011 Census (NOMIS, 2011) found that 77.4 % of workers whose workplace was located in Argyll and Bute were residents of the Argyll & Bute Council area. The residual 22.6 % workers were resident of other parts of the UK, almost all of whom reside elsewhere in Scotland.

152. These data have been used to calculate the following estimates for leakage:

- Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute: 22.6 %; and
- Scotland: 0.5%.

153. It is assumed that displacement would amount to 5.0 %. Higher levels of displacement are assumed at national level (15 %).

154. In addition to considering the effects of leakage and displacement, which act to reduce the value of the project within the local economy, consideration must be given to estimating the additional jobs and economic value that would be created in the local economy through the (positive) indirect and induced effects of subsequent rounds of direct expenditure in the economy. The assumptions used in this assessment with respect to multiplier values are consistent with Type I (indirect) and Type II (indirect and induced) values found in the latest Scottish Input-Output tables.

155. The additionality assumptions used in this assessment are summarised and the subsequent net employment and GVA estimates detailed in **Table 14.15**.

Table 14.15: Net Development and Construction GVA and Employment in Job Years by Study Area

Additionality Factor	Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Leakages	22.6 %	0.5 %
Displacement	5.0 %	15 %
Multipliers	0.29	0.44
Net person years of employment	53	215.4
Net GVA	4.2	17.4

Source: Leakage assumption based on 2011 Census data

156. The net employment and GVA effects represent the total impact during the construction and development phase. The total combined impact was estimated to be up to 53 job years and £4.2 million GVA in Argyll and Bute and Tarbert and Skipness, and 215.4 job years and £17.4 million GVA in Scotland.

157. It is expected that during the construction phase, the effect of the proposed Development would be **Minor (Positive)** in Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute, and **Negligible (Positive)** in Scotland.

Wider Economic Benefits

Tourism Economy

158. The construction period is expected to last approximately 24 months and would benefit the local economy through expenditure on accommodation and purchases of food, drink, fuel, etc. that are needed to sustain the construction workforce. These beneficial effects would be experienced mainly by businesses within the tourism sector, or those that are partly dependent on tourism for their income e.g. the retail sector.

159. Anecdotal evidence received by SPR on other onshore wind development construction projects shows that local businesses such as accommodation providers welcome the enhanced level of occupancy that is achieved due to construction contractors using their accommodation on a year-round basis, including periods of the year that are traditionally considered 'low season'. The benefits of increased business, although temporary, can allow businesses to invest in improvements that would not otherwise be affordable, leading to a long-term enhancement. Construction of the solar array is likely to produce a similar benefit, albeit for a more limited period.

160. The positive effects arising during the construction period are expected to more than offset any possible temporary losses to the tourism economy that may occur in the event that tourist visitors were deterred (for example, if holiday accommodation was in use by construction workers) during this phase.

161. Whilst overall effects on the tourism economy are considered to be negligible and not significant, the benefits to individual businesses may be substantial and may indeed be significant. However, until such time as contracts are let, it is not possible to identify the level of benefit to individual businesses.

Supply Chain

162. In terms of potential supply chain benefits, the proposed Development provides opportunities for the involvement of local, regional and Scottish suppliers in a range of activities, including research and development, design, project management, civil engineering, component fabrication / manufacture, installation and maintenance. There is expertise in all of these areas in the wider region, although a full wind energy and BESS supply chain covering all aspects of wind turbine and solar panel component manufacture has not yet been developed within the region or indeed within Scotland as a whole. Scotland currently houses wind turbine manufacturing plants in Argyll and Bute, Fife, and in the Highlands. Proposals are also emerging for the location and development of wind turbine manufacturing facilities, including those in and around the east coast, although these are currently primarily for offshore machines.

163. The key consideration in this context is that with an increasing number of windfarm and renewable energy developments either operational, under development or having gained consent in Scotland, the commercial viability, and job prospects amongst Scottish firms has improved. Cluster benefits in the industry increase where firms are supported by the spending of other firms within the renewables sector. The net effect is to increase business and employment opportunities within Scotland's renewable energy sector, boosting the performance of local and national economies and to contribute to the fight against climate change.

164. In addition, during the construction process there will be opportunities where those employed will develop skills that will be of benefit to the local economy and to local businesses in the longer term. Furthermore, employment generated through the proposed Development will contribute to diversifying the local economy and help support the retention in the area of the working age population. This is not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.

165. SPR works with a variety of Tier 1 / Tier 2 contractors who are actively encouraged to develop local supply chains throughout the local area, and work with subcontractors to invest in training and skills development. SPR, due to its presences within

Argyll and Bute, has now established good connections with local companies (especially Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)). This will enhance local supply chain opportunities.

Enhancement Measures

166. Procurement of goods and services can have an important effect on the local economy. The potential level of expenditure calculated in the paragraphs above shows and shown in **Table 14.14** that, for the proposed Development, local contract spend (within Tarbert and Skipness, Argyll and Bute) could be approximately £15.07 million over the proposed Development (planning) period and 24-month construction period.

167. SPR is committed to employing good practice measures with regard to maximising local procurement and would adopt established good practice measures such as those set out in the Renewables UK Good Practice Guidance 2014: 'Local Supply Chain Opportunities in Onshore Wind' (RenewablesUK, 2014). SPR has a long track record of developing onshore windfarms in Scotland, and experience from constructing similar renewable energy developments, is that expenditure in local goods and services is widely spread and makes a difference to existing businesses.

168. The construction contractor would be required by the Applicant to give local companies due consideration for the provision of goods and services. Local sourcing of equipment is preferred whenever possible, but this procurement is subject to tendering and may be constrained by the specialist nature of some of the equipment. Local contractors will be encouraged to tender for construction, operation and maintenance work wherever possible, to ensure maximum benefit to local communities.

169. Among the services that local contractors may be able to provide during the construction phase:

- forestry services;
- haulage and transport services including traffic management;
- site clearance including waste management;
- access road, turbine platform construction and other civil engineering services;
- site and ground investigation services;
- building construction, electrical, plumbing, roofing, flooring, plastering, decorating and joinery services;
- crane companies to provide lifting services;
- plant and equipment hire;
- fencing, road furniture and signage installation;
- supply of building and electrical materials (e.g. aggregates, concrete, cabling, equipment, culvert tubes etc.);
- mechanical, electrical, project management and supervisory services;
- site security and catering services;
- provision and servicing of temporary welfare facilities; and
- supply of fuel and other consumables.

170. In terms of a quantitative assessment of effects, the provision of goods and services by local businesses has been taken into account in the assessment of employment and GVA estimates reported in the previous section. At this stage in the EIA process it is not possible to quantify economic benefits in respect of individual supply chain companies, as contracts would not be let until consent is granted. However, it is evident from recent SPR experience in Scotland (including the eight windfarms in south west Scotland subject of the BVGA report on economic benefits (BVG Associates, 2017)) that suppliers of a wide range of goods and services locally and in Scotland as a whole would obtain benefit from the proposed Development.

14.7.2 Potential Operational Effects on the Economy

14.7.2.1 Socio-Economics

Operational Expenditure (OPEX)

171. When the proposed Development is operational, should it be consented, personnel to provide servicing, maintenance, repairs and other operational support would be required. All of these staff are expected to be based within the Study Area.

172. The operation and maintenance impact of the proposed Development was estimated as the impact that would persist throughout the lifespan of the proposed Development. The proposed Development is anticipated to have an operational life of 40 years, after which it would be decommissioned, and the turbines dismantled and removed. The long-term assessments of the operations and maintenance impacts have been assessed in this study over this 40-year period.

173. Annual expenditure on operations and maintenance was estimated based on analysis undertaken in the 2015 RenewableUK report, which stated that the weighted average cost was £59,867 per MW per annum. It was estimated that the annual operations and maintenance expenditure associated with the proposed Development could be up to £4.6 million (which excludes community benefit funding and nondomestic rates). Over the 40 years of operational life of the proposed Development, this could amount to approximately £184 million. Annual expenditure on operations and maintenance for the solar array was estimated as £39.7 per annum[12]. Over the 40 years of operational life of the proposed Development this could amount to approximately £1.6 million. The combined OPEX per annum is £6.6 million and over the 40 years of operational life the OPEX is £264 million. These figures are based only on the wind and solar elements of the proposed Development; and therefore, do not include BESS elements. Actual OPEX would likely be higher but information on OPEX for BESS is not available. The OPEX estimates assessed below represent the worst-case scenario.

174. To estimate the economic impact of the operation and maintenance expenditure in each of the Study Areas it was first necessary to estimate the proportion of contracts that could be secured in each of these areas. These assumptions were based on the contract proportions reported in the RenewableUK report.

175. On this basis it was estimated that Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute could secure 42 % of operation and maintenance contracts, worth up to £1.93 million each year, and that Scotland could secure 58 % of contracts, worth up to £2.6 million, as shown in **Table 14.16**.

Table 14.16: Annual Operation and Maintenance Expenditure by Study Area

	Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute		Scotland	
	% of expenditure	£ millions	% of expenditure	£ millions
Operation and Maintenance Expenditure	42	1.93	58	2.6

Gross Employment and GVA Estimates

176. As with the construction phase, the contract values awarded in each of the Study Areas represent an increase in turnover in those areas. The economic impact of the increase in turnover on GVA and employment was estimated by using the Scottish Annual Business Statistics (2018) to calculate ratios of turnover to GVA and GVA per employee. It should be noted that GVA per employee data was calculated based on total number of employees and not Full Time Equivalent (FTE), a GVA to FTE ration would be higher. Assessing employment effects using the GVA per employee ratio represents the worst-case scenario.

177. In this way, it was estimated that turnover generated by the operation and maintenance of the proposed Development could support up to £0.66 million GVA and 9 jobs in Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute, and £0.86 million GVA and 12 jobs in Scotland.

Table 14.17: Annual Operation and Maintenance Direct Impact

	Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute	Scotland
GVA (£m)	0.66	0.89
Employment (jobs)	9	12

Net Employment and GVA Estimates

178. After the gross employment and economic impacts were estimated then the net impacts were estimated by incorporating additionality factors.

179. In order to convert gross employment and GVA estimates into net employment and GVA estimates, additionality factors were incorporated. Assumptions are needed for leakage, displacement and for the potential value of indirect and induced effects. For this project the following assumptions are used:

[12] Based on analysis undertaken by Vartiainen et al (2019), which stated that the weighted average OPEX cost for utility-scale solar developments in Europe was €9.2 per KiloWatt (KW) per annum. This has been converted to pounds (£7.93/KW as of 05/11/21) and multiplied by the capacity of the proposed solar array (5 MW).

- **Leakage**: it is assumed that 22.6 %; of jobs benefit non-Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute residents and 0.5 % would benefit non-Scottish residents. This assumption is based on Census 2011 commuting data for Argyll and Bute.
- **Displacement**: it is assumed that displacement effects (e.g. jobs lost in other local businesses as a result of the project) are zero.
- **Induced effects**: it is assumed that the value of the induced multiplier at the spatial level of the Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute is 9 %. This is a standard assumption for assessments of this kind.

180. **Table 14.18** below summarises the results of the assessment.

Table 14.18: Net Annual Operation and Maintenance Direct and Indirect Impact

	Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute		Scotland	
	GVA (£ millions)	Person years	GVA (£ millions)	Person years
Gross (i.e. direct)	0.66	9	0.89	12
Induced	0.06	0.9	0.1	1.35
Leakages and displacement	0.2	2.6	0.01	0.1
Net total	0.5	7.3	0.9	13.3

* Totals may not add up due to rounding.

181. The overall operational impacts of the proposed Development are assessed on the basis of a 40-year operational period. This would generate local GVA worth a cumulative total of £26.4 million (value undiscounted).

182. It is expected that the effect on the economy of Tarbert and Skipness/Argyll and Bute would be **Negligible (Positive)**, due to the scale of the regional economy as a whole. In Scotland, it is expected that the effect would also be **Negligible (Positive)**.

Embedded Mitigation

183. SPR would seek to secure positive benefits for the local economy by encouraging the use of local labour, manufacturers and suppliers where possible during the operational phase. The majority of jobs during the operational phase would be related to turbine/solar maintenance and civils maintenance works. ScottishPower runs a graduate trainee scheme which lasts for two years and involves on the job training and placements in various parts/locations of the ScottishPower business including Renewables.

Proposed Mitigation

184. No significant effects have been identified in respect of socio-economic receptors arising from operation of the proposed Development and therefore no mitigation measures are required to reduce or remedy any adverse effect.

Residual Effects

185. As no significant effects have been identified, and no mitigation is required, residual effects would remain as no greater than **Negligible** (adverse) and are considered to be **Not Significant**.

Enhancement Measures

186. SPR is committed to procure materials and services locally and other enhancement measures, as described below.

Community Benefit

187. SPR has contributed more than £45 million in community benefit funding to support initiatives and projects local to their onshore windfarm sites across the UK.

188. To date, in the Argyll and Bute Council area, SPR has made community benefit of over £2 million available from four operational sites: Beinn an Tuirc, and Beinn an Tuirc 2 Windfarms, Cruach Mhor Windfarm and Clachan Flats Windfarm. The community benefit fund being made available from the recently constructed Beinn an Tuirc 3 windfarm will provide additional funding in the region of £225,000 per annum to the local community.

189. Since becoming operational in 2001 and 2014 respectively, SPR's Beinn an Tuirc and Beinn an Tuirc 2 Windfarms on the Kintyre Peninsula have together contributed more than £1.35 million to the local communities. As a result, these communities have funded a variety of initiatives including:

- Over £90,000 towards energy efficiency, general maintenance and equipment for local village halls;
- £12,000 towards the refurbishment and running costs of the Campbeltown Picture House;
- Almost £11,000 to support The Kintyre Way route and Kintyre Way Ultra events;
- Over £18,000 to "Shopper Aide" to deliver their services and to help meet the costs of a wheelchair friendly vehicle, to assist local residents experiencing low mobility and/or social isolation in accessing shops, clubs, medical appointments and taking part in social activities;
- Contributions of £7,500 towards the Kintyre Community Dialysis Unit;
- £2,400 to provide defibrillators in Carradale; and
- Support for various projects for young people, including £25,000 to Carradale Activity Play Park to replace the existing equipment for both local children and those visiting on holiday and almost £4,000 towards swimming & kayaking lessons for local primary school children.

190. SPR has worked with Argyll & Bute Council and ALIenergy (Argyll, Lomond & the Islands Energy Agency) for many years to support educational work with schools and communities across the region. Since 2015, 40% of the Beinn an Tuirc 2 Windfarm community benefit package has been committed to funding an Education and Skills Development Programme delivered by ALIenergy which encourages and facilitates young people to seek careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related sectors, providing events, workshops and careers advice for schools and communities, particularly in the areas of Mid Argyll and the Kintyre Peninsula. This programme typically includes delivery of STEM workshops as part of Transition Week for local primary school pupils moving up to Campbeltown, Tarbert, and Lochgilphead High Schools. During 2020, the programme moved online with a suite of resources being developed. These included a digital 'STEM at Home' activity workbook, an inspiring video showcasing some STEM related career paths available in the region and a suite of written career profiles from a variety of interesting people who work in STEM roles and have a connection to Argyll & Bute.

191. SPR has entered into a Concordat with Argyll and Bute Council outlining our commitment to work together positively to deliver our renewables ambitions across the region. As an active member of Argyll and Bute Renewable Alliance (ABRA), SPR is also working with Argyll and Bute Council, local stakeholders and other industry representatives to ensure that renewable energy boosts the local economy and creates opportunities for local people.

192. The community benefit package for the proposed Development includes an offer of a community benefit fund and an opportunity for the local community to invest in the proposed Development once operational, if they choose to do so. A number of Kintyre communities have already formed an appropriate community vehicle to consider any investment opportunities offered in the area and an introductory leaflet on the investment opportunity related to Earraghail RED is being issued for their information.

193. It is expected that income streams from the Earraghail RED community benefit package could provide a long-term revenue which could be used to support community projects within Argyll and Bute. SPR's flexible approach to community benefit empowers local communities to determine which projects and initiatives are of greatest value locally when deciding what the community benefit is spent on.

194. Benefits would accrue from the scale and nature of the proposed income streams and, depending on the choices made, could have a positive effect on the provision and quality of local facilities, the general quality of life of local residents as well as other economic benefits. The long-term nature of the income could allow the community to plan ahead; to draw in other sources of match funding to maximise the benefits; and to assist in the delivery of local initiatives that are deemed to be of the greatest value by the community.

195. Whilst these effects cannot be quantified at this stage, it is clear that the proposed community benefit package could offer real socio-economic benefits to the local community.

Effects on Visitor and Tourism Economy

196. The most comprehensive study of the potential effects of windfarms on tourism was undertaken by the Moffat Centre at Glasgow Caledonian University in 2008 (Glasgow Caledonian University/Moffat Centre, 2008). The study found that,

although there may be minor effects on tourism providers and a small number of visitors may not visit Scotland in the future, the overall effect on tourism expenditure and employment would be very limited. This study is now about 10 years old, although a Scottish Government report confirmed the findings (ClimateXchange, 2012), and in that time windfarms have become a more common feature in Scotland. As such, it would be expected that any negative effects on the tourism economy would now be apparent.

197. In 2017 BiGGAR Economics undertook a study into the effects that constructed windfarms were having on tourism at the national, regional and local level (BiGGAR Economics, 2017).

198. Tourism employment was considered from 2009 to 2015, a six-year period over which Scotland and almost all local authority areas increased the number of windfarms, while employment in sustainable tourism also grew significantly. The analysis found no correlation between tourism employment and the number of turbines at the national or local authority level.

199. The study also considered the impact on employment at a smaller level, in data zones up to 15 kilometres from developments. The sites considered were constructed between 2009 and 2015. The study compared employment in 2009, when the sites did not exist, and 2015, when they were constructed, to measure of the effect of windfarms on local employment. This excluded construction impacts, such as windfarm related employees staying in local accommodation.

200. At the local authority level in these smaller areas, no link was found between the development of a windfarm and tourism related employment. In 21 out of the 28 areas considered employment in this sector grew. In 22 of the areas, employment either grew faster or decreased less than the rate for the relevant local authority area as a whole.

201. Overall, the conclusion of this study was that published national statistics on employment in sustainable tourism demonstrate that there is no relationship between the development of onshore windfarms and tourism employment at the level of the Scottish economy, at the local authority level, nor in the areas immediately surrounding windfarm development.

202. The findings of this research are in accordance with those of the Scottish Parliament's Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee in 2012 (Scottish Parliament Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee, 2012), when they concluded that there is no robust, empirical evidence of a negative link between windfarm development and tourism.

203. Overall, there is no research evidence which suggests that negative effects on the tourism economy in Scotland, as a result of windfarms is likely.

204. The BiGGAR (2017) study was followed up by another published in 2021. BiGGAR (2021), analysed 44 windfarm case studies in Scotland and found no evidence of a link between wind farm development and trends in tourism employment at a national and local authority area, as well as in the locality of the windfarm sites investigated.

205. Within that overall context, the following assessment nevertheless considers whether there might be any specific effects on individual tourism assets. This assessment considers whether the proposed Development could result in changes in the behaviour of tourists that might lead to effects on the tourism economy.

14.7.3 Tourism, Recreation and Land Use

14.7.3.1 Tourism and Recreational Receptors

206. Potential effects on the tourism and recreational resource are categorised as:

- Direct physical effects: for example, construction activities interfering with rights of access; and
- Indirect effects: such as the changes in amenity on tourists and recreational land users

Construction Effects

207. There would be a direct impact to recreation caused by construction activities onsite, which would restrict recreational activities within the application boundary. The Site is accessible via the general access rights granted under the Land Reform Act (Scotland) 2003, so the Site may be used for cycling, walking and horse riding; however, access to areas where construction is taking place or where there are construction related activities may be restricted. In accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 is a legal obligation for health and safety purposes. Measures for ensuring public safety during construction will be set out in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), an outline of which is provided at **Technical Appendix 3.1**, and periods of exclusion would be kept to the minimum necessary

for safe working. The CEMP will set out measures to ensure that recreational users of the Site are informed of the construction work and directed into safe areas where there would be no conflict with plant and machinery. Such measures would be agreed in advance with the Council.

208. The magnitude of impact would be low given that it would potentially cause minor disruption and would be temporary and short term. It is considered that the Site is of high sensitivity for recreation as it is crossed by part of The Kintyre Way which is of importance at a local, regional and national level. This will also reduce the access to the neighbouring land. Therefore, the direct effects on recreation during construction is considered to be a **Short-term** and **Moderate** effect.

209. There is a potential indirect impact on recreation caused by visual disturbance during the period of construction, which could affect amenity and enjoyment of nearby walks. The visual impacts of construction effects will be localised and temporary, as the construction works will only be detectable to route users for short periods along the route. There are 28 core paths within the 5 km Study Area, the closest being C099(e), C099(d), C099(c) and C099(f) which cross the Site and constitutes part of The Kintyre Way. These are expected to be used predominantly by local residents all year round, and by visitors during the holiday season, due to their importance to the local character the receptor sensitivity is considered high. As these walking routes have a high sensitivity and the magnitude is considered to be low, the effects are considered to **be Short-term** and **Moderate**.

210. Indirect effects on other off-site resources such as the accommodation, mentioned in **Section 14.6.2.3**, are unlikely to be affected by the construction of the proposed Development. Due to the intervening distance of these receptors from the proposed Development and the screening provided by the forestry on the Site, it is considered that the magnitude of effect would be low on a low sensitivity resource in terms of construction effects. This signifies a short term, negligible adverse effect which is considered to be not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.

211. Local shops, cafes, accommodation providers and hotels often experience an increase in turnover during the construction phase as they have opportunities to provide additional services to the developer and their contractors. The proposed Development will result in a short term, beneficial effect at local level, resulting in a minor effect, which is not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.

Embedded Mitigation

212. The proposed Development, as described in **Chapter 3**, incorporates good practice measures for limiting the adverse effects of the construction works. The principal potential effects arising from construction tend to relate to construction traffic affecting use of the local highway network and onsite tracks and forestry roads for recreational users. Measures are set out in **Chapter 3** and also in **Chapter 12** relating to how delivery of goods and services would be managed during construction so as to minimise impacts on sensitive receptors. The proposed management measures would be further developed in the CEMP that would be adopted prior to construction commencing. An outline CEMP is provided in **Technical Appendix 3.1**.

Operational Effects

Visual effects associated with the proposed Development may occur at receptor locations, when people are looking towards the proposed Development and from locations where clear views of the turbines are available. The visual effects of the Development on tourism and recreational resources are assessed in **Chapter 7**. It should be noted that there is a distinction between a visual effect and a recreational amenity effect. Recreational amenity effects are described as effects that would influence the recreational value, e.g. use or enjoyment of an asset such as a walking route.

Tourist Attractions

213. There are no tourist attractions within the application boundary so only indirect impacts on tourist attractions within 15 km of the Site has been considered.

214. Based on a review of the findings of the assessment in **Chapter 12**, no significant effects are expected due to maintenance vehicles using the access road and Site as this would be on an occasional basis only. However, potential indirect impacts that affect tourism amenity might result from visual impacts of the turbines during operation. For the following tourist attractions within the 15 km Study Area it was considered that the potential visual effects were not likely to affect the main features, as described in **Chapter 7** and **Chapter 11**.

215. The following tourist attractions may be impacted visually by the proposed Development in a way that affects their landscape and setting: Skipness Castle and Kilbrannan Chapel, as detailed in **Chapter 7** and **Chapter 11**. However, the amenity of

such attractions would not be significantly impacted, as their main views are faced towards the sea, opposite to the proposed Development. Similarly, Lochranza Castle's setting has been analysed in **Chapter 11**. The amenity of the views from the Castle will not be significantly affected by the presence of the proposed Development, due to the turbines being located at a significant distance. This is supported by surveys of the public's attitudes to windfarms, which provide no clear evidence that the presence of windfarms in an area has an adverse impact on local tourism (see **Section 14.6.2.5** of this Chapter). Local tourist attractions may have a particular sensitivity to visual effects; however, access to tourist facilities will be unaffected, as these are located outside of the Site. Hence, even where significant visual effects are predicted, adverse effects of the operational phase of the proposed Development will not have a significant effect on tourism receptors in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

Recreation Attractions

216. There are a number of recreational routes that cross the Site and the surrounding area, as described in **Section 14.6.2.3**. The only potential direct effects upon these routes would be due to maintenance vehicles using the access road and Site as this would be on an occasional basis only. This would also apply to the A83, which leads to the Site. The land within the proposed Development will be accessible, during operations, to the public at all times of the year as per Section 1 and 2 of Land Reform Act (Scotland) 2003. Additionally, it is therefore anticipated that the tracks associated with the proposed Development may also be utilised for recreational access, albeit unlikely to result in a notable increase in onsite recreation.

217. On that basis, it is possible that temporary exclusions may be needed, for health and safety reasons, during times where essential maintenance is required, as well as during routine forestry operations. Where these are required, clear signage advising of the restrictions will be provided. This will be similar to the current requirements for forestry operations. Therefore, whilst this would represent a potential direct impact from the operation of the proposed Development, it is anticipated such an impact would be of low magnitude of effect. Receptor sensitivity of the recreational routes across the Site that may be affected by these activities and measures are considered to range from high to low, constituting long-term, negligible to moderate adverse effect which is not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations

218. During operation there is also the potential for visual amenity effects upon recreational routes. The visual effects on the following recreational routes was assessed as significant in **Chapter 7**. The following routes are likely to have notable visibility of the proposed Development, as shown on **Figure 7.1**, the ZTVs and **Figure 7.15**, are considered further in **Section 7.7.6** of **Chapter 7**.

- A83 north of Tarbert (southern section within Kintyre 66);
- A8003 – Kames;
- Kintyre 66 – locally designated tourist driving route using the A83, B842 and B8001;
- Ferry route Tarbert, Kintyre to Portavadie, South Cowal (year-round service);
- Ferry route Lochranza, Arran to Claonaig, Kintyre (Easter to end October – by appointment only in winter);
- Caledonia Way – 376 km cycle route between Campbeltown and Inverness, using B842, B8001, A83 and B8024 through the Study Area;
- Kintyre Way – long-distance recreational route passes through the Site on forest tracks as it runs between Tarbert and Campbeltown via Skipness;
- Cowal Way – long distance recreational route from Tarbet (Loch Lomond) to Portavadie with sections of visibility at the southern end approaching Portavadie;
- Arran Coastal Way – long distance recreational route circumnavigating Arran with visibility to the proposed Development on the north coast of Arran; and
- Argyll Sea Kayak Trail – Long distance canoe and kayak recreational route with visibility to the proposed Development.

219. Assessment of the socio-economic effects resulting from the findings of the landscape and visual assessment takes account of the fact that the visual experience forms only part of the experience for recreational users. It is not expected that the other recreational routes, including core paths identified within the Study Area, would be impacted by the proposed Development.

220. Studies undertaken in respect of other windfarm projects where users have been asked if the presence of wind turbines would discourage them from using a route have found that the majority would not be deterred. For example, an independent survey of tourists and day-trippers in the area around the proposed Clashindarroch Wind Farm in Aberdeenshire (Gilmorton Rural Development, 2009) found that 84 % of respondents did not feel that the proposed windfarm would have an impact on their willingness to revisit the area. The survey also found that there was no difference in the attitude of walkers to other visitors in relation to their willingness to revisit. Furthermore, the magnitude of impact for cyclists and horse riders may be

less than for walkers as the speed of travel is likely to be faster and individual views are experienced for a shorter period of time. Even for users who find the presence of a windfarm detracts from their experience, this may simply manifest itself in users choosing not to linger in those sections of the route that have clear views of the windfarm.

221. It is expected that the proposed Development will have no impact on the behaviour of visitors/tourists that use paths within the Study Area. Therefore, the effect assessed is considered to be not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.

Accommodation

222. There would be some very minor beneficial effects on local businesses within the study area arising from expenditure on goods and services by operational staff working on the proposed Development. This is expected to benefit local shops, food and drink businesses, and accommodation providers. Although the expenditure would be intermittent and is difficult to quantify, the benefit would be enhanced by the fact that operational workers would be there all year round, unlike tourism expenditure which tends to be seasonal.

Proposed Mitigation

223. No significant effects have been identified in respect of socio-economic receptors arising from operation of the proposed Development and therefore no mitigation measures are required to reduce or remedy any adverse effect.

Residual Effects

224. No residual adverse effects are expected.

Enhancement Measures

225. During the course of the EIA, design and public consultation activities undertaken for the proposed Development, the opportunity to propose a new walking route up to a viewpoint location at the summit of Cnoc nan Caorach at the northern edge of the Site was discussed and agreed with the landowner, Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS), and raised in a meeting with The Kintyre Way SCIO in January 2021.

226. The proposed walking route would form an extension to the Corranbuie Walking Trail (part of the core paths that connect Tarbert to Skipness, including C099(a), C099(c) and C099(d)), a circular route from Tarbert that is also part of The Kintyre Way. The area where the potential walking route is proposed includes areas of coniferous trees and areas of bare ground with low lying vegetation.

227. The proposed new walking route would be in the form of a gravel footpath suitable for pedestrian use only. Its appearance would be consistent with the Corranbuie Walking Trail adjacent to it and The Kintyre Way within the Site. Materials for the footpath construction would be sourced from the proposed Development construction and/or from the Site itself. The exact route of the footpath would be confirmed prior to its construction, taking account of topographical features such as steep slopes and environmental constraints. If areas of poor drainage are identified, alternative construction methods (e.g. a narrow wooden walkway or wooden footbridge, or re-routeing to avoid the poorly drained area) would be considered. It would form of a circular route to the south and, when combined with the existing Corranbuie Walking Trail, would form a figure of 8 shape in plan.

228. From the most southerly part of the proposed walking route, the viewpoint on the new path at the summit of Cnoc nan Caorach would have good views to the north to Tarbert and to the south to the proposed Development. The viewpoint location is currently on an exposed area of bedrock. The viewpoint is anticipated to take the form of two all-weather interpretation boards: one showing key features of the view north across Tarbert, with a second showing key features of the view south towards the proposed Development.

229. SPR has entered discussions with The Kintyre Way SCIO, custodians of The Kintyre Way, on the provision of a new walking bothy for recreational users of The Kintyre Way within the Site and has identified and discussed a location with the SCIO.

230. The new walking bothy is proposed at a location close to the southern extent of the Site, adjacent to The Kintyre Way. The location under discussion is at approximately NR 8920 6130. The location is currently an artificially flat area of grassland and has previously been the location of a picnic bench (no longer present). It is located approximately 4.2 km away from Skipness and 10.5 km away from Tarbert along The Kintyre Way.

231. The bothy would consist of a basic single room, single-storey building finished with local materials and in the vernacular architectural style of the local area.

232. The responsibility for installing and maintaining these features would lie with SPR, though SPR would likely choose to engage with locally-based third parties to provide both the construction and maintenance of them.

14.7.3.2 Land Use

233. The Site comprises commercial forest. Commercial forestry is not regarded as a receptor for EIA purposes. Effects of the proposed Development for felling, restocking and forest management practices, as are the approach to compensatory planting, are described in **Technical Appendix 15.1**. The Site will remain a commercial forested site, and the proposed Development will not influence the socio-economic status of the forestry.

234. The land-use is considered to be a medium sensitivity receptor as it is used by the public.

235. The proposed Development will not have any significant effects on land-use receptors in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

Proposed Mitigation

236. No significant effects have been identified in respect of land use receptors arising from operation of the proposed Development and therefore no mitigation measures are required to reduce or remedy any adverse effect.

Residual Effects

237. As no significant effects have been identified, and no mitigation is required, residual effects would remain as no greater than negligible (adverse) and are considered to be not significant.

14.8 Cumulative Assessment

238. There is potential for cumulative effects to arise with regard to a number of prospective or consented projects. Effects could be experienced by tourists and recreational users on long distance routes, in particular if sequential effects arise from the fact that users would see several windfarms from viewpoints along the route. The landscape and visual assessment has considered this potential effect in **Chapter 7** and has assessed the potential for cumulative effects and no significant effects have been identified. No other operational cumulative effects are expected. Further detail can be found in **Section 7.8** of **Chapter 7**.

14.9 Conclusions

239. This assessment has considered data from a diverse range of sources to determine the likely effects of the proposed Development on the local economy and land use, together with local effects on tourism and recreational assets. The potential effects on the economy and identified assets take account of embedded mitigation, such as good practice measures to be adopted. All of this has been considered in the context of current employment in and regeneration activities, land use, the proposed location of the wind farm and its relationship with recreational facilities and tourism attractors.

240. In addition, renewable energy and economic development policies for Scotland and Argyll and Bute Council are supportive of renewable energy developments within the council area.

241. No specific mitigation requirements have been identified and, therefore, residual effects of the proposed Development are effectively the same as the predicted effects. Predicted adverse and beneficial effects have been assessed as not significant during both the construction and operational phases.

242. The overall conclusion of this assessment is that the proposed Development will bring overall positive socio-economic impact to the Tarbert and Skipness area with no negative effects on the recreation or the tourism economy in the immediate area. This conclusion is based on the following key findings:

- the proposed Development would be located in an area of commercial forestry which would mean that there is no direct loss of local amenity from the development of the Site.
- any impacts on forestry have been considered fully in **Technical Appendix 15.1** with the conclusion that the proposed Development will bring positive environmental benefit and no economic loss through the removal of forestry and the introduction of new land management.
- the proposed Development will bring opportunities for local businesses through construction and into operation and economic opportunities through direct employment.

14.10 Statement of Significance

243. This assessment has considered data from a diverse range of sources to determine the likely effects of the proposed Development on the local economy and land use, together with local effects on tourism and recreational assets. The potential effects on the economy and identified assets take account of embedded mitigation, such as good practice measures to be adopted. No specific mitigation requirements have been identified and, therefore, residual effects of the proposed Development are effectively the same as the predicted impacts. Predicted adverse and beneficial effects have been assessed as **Not Significant** during both the construction and operation of the proposed Development.

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