

Harestanes West

Windfarm

**Environmental Impact Assessment
Report**

Volume 2

Chapter 6: Scoping and Consultation



Table of Contents

Abbreviations	3
6. Scoping and Consultation	4
6.1. Executive Summary	4
6.2. Introduction	4
6.3. Scoping	4
6.4. Further Consultation	6
6.5. Public Information Events (PIEs) and Community Consultation	7
6.6. Gatecheck	9
References	10

Abbreviations

BT	British Telecom
CC	Community Council
DIO	Defence Infrastructure Organisation
ECU	Energy Consents Unit
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
JRC	Joint Radio Company
PAN	Planning Advice Note
PAC	Pre-Application Consultation
PIE	Public Information Event
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency

6. Scoping and Consultation

6.1. Executive Summary

1. This Chapter sets out the consultation process that has been undertaken as part of the EIA for Harestanes West Windfarm (hereafter 'the proposed Development'). A formal request for EIA scoping was submitted by SPR (hereafter 'the Applicant') in March 2023.
2. In addition to the EIA consultation and consultation forming part of the scoping process, consultation was undertaken with the local communities in the form of Public Information Events (PIEs), which were held in June to July 2023, and September to October 2024.
3. A Gatecheck Report issued to the ECU on 21st August 2024. The report provides detail on how consultee scoping responses have been addressed by the EIA process and the design of the proposed Development. Responses to the Gatecheck Report were received from consultees in September and October 2024.

6.2. Introduction

4. This Chapter sets out the consultation process that has been undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed Development. It also details additional consultation that has been undertaken in respect of the proposed Development with consultees.
5. The purpose of undertaking scoping and consultation is to:
 - ensure that statutory consultees and other stakeholders with a particular interest in the environment, and the Site (the area within the Application Boundary), are informed of the proposed Development and provided with an opportunity to comment at an early stage in the EIA process;
 - obtain baseline information regarding existing environmental conditions of the Site
 - establish key environmental issues and identify potential effects to be considered during the EIA;
 - identify those issues which are likely to require more detailed study and those which can be justifiably excluded from further assessment; and
 - provide a means of confirming the most appropriate methods of assessment.

6.3. Scoping

6. An underlying principle of the EIA process is that it should concentrate on environmental issues where effects associated with a development proposal are likely to be significant. The proposed Development was subject to a detailed scoping exercise on March 2023, in order to determine issues that should be addressed in the EIA and the form individual assessments should take. The scoping exercise involved a review of available documentation related to the form and status of the existing environment; consultation with statutory and non-statutory stakeholders and other environmental bodies with knowledge of the Site and surrounding area; preliminary desk-based and site-based



appraisals and surveys; and knowledge of the potential environmental implications of comparable schemes (based on direct past project experience and other published experience and guidance).

7. The following considerations were factored into the scoping process:
 - the nature of the receiving environment and the type of operations associated with the proposed Development are such that environmental effects could arise during construction and operation of the proposed Development;
 - a review of the Site revealed ecological habitats, areas of peat and peatland habitats, and species of potential interest;
 - early liaison with stakeholders and consultation bodies (e.g. the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and NatureScot (then ‘SNH’), as required, to provide input into the EIA and site design process; and
 - consideration of cumulative effects that could potentially arise through interaction of the proposed Development with other existing or approved development projects nearby.
8. Following submission of the Scoping Report to the ECU, key consultees and stakeholders have been consulted and formed their Scoping Opinion.
9. The list of those organisations consulted, if they responded and the date of the response are shown in **Table 6.1**.

Table 6.1 Scoping Consultees

Consultee	Response Received	Date of Response
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Yes	3 May 2023
Historic Environment Scotland	Yes	16 May 2023
NatureScot	Yes	14 April 2023
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Yes	24 April 2023
Energy Consents Unit	Yes	3 September 2023
Ministry of Defence	Yes	5 May 2023
Nith District Salmon Fishery Board	Yes	29 April 2023
British Telecom (BT)	Yes	11 April 2023
NATS	Yes	12 April 2023
Glasgow Airport	Yes	18 April 2023
Glasgow Prestwick Airport	Yes	28 March 2023
Galloway Fisheries Trust	Yes	11 April 2023
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Yes	16 May 2023
Nuclear Safety Directorate (HSE) / Office for Nuclear Regulation	Yes	4 April 2023
Marine Scotland	Yes	28 March 2023
Scottish Water	Yes	31 March 2023
The Coal Authority	Yes	14 April 2023
Joint Radio Company (JRC)	Yes	29 March 2023
MET Office	Yes	29 March 2023
Scottish Forestry	Yes	17 April 2023
Closeburn Community Council (CC)	No	
Kirkmahoe CC	No	



Consultee	Response Received	Date of Response
Tinwald Parish CC	No	
Kirkmahoe CC	No	
Auldgirth and District CC	No	
Ae CC	No	
Johnstonebridge CC	No	
Lochmaben and District CC	No	
Keir CC	No	
Kirkmichael CC	No	
Transport Scotland	No	
Annan DSFB	No	
The British Horse Society Scotland	No	
Crown Estate Scotland	No	
Mountaineering Scotland	No	
Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)	No	
Scotways	No	
Fisheries Management Scotland	No	
John Muir Trust	No	
Scottish Wild Land Group	No	
Scottish Wildlife Trust	No	
Visit Scotland	No	
Woodland Trust	No	
West of Scotland Archaeology Service	No	
Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere	No	
Airwave (Motorola Solutions)	No	
Civil Aviation Authority	No	

10. A summary of the key issues raised during consultation is provided in **Technical Appendix 6.1**. The responses are detailed in the consultation tables contained within each relevant EIA Chapter (**Chapters 7 to 14**), with reference to how the comments have been addressed.

6.4. Further Consultation

11. Further consultation was undertaken throughout the EIA process with consultees in order to inform the design, baseline data-gathering and assessment activities, and to refine the scope of the survey and assessment. Noteworthy activities included the following:
- consultation with NatureScot regarding the scope of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (**Chapter 7**);
 - consultation with NatureScot regarding scope of landscape cumulative assessment and night-time assessment (**Chapter 7**);
 - consultation with NatureScot regarding scope of ecology surveys (**Chapter 8**);
 - consultation with NatureScot regarding scope of ornithology surveys (**Chapter 9**);
 - consultation with SEPA regarding opportunities for peatland habitat restoration (**Chapter 10**);
 - consultation with SEPA regarding opportunity for nature flood management measures (**Chapter 10**);
 - consultation with SEPA regarding further consultation in relation to Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems, groundwater abstractions;



- consultation with SEPA regarding scope of forest removal and waste;
- consultation with SEPA regarding the aim to source material within the Site;
- consultation with HES advising on the approach to be taken in relation to impacts on the setting of designated heritage assets (**Chapter 11**); and
- consultation with DGC to confirm the DGC would not be providing a response to the EIA Scoping consultation request from the ECU. They did in May 2024 however provide internal consultation responses from the Council's Archaeologist, Flood Risk Management Team Leader, Environmental Health Officer, and Roads Planning Team Leader.

6.5. Public Information Events (PIEs) and Community Consultation

12. Public consultation is a key element of the environmental assessment process and, as part of the wider consultation process, attention was given to community engagement, in cognisance of Planning Advice Note (PAN) 3/2010: Community Engagement (Scottish Government 2010).
13. The Applicant is committed to developing renewable energy responsibly and strive to be good neighbours in all aspects of their work. The Applicant is committed to Dumfries and Galloway and to maximising the opportunities for local communities to benefit from their projects. The public consultation activities undertaken for the proposed Development are described in a separate Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report that accompanies the application for consent.
14. Local community councils that have an administrative boundary within or adjacent to the Site were contacted during the EIA process. The Applicant's project development team has a long standing, existing relationship with the local community councils and informed the following Community Councils of the proposed Development, and upcoming first round of PIEs by email, in March 2023¹:
 - Closeburn CC;
 - Kirkmichael CC;
 - Tinwald Parish CC;
 - Kirkmahoe CC;
 - Auldgirth and District CC;
 - Ae CC;
 - Lochmaben and District CC; and
 - Keir CC.
15. An information leaflet was distributed to the 500 residences nearest to the turbine area, introducing the proposed Development and inviting the public to participate in upcoming

¹ Note Johnstonebridge CC's committee was not constituted at the time the consultation and public information days were arranged and delivered.



(PIE). Details of the PIEs were advertised locally in the Dumfries Courier, Annandale Herald, Moffat News, Annandale Observer and Galloway Gazette from Monday 12th to Friday 16th June 2023.

16. The first round of face-to-face Public Information Events (PIEs) were undertaken as follows:
 - Wednesday 21st June 2023 at Auldgirth Community Hall, DG2 0XG, 2.30pm – 7.30pm; and
 - Thursday 22nd June 2023 at Dalwinston Village Hall, DG2 0XY, 10.30am – 4.00pm.
17. Elected local councillors were contacted by the Applicant in advance of the events and were given the opportunity to attend each of the PIEs and meet members of the team. Information about the proposed Development and the public consultation arrangements were included on the Applicant's dedicated website for the proposed Development, alongside an online feedback form. Members of the public were given the opportunity to provide feedback via the online feedback form, email or letter up to 20th July 2023.
18. A total of 2 responses to the initial round of public consultation undertaken in June and July 2023 were received, as follows:
19. A total of 13 members of the public attended the first round of PIEs on 21st and 22nd June 2023.
20. According to website traffic, there were 6 'new visitors' over the period between June and July 2023 who visited the Harestanes West PIE website.
21. A second round of public consultation events providing an update on the progress of the proposed Development was undertaken in early September 2024 to early October 2024, with opportunities to find information via the Harestanes West Windfarm website.
22. For the second round, the Applicant increased the area and number of properties that received a leaflet. A total of 72 responses via post and email to the second round of public consultation undertaken in September and October 2024 were received.
23. A total of 44 members of the public attended the second round of PIEs on 10th and 11th September 2024.
24. According to website traffic, there were 173 visits to the Harestanes West PIE website, over the period between September and October 2024.
25. The feedback provided by the Community Councils and local residents highlighted several points which this EIA Report addresses, including:
 - community benefits;
 - access into the Site for recreation;
 - traffic disruption;
 - tourism impact;
 - noise disturbance;
 - water supplies;
 - landscape and visual impacts;



- ecological effects;
- population and human health;
- shadow flicker;
- aviation and low-flying aircraft;
- support for renewables; and
- need to tackle climate change.

6.6. Gatecheck

26. A Gatecheck Report was sent to the ECU on 4th September 2024. The report provided detail on how consultee scoping responses have been addressed by the EIA process and the design of the proposed Development.
27. Further details of the issues raised and the Applicant's response to each issue is provided as a tabulated summary in **Volume 4 Technical Appendix 6.1 - Consultation Matrix** of the EIA Report



References

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

The Electricity Act 1989.

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