

REASONS FOR REFUSAL

- Reason 1** The proposed development does not demonstrate: a satisfactory siting, scale and design and therefore would have significant adverse effects on the following special qualities of the South Lewis, Harris and North Uist National Scenic Area:
- A wild, mountainous character;
 - Intervisibility;
 - The close interplay of the natural world, settlement, and culture; and
- the following Wild Land Quality of the Harris - Uig Hills Wild Land Area:
- Awe-inspiring, towering, irregular, rocky mountains that adjoin low-lying peatland or the sea, offering panoramic views and possessing a strong sense of naturalness.
- There are no exceptional circumstances or imperative reasons of overriding public interest that would outweigh this harm, contrary to the provisions of Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan (OHLDP) - Policy PD1: Development Strategy (Remote Areas) and OHLDP Policy NBH1: Landscape and of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Policy: 4 – Natural places parts 4c) and 4g).
- Further, there is a clear absence of justification in relation to OHLDP Policy EI10: Communications Infrastructure parts a) and b) to prioritise the benefits of digital infrastructure provision over the protection of important landscape qualities and, the visual and amenity impacts of the proposed development have not been minimised through careful siting and design, contrary to OHLDP Policy EI10: Communications Infrastructure and NPF4 Policy 24: Digital Infrastructure.
- Reason 2** The proposed development does not sufficiently address the risk from the construction of the development and operation of the wind turbines in relation to the protected species, golden eagle, including impacts on their behaviour, potential for injury or mortality risk. It is thus considered the development is contrary to OHLDP Policy NBH2: Natural Heritage and of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Policy: 4 – Natural places part 4f).
- Reason 3** The proposed development does not sufficiently address the impact on built and cultural heritage from the construction of the development and operation of the telecommunications mast, wind turbines, and associated development, in relation to the known and unknown archaeological potential within the area, and its wider relevance within the cultural heritage of the Outer Hebrides. It is thus considered the development is contrary to NPF4 Policy 7 – Historic assets and places and OHLDP Policy NBH5: Archaeology.
- Reason 4** The proposed development has been subject to a Screening Opinion under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017, the conclusion of which is that the development is likely to result in significant adverse effects on landscape character, the special qualities of the South Lewis Harris and North Uist National Scenic Area; the wild land qualities of the Harris - Uig Hills Wild Land Area; and potentially significant effect on Golden Eagle, a Schedule 1, 1A and A1 protected bird under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; which determines that the development would be EIA Development. An EIA Report is therefore required to assess likely significant effects to address the requirements of the EIA Regulations.