

Planning Statement

Monan Repower

Client: Constantine Wind Energy (UK) Ltd

Reference: C5507-442

Version 2.0

March 2024



Planning Statement

Constantine Wind Energy (UK) Ltd | C5507-442 | Version 2.0



Report Prepared for:

Constantine Wind Energy (UK) Ltd

Author:

Green Cat Renewables Ltd

Checked by	Isla Ferguson	Date	06/03/2024
Approved by	Dale Hunter	Date	06/03/2024

Issue History	Date	Details
V1.0	06/03/2024	Client Draft
V2.0	20/03/2024	Submission

Table of Contents

1	Planning Statement	1
1.1	Introduction	1
1.1.1	Summary of Proposed Development	1
1.1.2	The Site	1
1.1.3	Site History	1
1.2	Renewable Energy Policy Context	2
1.3	The Development Plan	2
1.3.1	National Planning Framework 4	2
1.3.2	Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan 2018	3
1.3.3	Outer Hebrides Supplementary Guidance for Wind Energy Development	3
1.3.4	Appraisal of Compliance with the Development Plan	3
1.4	Other Material Considerations	8
1.4.1	Onshore Wind Policy Statement 2022	8
1.4.2	Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018 – 2032: Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero	8
1.4.3	Scottish Energy Strategy: The Future of Energy in Scotland	9
1.5	Conclusion	10

1 Planning Statement

1.1 Introduction

In terms of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, this statement sets out the Planning and Legislative Context with a summary of the Proposed Development in its context, a summary of the Development Plan, carries out an appraisal of whether the Proposed Development is in compliance with the Development Plan, and whether other material considerations indicate otherwise. The chapter concludes with a summary of the material considerations effecting the planning balance in order to assist Comhairle nan Eilean Siar in their assessment of the application.

1.1.1 Summary of Proposed Development

A full description of the Proposed Development can be found in **EIAR Chapter 2 - Proposed Development**.

1.1.2 The Site

A full description of the Site and its context can be found in **EIAR Chapter 1 - Introduction**.

1.1.3 Site History

The planning history of a site can be material in the determination of the application.

- Informal pre-application discussions were held with Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar Planning at an early stage of the project.
- A core part of the planning history for this Site is the consented and operational Monan Wind Farm that the Proposed Development is to repower. In 2008 consent was granted on the Monan Wind Farm Site for three wind turbines at a maximum tip height of 86m and associated infrastructure (06/00290). This consent was then varied in 2012 to reduce the height of the turbines to the height of the operational scheme due to turbine supply issues for the Site at this time. The established use of the Site for the proposed land use is considered material as part of the decision making process. This application seeks consent for turbines of a tip height consistent with the original 2008 consent.
- It is noted that further mapping searches of the site history have not been conducted due to the criminal cyber incident on the CnES website in late 2023¹. It is not anticipated that any site history will have any significant influence on the outcome of the planning balance for this Site.
- A formal Scoping Response was received from Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar on 21 December 2023 which received reference 23/00431_SCO_L. The advice received within the Scoping Response has been invaluable in compiling the EIA Report and planning application submission, including the consultation responses provided with the Scoping Response.

This planning history context has informed the design process for the Proposed Development.

¹ [Development Management Planning Permission](#) Accessed 14/02/2024

1.2 Renewable Energy Policy Context

The Climate Change Secretary, on behalf of the Scottish Government declared a global climate emergency in May 2019² and followed with an amendment to the Climate Change Bill. The declaration describes the update to be “...the most stringent legislative targets anywhere in the world...”.

Subsequent legislative, regulatory and policy updates from the Scottish Government have accelerated the push for tackling climate change. Two of the key elements to this are the targets within the Onshore Wind Policy Statement 2022 and policies within the National Planning Framework 4 (discussed in **Sections 1.3.1** and **Sections 1.4.1** below).

After the publication of the National Planning Framework 4, Scottish Renewables, the industry body for the renewables industry in Scotland, is quoted in a speech by Ministers in Parliament³ as saying Scotland has “probably...one of the most supportive planning regimes for renewables in the whole of Europe”.

This application is a direct response to that context.

1.3 The Development Plan

Section 25 of Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997⁴ requires that when “...making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination is, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, to be made in accordance with that plan.”

The Site is wholly within Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar and therefore the Development Plan in this instance consists of the National Planning Policy Framework 4 (NPF4)⁵, adopted February 2023, and the Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan (OHLDP)⁶, adopted 2018.

1.3.1 National Planning Framework 4

The fourth National Planning Framework was adopted by the Scottish Government on 13th February 2023. The NPF4 is in force at the time of the submission of this application and National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy are superseded.

NPF4 brings together the long-term spatial strategy with national planning policies as part of the statutory Development Plan. The framework contains six overarching spatial principles: just transition, conserving and recycling assets, local living, compact urban growth, rebalanced development and rural revitalisation. These principles will be key in achieving the goal of sustainable, livable and productive places.

Policy 1 of the report gives a clear direction by stating that significant weight should be given to tackling the climate and nature crises. This statement recognises the important role of the NPF4 in achieving the ambitious targets for climate change and sets out the significant shifts in policies that are required to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045. This is further developed by Policy 2 which promotes climate mitigation and adaptation.

The key policy for this development appears to be Policy 11 on Energy. Part ‘a’ highlights specific policy support for low-carbon and zero emissions technologies for wind farms including repowering, extending, expanding and extending the list of existing wind farms. The Proposed Development represents one of the supported repowering effects and this support is considered to be material in the planning balance. Part ‘e’ of the policy notes a range of factors which should be taken into account when considering development proposals for energy developments

² [The Global Climate Emergency - Scotland's Response: Climate Change Secretary Roseanna Cunningham's statement](#) Accessed 16/06/2023

³ [Fourth National Planning Framework: Planning Minister's speech - 11 January 2023](#) Accessed 16/06/2023

⁴ [Town and Country Planning \(Scotland\) Act 1997](#) – Accessed 27/11/2023

⁵ [National Planning Framework 4](#) Accessed 27/11/2023

⁶ [Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan](#) Accessed 27/11/2023

and concludes by noting that, in material terms, significant weight should be placed on the contribution that the Proposed Development makes to energy generation targets and greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

It is considered that NPF4 represents a sizeable shift in priorities and more weight will be given towards developments that will contribute towards carbon reduction targets within the planning system.

1.3.2 Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan 2018

The Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan, adopted in 2018 (OHLDP), is the established planning policy for Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar. The plan allows for ready identification of development proposals affecting individual settlements. The plan sets out a vision and objectives for the Western Isles for the next 10-20 years. The vision for the local development plan is;

“To encourage and facilitate sustainable economic growth and help build confident and resilient communities, the Plan will provide planning policy that delivers long term benefits to the communities of the Outer Hebrides by ensuring development contributes to the creation of well designed and attractive places, and that our natural, marine, and cultural resources are valued and utilised efficiently and sustainably.”

1.3.3 Outer Hebrides Supplementary Guidance for Wind Energy Development

The Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan: Supplementary Guidance for Wind Energy Development, adopted in 2021, accompanies the Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan and provides guidance to developers regarding the locations where the Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar deems it acceptable to locate large-scale wind development. It also provides policies that form the basis of the decision-making process that onshore wind applications will be assessed against. The Proposed Development has been appraised against these policies in .Table 1.1.

1.3.4 Appraisal of Compliance with the Development Plan

In order to determine whether the Proposed Development is in accordance with the Development Plan, the key policies, as identified in **Table 1.1 - Appraisal of Compliance** with the Development Plan, have been responded to individually on a site specific basis.

Table 1.1 - Appraisal of Compliance with the Development Plan

Topic	National Policy	Local Policy	Relevant Chapters	Appraisal
Carbon Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy 1: Tackling the climate and nature crises Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaptation Policy 11: Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy EI8: Energy and Heat Resources 	Chapter 5 Carbon Balance	<p>Following assessment, Chapter 5 Carbon Balance concludes that the Proposed Development will make a significant contribution to Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar’s low carbon energy production targets and decarbonisation targets, as well as contributing to the wider national target of achieving net zero by 2045.</p> <p>It is considered that this results in the Proposed Development receives significant material weight from NPF Policy 1 and 11.</p> <p>Policy EI 8 states ‘Comhairle will not support wind farm developments in Areas Unacceptable for Wind Farms’. The Proposed Development is located in one of these areas, however, as the Proposed Development is a repowering of existing turbines, the precedent for wind energy development on the Site is already established, therefore invalidating this element of Policy EI 8. It is therefore deemed that the Proposed Development receives material weight from Policy EI 8.</p>
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy 4: Natural Places Policy 11: Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy DS1: Development Strategy Policy NBH1: Landscape Policy EI 8: Energy and Heat Resources 	Chapter 6 Landscape and Visuals Impact Assessment	<p>NPF4 Policy 4 provides protections against unacceptable impacts on the natural environment, including specific protections for European sites, and along with NPF4 Policy 11, National Parks, National Scenic Areas, National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. OHLDP Policies DS1 requires developments to positively integrate with the surrounding landscape and achieve a sympathetic fit and that the capacity of the landscape to accommodate the development will be considered. OHLDP NBH1 requires developments are designed around the specific landscape and visual characteristics of the area and that overall landscape character integrity is maintained. Policies EI8 requires that there are no significant adverse impacts including cumulatively on landscapes.</p> <p>The application submission is accompanied by a comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment contained within Chapter 6 of the EIA Report. The chapter concludes that even through the Proposed Development consists of larger wind turbines than the existing Monan Wind Farm, the impact on the landscape would not be sufficient to significantly alter the existing landscape. Common screening from the changing topography would reduce the vertical prominence of the Proposed Development. While the Proposed Development is within both a National</p>

Planning Statement

Constantine Wind Energy (UK) Ltd | C5507-442 | Version 2.0

				<p>Scenic Area and a Wild Land Area, its presence is not sufficient to significantly alter the quality, character or setting of these designed landscapes.</p> <p>It is considered therefore that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the landscape aspects of the policies noted.</p>
<p>Hydrology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policy 5: Soils ● Policy 22: Flood risk and water management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policy E11: Flooding ● Policy E13: Water Environment ● Policy E15: Soils ● Policy E18: Energy and Heat Resources 	<p>Chapter 7 Hydrology</p>	<p>NPF4 Policy 5 seeks to minimise disturbance to soils from development and Policy 22 seeks to strengthen resilience to flood risk by promoting avoidance as a first principle and reducing the vulnerability of existing and future development to flooding. OHLDP Policies E11 seeks to ensure that development is safeguarded from flooding and also does not contribute towards flooding of other receptors. Policies E13 seeks to ensure that development does not conflict with or compromise water environments and habitats. E18 requires there are no significant adverse impacts including on hydrology features.</p> <p>Chapter 7 of the EIA Report considers Hydrology and Hydrogeology. It includes a desk-based study and site walkover to establish the baseline hydrological environment of the Site, where potential impacts from the Proposed Development were identified.</p> <p>It is anticipated that careful design of the Site layout, and the implementation of the mitigation methods proposed, will ensure that any potential risks identified are avoided and the associated risk is reduced to acceptable levels.</p>
<p>Ecology & Ornithology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policy 1: Tackling the climate and nature crises ● Policy 3: Biodiversity ● Policy 4: Natural Places ● Policy 5: Soils ● Policy 11: Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policy NBH2: Natural Heritage ● Policy E18: Energy and Heat Resources 	<p>Chapter 8 Ecology, Chapter 9 Ornithology</p>	<p>Chapter 8 of the EIA Report considers Ecology. The chapter concludes that no significant adverse effects in EIA terms are considered to occur to habitats and protected species.</p> <p>Chapter 9 of the EIA Report considers Ornithological interests. No significant adverse effects in EIA terms are considered to occur to the golden eagles surveyed for this Proposed Development. The predicted residual levels of significance of effects during the construction, operational and decommissioning stages of the proposed development are considered to be no more than of minor adverse and therefore not significant. Therefore, based on the data generated from the surveys this assessment does not predict any likely significant ornithological residual effects associated with the Proposed Development.</p> <p>Following the application of mitigation, such as habitat management plans, species protection plans and standard working methods and good practice measures, such</p>

Planning Statement

Constantine Wind Energy (UK) Ltd | C5507-442 | Version 2.0

				as a CEMP and pollution prevention measures, no significant residual effects are predicted. Therefore, embedded mitigation has been proposed to ensure the low significance of effects during the construction phase and to reduce the likelihood of legal offences and comply with good practice. The assessment does not predict any likely significant ecological residual effects associated with the Proposed Development and as such is considered to comply with the policies in the Development Plan.
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy 11: Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy EI11: Safeguarding Policy EI8: Energy and Heat Resources 	Chapter 10 Telecommunications and Infrastructure, and Chapter 12 Other Issues (Decommissioning, Aviation, Safety)	<p>Policy 11 seeks to ensure that the potential impacts of renewable energy development on aviation and defence interests, and other infrastructure. OHLDP EI11 seeks to ensure that relevant safeguarding and consultation zones are adhered to. EI8 seeks to ensure that there are no significant adverse impacts on infrastructure features.</p> <p>The application is accompanied by an assessment of the potential impacts of the development on surrounding infrastructure features within Chapter 10 Telecommunications of the EIA Report. This chapter concludes that the Proposed Development is not anticipated to have any significant or unacceptable impacts. An assessment of potential impacts of the development on aviation and radar features. This chapter concludes that an objection from NATS or Highlands and Islands Airports is not anticipated. The MoD was consulted prior to the submission of this application, to appease their consultation response the turbines will be fitted with MoD approved 25cd infra-red lighting. The only other aspect raised by the MoD was the possibility of low-flying training in the area, however, as the area in which the turbines are located is designated as a Low Priority Low Flying Zone this is not anticipated to be of such concern to the MoD that it prompts an objection.</p> <p>It is considered therefore that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the aviation, radar and infrastructure aspects of the policies noted.</p>
Traffic & Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy 11: Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy EI8: Energy and Heat Resources 	Chapter 11 Traffic & Transport	Following assessment, Chapter 11 Traffic and Transport demonstrates that the abnormal route identified allows for turbine components to be delivered safely and with a no significant impacts to other road users.
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy 7: Historic assets and places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy NBH4: Built Heritage 	N/A	Following preapplication discussions with CnES, it was agreed that Cultural Heritage and Archaeology could be Scoped Out of the EIA Report because the previous application dealt with the necessary on-site archaeological mitigation. Additionally,

Planning Statement

Constantine Wind Energy (UK) Ltd | C5507-442 | Version 2.0

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy 11: Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy NBH5: Archaeology Policy NBH6: Historic Areas Policy EI8: Energy and Heat Resources 		<p>it was highlighted that additional visibility would be minimal and it was advised that there would be no archaeological issues with the Site. The Proposed Development is therefore considered to comply with the Development Plan on this basis.</p>
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy 11: Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy PD1: Placemaking and Design Policy EI8: Energy and Heat Resources 	Chapter 2, Proposed Development and Design Evolution	<p>The design process of the Proposed Development has had four key iterations. These iterations have taken into consideration environmental constraints, results from environmental baseline surveys, scoping responses from consultees, knowledge from the operational wind farm and input from turbine manufacturers for the new replacement turbines.</p>
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy 23: Health and Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy PD6: Compatibility of Neighbouring Uses 	N/A	<p>Due to the lack of third party turbines, lack of third party receptors and the lower sound level of the candidate turbine for the Proposed Development, construction phase, operational, and cumulative noise assessments were all scoped out of the EIAR during scoping (23/00431/SCO_L). This was agreed upon by the Comhairle’s Environmental Health Officer.</p>

Further to the above, it is considered that the Proposed Development is in compliance with all relevant Development Plan policies and therefore should gain material support in the planning balance.

1.4 Other Material Considerations

Outside of the Development Plan, other material considerations exist which influence the outcome of planning application assessments. These generally take the form of national policy documents specific to the development under consideration, for example, the Onshore Wind Policy Statement.

1.4.1 Onshore Wind Policy Statement 2022

The Scottish Government published an updated version of the Onshore Wind Energy Statement (OWPS) in December 2022.

The document highlights that Scotland has approximately 8.4GW of installed capacity of onshore wind. The new target for deployment by the year 2030, is for 12GW of additional onshore wind deployment.

The target for the rapid deployment of additional onshore wind developments provides further material weight in favour of planning applications for onshore wind development.

The OWPS includes in section 5.3 that there will be opportunities for the repowering of existing wind farms, and this Proposed Development is one of those opportunities and material policy support is anticipated from this. It notes the significant support in Scotland for replacement of old turbines with new ones once they reach the end of the lifespan.

The statement is progressing towards publishing a 'sector deal' for onshore wind amongst other actions being taken by the Scottish Government to encourage deployment. In order to meet these ambitious targets, new proposals will need to shift towards utilising the larger turbine typologies that are emerging with the evolution of onshore wind technology. That Onshore Wind Sector Deal was published by the Scottish Government on 21 September 2023 and illustrates the Scottish Government's ambition for the deployment of onshore wind.

1.4.2 Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018 – 2032: Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero

The Scottish Government published the update to the Climate Change Plan on 16th December 2020, as a revision to the 2018 Climate Change Plan. The COVID-19 pandemic has had profound impacts across various sectors, creating social, public health, and economic challenges. In the wake of this, the Scottish Government have revised the Climate Change Plan Update (CCPu) to commit to a 'green recovery' from COVID-19, setting out a resurgence from the pandemic that will capture the considerable economic opportunities created in Scotland's path to net zero. The transition to a greener economy can create green jobs and upskilling within the renewable energy industry. This would rebuild a more sustainable economy that would support Scotland's recovery from a global pandemic, whilst tackling the ongoing climate change emergency.

In an update to the 2018 Climate Change Plan, the CCPu sets out more ambitious targets to reduce emissions by 75% by 2030 and to achieve net zero by 2045. Delivery of these targets will depend on the successful development of a coordinated approach across the entire energy system. Bringing different sectors of Scotland's energy system closer together will ensure that the strategy for the delivery of decarbonisation has fully considered the impacts and requirements of each sector.

The document identifies the importance of onshore wind in the green recovery, as one of the lowest cost forms of power generation available, indicating that the industry must focus on harnessing Scotland's potential and make the most of our vast wind resources. The CCPu states:

“We need to see adoption of electricity-based solutions, for example in heat and transport, taking advantage of the large potential for growth of onshore and offshore wind capacity in Scotland”.

In support of onshore wind, the Scottish Government have promised to review the energy consenting process and quicken the determination process, which will benefit future wind energy proposals. The Plan states:

“We will continue to review our energy consenting processes, making further improvements and efficiencies where possible, and seeking to reduce determination timescales for complex electricity generation and network infrastructure applications. Faster determinations will enable any projects awarded consent to develop more quickly, which will benefit onshore wind in particular.”

The Scottish Government are evidently encouraging of new wind energy proposals that can support the economy’s green recovery and contribute towards achieving net zero, subject to the suitability of the proposed scheme.

1.4.3 Scottish Energy Strategy: The Future of Energy in Scotland

The Scottish Energy Strategy, which was published in December 2017, sets out the Scottish Government’s vision for the future energy system to 2050. It is noted that an update to this strategy is being prepared by the Scottish Government and a future version may supersede this. The updated document is anticipated to consider the Just Transition.

The 2017 Strategy outlines the commitment from the Scottish Government to the continued growth of the renewable energy sector in Scotland, identifying the sector as a key driver of economic growth and an essential feature of the future energy system. The vision of the strategy is guided by three core principles:

- A whole system view;
- An inclusive energy transition; and
- A smarter local energy model.

The vision for the future of energy in Scotland takes a whole system approach, setting a target of 50% of the energy for Scotland’s heat, transport and electricity consumption to be supplied from renewable sources, as well as an increase in 30% in the productivity of energy use across the Scottish economy to be achieved by 2030.

With the drive to decarbonise the heat and transport sectors, electricity will have a major role to play as the country looks to electric/hybrid vehicles and innovative solutions to heat demand, removing the dependency on fossil fuel heating systems.

To achieve the 50% interim targets, the vision outlines the need for a considerably higher market penetration of renewable electricity than today – requiring in the region of 17 GW of installed capacity in 2030 (compared to 9.5 GW in June 2017)⁶.

The vision outlines the importance of onshore wind, indicating that the Scottish Government are supportive of new development. The vision states:

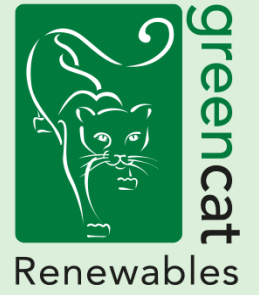
“Our energy and climate change goals mean that onshore wind must continue to play a vital role in Scotland’s future – helping to decarbonise our electricity, heat and transport systems, boosting our economy, and meeting local and national demand.”

It is clear that onshore wind will continue to play a vital role in the future energy mix and that the Scottish Government are supportive of new development, subject to appropriate assessment to demonstrate the suitability of the proposal.

⁶ Scottish energy Strategy Page 37.

1.5 Conclusion

The appraisals in this chapter conclude that the Proposed Development is in compliance with key Development Plan policies and with the Development Plan as a whole. Other material considerations add material weight to the planning balance in favour of the Proposed Development. As such, subject to the imposition of appropriate



Registered Office

Green Cat Renewables
Stobo House
Roslin
Midlothian
EH25 9RE

+44 (0) 131 541 0060

info@greencatrenewables.co.uk
www.greencatrenewables.co.uk