MUIR MHÒR
OFFSHORE WIND FARM

A joint venture between Fred. Olsen Seawind & Vattenfall

Onshore Pre-Application Consultation Report

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Contents

1. introduction 4

1.1. Introduction 4
1.2. Applications and Consents 4
1.3. Proposal of Application Notice 5
1.4. The Applicant & Muir Mhor Offshore Wind Farm 5
1.5. The Proposed Development & Development Zones 5
1.6. This Pre-Application Consultation Report 6

2. Legislative & Regulatory Requirements 8

2.1. Introduction 8
2.2. Legislative Requirements 8
2.3. Regulatory Requirements 8
2.4. Meeting Legislative and Regulatory Requirements 9

3. Approach to Pre-Application Community Consultation 12

3.1. Introduction 12
3.2. Means of Engagement 12
3.3. Raising Awareness 13
3.4. Processing Responses And Correspondence 14
3.5. Approach To Analysis 14

4. Informal Rounds of Consultation 15

4.1. Introduction 15
4.2. Round 1 Community Consultation 15
4.3. Round 2 Community Consultation 17
4.4. Round 3 Community Consultation 19
4.5. Summary 20

5. Formal Rounds of Consultation 22

5.1. Introduction 22
5.2. Round 4 Community Consultation (1st Formal Event) 22
5.3. Round 5 Community Consultation (2nd Formal Event) 23
5.4. Round 6 Community Consultation (3rd Formal Event) 24
5.5. Summary 25

6. Applicant's Reponse to Views Raised 27

6.1. Introduction 27
6.2. The Applicant's Response to Views Raised 27

7. Summary 31

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.1. This Onshore Pre-Application Consultation Report (this "PACR") has been prepared by Young Planning & Energy Consenting Ltd on behalf of Muir Mhòr Offshore Wind Farm Ltd ("the Applicant"). It supports an application for planning permission in principle (PPP) submitted to Aberdeenshire Council in respect of onshore electricity transmission works (OnTW) and associated development, as part of the Muir Mhòr Offshore Wind Farm.

1.1.2. The description of development is: "Application for planning permission in principle for electricity transmission infrastructure and associated development" (the Proposed Development", described in detail at Section 2 of this Statement), at land between Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) at Lunderton Bay and the site of a new Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) substation, known as the Netherton Hub, to the east of Longside ("the Site")."

1.1.3. Collectively, the onshore and offshore elements of the Muir Mhòr Offshore Wind Farm (i.e. the Muir Mhòr Offshore Wind Farm as a whole), are referred to as "the Project" throughout the remainder of this PACR.

1.2. APPLICATIONS AND CONSENTS

1.2.1. The Proposed Development relates to those parts of the Muir Mhòr Offshore Wind Farm which are landward of MLWS, including the intertidal area (i.e. the "onshore" element of the Project). An application is therefore required to be made to Aberdeenshire Council for the onshore works pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 ("the 1997 Act").

1.2.2. The remainder of the Muir Mhòr Offshore Wind Farm, i.e., the "offshore" elements seaward of Mean High-Water Springs (MHWS), is the subject of parallel submissions to the Marine Directorate, and which require the submission of applications for Marine licences pursuant to the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, and consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (collectively, "the offshore applications"). The offshore applications are accompanied by a separate Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) "the offshore EIAR", covering the offshore and intertidal elements of the Project.

1.2.3. Given that the inter-tidal area between MLWS and MHWS is within the parameters of both onshore and offshore consenting regimes, an area of overlap exists in both consenting and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) terms.

1.2.4. This PACR focusses upon the Applicant's pre-application community consultation as it relates to the Proposed Development, and the associated legislative requirements established in the 1997 Act. A separate offshore Pre-Application Report supports the offshore applications and considers matters of relevance to those applications; it is contained at Volume 4, Appendix 1 of the offshore EIAR and is referenced throughout the remainder of this PACR as "the offshore PACR".

1.3. PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE

1.3.1. National Planning Framework 4's (NPF4) national development number 3 affords national development status to the Proposed Development, for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

1.3.2. As required in respect of national developments and pursuant to section 35B of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 the Applicant submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) (ref: ENQ/2024/0953, submitted 1 July 2024) and community consultation was subsequently undertaken as agreed with Aberdeenshire Council through that PoAN process. A copy of the PoAN documentation submitted by the Applicant is attached at Appendix 1.

1.3.3. Aberdeenshire Council accepted the PoAN, including the proposed scope of community consultation, in correspondence dated 10 July 2024.

1.3.4. Muir Mhòr's OnTW had been the subject of a previous PoAN, reference ENQ/2023/1286 ("the original PoAN"), which was superseded by the aforementioned PoAN following amendments to the site boundary.

1.4. THE APPLICANT & MUIR MHOR OFFSHORE WIND FARM

THE APPLICANT

1.4.1. The Applicant is an equal joint venture between Fred. Olsen Seawind Limited and Vattenfall Wind Power Limited. The Applicant brings together a unique combination of financial, technical and project development capability, a commitment to delivery, and a clear vision for the Project.

SCOTWIND LEASING PROCESS

1.4.2. As part of the Crown Estate Scotland ScotWind Leasing process in January 2022, the Applicant was identified as the successful bidder and awarded an Option Agreement, granting exclusive rights to develop the Project, located within the E2 Plan Option area. The Muir Mhòr Offshore Wind Farm array area covers an area of approximately 200 square kilometres and is located approximately 63 kilometres east of Peterhead on the east coast of Scotland. The Project is anticipated to have a generation capacity of approximately 1 Gigawatt using floating offshore wind technology.

1.5. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT & DEVELOPMENT ZONES

1.5.1. The Proposed Development and associated Proposed Development Zones are described in detail in Chapter 4 of the accompanying Onshore Environmental Impact Assessment Report ("the onshore EIAR") and are summarised at Section 2 of the accompanying onshore Planning Statement ("the OPS"). For ease of reference a brief summary of the Proposed Development and Proposed Development Zones, are provided below:

- The OnTW:
  - a new onshore substation, including:
    - Substation buildings and/or external substation equipment;

    - External plant and equipment;
    - Welfare facilities;
    - Parking and turning areas;
    - Internal access roads;
    - Security features including CCTV, fences and gates;
  - Landfall works;
  - Onshore cables and cable ducts within a cable corridor between the landfall and the new onshore substation, and between the new onshore substation and the new SSE Networks Netherton Hub;
- Associated infrastructure, including:
  - Permanent or temporary drainage infrastructure;
  - Landscaping;
  - New and upgraded access roads (permanent or temporary);
  - Re-profiled land; and
  - Construction compounds, laydown areas and other temporary facilities and features required for construction purposes.

1.5.2. The Applicant has identified four indicative "Development Zones" within which the Proposed Development will be located:

- The Landfall Zone;
- Cable Zone A, between landfall and the onshore substation;
- The Substation Zone; and
- Cable Zone B, between the onshore substation and the SSEN Netherton Hub.

1.5.3. Development parameters which underpin this application for PPP cover a realistic maximum form of development and form the basis of the assessment of the Proposed Development within the onshore EIAR.

1.5.4. The PPP approach retains flexibility of the phasing of the delivery of the Proposed Development, as well as the exact boundaries of the Development Zones. It is proposed that both phasing and development zones are the subject of planning conditions to be addressed at Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSC) stage, as described throughout the OPS.

1.6. THIS PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION REPORT

1.6.1. This PACR demonstrates compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, as well as documenting the Applicant's comprehensive approach to pre-application community consultation.

1.6.2. This PACR comprises:

- This introductory section;
- Section 2: Legislative and Regulatory Requirements – an overview of relevant requirements and signposting of locations within this PACR where it is demonstrated that each requirement has been met;
- Section 3: Approach to Pre-Application Community Consultation;
- Section 4: "Informal" Rounds of Consultation;
- Section 5: "Formal" Rounds of Consultation;

- Section 6: Applicant's Response to Views Raised; and
- Section 7: Summary

1.6.3. This PACR also includes a series of Appendices, many of which comprise copies of documents referenced throughout this PACR.

1.6.4. This PACR will demonstrate that the Applicant's programme of pre-application community consultation meets the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements. In doing so, the PACR followed the principles of Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Advice PA2023-15: SP=EED.

2. LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

2.1. INTRODUCTION

2.1.1. This Section documents the legislative and regulatory requirements which underpin the Applicant's approach to community consultation. It concludes by summarising such requirements and the location within this PACR where it is demonstrated that each requirement has been addressed.

2.2. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

2.2.1. Given the national development status afforded to the Proposed Development (as referenced in Section 1.3 of this PACR), the provisions of Sections 35A, 35B and 35C of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 apply, as enacted by Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 ("the 2013 Regulations") (as amended):

- Section 35A defines the process for determining whether a statutory requirement to undertake pre-application community consultation exists;
- Section 35B establishes specific requirements around pre-application consultation;
  - Part (ii) requires a Proposal of Application Notice to be submitted;
  - Part (iii) requires a period of between 12 weeks and 18 months to have elapsed between PoAN submission and the submission of an associated planning application;
  - Part (iv) prescribes the form at PoAN must take;
  - Parts (v) and (vi) allows Regulations to define further details around PoANs; and
  - Parts (vii) and (viii) provides planning authorities control over the scope of consultation to be undertaken and prescribes how that should be determined.
- Section 35C requires a Pre-Application Consultation Report alongside applications for development where there is a statutory requirement to undertake pre-application community consultation.

2.3. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

2.3.1. Scottish Government Planning Circular 3/2022: Development Management Procedures ("Circular 3/2022") provides guidance on the implementation of legislative measures through the 2013 Regulations, incorporating amendments required through the incorporation of relevant elements of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.

2.3.2. The following Regulations, which comprise Part 2 of the 2013 Regulations, are relevant to the scope of this PACR:

- Regulation 4 prescribes that Section 35A of the 1997 Act applies to developments including those belonging to the category of national developments;
- Regulation 4A establishes the characteristics of development within the categories of Regulation 4, but to which the Section 35A requirement does not apply;
- Regulation 5 details the required content of pre-application consultation "screening" requests;
- Regulation 6 supplements Section 35B(4) in specifying information to be provided in a PoAN;

- Regulation 7 establishes specific requirements in terms of the form pre-application consultation should take, including:
  - Part (1) requires consultation with every Community Council whose area is within or adjoins land where a development is located;
  - Part (2) requires a prospective applicant to:
    - (a) hold at least two public events where members of the public may make comments;
    - (b) publish details of such events in a local newspaper;
  - Part (2A) prescribes information to be included with the notices prescribed at (2)(b);
  - Part (3) requires at least seven days between the notice prescribed at (2)(b) and the advertised event, and at least 14 days between the two events prescribed at (2)(a);
  - Part (4) requires, at the final event, the Applicant to feedback on comments received during previous events.
- Regulation 7A relates to the relaxation of pre-application consultation requirement during the Coronavirus emergency period; and
- Regulation 7B specifies the required content of a Pre-Application Consultation Report pursuant to Section 35C, including:
  - Part (a): details of public events, including time and location;
  - Part (b): details of any additional means of consultation adopted by prospective applicants;
  - Part (c): details of organisations consulted;
  - Part (d): evidence of details prescribed in (a) to (c);
  - Part (e): copies of relevant materials;
  - Part (f): photographs of materials displayed at events;
  - Part (g): confirmation that attendees were informed of the status of any comments they provide;
  - Part (i): a summary of written responses and views raised at events;
  - Part (j): an explanation of how the prospective applicant took account of views raised; and
  - Part (k): an explanation of how members of the public were informed of the prospective applicant's consideration of their views.

2.4. MEETING LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

2.4.1. Table 2-1 documents how the relevant regulatory requirements were met and/or identifies the locations within this PACR where the required information is provided.

Table 2-1 Meeting Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

Subject matter	Legislation (all sections relate to 1997 Act)	Regulation (all regulations relate to 2013 Regulations)	Comment	Relevant section of PACR
Relevant Developments	Section 35A	Regulation 4	Proposed development is national development and statutory pre-application consultation requirements apply	From Paragraph 1.3.1

Subject matter	Legislation (all sections relate to 1997 Act)	Regulation (all regulations relate to 2013 Regulations)	Comment	Relevant section of PACR
PoANs	Section 35B	Regulation 6	A PoAN was submitted on 1 July, more than 12 weeks prior to submission of this application, but less than 18 months prior. The PoAN contains the requirement information. Aberdeenshire Council accepted the proposed form of consultation	Discussed from Paragraph 1.3.2, appended at Appendix 1
		Regulation 7(1)	All Aberdeenshire Community Councils were invited to all events	Defined at Paragraph 4.2.11
		Regulations 7(2)(a), (3)	Three public events were held, all at least 14 days apart	Within Section 5
		Regulations 7(2)(b), (2A)	Details of events were published in local newspapers and took the prescribed form	Within Section 5 and appended at Appendices 8, 10 and 12
		Regulation 7(4)	The Applicant fed back on comments raised at previous events	Described within Section 5.3 and evidenced within Appendix 11
PACR	Section 35C	Regulation 7B(a)	PACR includes required details	Paragraphs 5.2.1, 5.3.1, 5.4.1
		Regulation 7B(b)		Sections 3.2 and 3.3
		Regulation 7B(c)		Defined at Paragraph 4.2.11
		Regulation 7B(d)		Throughout appendices
		Regulation 7B(e)		Appendices 9, 11 and 13
		Regulation 7B(f)		Appendix 14
		Regulation 7B(g)		Paragraph 5.2.9, evidenced at Appendices 9, 11 and 13
		Regulation 7B(i)		Section 6
		Regulation 7B(j)		Paragraph 7.1.5
		Regulation 7B(k)		Appendices 9, 11 and 13

2.4.2. The following are not considered further within this PACR, either as a result of not being relevant to the Proposed Development, or as a result of the Applicant adopting an approach which does not require their consideration:

- Section 35B(v) and (vi) – relates to pre-application consultation "screening", which isnt relevant since the Applicant knew Section 35A applies to the Proposed Development;
- Regulation 4A – the Proposed Development is not exempt from Regulation 4 requirements and therefore Regulation 4A is not relevant;
- Regulation 5 – also relates to pre-application screening, and therefore is not relevant; and
- Regulation 7A – relates to measures during Coronavirus, which no longer apply.

2.4.3. The Applicant confirms compliance with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, referenced above, and as documented throughout this PACR.

2.4.4. In addition, in terms of the various criteria prescribed in SP=EED:

- Transparency and integrity – opportunities for engagement were clearly explained and feedback was analysed following the completion of each round of community consultation;
- Co-ordination – timetables for engagement included adequate periods for events and the provision of feedback;
- Information – information was communicated and shared with stakeholder, inviting feedback;
- Appropriateness – engagement processes were appropriate to the Proposed Development and the local area, with members of the multi-disciplinary project team always on hand to discuss the Proposed Development;
- Responsiveness – findings from the engagement process were analysed, disseminated and, where appropriate, incorporated into the Proposed Development;
- Inclusiveness – relevant stakeholder groups were identified, and an emphasis was placed upon obtaining feedback from seldom heard groups, for example the Applicant's engagement in the STEM process; and
- Monitoring and evaluating – Feedback was received and, where relevant, informed the arrangement of future consultation exercises.

3. APPROACH TO PRE-APPLICATION COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

3.1. INTRODUCTION

3.1.1. This Section summarises the Applicant's approach to pre-application community consultation, documenting the various means of engagement and the role of community consultation within the wider development process.

3.1.2. As well as the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, the Applicant committed to delivering on the principle of effective engagement prescribed by Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Advice PA2023-15: SP=EED.

3.2. MEANS OF ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION EVENTS

3.2.1. The focus of pre-application engagement with local communities were a series of "drop-in" consultation events, held before and after the submission of the PoAN.

A total of eight days events were held across six "rounds" of consultation, summarised in Table 3-1 below:

Table 3-1: Summary of Public Consultation Events

Date	Venue	Attendance Number	Feedback Received
Event Round 1			
Wednesday 15th November 2023 1pm – 7pm	Peterhead Football Club	72	16
Thursday 16th November 2023 2pm – 7pm	Longside Parish Church Hall		
Event Round 2			
Tuesday 26th March 2024 2pm – 7pm	Peterhead Football Club	93	13
Wednesday 27th March 2024 2pm – 7pm	Longside Parish Church Hall		
Event Round 3			
Wednesday 5th June 2024 2pm – 7pm	Longside Football Club	63	11
Event Round 4			
Wednesday 11th September 2024 2pm – 7pm	Longside Parish Church Hall	31	9
Event Round 5			
Wednesday 25th September 2024 2pm – 7pm	Peterhead Football Club	43	3
Event Round 6			
Wednesday 23rd October 2024 3pm – 7pm	Longside Parish Church Hall	21	1

3.2.2. The PoAN was submitted on 1st of July 2024, between Rounds 3 and 4. For the remainder of this PACR, for ease of reference and the purpose of demonstrating legislative and regulatory compliance, community consultation undertaken prior to the submission of the PoAN is

referred to as “informal” consultation, with community consultation undertaken after the submission of the PoAN as “formal” consultation. For the avoidance of doubt, whilst the latter is relevant in demonstrating legislative and regulatory compliance, the Applicant considers all rounds of consultation to have been of equal importance and does not differentiate between informal and formal consultation in terms of how feedback has been sought, collated, reviewed and acted upon.

3.2.3. Informal consultation was undertaken pursuant to the original PoAN, which was superseded by the PoAN following changes to the associated site boundary.

OTHER MEANS

3.2.4. In addition to the physical drop-in events, several forms of print and electronic media were utilised:

- A project website (https://muirmhor.co.uk/) and corresponding mailbox (feedback@muirmhor.co.uk) was set up so stakeholders and other members of the community can access information and reports relating to the Project, as well as contact information for feedback throughout the whole process;
- Press releases and newsletters have kept stakeholders updated on the Project. A total of 13 press releases are available on the website (https://muirmhor.co.uk/news/) and three newsletters/ leaflets (https://muirmhor.co.uk/document-library/);
- In addition to the notices required to publicise events, further content notifying the public of consultation events were included in local newspapers;
- Events were promoted through non-paid posts on the Developer’s sponsored Facebook page (Annex 6D), as well as a sponsored (paid) LinkedIn campaign; and
- The Applicant also sent emails to multiple organisations, affected stakeholders, councillors, Community Councils, MSPs and MPs about the events. The Developer also invited local community members who had signed up to the Project’s mailing list.

3.3. RAISING AWARENESS

3.3.1. The Applicant hosts a specific website as a platform for raising awareness of the Project, including the Proposed Development, and for sharing of information and contact details (https://muirmhor.co.uk/). The website is actively maintained to provide updates, and information on lead team members, community consultation events, virtual exhibition rooms, and supply chain information.

3.3.2. Email addresses for general inquiries (info@muirmhor.co.uk), supply chain registration (supplychain@muirmhor.co.uk), and consents enquiries (consents@muirmhor.co.uk) are provided on the website.

3.3.3. The website also includes a publicly accessible document library, currently including newsletters, submitted licence application documentation, and notices, https://muirmhor.co.uk/document-library. That document library also hosts a digital version of key documents and will host copies of documentation supporting this application for PPP.

3.3.4. An extensive opt in/opt out mailing list also exists to further raise awareness of key milestones, Project updates and upcoming consultation events.

3.4. PROCESSING RESPONSES AND CORRESPONDENCE

3.4.1. All consultation responses were logged and recorded by the Applicant. When given by respondents, contact details were recorded and added to the communication database so they could receive updates via email (if respondents agreed to receive regular updates). The Applicant individually assessed all feedback and correspondence, and, where requested, provided further information to assist the respondent.

3.5. APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

3.5.1. The Applicant's approach was to analyse and report response data in a way that allowed the views raised to be easily understood.

3.5.2. All comments, queries and concerns were considered, allocating them to existing issues or identifying them as a new issue. The Applicant's approach enabled the identification of consultees' main issues classified by theme.

4. INFORMAL ROUNDS OF CONSULTATION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

4.1.1. This Section details community consultation undertaken by the Applicant prior to the submission of the PoAN on 1 July 2024, defined as "informal" consultation in paragraph 0 and comprising Rounds 1, 2 and 3.

4.2. ROUND 1 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

DATE AND LOCATION

4.2.1. The first informal Public Consultation Event (PCE) for the Proposed Development was carried out on the following dates and locations:

- 15th of November 2023, 2-7pm, Peterhead Football Club, Balmoor Terrace, Peterhead, AB42 1EQ; and
- 16th of November 2023, 2-7pm, Longside Parish Church Hall, Longside, AB42 4XN.

4.2.2. Locations were selected due to their likely proximity to the OnTW, the site of which was, at the time, still to be refined into what is now the Site.

4.2.3. The objective was to inform the public and stakeholders about the Proposed Development and work to date, including Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping which was made publicly available at the end of September 2023.

4.2.4. To those that could not attend the in-person event, a virtual PCE was held from 15th of November 2023 to 17th December 2023.

4.2.5. The Applicant undertook a full health and safety assessment on both venues. An accessibility review was also carried of both venues, to ensure all those who wished to attend the event could readily access and participate. Break-out rooms were provided at the events so those with feedback/concerns/opinions could inform relevant Project team members.

NOTIFICATIONS AND ADVERTISEMENT

4.2.6. As detailed in Section 3.3, multiple actions were taken by the Applicant to raise awareness of the event, and to maximise engagement and attendance.

NEWSPAPERS AND MEDIA

4.2.7. These PCEs were advertised in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 7(2) of the 2013 Regulations, the advertisement being placed in the following local newspapers:

- The 2nd of October 2023 edition of the Press & Journal;
- The 3rd of October 2023 edition of the Buchan Observer
- The 3rd of October 2023 edition of the Buchan Observer;
- The 6th of November 2023 edition of the Press & Journal; and
- The 7th of November 2023 edition of the Buchan Observer.

4.2.8. Copies of all adverts are attached at Appendix 2.

4.2.9. As was the case with press advertisements relating to all six rounds of PCEs, these adverts included the following text:

"Please note that any comments received by the Muir Mhòr Offshore Wind Farm project team are not representations to the planning authority. Representations to the planning authority can be made once the planning applications have been submitted to Marine Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council."

COMMUNITY POSTERS

4.2.10. Community posters were distributed around the area to advertise the event.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NOTICE

4.2.11. All nine community councils in the area and Aberdeenshire Council were informed and invited to the event via email. The nine community councils (hereafter "the Community Councils") contacted are as follows:

- Boddam Community Council;
- Buchan East Community Council;
- Longside Community Council;
- Deer Community Council;
- Mintlaw Community Councill
- Peterhead Community Council;
- Cruden Community Council;
- New Pitsligo Community Council; and
- Strichen Community Council.

INFORMATION PROVIDED

4.2.12. A key principle of the Applicant's approach to community consultation was to engage with stakeholders in a structured, coherent, friendly and informative basis. Various methods at the event were employed to provide up to date information on the Proposed Development.

4.2.13. To facilitate and initiate discussion and feedback at the event, exhibition boards were created including the following information relevant to the Proposed Development.

- The ethos, roles, and responsibilities of Project partners Fred Olsen Seawind and Vattenfall, the role of Crown Estate Scotland, and the background/timeline/outcome of ScotWind Auction;
- Information on why the Project is being developed, with respect to the renewables targets of the Scottish and UK Government. How the Project will significantly contribute to the UK target of deploying up to 50 GW off Offshore Wind by 2030 with up to 5 GW coming from floating Offshore Wind Projects;
- The Project's infrastructure, its construction and operation, and the optioneering process undertaken to date. Information on the indicative development timeline;
- The location, capacity, number of turbines, the development area water depth, landfall location and the expected grid connection location;
- The extent of OnTW and associated construction activities required as part of the Project; and

- Description of the EIA Process being applied, and a summary of the assessment work undertaken to date to support the EIAR.

4.2.14. As with the press advertisements, materials displayed at these PCEs included a statement clarifying that comments made through the pre-application consultation process are not formal representations on a planning application, and that there would be opportunities for formal representations once an application has been submitted to the planning authority. Similar statements were provided in the materials displayed at all six rounds of PCEs.

4.2.15. Copies of consultation materials are provided at Appendix 3.

3D VISUALISATION

4.2.16. To help attendees understand the potential design and function of the turbines, Virtual Reality (VR) headsets were made available, providing a 3D demonstration of the size, location and operation of offshore elements of the Project. It was found to be a useful and popular tool to engage and inform on offshore elements of the Project and positive feedback from attendees was received.

ATTENDANCE

4.2.17. There were 31 attendees to the event on 15th of November 2023, at Peterhead Football Club, and there were 41 attendees at Longside Parish Church Hall on 16th of November 2023.

FEEDBACK

4.2.18. To facilitate feedback from attendees, multiple feedback options were provided. Links to digital feedback forms were located on the virtual PCE, and QR codes were included on the physical exhibition boards linking to the online feedback form. Paper versions of the feedback form were also offered to event attendees.

4.2.19. Between round 1 events, 16 people filled out the feedback forms. Comments related to matters across the Project as a whole, some focussed on potential employment opportunities, development of community facilities, and other relating to the Proposed Development location (including queries in relation to the requirement for a connection near to Peterhead), environmental impacts and ongoing process. All feedback was noted, and relevant action taken.

4.3. ROUND 2 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

DATE AND LOCATION

4.3.1. The second round of consultation was carried out on the following dates and locations:

- 26th of March 2024: Peterhead Football Club, Balmoor Terrace, Peterhead, AB42 1EQ; and
- 27th of March 2024: Longside Parish Church Hall, 4-13 Inn Brae, Longside, AB42 4XN.

4.3.2. The objective was to provide an update on the Proposed Development and to obtain further feedback to inform the ongoing OnTW site selection and EIA processes.

4.3.3. To those that could not attend the in-person event, a second virtual PCE, displaying information updated from round 1 PCE was held from 26th of March until 17th of May 2024.

4.3.4. The Applicant undertook a full health and safety assessment on both venues. An accessibility review was also carried of both venues, to ensure all those who wished to attend the event could readily access and participate. Break-out rooms were provided at the events so those with feedback/concerns/opinions could inform relevant Project team members.

NOTIFICATIONS AND ADVERTISEMENT

4.3.5. As detailed in Section 3.3, multiple actions were taken by the Applicant to raise awareness of the event, and to maximise engagement and attendance.

NEWSPAPERS AND MEDIA

4.3.6. These PCEs were advertised in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 7(2) of the 2013 Regulations, the advertisement being placed in the following local newspapers:

- The 12th of March 2024 edition of the Buchan Observer;
- The 13th of March 2024 edition of the Press & Journal;
- The 14th of March 2024 edition of the Fraserburgh Herald;
- The 18th of March 2024 edition of the Press & Journal;
- The 19th of March 2024 edition of the Buchan Observer; and
- The 20th of March 2024 edition of the Press & Journal.

4.3.7. Copies of all adverts are attached at Appendix 4.

COMMUNITY POSTERS

4.3.8. Community posters were distributed around the area to advertise the event.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NOTICE

4.3.9. The Community Councils were again informed and invited to the event via email.

INFORMATION PROVIDED

4.3.10. Exhibition boards were used to provide updated information on progress of the Proposed Development since the round 1 PCEs in November 2023, including refinement of development parameters and site boundaries, and the ongoing site selection and EIA processes.

4.3.11. Copies of consultation materials are provided at Appendix 5.

3D VISUALISATION

4.3.12. Due to its success at the first PCE in November 2023, VR headsets were again made available, to provide a 3D demonstration of the size, location and operation of offshore infrastructure.

ATTENDANCE

4.3.13. The PCE at Peterhead on 26 March 2024 was attended by 31 people and 62 people attended the event in Longside on 27 March 2024.

FEEDBACK

4.3.14. To facilitate feedback from attendees, multiple feedback options were provided. Links to digital feedback forms were located on the virtual PCE, and QR codes were included on the physical exhibition boards linking to the online feedback form. Paper versions of the feedback form were also offered to event attendees.

4.3.15. Feedback on the Proposed Development from round 2 PCEs was focussed on the following:

- Specific form of development;
- Job opportunities and other benefits;
- Feedback on potential Substation locations;
- Comments regarding the specifics of PCE arrangements, advertising, etc;
- Construction-related impacts on the local roads network; and
- The status of the Proposed Development in the context of wider development activity and opportunities for collaboration between developers.

4.3.16. There was general positive feedback about the overall running of the event, the friendliness and helpful nature of staff, and how the public felt engaged with the Project.

4.4. ROUND 3 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

DATE AND LOCATION

4.4.1. The third round of consultation focussed upon the OnTW and associated works rather than the Project as a whole and was held on 5th of June 2024 at Longside Football Club between the hours of 2pm-7pm.

4.4.2. The objective was to provide an update on the Proposed Development, specifically in relation to the identification of preferred substation and landfall locations.

4.4.3. To those that could not attend the in-person event, a further virtual PCE, displaying updated information was held from 16th of July 2024.

4.4.4. The Applicant undertook a full health and safety assessment on both venues. An accessibility review was also carried of both venues, to ensure all those who wished to attend the event could readily access and participate. Break-out rooms were provided at the events so those with feedback/concerns/opinions could inform relevant Project team members.

NOTIFICATIONS AND ADVERTISEMENT

4.4.5. As detailed in Section 3.3, multiple actions were taken by the Applicant to raise awareness of the event, and to maximise engagement and attendance.

NEWSPAPERS AND MEDIA

4.4.6. This PCE was advertised in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 7(2) of the 2013 Regulations, the advertisement being placed in the following local newspapers:

- The 21st of May 2024 edition of the Buchan Observer;
- The 21st of May 2024 edition of the Press & Journal;
- The 23rd of May 2024 edition of the Ellon Times & Inverurie Herald; and

- The 23rd of May 2024 edition of the Fraserburgh Herald.

4.4.7. Copies of all adverts are attached at Appendix 6.

COMMUNITY POSTERS

4.4.8. Community posters were distributed around the area to advertise the event.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NOTICE

4.4.9. The Community Councils were again informed and invited to the event via email.

INFORMATION PROVIDED

4.4.10. Exhibition boards were used to provide updated information on progress of the Proposed Development since the round 2 PCEs in March 2024, including refinement of development parameters and site boundaries, and the ongoing site selection and EIA processes. In particular, round 3 materials identified a preferred substation location and sought associated feedback from the local community.

4.4.11. Copies of consultation materials are provided at Appendix 7.

3D VISUALISATION

4.4.12. Due to its success at the first PCE in November 2023, VR headsets were again made available, to provide a 3D demonstration of the Project. For the first time, the 3D visualisation included to demonstrate the onshore substation, based upon a series of maximum development parameters, within the preferred substation location (now the Substation Zone).

ATTENDANCE

4.4.13. The round 3 event was attended by 63 people.

FEEDBACK

4.4.14. To facilitate feedback from attendees, multiple feedback options were again provided. Links to digital feedback forms were located on the virtual PCE, and QR codes were included on the physical exhibition boards linking to the online feedback form. Paper versions of the feedback form were also offered to event attendees.

4.4.15. Feedback on the Proposed Development from round 3 PCEs was focussed on the following:

- Feedback on the preferred substation location;
- Queries on environmental impacts associated with the substation;
- Construction impacts on residential amenity; and
- Construction-related impacts on the local roads network.

4.5. SUMMARY

4.5.1. Informal consultation events held before the submission of the PoAN comprised five days of PCEs across three rounds, advertised in accordance with the relevant regulatory requirements. PCEs were held in accessible local venues and were supported by a range of relevant paper and digital materials and were attended by a total of 228people.

4.5.2. Materials provided by the Applicant demonstrated the evolution of the development process, engaging the local community at an early, consulting upon site options then seeking feedback upon a preferred substation option.

5. FORMAL ROUNDS OF CONSULTATION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

5.1.1. This Section details community consultation undertaken by the Applicant after to the submission of the PoAN on 1st of July 2024, defined as "formal" consultation in paragraph 0 and comprising Rounds 4, 5 and 6. Round 4 provides an updated on proposed cable corridors as well as updated on the ongoing refinement of the substation and landfall, and associated maximum development parameters. In accordance with the regulatory requirements, the second formal event (round 5) feeds back on views provided following round 4, as well as those provided during the informal PCE events. Round 6 then provides a final update prior to the submission of applications. This Section documents the process around these PCEs; in terms of the substance of materials presented at round 5, these are considered alongside wider feedback within Section 6 of this PACR, whilst given its reduced scope, round 6 is only briefly considered.

5.2. ROUND 4 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION (1ST FORMAL EVENT)

5.2.1. The fourth round of consultation also focussed upon the OnTW and associated works, updating attendees on further refinements to substation and landfall locations, export cable corridors and associated maximum development parameters. This first formal PCE event was held on 11th of September 2024 at Longside Parish Church Hall.

5.2.2. To those that could not attend the in-person event, a further virtual PCE, displaying updated information was held from 11th of September until the 25th of September.

NOTIFICATIONS AND ADVERTISEMENT

5.2.3. As detailed in Section 3.3, multiple actions were taken by the Applicant to raise awareness of the event, and to maximise engagement and attendance.

NEWSPAPERS AND MEDIA

5.2.4. This PCE was advertised in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 7(2) of the 2013 Regulations, the advertisement being placed in the following local newspapers:

- The 27th of August 2024 edition of the Press & Journal;
- The 29th of August 2024 edition of the Fraserburgh Herald;
- The 29th of August 2024 edition of the Ellon Times and Inverurie Herald; and
- The 27th of August 2024 edition of the Buchan Observer.

5.2.5. Copies of all adverts are attached at Appendix 8.

COMMUNITY POSTERS

5.2.6. Community posters were distributed around the Peterhead and Longside areas to advertise the event.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NOTICE

5.2.7. The Community Councils were again informed and invited to the event via email.

INFORMATION PROVIDED

5.2.8. Exhibition boards were used to provide updated information on progress of the Proposed Development since the round 3 PCE in June 2024, including refinement of development parameters and site boundaries, and the ongoing site selection and EIA processes. In particular, round 4 materials provided an indicative/illustrative substation layout, as well as further details of proposed export cable corridors, and sought associated feedback from the local community.

5.2.9. As with the press advertisements and materials displayed at informal events, materials displayed at all formal PCEs included a statement clarifying that comments made through the pre-application consultation process are not formal representations on a planning application, and that there would be opportunities for formal representations once an application has been submitted to the planning authority.

5.2.10. Copies of consultation materials are provided at Appendix 9.

3D VISUALISATION

5.2.11. Further onshore visualisations, including at landfall and along cable corridors, were included within the 3D visualisations made available to attendees at the event. These supplemented a refined illustration of development within the Substation Zone, refined since round 3.

ATTENDANCE

5.2.12. The round 4 event was attended by 31 people.

FEEDBACK

5.2.13. To facilitate feedback from attendees, multiple feedback options were again provided. Links to digital feedback forms were located on the virtual PCE, and QR codes were included on the physical exhibition boards linking to the online feedback form. Paper versions of the feedback form were also offered to event attendees.

5.2.14. Feedback on the Proposed Development from round 4 PCEs was broadly consistent with that received following round 3:

- Comments and queries regarding substation development parameters;
- Queries on environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Development;
- Queries around operational access; and
- Construction-related impacts on the local roads network.

5.3. ROUND 5 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION (2ND FORMAL EVENT)

5.3.1. This second formal PCE event was held on 25th of September 2024 at Peterhead Football Club, Balmoor Terrace, Peterhead, AB42 1EQ. The fifth round of PCEs considered the Project as a whole. In respect of the Proposed Development, the regulatory requirement is that the second formal event feeds back on comments provided by the public during the first formal PCE (round 4). This requirement was met as illustrated within the PCE materials appended at Appendix 11, and materials also fed back on comments received during earlier PCE events.

NOTIFICATIONS AND ADVERTISEMENT

5.3.2. As detailed in Section 3.3, multiple actions were taken by the Applicant to raise awareness of the event, and to maximise engagement and attendance.

NEWSPAPERS AND MEDIA

5.3.3. This PCE was advertised in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 7(2) of the 2013 Regulations, the advertisement being placed in the following local newspapers:

- The 10th of September 2024 edition of the Press & Journal;
- The 12th of September 2024 edition of the Fraserburgh Herald;
- The 12th of September 2024 edition of the Ellon Times and Inverurie Herald; and
- The 10th of September edition of the Buchan Observer

5.3.4. Copies of all adverts are attached at Appendix 10.

COMMUNITY POSTERS

5.3.5. Community posters were distributed around the area to advertise the event.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NOTICE

5.3.6. The Community Councils were again informed and invited to the event via email.

INFORMATION PROVIDED

5.3.7. Round 5 materials provided relevant updates on progress since the previous PCE earlier in September 2024. Materials also fed back on views raised during earlier PCE, highlighting the Applicant has taken account of such feedback. Copies of round 5 PCE materials are provided in Appendix 11.

3D VISUALISATION

5.3.8. 3D visualisations provided at the round 5 event reflected that demonstrated at the round 4 PCE, incorporating relevant refinements between the two events.

ATTENDANCE

5.3.9. The round 5 event was attended by 31 people.

FEEDBACK

5.3.10. The primary purpose of Round 5 was to provide the Applicant's feedback rather than to gather further comments on the Proposed Development. Section 6 of this PACR details the Applicant's feedback to comments raised during rounds 1-4.

5.4. ROUND 6 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION (3RD FORMAL EVENT)

5.4.1. The round 6 PCE was a final, event prior to the submission of all applications, relating to the Project and was held on 23rd of October 2024 at Longside Parish Church Hall. The event summarised the contents of the application prior to its formal submission.

5.4.2. This PCE was again advertised in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 7(2) of the 2013 Regulations, the advertisement being placed in the following local newspapers:

- The 8th of October 2024 edition of the Press & Journal;
- The 10th of October 2024 edition of the Fraserburgh Herald;
- The 10th of October 2024 edition of the Ellon Times and Inverurie Herald; and
- The 8th of October 2024 edition of the Buchan Observer.

5.4.3. Copies of all adverts are attached at Appendix 12.

5.4.4. In terms of other notifications, the approach to round 6 was consistent with that adopted in earlier rounds and as detailed at Section 3.3 of this PACR.

5.4.5. This PCE was attended by 21 people.

5.4.6. Materials presented at the PCE are attached at Appendix 13.

5.5. SUMMARY

5.5.1. Pre-application community consultation undertaken by the Applicant meets the requirements of Regulation 7 of the 2013 Regulations and Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Advice PA2023-15: SP=EED, and in some cases exceeds such requirements:

- A total of eight PCEs were held in local venues, across six rounds of events;
- All PCEs were advertised in local newspapers in accordance with Regulation 7(2) of the 2013 Regulations;
- Consultation materials were provided both at physical PCEs and online, and were supported by other consultation tools, including 3D visualisations, newsletters, feedback forms and social media interactions;
- Attendees could provide feedback in a variety of forms, both during and following PCEs; and
- Feedback was taken on board by the Applicant and where appropriate, informed the development process from several perspectives (for example, informing the refinement of the Proposed Development, the Site and associated development parameters; informing the scope and detail of surveys and assessments undertaken through the EIA process; and informing arrangements and format of subsequent PCEs).

5.5.2. As detailed from Paragraph 2.4.4, the approach to pre-application consultation implemented by the Applicant consistently delivers on the requirements of SP=EED.

5.5.3. A total of 323 people attended PCEs; 228 during informal rounds of consultation and 93 during the formal rounds.

5.5.4. The pre-application process discussed above demonstrates a clear evolution of the subject matters presented at and around PCEs, reflecting the parallel refinement of the Proposed Development and the Site, associated maximum development parameters, EIA and site selection processes. For example:

- Round 1 provided an introduction to the Project and an overview of likely requirements, future process and associated timescales;
- Rounds 2-4 updated on site selection and EIA process, focusing upon the former, and documenting ongoing activities to refine landfall, substation and export cable corridors. These updates ranged from a multi-area illustration of potential substation locations at

round 2, to a site-specific potential substation layout within the Substation Zone at round 4; and

- Round 5 provided feedback on views raised during previous PCEs, highlighting where feedback has been taken into account by the Applicant, whilst round 6
- Round 6 summarised all previous PCE activities and outlined next steps around formal application submissions.

6. APPLICANT'S REPONSE TO VIEWS RAISED

6.1. INTRODUCTION

6.1.1. Some comments provided during earlier rounds of community consultation have effectively been superseded by the refinement of the Proposed Development, the Site and associated development parameters, which was ongoing through the pre-application community consultation process. Such comments, for example in relation to substation site options which have not been progressed, are not considered within this PACR.

6.1.2. This PACR does not provide copies of written, or email feedback provided during or following PCEs due to the presence of personal data or comments which might clear identify authors. In the interests of transparency however, such copies can be provided to Aberdeenshire Council at its request.

6.2. THE APPLICANT'S RESPONSE TO VIEWS RAISED

QUERIES IN RELATION TO MACRO SITE SELECTION (I.E. WHY THE PETERHEAD AREA?)

6.2.1. On several occasions during the pre-application community consultation process, attendees queried why the Project's grid connection in the Peterhead area had been determined.

6.2.2. This was not within the Applicants control, but rather emerges from a Holistic Network Design (HND) undertaken by the National Energy System Operator on behalf of the UK Government. The HND process includes the coordination of connections across multiple offshore wind developments, as part of a strategic approach to delivering the required transmission grid improvements as effectively and as efficiently as possible.

6.2.3. One of these coordinated connections involves the Project as part of a 2 GW connection in the Peterhead area, of which the Proposed Development comprises a first phase. Further details of the HND process are provided in Section 1.5 of the accompanying OPS.

GENERAL COMMENTS IN RELATION TO SITE SELECTION AND EIA PROCESSES

6.2.4. Information presented by the Applicant with regards to site selection and EIA processes evolved through the pre-application community consultation process. Respondents and attendees regularly engaged positively and contributed towards site selection decision making and the refinement of the Proposed Development, the Site, and EIA processes.

6.2.5. For example, attendees voiced concern at the prospect of a substation location near to SSEN's Netherton Hub, to the east of Longside, citing the potential for cumulative impacts during construction as well as significant landscape and visual impacts in the long-term. The Applicant took account of this has identified a substation location several kilometres from Longside and also included enhanced planting and bunding to provide visual screening.

6.2.6. Other examples relating to the EIA process included several attendees whose specific interests and expertise aligned with some of the technical surveys and assessments documented within the onshore EIAR. This engagement helped improve the Project team's understanding of the local environment from an early stage and contributed towards the scoping of some specific surveys and assessments.

COMMENTS/QUERIES ON THE SPECIFICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND/OR MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

6.2.7. Attendees regularly queried specific elements of the Proposed Development and its construction. The Applicant ensured technical experts also attended PCEs and explained based upon the level of detail available at any given time. The Applicant sought to also explain the development process and how it informs the approach being adopted through this planning application process; specifically, the identification and assessment of maximum development parameters which will be refined once further technical information is available, and to which a further planning stage (AMSC) will relate.

6.2.8. On occasion attendees vocalised frustration that particular parameters cannot be defined at this stage, but the Applicant requires a degree of flexibility in order to accommodate a range of potential technology designs.

6.2.9. Specifics of particular interest often related to construction impacts, considered below.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS ON LOCAL ROADS AND PUBLIC ROUTES

6.2.10. The issue of construction impact was regularly cited by attendees at PCEs. This took two forms: (i) the impact on roads as a result of cable installation; and (ii) the impact of construction traffic on local roads.

6.2.11. In respect of (i), installation of the cable could involve trenchless crossings of linear infrastructure. This is likely to be the case in respect of major roads such as the A90. A trenchless crossing technique (such as horizontal directional drilling) would allow the road to remain open throughout construction. Crossing of local roads may involve open cut trenching. Where this is the case, suitable traffic management measures will ensure continued access to properties throughout construction and will minimise disruption. Such measures will be controlled through a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), agreed with Aberdeenshire Council at AMSC stage.

6.2.12. Regarding (ii), the onshore EIAR assesses the impacts of the construction of the Proposed Development on local roads, the findings of which form part of Chapter 11 of the onshore EIAR. Subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, including the aforementioned CTMP, the EIA process concludes that the Proposed Development will not produce significant negative impacts, either in isolation or cumulatively alongside other developments in the area.

6.2.13. In respect of public access, an outline Access Management Plan is included within the application documentation and will contribute towards the management of continued safe access to the Buchan and Fortmartine Way.

SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENTS

6.2.14. Respondents commented upon the volume of infrastructure developments nearby, in particular SSEN's Netherton Hub. On occasion there was confusion between the Project/Proposed Development and other developments. Other respondents queried whether there are opportunities for collaboration between developments, including the sharing of infrastructure.

6.2.15. The Applicant acknowledges that there are several other infrastructure developments being promoted in the vicinity of Peterhead and appreciates that local communities will be exposed to consultation events relating to several of these developments, often in the same weeks or months.

6.2.16. The Applicant sought to keep itself up to date in terms of consultation activity in the area and explained the differences between projects when asked by attendees.

6.2.17. In terms of collaboration with other developers, there are limited prospects due to projects being at different stages in the development process, as well as complications around the long-term status of OnTW. Notwithstanding, the Applicant is working with other offshore wind farm developers and SSEN to minimise potential impacts, where possible. Further, the Proposed Development includes a first phase of the coordinated connection, comprising the installation of cable ducts alongside onshore export cables for the Project, contributing towards the minimising of environmental impacts associated with construction activities in the area.

6.2.18. In addition, the Applicant is engaged in the Peterhead Developers Forum (PDF) alongside other active development, which will soon launch materials which will contribute towards improving communities' awareness of activity in the area. The PDF website, once launched, will provide further information on all ScotWind developers active in the area, including timescales and locations, and details of forthcoming PCEs.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND OTHER BENEFITS

6.2.19. There were regular enquiries about job and supply chain opportunities, as well as wider long-term benefits for the local community.

6.2.20. The Applicant has, and will continue to engage with relevant stakeholders with a view to maximising local economic impacts throughout the lifecycle of the Project, including:

- Working alongside the University of Highlands and Islands to create an industry-backed scholarship bursary aimed at nurturing engineering talent and helping the next generation of renewable leaders into the clean energy industry;
- Participating in several Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) outreach events such as the Girls In Energy course at Mintlaw Academy. The initiative is designed to encourage young women to engage with the STEM subjects; and
- Engaging with the local supply chain, organising and participating in several supply chain events and workshops.

6.2.21. The PDF are also analysing local skills with a view to delivering of a legacy of skills and jobs which contributes to increased opportunities for local suppliers.

SPECIFICS OF PCE ARRANGEMENTS

6.2.22. During some informal PCEs respondents suggested improvements which could be made to the advertising and notification processes undertaken by the Applicant during the organisation of PCEs.

6.2.23. The Applicant acknowledged the suggestions and incorporated these as part of the organisation of subsequent PCEs. For example, advertisements were placed in local newspapers covering a wider area of Aberdeenshire, following interest the Fraserburgh and Inverurie areas. Also, invitations to later PCEs were part of a maildrop to residents around the Substation Zone, once that location had been identified.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

6.2.24. Attendees regularly queried environmental impacts (other than those relating to traffic and transport, which are considered above) which could be expected during the construction phase. The Applicant sought to reassure that such impacts are the focus of several technical

assessments within the onshore EIAR. Those assessments conclude insignificant impacts on residential amenity, including noise, subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures documented within the EIAR.

OPERATIONAL IMPACTS ON THE LOCAL ROAD NETWORK

6.2.25. The question of whether the Proposed Development would produce significant traffic once operational was also raised, and forms part of the Chapter 11 (of the onshore EIAR) assessment of the Proposed Development from a traffic and transport perspective. Operational traffic will be minimal due to the largely automated nature of the substation. Notwithstanding, regular maintenance will produce small volumes of traffic which will not impact the local roads network.

6.2.26. Public access routes will not be affected once the Proposed Development is operational.

OPERATIONAL IMPACTS ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE SUBSTATION

6.2.27. There was regular interest amongst attendees in the environmental impacts the substation, once operational, particularly from a residential amenity perspective.

6.2.28. The details of specific residential amenity-related impacts will be defined at AMSC stage; they are however expected to be within the range concluded within the onshore EIAR, based upon the details of the Proposed Development being refined at AMSC stage, within the parameters established at this PPP stage. In particular on the topic of residential amenity, exact noise-related mitigation requires a detailed substation design, the extent of mitigation required to meet prescribed noise levels differing significantly depending upon the extent of enclosed versus external plant. Notwithstanding, Chapter 10 of the onshore EIAR concludes that noise impacts will not be significant.

7. SUMMARY

7.1.1. Pre-application community consultation undertaken by the Applicant meets the requirements of Regulation 7 of the 2013 Regulations and Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Advice PA2023-15: SP=EED, and in some cases exceeds such requirements:

- A total of eight PCEs were held in local venues, across six rounds of events;
- All PCEs were advertised in local newspapers in accordance with Regulation 7(2) of the 2013 Regulations;
- Consultation materials were provided both at physical PCEs and online, and were supported by other consultation tools, including 3D visualisations, newsletters, feedback forms and social media interactions;
- Attendees could provide feedback in a variety of forms, both during and following PCEs; and
- Feedback was taken on board by the Applicant and where appropriate, informed the development process from several perspectives (for example, informing the refinement of the Proposed Development, the Site and associated development parameters; informing the scope and detail of surveys and assessments undertaken through the EIA process; and informing arrangements and format of subsequent PCEs).

7.1.2. A total of 323 people attended PCEs; 228 during informal rounds of consultation and 93 during the formal rounds.

7.1.3. The pre-application process discussed above demonstrates a clear evolution of the subject matters presented at and around PCEs, reflecting the parallel refinement of the Proposed Development and the Site, associated maximum development parameters, EIA and site selection processes. For example:

- Round 1 provided an introduction to the Project and an overview of likely requirements, future process and associated timescales;
- Rounds 2-4 update on site selection and EIA process, focusing upon the former, and documenting ongoing activities to refine landfall, substation and export cable corridors. These updates ranged from a multi-area illustration of potential substation locations at round 2, to a site-specific potential substation layout within the Substation Zone at round 4; and
- Round 5 provides feedback on views raised during previous PCEs, highlighting where feedback has been taken into account by the Applicant, whilst round 6 summarises all previous PCE activities and outlines next steps around formal application submissions.

7.1.4. Feedback provided by attendees during PCEs covered a wide range of subject matters, including:

- The identification of the Peterhead area for the location of the Project's grid connection;
- Site selection and EIA processes;
- Maximum development parameters and specifications of the Proposed Development;
- The relationship between the Proposed Development and nearby developments;
- Job opportunities and other benefits;
- Specifics of PCEs;
- Construction impacts on:

  - Local roads;
  - Residential amenity

- Operational impacts on residential amenity.

7.1.5. The Applicant was able to take account of feedback in several ways:

- Public feedback informed the Applicant's site selection process, which was refined throughout the pre-application process;
- Public feedback also informed the EIA process, with feedback from attendees with specific environmental interests informing the scope of environmental surveys and assessments;
- Feedback received during early PCEs informed the scope of and arrangements for, future events. For example, 3D visualisations were particularly popular, and the Applicant ensured such media was always available in an up-to-date form;
- Feedback in relation to potential job opportunities has informed the Applicant's contributions to the PDF which itself will contribute towards improved transparency across development projects in the Peterhead area;
- Investigated alternative substation layouts to reduce building heights and minimise visual impacts. Proposals for planting and bunding were incorporated as visual screens;
- Cumulative impacts were given careful consideration during the substation site selection process, in particular those around SSEN's proposed Netherton Hub. The Applicant is also working with other developers to identify opportunities to minimise environmental impacts and maximise economic benefits; and
- In response to queries around public access, in particular in respect of the Buchan and Formartine Way, the Applicant has provided an outline Access Management Plan which will contribute towards the continued safe access throughout construction. Further details will be agreed with the Planning Authority at AMSC stage.

7.1.6. The Applicant is committed to maintaining a regular dialogue with the local community, both in keeping residents up to date, but also in defining effective long-term mitigation, particularly through the construction period.

MUIR MHÒR
OFFSHORE WIND FARM

A joint venture between Fred. Olsen Seawind & Vattenfall

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