voltalia

CRUACH CLENAMACRIE WIND FARM

CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION

November 2024

RESPONSIBILITIES

	DATE	NAME	FUNCTION
Elaboration	02/05/2024	Isla Ferguson	Author
Validation	24/06/2024	Corey Simpson	Project Manager Review
Approval	14/11/2024	Alexander Hamilton	Applicant Approval

REVISION HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
1.0	27/06/2024	Isla Ferguson	Issued for First Client Review
2.0	23/09/2024	Isla Ferguson	Issued for Legal Review
3.0	04/11/2024	Isla Ferguson	Issued for Sign Off
4.0	14/11/2024	Isla Ferguson	Submission

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	DESCRIPTION
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
ECU	Energy Consents Unit
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GCR	Green Cat Renewables Ltd
ha	Hectares
IPP	Independent Power Producer
NTS	Non-Technical Summary
PAC	Pre-Application Consultation
PRES	Planning and Renewable Energy Statement
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Voltalia UK Ltd (hereinafter referred to as 'the Applicant') is applying to the Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended) to construct, operate and decommission the Cruach Clenamacrie Wind Farm, Argyll and Bute (hereinafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'). The Proposed Development is located at a site centered on grid coordinates E194142 N729887, as shown in **Figure 1.1 – Site Location.** This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report has been prepared in support of the application to the Scottish Ministers.

This chapter provides an introduction and background to the Proposed Development, as well as providing an overview of the purpose of the EIA Report, its structure, and the project team producing it.

1.1.1 Key Terms

To ensure clarity and consistency throughout the EIA Report, the following terms are used:

- EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment;
- Proposed Development – Proposed Cruach Clenamacrie Wind Farm;
- Application Boundary – the extent of the area relating to the application;
- The Site – the area within the Application Boundary in which the Proposed Development lies;
- Developable Area - the immediate surroundings to the infrastructure within the Proposed Development
- Study Area – the area for which the respective assessment or study is concerned; and
- The Applicant – Voltalia UK Ltd

1.2 The Applicant

Founded in 2005, Voltalia is an experienced global renewable energy developer and Independent Power Producer (IPP) developing, constructing, and operating solar, wind, hydro, biomass, and storage projects. Voltalia has assets with 2.37GW of installed capacity, with a 16.6GW pipeline of projects globally and has a long-term commitment and experience to development in the UK.

Voltalia UK Ltd is focused on providing renewable energy schemes to help decarbonise the UK's electricity generation and combat the climate crisis by supplying an affordable and renewable source of clean electricity.

The Proposed Development is the first in a series of renewable energy projects which Voltalia are proposing to construct and operate in Scotland. If consented, international experience and expertise will allow Voltalia to develop their ~600MW of onshore renewables in Scotland to help achieve the current net zero targets and fight the climate crisis.

1.3 The Site

The application site, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', is located approximately 7km east of Oban within the Argyll and Bute Council administrative area. The Site is approximately 262 Hectares (ha) and is bordered by Fearnoch Forest to the east, south and west. The Lusragan Burn and Black Loch's tributaries run through the Site.

The landscape within the Site is characterised as craggy upland with oak-birch woodland, rounded knolls, rocky outcrops and numerous lochs in low-lying hollows and glens. The terrain is hilly with a maximum elevation of 273m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). Deadh Choimhead Hill is situated south of the Site.

There are no Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings within the Site. Glenamachrie Cairn and An Dun, dun and Glenamachrie Standing Stone are the closest Scheduled Monuments located approximately 0.8km south-west of the Site. The closest Listed Building is the Category B Achnacloich House which is located approximately 2.3km to the north-west of the access track.

The A85 lies directly north of the Site and provides connectivity to A82, A816 and A8.

The Carbon and Peatland map 2016[1] indicates that most of the Site is underlain with Class 2 peat with pockets of Class 5 peat dispersed across the Site. The largest section of Class 5 peat is found towards the south-west of the Site.

Directly north of the Site lies an area of the Loch Etive Woods Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) which is located within the Clais Dhearg Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In addition, there are areas of Ancient Woodland Inventory located within the Fearnoch Forest portion of the Site along the access track.

Fearnoch is located approximately 2.3km north-east of the closest turbine. Glenamachrie is the nearest residential property located approximately 1.3km south-west of the closest turbine.

1.4 Description of Development

The Proposed Development will comprise of the following key components:

- Six, three-bladed horizontal axis wind turbines, up to 200m in tip height and a generating capacity of approximately 7.2MW each;
- 20MW Battery energy storage system (BESS) containers located adjacent to the substation compound;
- New and upgraded access tracks, passing places and turning heads;
- Hardstanding areas for cranes at each turbine location;
- Turbine foundations;
- Drainage works;
- Up to four borrow pits;
- Power cables, linking the wind turbines, laid in trenches underground, including cable markers;
- An on-site electrical substation, parking, and a small storage compound;
- Temporary laydown areas;
- Temporary construction compound, including parking, and welfare facilities; and
- Associated ancillary works.

A full description of the Proposed Development is provided in **EIA Report Chapter 5: Project Description.**

1.5 Purpose of the EIA Report

This Cruach Clenamacrie Wind Farm EIA Report describes the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Development and assesses the significance of the residual effects, along with suggesting mitigation measures that can be implemented to minimise these effects. It considers impacts that may arise from construction, operation (including likely planned maintenance activities) and decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

The EIA includes an assessment of cumulative impacts alongside other programmes/projects in the vicinity of the Proposed Development that are consented, currently in planning or are being constructed.

Further details on the requirements for undertaking this EIA are presented in **EIA Report Chapter 3: EIA Methodology**. This EIA process has been informed by a scoping process with Scottish Ministers and key

[1] The Carbon and Peatland Map 2016 (Accessed 12/07/2024)

consultees. A Scoping Report (**Appendix 1.1**) was submitted to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit on 25 June 2023 (ECU00004841) A Scoping Opinion (**Appendix 1.2**) was received from the Scottish Ministers on 14 September 2023.

A full description of the consultation undertaken throughout the EIA process is provided in **EIA Report Chapter 3: EIA Methodology.**

1.6 The Project Team

Green Cat Renewables Ltd (GCR) has been commissioned by the Applicant as the Environmental Consultant to lead the EIA and prepare the supporting EIA Report. GCR is an environmental and engineering consultancy focused on all aspects of development support, based in Scotland. With a team of 100 staff spread across 4 offices, the company's multi-disciplinary resource base spans all stages of project delivery: from feasibility and concept development through to planning, engineering, project management and operational asset management.

GCR have development expertise in helping a range of businesses find suitable energy solutions to aid economic viability in a climate where energy costs are forecast to continue to rise.

GCR has been supported in preparing this EIA Report by ReAmp, Abseline, WSP, AOC Archaeology Group, Aviatica (Gladhouse Planning), Pell Frischmann, WRc and DGA Forestry as specialist subconsultants.

In line with Regulation 5(5) of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017, the EIA Report and technical assessments which inform is have been undertaken by a qualified project team. **Table 1.1** presents the EIA Project Team and associated specialist roles.

TABLE 1.1 - EIA PROJECT TEAM

ORGANISATION	PROJECT ROLE	TECHNICAL LEAD	COMPETENCY
Green Cat Renewables	EIA Project Management	Corey Simpson Isla Ferguson	BA – over 15 years of experience AIEMA, MSc, BSc (Hons) – four years of experience
ReAmp	Town Planning	Alison Sidgwick	BSoc Sc, MURP, MRTPI – 25 years of experience
Abseline	Landscape and Visual	Mary Fisher Mark Evans	Chartered Landscape Architects - over 22 years of experience
AOC Archaeology Group	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	Victoria Oleksy Lisa Bird	MCIfA, MA, BA – over 18 years of experience. ACIfA, MA, MSc – nine years of experience
Green Cat Renewables	Noise and Shadow Flicker	Merlin Garnett	MIOA, MSc – 11 years of experience
WRc	Geology, Hydrogeology, Hydrology and Soils	Catherine Isherwood	MSci (Hons), MA (Cantab), MSc, PhD, CGeol, FGS, MIMMM - over 18 years of experience

ORGANISATION	PROJECT ROLE	TECHNICAL LEAD	COMPETENCY
		Lucy McCulloch	BSc (Hons), MSc, AMIEnvSc - three years of experience
WSP	Ecology	Alastair Miller Sabrina Bremner	BSc, MenvS, MCIEEM - over 19 years of experience BSc, MCIEEM – over 17 years of experience
WSP	Ornithology	Jon Seller Pete Clark	BSc, MSc, CEcol, MCIEEM - over 19 years of experience BSc, MSc, MCIEEM- 13 years of experience
Pell Frischmann	Transport and Access	Gordon Buchan	BEng (Hons), MSc, CEng, FCIHT, CMILT – 27 years of experience
DGA Forestry	Forestry	Sandy Anderson James Anderson	BSc (Hons), MBA, MICFor - 50 years of experience BArch, MSc - 12 years of experience
Aviatica (Gladhouse Planning)	Aviation and Telecommunications	Malcolm Spaven	MA, MSc – 28 years of experience
Green Cat Renewables	Engineering Design	Christopher Thompson	HND, HNC – 8 years of experience

1.7 Content of Submission

The application for Section 36 consent and deemed planning permission comprises:

- The Cruach Clenamacrie Wind Farm EIA Report;
- Non-Technical Summary;
- Planning and Renewable Energy Statement (PRES); and
- Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report.

The EIA Report is organised as follows:

- Non-Technical Summary
- Volume 1: EIA
  - Chapter 1: Introduction
  - Chapter 2: Planning and Renewable Energy Policy
  - Chapter 3: EIA Methodology
  - Chapter 4: Assessment of Alternatives
  - Chapter 5: Project Description
  - Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual
  - Chapter 7: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology
  - Chapter 8: Noise
  - Chapter 9: Geology, Hydrogeology, Hydrology and Soils

  - Chapter 10: Ecology
  - Chapter 11: Ornithology
  - Chapter 12: Transport and Access
  - Chapter 13: Forestry
  - Chapter 14: Aviation and Radar
  - Chapter 15: Shadow Flicker
  - Chapter 16: Telecommunications and Infrastructure
  - Chapter 17: Climate Change and Carbon Balance
  - Chapter 18: Summary of Mitigation
- Volume 2: Figures
- Volume 3: Appendices

1.8 Availability of the EIA Report

Digital copies of the EIA Report will be available at the links below:

- Energy Consents Unit (ECU) Portal: https://www.energyconsents.scot/Default.aspx
- Cruach Clenamacrie Wind Farm website: https://cruach-clenamacrie.co.uk/

Hard copies of the EIA Report will also be available for inspection, free of charge at the following locations:

Oban Public Library
Albany Street
Oban
PA34 4AL

Opening Times:
Sunday & Monday: Closed
Tuesday & Wednesday: 9:30 am–16:30 pm
Thursday: 9:30 am–18:30 pm
Friday & Saturday: 9:30 am–13:00pm

Connel Village Hall
Connel
PA37 5AL

Opening Times:
Monday – Sunday: 10:00am – 19:00pm

Times may vary, please check the online hall diary on the Connel Village Hall website, https://www.connelvillagehall.org.uk/index.asp
Materials will be displayed in the front entrance of the village hall.

Hard copies of the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) can be provided free of charge upon request and the full EIA Report can be provided for £1000 per hard copy. Electronic copies of the EIA Report on a USB drive are available free of charge.

To request copies of the NTS or EIA Report please contact Green Cat Renewables.

Address: Stobo House, Roslin, EH25 9RE

Email: info@greencatrenewables.co.uk

Tel: 0131 541 0060

1.8.1 Representation to the Application

Representations can be made via email to representations@gov.scot or in writing to Energy Consents Unit, Scottish Government, Atlantic Quay, 150 Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU.