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CRUACH CLENAMACRIE WIND FARM

APPENDIX 5.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATEMENT

November 2024

RESPONSIBILITIES

	DATE	NAME	FUNCTION
Elaboration	20/09/2024	Kirsty MacInnes	Technical Review
Validation	23/09/2024	Corey Simpson	Project Manager Review
Approval	18/11/2024	Alexander Hamilton	Applicant Approval

REVISION HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
0.1	13/09/2024	Andrew Maclean	First Draft
0.2	20/09/2024	Andrew Maclean	Updated Following First GCR Review
1.0	23/09/2034	Andrew Maclean	Issued for Client Review
2.0	17/10/2024	Andrew Maclean	Issued Back to Client
3.0	06/11/2024	Andrew Maclean	Issued for Legal Review
4.0	15/11/2024	Andrew Maclean	Issued for Final Review
5.0	18/11/2024	Corey Simpson	Submission

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	DESCRIPTION
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CAPEX	Capital expenditure
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CLG	Community Laison Group
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GCR	Green Cat Renewables
GVA	Gross Value Added
GW	Gigawatt
LVA	Local Value Added
MW	Megawatt
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
NRS	National Records of Scotland
OAMP	Outdoor Access Management Plan
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OPEX	Operational expenditure
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATEMENT

1.1 Introduction

This report analyses the potential effects of the Cruach Clenamacrie Wind Farm (the 'Proposed Development') in accordance with socio-economic, tourism, and recreational receptors.

The key objectives of this report are to:

- Identify the net economic benefit of the Proposed Development in relation to Policy 11 of the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4); and
- Identify any potential changes to tourism and recreational behaviours/habits.

The Proposed Development would comprise up to six turbines with a generating capacity of approximately 45MW and approximately 20MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).

This stand-alone report should be read alongside the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report. Environmental topics which have relevance to aspects considered within this report are; **EIA Report Chapter 12: Traffic and Transport**, **EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise, EIA Report Chapter 7: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology** and **EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.** The potential effects of these are provided in the EIA Report as separate chapters and are not reassessed in this stand-alone report.

1.2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

1.2.1 Legislation

1.2.1.1 Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003

Under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, all local authorities in Scotland are required to produce a system of core paths within their constituency, to give the public reasonable access to outdoor areas[1]. Core paths, and their users (cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians), are protected under this act.

1.2.2 National Policy

1.2.2.1 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

Policy 11 (Energy) of NPF4 encourages and promotes the development of onshore and offshore renewable energy developments.[2] Under Policy 11(c), renewable energy developments will only be supported by the Scottish Government when due consideration is given to maximising net economic benefit:

"Development proposals will only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities".

Policy 11: e(iii) also notes that the project design and mitigation process give due consideration to its impact on public access, including long distance walks, as well as cycle and scenic routes.

[1] Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2004 (Part 2) (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[2] National Planning Framework 4 (2023): https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/pages/3/ (Accessed 05/09/2024)

Policy 25: (Community Wealth Building) promotes a new strategic approach to economic development. Under part (a) of this policy, development proposals will be supported where they are supporting local economic priorities, such as by improving community reliance, creating local jobs, and increasing spending within communities to ensure the use of local supply chains and services.

1.2.2.2 Scottish Government: Onshore Wind – Policy Statement (2022)

The Scottish Government aims to deploy 20GW of onshore wind capacity by 2030, as outlined in their Onshore Wind - Policy Statement 2022, which reflects their commitment to renewable energy and carbon reduction targets. Priority is given to increasing the volume of local content in energy projects and promoting community benefits and shared ownership, as well as the potential for wind farm developments to offer outdoor recreational and tourism opportunities.[3]

1.2.2.3 Scotland Outlook 2030

Scotland Outlook 2030[4] lays out the future vision for Scottish tourism, focusing on four main priorities: people, places, diverse businesses, and experiences. The vision also emphasises investment, training, accessibility, and sustainability.

1.2.3 Local Policy

1.2.3.1 Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2 (2024)

Argyll and Bute Council (the 'Council') is dedicated to developing and expanding renewable energy resources in the area, recognising their positive impact on the local economy[5]. Their commitment is outlined in Policy 30: The Sustainable Growth of Renewables, which states that the Council will assess a scheme's suitability against a set of criteria. Of relevance to this assessment is:

- Net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities; and
- Impacts of tourism and recreation.

1.2.4 Guidance

1.2.4.1 Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments

The Scottish Government's Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments provide a benchmark for the sector and have been widely adopted.[6] This piece of guidance aims to "promote transparency" and encourage communities and developers to work together to ensure renewable energy development continues whilst creating a lasting benefit for the communities based adjacent. This documentation also emphasises the importance of providing a community benefits package that relates to *"the specific needs and aspirations of local people, evidenced by some form of the ballot or another mechanism to capture views presented".*

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[3] Onshore Wind Policy Statement 2022 (Accesses 05/08/2024)
[4] https://scottishtourismalliance.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Scotland-Outlook-2030.pdf (Accessed 30/09/2024)
[5] https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan-2 (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[6] https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-good-practice-principles-community-benefits-onshore-renewable-energy-developments/ (Accessed 30/09/2024)

1.2.4.2 Argyll and Bute Tourism Recovery and Growth Strategy (2022-2025)

The Argyll and Bute Tourism Recovery and Growth Strategy aims to boost economic activity and support sectors impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing energy prices, and the cost of living crisis. It includes short-term survival measures, medium-term sector support, and long-term strategies for sustainability. Tourism is a key aspect, requiring flexibility due to ongoing uncertainties.[7]

The plan complements existing strategies and addresses both short-term recovery and long-term trends in tourism. It acknowledges the shift towards a net-zero carbon economy by 2045, impacting the sector's energy use, materials, and transportation.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 Overall Approach

A combination of detailed assessment, industry best practice, and professional judgment has informed the approach to this assessment. The methodologies for each technical element of this report are detailed in their individual sections (**Section 1.3.6.1** and **Section 1.3.6.2**) below.

1.3.2 Data Sources

The following information sources have been utilised for the purposes of this report:

- National Records of Scotland[8];
- Office for National Statistics (ONS)[9];
- Argyll and Bute Council[10];
- Visit Scotland[11];
- Sustrans[12];
- BiGGAR Economics Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014 (2015)[13];
- BiGGAR Economics (2021) Case Study of Crossdykes Wind Farm[14];
- ONS (2024) Non-financial Business Economy, UK Regional Results: Sections A to S, Scotland, 2008 to 2020; and
- Scottish Government (2022) Supply, Use and Output Tables.

1.3.3 Study Area

The socio-economic Study Area will be focused on the local Council (Argyll and Bute) area, in order to comply with Policy 11 of NPF4 and determine the local net-economic benefit of the Proposed Development. Economic impacts at a regional (Scotland) and national (United Kingdom) scale are also considered where applicable.

1.3.3.1 Tourism Study Area

[7] https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s196911/AISTP%20Strategy%202022-2025%20FINAL%20VERSION%20Updated%202023.pdf (Accessed 30/09/2024)
[8] National Records of Scotland (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[9] Office for National Statistics (Accessed 05/0/2024)
[10] https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[11] Visit Scotland (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[12] Sustrans (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[13] BiGGAR Economics (2015) Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014 (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[14] https://biggareconomics.co.uk/crossdykes-wind-farm-impact-case-study (Accessed 30/09/2024)

The Study Area for tourism has been informed by professional judgment, industry best practice, and relevant experience. Impacts on tourist receptors are considered within a 10km radius of the proposed turbine locations (Tourism Study Area) to capture the receptors that are most likely to experience impacts and residual effects as a result of the Proposed Development. The Tourism Study Area is shown in **Figure 5.1.1** and **Figure 5.1.2**.

1.3.3.2 Recreational Study Area

The Study Area for recreation has been informed by professional judgment, industry best practice, and relevant experience. Impacts on recreational receptors are considered within a 5km radius of the proposed turbine locations (Recreational Study Area) to capture the receptors that are most likely to experience impacts and residual effects as a result of the Proposed Development. Upon further assessment, it was found that there would not be any likely significant effects beyond 5km of the Proposed Development. To keep the assessment proportionate, a 5km Recreational Study Area has been deemed to be appropriate. The Recreational Study Area is shown in **Figure 5.1.3**.

1.3.4 Baseline Studies

Baseline data for each technical element has been established through a desk-based study. This included a review of the information sources, noted in **Section 1.3.2** above, to establish receptors within each technical area's given Study Area (as identified in **Section 1.3.3**). Where applicable, national, and regional information/studies are referenced to provide context on local results.

The socio-economic baseline assessment includes:

- Up-to-date discourse surrounding the impacts of wind farms on social and economic trends;
- Population figures; and
- Information on the size and performance of the local economy.

The tourism baseline assessment provides information on:

- Up-to-date discourse surrounding the impacts of wind farms on tourism;
- Tourist and visitor trends;
- Tourist trips and expenditure;
- Accommodation occupancy; and
- Tourist activities / receptors.

The recreation baseline assessment provides information on:

- Core paths;
- Forestry Tracks;
- Cycle routes; and
- Any other recreational features within the Recreational Study Area.

1.3.5 Study Limitations

Study limitations include:

- Gross Value Added (GVA) and employment multipliers from the Scottish Government are based on 2019 data. This is the most current data available at the time of assessment and the multiplier values cannot be amended to account for 2024 market values. In Green Cat Renewable's (GCR) professional judgement, this assessment still reflects the most likely economic and employment outcomes for the Proposed Development, as every attempt has been made to use the most up-to-date information;

- Baseline data for different areas and/or assessments may be derived from different dates. Where possible, the most up-to-date and reflective data will be used; and
- Whilst efforts have been made to ensure that key tourism and recreation facilities in the area have been identified, it is possible that there are a number of small attractions that may not have been identified through the data collection process.

1.3.6 Assessment of Impacts

1.3.6.1 Socio-Economics

The socio-economic assessment has been based on a quantitative, desk-based assessment to determine the likely impacts of the Proposed Development on the local economy. Direct impacts will be estimated using the RenewableUK study, *Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014* (2015)[15] which utilised 20 case studies from across the UK to develop a framework for calculating the project spend per annum, employment opportunities, and GVA contributions of the given onshore wind farm developments. Numbers taken from the RenewableUK study have been amended to reflect 2024 market values by utilising annual data on business turnover from the Office of National Statistics (ONS). Induced and indirect impacts will then be calculated from these results using Standard Industrial Classifications (SIC) and Supply, Use, and Output Tables multipliers from the Scottish Government.

This assessment has considered the economic and employment impacts of the Proposed Development within the Socio-Economic Study Area. These impacts have been defined as Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Jobs, FTE Job Years, and Gross Value Added (GVA). These impacts will be expressed as:

- Direct impacts: employment opportunities during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development. The nature and scale of the economic impact will be determined by the total cost of the Proposed Development, where materials are sourced from and the cost of labour.
- Indirect impacts: employment opportunities created down the supply chain by companies providing services to the Proposed Development during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases; and
- Induced impacts: measured by the employment created by the additional spend of wages into the local economy and through the purchasing of basic materials, equipment and office space for staff.

Direct impacts have been estimated utilising the 2015 RenewableUK Report[16] as well as the ONS Non-financial Business Economy, UK and Regional Result data[17]. Both data sources have been amended to reflect 2024 market values. Using the results generated, the indirect and induced impacts have been calculated by applying Scottish Government Type I and Type II multipliers[18]. Type I variables have been used to estimate the indirect impacts which are created by more people working in onshore wind which will mean a higher demand for planners, consultants, construction workers, manufacturing, etc. Type II multipliers have been used to calculate the induced impacts, which are caused by the proportion of increased income being re-spent on final products (e.g. the more money the output creates, the more jobs will be created as a result).

The multipliers utilised are dependent on the SIC the work belongs to, which varies with each phase of the Proposed Development, as the type of works associated with each phase varies. Using the RenewableUK

[15] RenewableUK (2015). Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014. (Accessed 15/08/2024)
[16] RenewableUK (2015). Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014. (Accessed 15/08/2024)
[17] ONS (2022) available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessservices/datasets/uknonfinancialbusinesseconomyannualbusinesssurveyregionalresultssectionsas
[18] Scottish Government (2023) available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/about-supply-use-input-output-tables/pages/user-guide-multipliers/

2015 study, the main industries for each phase could be estimated. For the purposes of this assessment, any contracts placed overseas are not included in calculating the local and regional employment and economic benefits.

For the purposes of the Proposed Development, a conservative, 'worst-case' scenario will be utilised. This is based on six turbines, with a generating capacity of up to 7.2MW and a combined generating capacity of up to 45MW. This is the lowest generating capacity anticipated for the Proposed Development. Should the generating capacity of the Proposed Development increase, it can be reasonably assumed that the associated socio-economic benefits will also increase.

The 20MW BESS will not be included for the purposes of this quantitative assessment as there is a lack of publicly available data and/or frameworks for calculating the employment and economic impacts of BESS facilities.

1.3.6.2 Tourism and Recreation

The tourism and recreational assessment is based on a qualitative, desk-based assessment to determine the likely impacts of the Proposed Development (inclusive of BESS) on any estimated changes in tourist and recreation-related behaviours and activities. This includes:

- Loss, closure or diversion of routes;
- Obstructing access routes or enhancing access;
- Reduction or enhancement of amenity value; and
- Changes in setting and context of the recreational resource.

For the purposes of this assessment, amenity is considered to be a combination of visual amenity and noise levels experienced by the users of tourist attractions, recreational facilities and accommodation.

A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) will also be used to guide this assessment. The ZTV shows the number of turbines theoretically visible throughout the 10km Tourism Study Area and the 5km Recreation Study Area. The figures included in these assessments are:

- **Figure 5.1.1 –** Accommodation ZTV;
- **Figure 5.1.2 –** Tourism ZTV; and
- **Figure 5.1.3 –** Recreation ZTV.

The ZTVs will be used to determine which tourist receptors will be assessed within this report. Receptors with no visibility of the Proposed Development will be scoped out of the assessment; however, ZTVs do not take account of built development and vegetation, which can significantly reduce the area and extent of actual visibility. An element of professional judgment will therefore be used to determine if views of the Proposed Development are visible from certain receptors.

1.3.6.2.1 Impact of Wind Farms on Tourism and Recreation

Tourism and recreation assessments evaluate the tourism economy by examining visitor spending and sector-supported employment. A change in visitor behaviour, such as avoiding an area or not recommending it due to a wind farm development, must occur to impact spending. This would lead to decreased spending and employment at local attractions or accommodations.

Visitor surveys show that people visit areas for various reasons, including scenery, landscape, history, culture, and reputation. The susceptibility of tourism sites to changes in their surroundings varies depending on:

- Their importance to the local tourism economy:
- Their users; and

- The reasons for their appeal (views, heritage, historical value, local folklore, etc).

The impact of a wind farm development correlates to:

- Distance from the development; and
- Interaction between the development and the site's features.

The combined effect of an attraction's susceptibility to change and the impact of the development determines the relative impact on the tourism economy. For these changes to affect the tourism economy, they must lead to reduced visitor spending and employment.[19]

1.3.6.2.2 Published Data on Wind Farms, Tourism and Recreation

In 2021, BiGGAR Economics analysed the relationship between onshore wind farm construction and tourism employment at national, regional, and local levels. The report found that despite a significant increase in onshore wind turbines in Scotland from 1,082 in 2009 to 3,772 in 2019, tourism-related employment increased by 20%.[20]

At the local authority level, areas with the largest increase in wind farm development also saw equal or greater increases in tourism employment compared to other areas in Scotland. The study included case studies of 44 onshore wind farms built between 2009 and 2019, examining tourism employment changes within 15km of each site. Of the 28 wind farms analysed before 2015, 18 areas experienced above-average increases in tourism employment. Among the 16 wind farms built between 2015 and 2019, 11 areas saw increases surpassing the Scottish average. This indicates that tourism employment changes were independent of nearby wind farms.

The report concluded that onshore wind farms in Scotland did not negatively affect tourism economies at the national, local, or immediate levels. Factors contributing to this conclusion include:

- High public support for renewable energy;
- Tourists' expectation of seeing wind farms, especially in rural Scotland;
- Success factors for tourism not being related to wind farm presence; and
- Influences on tourism such as travel ability, economic performance, exchange rates, quality of tourism products, destination marketing, and service value.

1.4 Baseline

The following document gives an overview of up-to-date discourse surrounding the socio-economic impacts of wind farms:

RenewableUK commissioned BiGGAR Economics to write Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014[21]. It is stated that a typical UK wind farm will invest £2.97 million per MW throughout its development, construction, and operation and maintenance stages, 47% will be spent, and 27% will be retained in the local economy. Of these three stages, construction, and operation and maintenance of the Site will generate the most money for the local economy.

This information informs the socio-economic assessment and is presented further in **Section 1.3.6.1** as it provides an empirical way of calculating the economic contribution of an individual wind farm to the regional and national economy.[21]

[19] Moffat Centre (2008), The Economic Impact of Wind Farms on Scottish Tourism (Accessed 10/09/2024)
[20] BiGGAR Economics (2021), Wind Farms & Tourism Trends in Scotland: Evidence from 44 Wind Farms (Accessed 10/09/2024)
[21] Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014 (Accessed 05/09/2024)

1.4.1.1 Population

The National Records of Scotland (NRS) Mid-2022 Population Estimates stated that Scotland had a population of 5,479,900 as of the 30th of June 2022[22]. The population increased by 13,900 people (0.25%) in the year to the 30 June 2021. The average annual growth in the 5 years before the COVID-19 pandemic was higher, at around 23,100 people (0.43%). This is largely due to the high rate of deaths, as there were 14,600 more deaths than births. Scotland covers an area of 7.9 million hectares, with an overall density of 70 people per square kilometre, the most sparsely populated country in the UK[23].

As of the 30 June 2022, the population of Argyll and Bute was 87,920. Argyll and Bute covers a land area of 6,909 per square kilometre, accounting for 9% of Scotland's total land area. Argyll and Bute have the fourth sparsest population of the 32 Scottish local authorities, with an average population density of 13 persons per hectare.

The population structure for Argyll and Bute and Scotland, according to the ONS are set out in **Table 1.1**.

TABLE 1.1 – ARGYLL AND BUTE AND SCOTLAND AGE DEMOGRAPHICS (ONS)

Age Group	Argyll and Bute (No.)	Argyll and Bute (%)	Scotland (No.)	Scotland (%)
0-15	12,518	14.2	939,260	16.6
16-64	51,868	59.0	3,498,240	63.8
65+	23,534	20.1	1,041,540	19.6
All Ages	87,920	100	5,479,000	100

Table 1.1 shows that 59% of Argyll and Bute's population is aged between 16-64. It also highlights that Argyll and Bute's 65+ demographic (20.1%) is larger than that of Argyll and Bute's 0-15 demographic (14.2%) suggesting that Argyll and Bute has an ageing population.

1.4.1.2 Employment

The below figures have been informed by NOMIS Labour Market Profiles (March 2024).[24] The information provided by NOMIS is available at a local authority-wide and regional-wide level, showing economic activity, the availability of labour, and employment demand. The working age population will be defined as those people aged between 16-64 years in line with NOMIS calculations.

TABLE 1.2 – ECONOMIC ACTIVITY FOR ARGYLL AND BUTE, SCOTLAND, AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

	Argyll and Bute (No.)	Scotland (No.)	United Kingdom (No.)
Employment Activity rate (aged 16-64)	39,600	2,761,000	34,368,000
Unemployment Activity Rate (age 16-64)	1,200	109,000	1,439,000

[22] Mid-2022 Population Estimates Scotland (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[23] Scotland – Statistics and Facts (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[24] https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157408/report.aspx (Accessed 30/09/2024)

	Argyll and Bute (£)	Scotland (£)	United Kingdom (No.)
Average Gross Weekly Pay for Full-Time Workers by Place of Residence	653.6	640.3	642.2

Table 1.2 shows that 39,600 of these people are economically active in Argyll and Bute, and around 1,200 or 3.1% of these people are unemployed. This is less than the Scottish and UK unemployment rate of 4%. It does reveal that the average weekly pay for full-time workers is Argyll and Bute is £13.30 more than the Scottish average and £11.40 more than the United Kingdom average.

Table 1.3 provides a breakdown of employment and employment sectors across Argyll and Bute, Scotland and the United Kingdom.[25]

TABLE 1.3 - PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED BY SECTOR IN ARGYLL AND BUTE, SCOTLAND AND THE UNITED KINGDOM (2022)

Areas of Employment	Argyll and Bute (%)	Scotland (%)	United Kingdom (%)
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning	1.1	0.8	0.4
Construction	5.6	5.7	4.9
Wholesale and Retail Trade - repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	11.1	12.9	14.0
Transport and Storage	4.2	4.1	5.0
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	13.9	8.4	8
Public Administration and Defence - Compulsory Social Security	11.1	6.5	4.7
Human Health and Social Work Activities	12.5	15.7	13.5

Table 1.3 reveals that Argyll and Bute support a broad range of economic activity. It also shows that some of the numbers employed in each sector are broadly in line with the regional and national average, whereas others, such as Accommodation and Food Services represent a higher rate of employment of 13.9%, compared to 8.4% within Scotland, and 8.0% within the UK. The largest employment sectors in Argyll and Bute are Human Health and Social Work (12.5%), Wholesale and Retail Trade (11.1%) and Accommodation and Food Service Activities (13.9%).

Of importance to this assessment are the numbers of people employed in sectors that could potentially benefit from the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. **Table 1.3** shows that 5.6% of Argyll and Bute's workforce are employed in construction. This is in line with Scotland's average and higher than the UK's average. The other sectors which may benefit from the Proposed Development are electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning, which employs 1.1% of Argyll and Bute's workforce and accommodation and food services which employs 13.9% of Argyll and Bute's workforce. As mentioned previously this is higher than the Scottish and UK averages. As both industries employ more than or equal to the Scottish and UK average, it is anticipated that employment-based opportunities will be abundant throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development within Argyll and Bute.

[25] https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157408/report.aspx (Accessed 05/09/2024)

1.4.2 Tourism

1.4.2.1 Tourism in Scotland

Tourism is one of Scotland's largest industries which supports an estimated 209,000 jobs and 9% of Scotland's population.[26] In 2019, there were approximately 17.6 million overnight trips and 34-million-day trips taken within Scotland, which totalled a visitor expenditure of around £5.7 billion. Tourism is a key aspect in the social, economic, and cultural well-being of Scotland. The industry is relied upon for jobs and infrastructure, from cities to rural areas.

1.4.2.2 Tourism in Argyll and Bute

Tourism holds a vital role in the Argyll and Bute region, contributing significantly to the local economy with an estimated value of £276 million.[27]

In 2019**,** Argyll and Bute experienced around 846,000 visits from UK residents, resulting in over 3 million overnight stays and expenditure of £199 million. Overseas visitors made 147,000 trips, contributing 548,000 nights, and spending £62 million[28]. This showcases the region's popularity among both domestic and international tourists, underlining its significance as a tourism destination.

1.4.2.3 Accommodation

There is the potential for tourists to be affected by views of the Proposed Development from their place of lodging, or whilst en-route to their accommodation. The key aspect of this is whether views of the Proposed Development would affect visitors' decision to visit or return to an area. It is also important to consider if increased traffic will impact a tourist's decision to visit, or return, to a specific accommodation provider. **Figure 5.1.1 – Accommodation ZTV** shows accommodation within a 10km Accommodation Study Area of the Proposed Development.

Table 1.4 shows the occupancy of different types of accommodation in Argyll and Bute.[29]

TABLE 1.4 – MONTHLY OCCUPANCY RATES BY ACCOMMODATION TYPE IN ARGYLL AND BUTE (VISIT SCOTLAND, 2021)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Hotel	62%	64%	67%	76%	83%	87%	83%	87%	82%	77%	62%	61%	74%
B&B	37%	48%	34%	45%	72%	70%	74%	86%	69%	46%	38%	17%	52%
Self-Catering	43%	50%	54%	55%	63%	63%	67%	71%	59%	53%	35%	40%	54%
Hostel	16%	31%	32%	56%	66%	60%	67%	72%	60%	43%	26%	27%	27%

Table 1.4 shows that the availability of accommodation varies across accommodation types, and at different times throughout the year. Hotels appear to have the highest occupancy rates across both Argyll and Bute, reaching 87% in June and August.

[26] Tourism Employment in Scotland (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[27] VisitScotland (2021) (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[28] VisitScotland (2021) (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[29] VisitScotland (2021) (Accessed 05/09/2024)

For the purpose of this assessment, it is important to note the accommodation availability, as it is likely that accommodation will be needed for some on-site workers during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development.

1.4.2.4 Tourist Attractions

There are a variety of different attractions within Argyll and Bute that attract tourists from the UK and overseas. The top-rated, paid tourist attractions in Argyll and Bute in 2019, according to Visit Scotland[30], are listed in **Table 1.5** below.

TABLE 1.5 – TOP-RATED, PAID TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN ARGYLL AND BUTE IN 2019 (VISIT SCOTLAND, 2021)

Attraction	Visitor numbers (2019)
Inveraray Castle	125,462
Iona Abbey & St Columba Centre	63,884
Oban Distillery Visitor Centre	57,031
Benmore Botanic Garden	53,318
Mount Stuart	42,809

The top-rated, free tourist attractions in Argyll and Bute in 2019, according to Visit Scotland[31] are listed in **Table 1.6** below.

TABLE 1.6 – TOP-RATED, FREE TOURIST ATTRACTION IN ARGYLL AND BUTE 2019 (VISIT SCOTLAND, 2021)

Attraction	Visitor numbers (2019)
Argyll Forest Park	151,538
Staffa National Nature Reserve	107,725
Oban War and Peace Museum	33,310
Iona	29,808
Aros Park	19,710

Of the top listed free and paid tourist attractions in Argyll and Bute in 2019, none are located within 10km (Tourism Study Area) of the Proposed Development.

The following table (**Table 1.7**) lists all tourist receptors that are located within the 10km Tourism Study Area for the Proposed Development. The distance has been measured from the proposed turbine locations. Tourist receptors have been identified through a desk-based online search consisting of Google, Visit Scotland[32] and Trip Advisor[33]. The following receptors are also highlighted in **Figure 5.1.2 – Tourism ZTV**.

[30] VisitScotland (2021) (Accessed 05/09/2024)
[31] https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/regions/argyll-isles (Accessed 13/09/2024)
[32] https://www.visitscotland.com/places-to-go/argyll-isles (Accessed 13/09/2024)
[33] https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attractions-g186497-Activities-Argyll_and_Bute_Scotland.html (Accessed 13/09/2024)

TABLE 1.7 – TOURIST RECEPTORS WITHIN 10KM OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Attraction Name	Distance to the Receptor from the nearest turbine
Angus's Garden Memorial	2.8km
Argyll Safaris	5.2km
Bonawe Historic Iron Furnace	6.2km
McCaig's Tower and Battery Hill	7.1km
Ardchattan Priory Gardens	5.0km
Oban War and Peace Museum	7.3km
Oban Distillery	7.2km
Ocean Explorer Centre	6.7km
Dunstaffnage Castle and Chapel	6.7km
Dunollie Museum, Castle, and Grounds	8.0km

1.4.2.5 Recreational Facilities

Several recreational facilities are located within the 5km Recreation Study Area from the Proposed Development, as listed in **Table 1.8** below. The following receptors are also highlighted in **Figure 5.1.3 – Recreation ZTV.**

Core Paths in Argyll and Bute are viewed as a strategic route to connect networks and destinations. They are used commonly for recreational purposes such as walking, jogging, cycling and horse riding. They are protected under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.[34]

TABLE 1.8 – TABLE OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WITHIN 5KM OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Recreation Type	Description	
Core Paths	**Core Path Name**	**Distance to Nearest Turbine**
	C157 (Taynuilt to Airds)	4.7km
	C160 (Taynuilt to Oban)	0.95km
	C177 (Black Lochs, Kilvaree, Connel	2.1km
	C152 (Oban to Appin)	3.4km
Cycle Routes	Route 78 – National Cycle Network	0.95km
Forestry Tacks	These are not designated paths. However, they run throughout Fearnoch	0.4km

Recreation Type	Description	
	Forest and intersect the eastern section of the Application Boundary.	

1.5 Assessment of Impacts

1.5.1 Socio-Economics

Using the 2015 RenewableUK Report[35], the average expenditure during the construction, operation and maintenance phases can be estimated based on the average spend per megawatt (MW). The average spend per MW varies depending on the phase of the Proposed Development and accrues either internationally, nationally (into the English region or Scotland) or within the individual local authority area. Numbers have been amended to reflect 2024 market value. International socio-economic effects have not been scoped out of the assessment as the socio-economic benefits will be experienced elsewhere.

It should be noted that jobs are based on the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) metric. An FTE job standardises employee workload, equalling one full-time position, usually 40 hours per week. It combines full- and part-time roles into a single metric for staffing, budgeting, and productivity.

1.5.1.1 Construction Phase Impacts

The RenewableUK study estimated that the weighted average cost to construct an onshore wind farm would be approximately £1.32 million per MW installed capacity per annum, or £1.58 million per MW at current 2024 market value. The study also estimated that 36% of construction expenditure typically occurs within Scotland and 12% within the local authority area. These calculations have been used to inform **Table 1.9** based on six turbines with a potential generating capacity of 43.2MW. Numbers have been amended to reflect 2024 market value.

TABLE 1.9 – ESTIMATED SPEND DURING THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE (GREEN CAT RENEWABLES CALCULATION BASED ON RENEWABLEUK ASSUMPTIONS)

Geographical Region	Percentage of Total Construction Spend (%)	BiGGAR Weighted Spend per MW (£)	Amended 2024 Market Value	Cruach Clenamacrie Calculated Spend (£)
Argyll and Bute	12	158,501	189,423	8,183,089
Scotland	36	480,182	573,862	24,790,836
UK	47	613,312	732,965	31,664,071

Note: Regional/national percentage of spend is inclusive of local spend. UK spend is inclusive of regional/national percentage of spend. International spend for construction phase is 53% of total spend. Spend per MW for the construction phase applies for the whole construction phase. International spend accounts for the remaining 53% of construction spend; however, as noted above in Section 1.5.1, international effects have been scoped out of this assessment.

Table 1.9 shows that the total estimated spend during the construction phase within the UK is £31.7 million, of which £24.8 million is expected to be spent within Scotland including up to £8.2 million expected to be spent in Argyll and Bute.

[35] RenewableUK (2015). Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014. (Accessed 15/08/2024)

RenewableUK estimated that the three main areas of construction spend are for the turbine, grid connection, and 'balance of plant' which accounts for all the facilities/infrastructure of a wind turbine installation except for the turbine itself. The majority of spend within Argyll and Bute would fall within the 'balance of plant' and would compromise of Contracts being placed with construction companies, contractors, civil engineers and consultancies in terms of:

- Concrete production;
- Civils Contractor;
- Electrical Contractor;
- Haulage and storage of abnormal loads;
- Hire of physical plant including cranes; and
- Accommodation and subsistence costs for work crews.

The RenewableUK study also created a framework for estimating impacts from the Proposed Development, in the form of FTEs and GVA. This indicated that, on average, there is one employee for every £137,942 in turnover and a GVA turnover rate of 0.432. Again, this varies depending on the phase of the Proposed Development, but not depending on the locality. These numbers have also been amended to reflect 2024 market values, using non-financial business economy, UK and regional result data from the ONS. This indicated that on average, there is one FTE employee for every £206,808 in turnover and a GVA turnover rate of 0.437.

The estimated number of jobs and GVA created are shown in **Table 1.10**.

TABLE 1.10 ESTIMATED JOB CREATION AND GVA DURING THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE (GREEN CAT RENEWABLES CALCULATIONS BASED ON RENEWABLEUK ASSUMPTIONS)

Geographical Region	Cruach Clenamacrie Calculated Spend (£)	Estimated FTE Jobs (inc displacement)	Estimated GVA
Argyll and Bute	8,183,089	36	3,572,535
Scotland	24,790,836	108	10,823,068
UK	31,664,071	138	13,823,753

As shown in **Table 1.10**, it is estimated that the Proposed Development could create up to 36 FTE jobs and contribute up to £3.6 million in GVA within Argyll and Bute during the construction phase. It is also estimated that in total up to 108 FTE jobs could be created across Scotland with a GVA contribution of up to £10.8 million.

A displacement factor of 10% has been applied to the direct jobs numbers calculated above. There is assumed to be no deadweight or substitution, as this is a new project. Based on an 18 month construction phase, the FTE job years are anticipated to be 54 FTE job years.

By applying the Type I and Type II Scottish Government multipliers to the numbers calculated in **Table 1.10**, the indirect and induced impacts for the CAPEX phase can be calculated for Argyll and Bute. These are as follows:

- 11 indirect FTE jobs and 11 induced FTE job years;
- 16 indirect FTE jobs years and 16 induced FTE job years; and
- £1.07 million indirect GVA and £1.07 million induced GVA.

Further, by applying assumptions made by BiGGAR Economics' economic case study of Crossdyke's Wind Farm (that only 22% of indirect impacts and 47% of induced impacts will be felt locally[36]), more realistic indirect and induced CAPEX impacts within the local area can be estimated:

- 2 indirect FTE jobs and 5 induced FTE job years;
- 4 indirect FTE jobs years and 8 induced FTE job years; and
- £235,787 indirect GVA and £503,727 induced GVA.

Overall, this means that within Argyll and Bute, during the CAPEX phase, there will be an estimated:

- Net employment impact of 43 FTE jobs (36 direct, 2 indirect and 5 induced);
- Net employment impact of 66 FTE job years (54 direct, 4 indirect and 8 induced); and
- Net economic impact of £4.3 million (£3.6 million direct, £235,787 indirect and £503,727 induced).

1.5.1.2 Operational Phase Impacts

Table 1.11 shows the calculated average spend during the operational and maintenance phase of the Proposed Development, as taken from the RenewableUK study (2015).[37] Again, these values have been amended to reflect 2024 market values.

TABLE 1.11 – THE ESTIMATED SPEND DURING THE OPERATIONAL PHASE (GREEN CAT RENEWABLE CALCULATION BASED ON RENEWABLEUK ASSUMPTIONS)

Geographical Region	Percentage of Total Operation & Maintenance Spend (%)	BiGGAR Weighted Spend per MW (£)	Amended 2024 Market Value	Cruach Clenamacrie Calculated Spend (£)
Argyll and Bute	42	25,244	30,169	1,303,297
Scotland	58	34,587	41,335	1,785,658
UK	87	51,992	62,135	2,684,243

Note: Regional/national percentage of spend is inclusive of local spend. UK spend is inclusive of regional/national percentage of spend. International spend for construction phase is 13% of total spend. Spend per MW for the operational phase is per annum. International spend accounts for the remaining 13% of operational spend; however, as noted above in Section 1.5.1, international effects have been scoped out of this assessment

Table 1.11 shows that 87% of operational expenditure tends to occur within the UK, with 42% spent in the local area. This also indicates that over £1.8 million in operational spend will be spent within the Scottish economy, of which over £1.3 million will be spent across Argyll and Bute.

Research generated by RenewableUK also indicates that, on average, there is one employee for every £121,935 in turnover and a GVA turnover rate of 0.430. These numbers have also been amended to reflect 2024 market values, and on average, there is one employee for every £178,588 in turnover and a GVA turnover rate of 0.491. Using the assumptions from **Table 1.11** based on operational spend, the employment rate and GVA turnover can be estimated. This is set out in **Table 1.12**.

[36] BiGGAR Economics (2021) available at: https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/ofgzq5bkdor9utbcd8nai/AHWYmlQnjiJp9iT1VYiQkAE/Volume%203?e=1&preview=Volume+3+-+Appendix+14A+Case+Study+of+Crossdykes+Wind+Farm.pdf&rlkey=vdxpyb4g502x8wsx3jrvq99ip&subfolder_nav_tracking=1&dl=0

[37] Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014 (2015) Accessed 09/09/2024

TABLE 1.12 – ESTIMATED JOB CREATION AND GVA DURING THE OPERATIONAL PHASE (GREEN CAT RENEWABLES CALCULATION BASED ON RENEWABLEUK ASSUMPTIONS)

Geographical Region	Cruach Clenamacrie Calculated Spend (£)	Estimated FTE Jobs (inc displacement)	Estimated GVA
Argyll and Bute	1,303,297	6	639,824
Scotland	1,785,658	8	876,628
UK	2,684,243	12	1,317,767

As shown in **Table 1.12**, it is estimated that the Proposed Development could create up to 6 FTE jobs and contribute up to £639,824 annually in GVA during the operational phase in Argyle and Bute. It is also estimated that in total up to 8 FTE jobs could be created across Scotland and a GVA contribution of up to £876,628.

A displacement factor of 10% has been applied to the direct jobs numbers calculated above. There is assumed to be no deadweight or substitution, as this is a new project. Based on a 50-year operational phase, the FTE job years are anticipated to be 300 FTE job years.

By applying the Type I and Type II Scottish Government multipliers to the numbers calculated in **Table 1.12**, the indirect and induced impacts for the OPEX phase can be calculated for Argyll and Bute. These are as follows:

- 4 indirect FTE jobs and 2 induced FTE job years;
- 180 indirect FTE jobs years and 90 induced FTE job years; and
- £255,930 million indirect GVA and £191,947 million induced GVA, annually.

Further, by applying assumptions made by BiGGAR Economics' economic case study of Crossdyke's Wind Farm (that only 22% of indirect impacts and 47% of induced impacts will be felt locally), more realistic indirect and induced OPEX impacts within the local area can be estimated:

- 1 indirect FTE jobs and 1 induced FTE job years;
- 40 indirect FTE jobs years and 42 induced FTE job years; and
- £56,305 indirect GVA and £90,215 induced GVA, annually.

Overall, this means that within Argyll and Bute, during the OPEX phase, there will be an estimated:

- Net employment impact of 8 FTE jobs (6 direct, 1 indirect and 1 induced);
- Net employment impact of 382 FTE job years (300 direct, 40 indirect and 42 induced); and
- Net economic impact of £786,344 (£639,824 direct, £56,305 indirect and £90,215 induced).

1.5.1.3 Socio-Economic Conclusions

The Proposed Development would comprise up to six turbines of approximately 45MW that will generate electricity for the local electricity network. **Section 1.5.1.1** and **Section 1.5.1.2** have shown that the Proposed Development will provide a range of positive opportunities for the local, regional, national, and overseas economies. Of particular interest to this assessment are those which will benefit Argyll and Bute's local economy. It is estimated that throughout the construction and operation phase of the Proposed Development that:

- Up to £8.2 million is anticipated to be spent within the local economy during the construction phase and up to £1.3 million is anticipated to be spent annually during the operational phase;
- Net employment benefit of up to 43 jobs (direct, indirect and induced) will be created across Argyll and Bute during the construction phase, as well as up to 8 jobs (direct, indirect and induced) during

the operational phase. This will provide up to 66 FTE job years during the construction phase and up to 382 job years during the operational phase; and
- Net economic benefit of up to £4.3 million during the construction phase and up to £786,344 (annually) during the operational phase.

Although it cannot be quantified at this time, it is anticipated that there will be beneficial socioeconomic impacts from the BESS facility during the construction and operational phases on employment and GVA at a local, national and UK level.

1.5.2 Tourism

There is the potential for tourist facilities to be affected by views of the Proposed Development if that tourist facility relies on its visual amenity to function, as it may impact visitors' decision to visit a specific attraction.

This section will assess how tourism may be impacted as a result of the Proposed Development. This will be assessed qualitatively.

This assessment will consider changes to the availability, accessibility, and amenity of different tourist receptors. This will largely depend on:

- The status of the tourist facility;
- Any anticipated changes to tourist numbers as a result of the Proposed Development; and
- Any anticipated change to the tourism economy as a result of the Proposed Development.

1.5.2.1 Construction Phase Impacts

The main impacts that could be potentially experienced during construction are:

- Disruptions on the local road networks as a result of general construction traffic and during the transportation of abnormal loads; and
- Visual/Noise impacts from machinery and on-site activity.

Table 1.13 provides a summary of the predicted impacts during the construction phase.

TABLE 1.13 – CONSTRUCTION PHASE ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON TOURISM

Tourist Receptor	Discussion
Angus's Garden Memorial	Some views of the Proposed Development's construction are expected to be visible from the grounds of the attraction (**EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).** However, it is anticipated that the majority of views will be screened by the woodland situated between the garden and the Proposed Development. No noise is anticipated to be audible from Angus's Garden Memorial **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** Some views may be visible when travelling to the facility via the A85; however, this is not expected to impact tourist numbers, economic revenue, or the appreciation of the facility **(Figure 5.1.2) (EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).** There may be a small increase in traffic if travelling on the A85 and A828 as there will be an increase in the number of vehicles visiting the Site; however, it is unlikely that there will be a noticeable increase from the standard day-to-day haulage. Construction traffic will be managed by utilising a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) **(EIA Report Chapter 12: Transport and Access)**.

Tourist Receptor	Discussion
	There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Angus's Garden Memorial during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Argyll Safaris	Some views of the Proposed Development's construction are expected to be visible from the open space and immediate roads throughout the guided tour route **(EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).** However, much of the views will be adequately screened given the woodland surrounding the area **(Figure 5.1.2)**. Any views of the Proposed Development will only be visible for a short period, as the tours start in Oban and then continue northwards. Any changes to visitor numbers, economic revenue or the appreciation of the facility are expected to be minor. No noise is anticipated to be audible from the safari tours **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** There may be a small increase in traffic if travelling to the attraction via the A85 and A828 as there will be an increase in the number of vehicles visiting the Site; however, it is unlikely that there will be a noticeable increase from the standard day-to-day haulage. Construction traffic will be managed via a CTMP **(EIA Report Chapter 12: Transport and Access)**. There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Argyll Safaris during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Bonawe Historic Iron Furnace	It is expected that the construction phase will be partially visible from Bonawe Historic Iron Furnace **(EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).** However, due to the surrounding woodland and built-up urban environment of Taynuilt, it is anticipated that views of construction activity will be sufficiently screened. No noise is anticipated to be audible from the castle **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** There may be a small increase in traffic if travelling to the attraction via the A85 as there will be an increase in the number of vehicles visiting the Site; however, it is unlikely that there will be a noticeable increase from the standard day-to-day haulage. Construction traffic will be managed via a CTMP **(EIA Report Chapter 12: Transport and Access)**. There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Bonawe Historic Iron Furnace during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
McCaig's Tower and Battery Hill	It is expected that the construction phase will be partially visible from McCaig's Tower and Battery Hill grounds when facing in an easterly direction. However, due to the urban area surrounding the attraction it is anticipated that views of construction activity will be sufficiently screened. It should also be noted that the primary views from the tower are west, looking outwards to the coast. No noise is anticipated to be audible from the attraction **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** There may be a small increase in traffic if travelling to the attraction via the A816 or A85 as there will be an increase in the number of vehicles visiting the Site; however, it is unlikely that there will be a noticeable increase from the standard day-to-day haulage. Construction traffic will be managed via a CTMP **(EIA Report Chapter 12: Transport and Access)**.

Tourist Receptor	Discussion
	There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at McCaig's Tower and Battery Hill during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Oban Distillery	Oban Distillery is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the construction phase **(Figure 5.1.2).** No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** Any increases in traffic are anticipated to be unnoticeable compared to regular day-to-day haulage. There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Oban Distillery during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Ocean Explorer Centre	Ocean Explorer Centre is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the construction phase **(Figure 2).** No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** Any increases in traffic are anticipated to be unnoticeable compared to regular day-to-day haulage. There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at the Ocean Explorer Centre during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Dunstaffnage Castle and Chapel	Dunstaffnage Castle and Chapel is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the construction phase **(Figure 5.1.2).** No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** Any increases in traffic are anticipated to be unnoticeable compared to regular day-to-day haulage. There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Dunstaffnage Castle and Chapel during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Dunollie Museum, Castle, and Grounds	Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the construction phase. This is due to the dense woodland surrounding the attraction which blocks all views of the Proposed Development **(Figure 5.1.2).** No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** Any increases in traffic are anticipated to be unnoticeable compared to regular day-to-day haulage. There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Oban War and Peace Museum	Oban War and Peace Museum is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the construction phase **(Figure 5.1.2).** This is due to the built-up urban environment of Oban blocking all views to the east. No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** Any increases in traffic are anticipated to be unnoticeable compared to regular day-to-day haulage.

Tourist Receptor	Discussion
	There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at the Oban War and Peace Museum during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Ardchattan Priory Gardens	Views of the Proposed Development's construction are expected to be visible from the grounds of the attraction when facing southwards. It is anticipated that individual trees and small groups within the grounds would provide additional screening in the summer months when visitors are present **(EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).** No noise is anticipated to be audible from Ardchattan Priory Gardens **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Ardchattan Priory Gardens during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Accommodation	Some views of machinery and on-site activity may be visible if the accommodation is facing the Proposed Development. There is a range of accommodation providers within the Tourism Study Area, some of which would not be disrupted by the construction phase, due to a distance of more than 5km from the Proposed Development and lack of visibility of the Proposed Development **(Figure 5.1.1)**. It is likely that during the construction phase, accommodation will be needed for some on-site workers. Where practicable, on-site workers will be allocated to stay in accommodation with lower occupancy rates to reduce any increase in demand for tourist accommodation. As such, it is not considered that the additional demand would affect the availability of accommodation and any small increase in numbers is expected to have a positive impact on the local economy. There may be a small increase in traffic if travelling on the A85 and A816, as there will be an increase in the number of vehicles visiting the Site; however, it is unlikely that there will be a noticeable increase from the standard day-to-day haulage. Construction traffic will be managed by utilising a CTMP (**EIA Chapter 12: Transport and Access**) There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at local accommodations during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

1.5.2.2 Operational Phase Impacts

The main impacts that could be potentially experienced during operation are:

- Views of the turbines and associated infrastructure; and
- Noise impacts from turbines

Table 1.14 provides a summary of the predicted impacts during the operational phase.

TABLE 1.14 – OPERATIONAL PHASE ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON TOURISM

Tourist Receptor	Discussion
Angus's Garden Memorial	There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Angus's Garden Memorial during the operational phase of the Proposed Development. Due to the density of the surrounding forestry, it is estimated that some views of the Proposed Development will be screened. This is only expected to affect a small number of people/activities. **(EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).** No noise will be audible from Angus's Garden Memorial **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).**
Argyll Safaris	Minor views of the Proposed Development are anticipated from the open space and immediate roads throughout the guided tour route **(EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).** However, much of the views will be adequately screened given the surrounding woodland area **(Figure 5.1.2)**. Any views of the Proposed Development will only be visible for a short period, as the tours start in Oban and then continue northwards. Any changes to visitor numbers, economic revenue or the appreciation of the facility are expected to be minor. No noise is anticipated to be audible from the attraction **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** Any changes to visitor numbers, economic revenue or the appreciation of the facility are expected to be minor. There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at the Argyll Safaris as a result of the operational phase of the Proposed Development.
Bonawe Historic Iron Furnace	There are expected to be some views of the Proposed Development when facing a south-westerly direction. However, some of the views of the Proposed Development will be blocked and screened due to the surrounding woodland and built-up urban environment of Taynuilt. **(Figure 5.1.2) (EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).** No noise is anticipated to be audible from the attraction **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Bonawe Historic Iron Furnace as a result of the operational phase of the Proposed Development.
McCaig's Tower and Battery Hill	There are expected to be some views of the Proposed Development when facing an easterly direction. However, the majority of views of the Proposed Development will be blocked and screened due to the surrounding urban development and woodland (**Figure 5.1.2**). As previously noted, the primary views from the tower are west, looking outwards to the coast. This is the opposite direction of the Proposed Development. No noise is anticipated to be audible from the receptor (**EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise**). Any changes to visitor numbers, economic revenue or the appreciation of the facility are expected to be minor. There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at McCaig's Tower and Battery Hill as a result of the operational phase of the Proposed Development.

Tourist Receptor	Discussion
Oban Distillery	Oban Distillery is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the operational phase **(Figure 5.1.2)**. No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor during the operational phase.
Ocean Explorer Centre	Ocean Explorer Centre is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the operational phase **(Figure 5.1.2)**. No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor during the operational phase.
Dunstaffnage Castle and Chapel	Dunstaffnage Castle and Chapel is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the operational phase **(Figure 5.1.3)**. No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor during the operational phase.
Dunollie Museum, Castle, and Grounds	Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the operational phase. This is due to the surrounding woodland blocking all views of the Proposed Development **(Figure 5.1.2)**. No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor during the operational phase.
Oban War and Peace Museum	Oban war and Peace Museum is not included in the assessment because there will be no views of the Proposed Development during the operational phase. This is due to the surrounding woodland blocking all views of the Proposed Development **(Figure 5.1.2)**. No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor during the operational phase.
Ardchattan Priory Gardens	There are expected to be some views of the Proposed Development when facing a southern direction. However, it is anticipated that individual trees and small groups within the grounds would provide additional screening in the summer months when visitors are present (**Figure 5.1.2) (EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).** No noise is anticipated to be audible from the attraction **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise)**. There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at Ardchattan Priory Gardens as a result of the operational phase of the Proposed Development.
Accommodation	There is not expected to be a change in tourism activity at accommodation providers within the Tourism Study Area during the operational phase. Some views of the Proposed Development may be visible if the accommodation is facing the Site **(Figure 5.1.1)**. However, the Proposed Development is not anticipated to further impact the setting and amenity of the various accommodation types. Therefore, it is not considered that the operational phase of the Proposed Development would impact accommodation availability. No noise is expected to be audible from the receptor during the operational phase. Occasionally during the operational phase, accommodation will be needed for some on-site workers. As these stays will be so infrequent and attempts will be made to select accommodation with higher occupancy rates, the availability of accommodation is not expected to change. Any small increase in numbers is expected to have a positive impact on the local economy.

1.5.3 Recreation

This section will assess how recreation may be affected as a result of the Proposed Development. This will be assessed qualitatively.

This assessment will consider changes to the accessibility and amenity of different recreational receptors. This will largely depend on:

- The extent to which the recreational feature relies on its present amenity status to attract visitors; and
- Any anticipated changes to visitor numbers as a result of the Proposed Development.

1.5.3.1 Construction Phase Impacts

The main effects that could be experienced during the construction phase are visual/noise impacts from machinery, on-site activity and construction traffic.

Table 1.15 provides a summary of the predicted effects during the construction phase for receptors in the Recreational Study Area.

TABLE 1.15 – CONSTRUCTION PHASE ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON RECREATION

Recreation Receptor	Discussion
Core Paths	Some views of construction will be visible from some core paths when facing towards the Proposed Development (**Figure 5.1.3**) (**EIA Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual**). The figure highlights that there are several Core Paths within the 5km Study Area and that the Proposed Development is theoretically visible in many instances. The three most impacted core paths with the highest levels of visibility are: • C157 (Taynuilt to Airds); • C177 (Black Lochs, Kilvaree, Connel); and • C152 (Oban to Appin). However, the ZTV does not take into account-built development and vegetation, which can significantly reduce the area and extent of actual visibility. The woodland areas surrounding the above-mentioned paths will provide screening and blocking of the Proposed Development, meaning views of the construction phase will not be constant. It is not anticipated that construction traffic associated with the Proposed Development will impact the core paths (**EIA Chapter 12: Transport and Access**). Noise from the construction site is expected to be negligible for the listed core paths within the Recreational Study Area **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** There is not expected to be a change in recreational activity at the listed core paths during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
C160 (Taynuilt to Oban)/Route 78 – National Cycle Network	The C160/National Cycle Network Route 78 runs close to the Site, with the closest section of the path coming within 700m of the Application Boundary. As a result, the Proposed Development is anticipated to have visual and access impacts on the core path and cycle route during the construction phase. It is anticipated that construction activity will be partially visible from the eastern section of the path **(Figure 5.1.3)**. However, the ZTV does not take into account vegetation, which can

Recreation Receptor	Discussion
	significantly reduce the area and extent of actual visibility of the Proposed Development, meaning views of the construction phase will not be constant. It is not anticipated that construction traffic associated with the Proposed Development will impact the core path (**EIA Chapter 12: Transport and Access).** The total distance of the core path and cycle route is 64km long. As the Proposed Development would only be proximate to users during a relatively short section of the long-distance route, it is not expected that activity on the route would change. Noise from the construction site is not expected to be audible from the core path and cycle route **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).** There is not expected to be a change in recreational activity on Core Path 160/National Cycle Route 78 during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.
Cycle Routes	The majority of core paths can also be used for cycling activities such as mountain biking. Therefore, the effects will be the same as Core Paths. There is not expected to be a change in recreational activity on the National Cycle Route 78. Construction noise would not be audible from the National Cycle Route 78 **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).**
Forestry Tracks	Forestry tracks are not designated. However, they are used for recreational purposes by the public. Forestry tracks run throughout Fearnoch Forest and intersect with the eastern part of the Application Boundary, including large parts of the Proposed Access Track (**Figure 5.1.3**). As a result, the Proposed Development is anticipated to have visual and access impacts on forestry tracks during the construction phase. During the construction phase of the Proposed Development, it is anticipated that the sections of the forestry track affected by construction activities will remain open to the public where appropriate. Mitigation measures such as an Outdoor Access Management Plan (OAMP) which will allow forestry tracks to remain open, will be developed with Argyll and Bute Council and secured via a planning condition. The OAMP is detailed within **EIA Report Chapter 12 Transport and Access** and **Appendix 12.1 Transport Assessment**. Key points to highlight are the efforts to separate users of forest tracks from construction traffic via crossing points, temporary diversions and traffic signage. Path users will also have the right of way. Any closures will be temporary and are not anticipated to be in place throughout the full construction period. Forestry tracks which will be utilised by construction traffic will also be upgraded. Therefore, increasing the recreational value of the tracks once the construction phase is over. It is anticipated that construction activity will be partially visible from the northeastern section of the path (**Figure 5.1.3**). However, the woodland areas surrounding forestry tracks will provide screening and blocking of the Proposed Development, meaning views of the construction phase will not be constant. Noise from the construction site is expected to be audible from the forestry tracks **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise).**

Recreation Receptor	Discussion
	There is not expected to be a change in recreational activity on the forestry tracks during the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

1.5.3.2 Operational Phase Impacts

The main effects that could be experienced during the operational phase are potential views of the turbines and their associated infrastructure and potential noise impacts.

Table 1.16 provides a summary of the predicted effects during the operational phase.

TABLE 1.16 – OPERATIONAL PHASE ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON RECREATION

Tourist Receptor	Discussion
Core Paths	There will be views of the Proposed Development. However, views will not be constant due to the surrounding forestry/topography screening most views of the Proposed Development from the majority of core paths within the Recreational Study Area **(Figure 5.1.3)**. The three most impacted core paths with the highest levels of visibility are: • C157 (Taynuilt to Airds); • C177 (Black Lochs, Kilvaree, Connel); and • C152 (Oban to Appin). However, the Proposed Development is not anticipated to further impact the setting, so views will be unlikely to dominate the landscape. Turbine noise is anticipated to have a negligible to low level of impact on the core paths listed within the Recreational Study Area **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise)**. There is not expected to be a change in recreational activity at the listed core paths during the operational phase of the Proposed Development.
C160 (Taynuilt to Oban)/Route 78 – National Cycle Network	The Core Path C160 and National Cycle Route 78 run close to the Site, with the closest section of the path coming within 700m of the Application Boundary. As a result, the Proposed Development is anticipated to have visual impacts on the path and cycle route during the operational phase. Core Path C160 and National Cycle Route 78 are 64km in distance. As the Proposed Development would only be proximate to road users during a relatively short section of the long-distance route, it is not expected that activity on the route would change. Turbine noise is anticipated to have a negligible level of impact on the path and cycle route **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise)**. There is not expected to be a change in recreational activity at Core Path C160 and National Cycle Route 78 during the operational phase of the Proposed Development.
Cycle Routes	The majority of core paths can also be used for cycling activities such as mountain biking. Therefore, the effects will be the same as Core Paths.

Tourist Receptor	Discussion
	Some turbines will be visible when looking to the west direction from the National Cycle Route 78 however these views will not be constant due to screening from the surrounding topography and woodland **(Figure 5.1.3)**. There is not expected to be a change in recreational activity at cycling routes during the operational phase. No noise will be audible from the cycle route **(EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise)**.
Forestry Tracks	There will be views of the Proposed Development from the majority of the forestry tracks, particularly at the sections of the track which cross the Application Boundary (**Figure 5.1.3**) (**EIA Report Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment**). However, due to the surrounding woodland at the point where the tracks cross the Application Boundary views of the Proposed Development will be partially screened. It is anticipated that the impact on this section of the forestry tracks will be low during the operational phase. As the tracks extend westward the surrounding forestry and topography provide sufficient blocking, which means views of the Proposed Development will not be constant and the impact on the forestry tracks is low during the operational phase. Turbine noise is anticipated to have a low level of impact on the forestry tracks (**EIA Report Chapter 8: Noise**). There is not expected to be a change in recreational activity on the forestry tracks during the operational phase of the Proposed Development.

1.6 Community Benefit

The Scottish Government has emphasised the importance of communities benefitting from renewable energy generation projects, including through community benefit funds as stated in the Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments[38].

As a renewable energy developer and provider, the Applicant wants their projects to not only help improve the global environment by reducing carbon emissions but also help improve the local environment. The Applicant is committed to providing environmental, social and economic benefits to the communities where their projects are based and encourage communities to engage with them on their needs and aspirations so that the package of community benefits offered can be tailored accordingly.

Previous examples of community benefits delivered by the Applicant include the sponsorship of local community events; delivery of renewable energy workshops in schools and site visits to support education in renewable energy.

The Applicant is committed to offering a package of community benefits as detailed below.

1.6.1 Community Benefit Fund

The Applicant has aligned the Proposed Development with the Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits.

[38] Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments (Accessed 05/08/2024)

Communities local to the Proposed Development will benefit through the Applicant's proposed Community Benefit Fund. The Applicant is proposing to provide a £5,000 per MW per annum (index linked) Community Benefit for the lifetime of the Proposed Development.

The Community Benefit Fund would provide long-term revenue which could be used to support community projects. Local communities would have the flexibility to choose how the money is spent and prioritise it on the things which matter most to them.

Final decisions with regards to the Community Benefit arrangement will be made by communities themselves should the Proposed Development be consented, with guidance from the Applicant where appropriate. The Applicant is seeking to engage with local community councils to establish a Community Liaison Group (CLG) which could administer the fund.

1.6.2 Local Business Partnerships

The Applicant is committed to aligning the Proposed Development with the principles laid out in NPF4 Policy 11(c), particularly maximising the socio-economic benefits in the local community through focused employment and supply-chain opportunities.

If consented, the Proposed Development will create significant opportunities for local businesses through the construction and operation phases. This will include; accommodation providers, manufacturers and suppliers, contractors, and transpeople across a wider range of specialities, including construction, groundworks, landscaping, and plant hire.

Local businesses and suppliers who are interested in getting involved in the Proposed Development can be added to the Applicant's database by emailing cruach-clenamacrie@voltalia.com.

1.6.3 Community Liaison Group

A Community Liaison Group (CLG) has been established to provide a platform where local representatives can discuss and share information, while also establishing a reliable channel of communication among the Applicant, the local community, and stakeholders.

The first CLG meeting was held on Thursday 29 August 2024 at Connel Village Hall. The Applicant will look to hold the next CLG meeting in early 2025.

1.7 Summary

This assessment has considered the effects of the Proposed Development on socio-economics, tourism and recreation during the construction and operation phases. In conclusion:

- Up to £8.2 million is anticipated to be spent within the local economy during phase the construction and up to £1.3 million is anticipated to be spent annually during the operational phase.
- Net employment benefit of up to 43 jobs (direct, indirect and induced) will be created across Argyll and Bute during the construction phase, as well as up to 8 jobs (direct, indirect and induced) during the operational phase. This will provide up to 66 FTE job years during the construction phase and up to 382 job years during the operational phase.
- Net economic benefit of up to £4.3 million during the construction phase and up to £786,344 (annually) during the operational phase.
- Any impacts on recreational activity upon forest tracks due to the construction phase will be mitigated through the implementation of an OAMP.
- No changes in tourism or recreational activity are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development.

GCR have undertaken a comprehensive socio-economic assessment, and when this is considered in conjunction with the range of community benefits the Applicant is proposing, it is considered that the As such, it is considered that the Proposed Development will not result in any significant effects on socio-economics, tourism or recreation.

1.7.1 Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Statement of Significance

As a stand-alone report, the Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Statement aims to satisfy two key objectives:

- Identify the net economic benefit of the Proposed Development in relation to Policy 11 of the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4); and
- Identify any potential changes to tourism and recreational behaviours/habits.

The findings of the report can also be used to determine the significance of effect of the Proposed Development on socio-economic, tourism and recreational receptors.

As an appendix to the Environmental Impact Assessment, this report identifies several socio-economic, tourism, and recreational effects with varying levels of significance.

1.7.1.1 Socio-economic

The significance of effect is estimated to be **minor** and **beneficial** during both the construction and operational phases as there will be small, noticeable impacts on the local economy in the form of increased GVA contributions and project spend per annum. As such, there is expected to be a **minor, beneficial** effect on socio-economics as a result of the Proposed Development and is not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.

1.7.1.2 Tourism Impacts

The construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development are anticipated to have a **Negligible** effect on tourism and is therefore not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations. This aligns with existing evidence on the relationship between onshore wind farm development and the tourism economy in Scotland, where despite increasing wind farm developments, tourism activity has risen.[39] Additionally, broad support for onshore wind developments, potentially increasing over time, suggests that aversion to such developments is unlikely to significantly impact most visitors' decisions.

1.7.1.3 Recreational Impacts

The construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development are anticipated to have a **minor, adverse** effect on recreation, which is not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations

Forestry tracks are used for recreational purposes. As forestry tracks run throughout Fearnoch Forest and intersect with the eastern part of the Application Boundary, including large parts of the Proposed Access Track, it is anticipated there will be visual and access impacts during the construction phase, with a **moderate, adverse** effect on recreational activities such as hiking and cycling, for users of forestry tracks during the construction phase. With appropriate mitigation (effective scheduling and signage through an OAMP) this level of effect is reduced to a **minor, adverse**, as impacts will be both temporary and reversible.

[39] Onshore Wind and Tourism in Scotland: https://biggareconomics.co.uk/onshore-wind-and-tourism-in-scotland (Accessed 14/11/2024)

The impact during the operational phases of the Proposed Development is anticipated to have an overall **minor, adverse** effect on the recreational receptors identified within the report.

1.8 Conclusion

This report identifies the Proposed Development to have a **minor, beneficial** socio-economic effect, due to its economic and employment contributions. These are considered to be not significant in EIA terms. **Negligible** effects on tourism are anticipated. **Minor, adverse** effects on recreation are anticipated, with the inclusion of appropriate mitigation OAMP which are not significant under the EIA terms.