

# Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign

## Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report



January 2024

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	THIS REPORT .....	3
1.2	PROJECT OVERVIEW .....	3
<b>2.</b>	<b>KEY STAKEHOLDERS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1.	KEY STAKEHOLDER MAPPING .....	4
2.2.	WIDER ENGAGEMENT .....	4
<b>3.</b>	<b>EARLY ENGAGEMENT – SCOPING (DECEMBER 2021 - FEBRUARY 2022).....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1.	INTRODUCTORY LETTERS TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS .....	5
3.2.	PROJECT WEBSITE LAUNCHED .....	5
3.3.	FOLLOW-UP PHONE-CALLS WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY COUNCILS .....	5
<b>4.</b>	<b>PUBLIC CONSULTATION – SCOPING DESIGN (MARCH - APRIL 2022) .....</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1.	EVENT VENUE SELECTION .....	6
4.2.	ADVERTISING THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS .....	6
4.3.	COMMUNICATING THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS .....	7
4.4.	HOLDING THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS .....	7
4.5.	CONSULTATION FEEDBACK - OVERVIEW .....	9
<b>5.</b>	<b>FURTHER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS (MAY 2022 - JULY 2023).....</b>	<b>10</b>
5.1.	AUGUST 2022 MEETINGS.....	10
5.2.	DECEMBER 2022 UPDATE LETTERS .....	10
5.3.	MAY 2023 MEETINGS .....	10
5.4.	JULY 2023 MEETINGS .....	11
5.5.	OTHER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY .....	11
<b>6.</b>	<b>PUBLIC CONSULTATION – FINAL DESIGN (AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2023) .....</b>	<b>12</b>
6.1.	ADVERTISING THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS .....	12
6.2.	COMMUNICATING THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS .....	12
6.3.	HOLDING THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS .....	13
6.4.	CONSULTATION FEEDBACK - OVERVIEW .....	14
<b>7.</b>	<b>FURTHER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS (AUGUST - OCTOBER 2023) .....</b>	<b>17</b>
7.1.	SEPTEMBER 2023 ‘PILOT’ COMMUNITY BENEFIT WORKSHOP .....	17
7.2.	CLASHINDARROCH WIND FARM ‘OPEN DOORS’ DAY .....	19
7.3.	OCTOBER 2023 MEETINGS .....	19
7.4.	KEY STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON APPLICANT’S APPROACH TO ENGAGEMENT.....	19
<b>8.</b>	<b>RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK .....</b>	<b>21</b>
8.1.	OVERVIEW .....	21
<b>9.</b>	<b>EVALUATION OF ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION.....</b>	<b>28</b>
9.1.	NATIONAL STANDARDS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - EVALUATION .....	28
<b>10.</b>	<b>CLOSING COMMENTS .....</b>	<b>32</b>
10.1.	SUMMARY.....	32

<b>11.</b>	<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>33</b>
11.1.	APPENDICES .....	33
11.2.	APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS (DECEMBER 2021) .....	34
11.3.	APPENDIX 2: NEWSPAPER ADVERT AND EDITORIAL (MARCH 2022) .....	36
11.4.	APPENDIX 3: WEBSITE UPDATES: 1 - CONFIRMING EXHIBITIONS, AND 2 - LAUNCHING THEM (MARCH 2022) .....	37
11.5.	APPENDIX 4: UPDATE LETTER TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS (MARCH 2022) .....	41
11.6.	APPENDIX 5: PROJECT NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2022 (MARCH 2022) .....	44
11.7.	APPENDIX 6: PUBLIC EXHIBITION PHOTOS - EXAMPLES (MARCH 2022) .....	48
11.8.	APPENDIX 7: EXHIBITION INFORMATION BOARDS (MARCH 2022) .....	49
11.9.	APPENDIX 8: COMMENTS FORM (MARCH 2022) .....	62
11.10.	APPENDIX 9: VIRTUAL VILLAGE HALL EXHIBITION – ON PROJECT WEBSITE (MARCH – APRIL 2022) .....	73
11.11.	APPENDIX 10: REPORT ON FEEDBACK (SPRING 2022 CONSULTATION PERIOD) .....	76
11.12.	APPENDIX 11: UPDATE LETTER TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS (DECEMBER 2022) .....	86
11.13.	APPENDIX 12: NEWSPAPER ADVERT AND EDITORIAL (AUGUST 2023) .....	89
11.14.	APPENDIX 13: UPDATE LETTERS TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS (AUGUST 2023) .....	90
11.15.	APPENDIX 14: PROJECT NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2023 (AUGUST 2023) .....	92
11.16.	APPENDIX 15: PUBLIC EXHIBITION PHOTOS – EXAMPLES (AUGUST 2023) .....	98
11.17.	APPENDIX 16: EXHIBITION INFORMATION BOARDS (AUGUST 2023) .....	99
11.18.	APPENDIX 17: COMMENTS FORM (AUGUST 2023) .....	118
11.19.	APPENDIX 18: VIRTUAL VILLAGE HALL EXHIBITION – ON PROJECT WEBSITE (AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2023) .....	129
11.20.	APPENDIX 19: GRAPHS SHOWING MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION FEEDBACK (2023 CONSULTATION) .....	132
11.21.	APPENDIX 20: INVITE LETTERS TO COMMUNITY BENEFIT WORKSHOP (AUGUST 2023) .....	134
11.22.	APPENDIX 21: COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND WORKSHOP REPORT (SEPTEMBER 2023) .....	136

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 This report

- 1.1.1 This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report has been prepared by Liddicoat PR Consultancy (LPRC) on behalf of Vattenfall Wind Farm Power Ltd, herein referred to as 'The Applicant'.
- 1.1.2 The Report relates to a Section 36 application submitted by the Applicant seeking consent from Scottish Ministers under the Electricity Act 1989 for a wind farm proposal in Banffshire, Moray.
- 1.1.3 Whilst there is no statutory requirement for pre-application consultation in relation to Section 36 applications, it is widely expected that applicants carry out pre-application consultation. The Applicant has clear values and an ethos that places emphasis on working closely with local communities and engaging in a meaningful and constructive way to help improve the design of their projects and bring lasting, sustainable benefit to the community. As such, the Applicant has undertaken pre-application consultation for the proposal and sought to exceed the minimum best practice activity<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.1.4 This PAC Report forms part of the Section 36 application and details the pre-application consultation activity undertaken by the Applicant (with support from LPRC) with the local community, general public, and locally elected representatives, herein referred to collectively as the 'Key stakeholders'.
- 1.1.5 This report does not capture the Scoping Report consultation or Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) consultation; this is reported on separately within the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

### 1.2 Project overview

- 1.2.1 The Section 36 application relates to the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm, herein referred to as the 'Proposed Development'. The site is located within a commercial forestry plantation known as Aultmore Forest, approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie.
- 1.2.2 Aultmore Wind Farm was originally consented in March 2014 by Moray Council as a 13-turbine, 29 megawatt (MW), scheme. Since then, significant advances in turbine technology have taken place with more powerful turbines becoming available. This led to the Applicant's decision to redesign the wind farm to increase the amount of fossil free electricity that could be produced.
- 1.2.3 In November 2021, the Applicant announced that they were redesigning the scheme and submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government and other key consultees, including local Community Councils, seeking feedback on the proposed scope of environmental survey work. The Scoping Report included an early-stage design layout for the Proposed Development, comprising 16-turbines.
- 1.2.4 Following two rounds of public exhibitions and consultation, extensive site surveys and assessments, and consultation with a wide range of key consultees, the Applicant refined and finalised the Proposed Development to a 16-turbine 105.6MW scheme with tip heights of up to 200m.
- 1.2.5 If consented, the 105.6MW Proposed Development could generate enough fossil free electricity each year for around 117,000<sup>2</sup> homes, almost four times the original 29MW scheme's 22,000 homes, and offset the equivalent of more than 177,000 tonnes of carbon emissions each year (using a fossil fuel mix scenario) – making an important contribution to Scotland's legally binding target of net zero carbon emissions by 2045. The Proposed Development would also provide a community benefit fund of around £528,000<sup>3</sup> each year to the local community, totalling £18.4 million over its 35-year operational life cycle, in addition to inward investment and local supply chain opportunities during construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/good-practice-guidance-applications-under-sections-36-37-electricity-act-1989/>

<sup>2</sup> [www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained/Statistics-Explained.htm](http://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained/Statistics-Explained.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Government guidance is 'to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project. Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives planning consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'.

## 2. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

### 2.1. Key Stakeholder mapping

- 2.1.1. Prior to undertaking formal consultation, the Applicant carried out desk-based research to identify initial key groups and representatives, herein referred to as the ‘Key Stakeholders’, to engage with.
- 2.1.2. In line with best practice, the Applicant identified the following Community Councils whose areas ‘hosted’ or adjoined the land on which the Proposed Development was sited:
- Cullen and Deskford Community Council;
  - Strathisla Community Council;
  - Lennox Community Council; and
  - Buckie and District Community Council.
- 2.1.3. The Applicant also identified the following additional Community Councils whose boundary areas were nearby (and the next closest) to the Proposed Development:
- Portknockie Community Council;
  - Findochty and District Community Council; and
  - Keith Community Council.
- 2.1.4. The Applicant also identified the following Moray Council wards (and their representative Councillors) as being likely to have an interest in the Proposed Development:
- Keith and Cullen ward (x3 ward Councillors);
  - Fochabers Lhanbryde ward (x3 ward Councillors); and
  - Buckie ward (x3 ward Councillors).
- 2.1.5. In addition, the Applicant identified the following respective Holyrood parliament and Westminster parliament representatives as being likely to have an interest in the Proposed Development:
- Constituency MSP for Moray;
  - Constituency MSP for Banffshire and Buchan Coast; and
  - Constituency MP for Moray.
- 2.1.6. All of the above Key Stakeholders were informed about the Proposed Development when it first became public and kept updated at key milestones, throughout the design development. Further details are provided within the later sections of this report.

### 2.2. Wider engagement

- 2.2.1. As the design progressed, the Applicant began to identify other wider stakeholders to engage with on the Proposed Development. These largely comprised key anchor groups in the area.
- 2.2.2. The timings and degree of engagement varied depending on when the Applicant made contact and the level of interest in the Proposed Development. These wider stakeholders included the following:
- The Three Kings Cullen Association;
  - Portgordon Community Trust;
  - Keith and Strathisla Regeneration Partnership/InKeith and Strathisla;
  - Findochty and Buckie Development Trust;
  - Buckie Area Forum;
  - REAP (Rural Environmental Action Project);
  - Deskford and District Community Association;
  - Moray Council’s Community Learning and Engagement Team;
  - Business Gateway;
  - Highlands and Islands Enterprise (Moray);
  - Buckie Harbour; and
  - TsiMORAY.
- 2.2.3. Further details regarding engagement are provided within the later sections of this report.

### 3. EARLY ENGAGEMENT – SCOPING (December 2021- February 2022)

#### 3.1. Introductory letters to Key Stakeholders

- 3.1.1. In December 2021, the Applicant wrote to Key Stakeholders to inform them that it was in the early stages of exploring a proposed redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm [[Appendix 1](#)].
- 3.1.2. The letter provided an overview of the Proposed Development, including the original consented scheme, and explained the rationale for the redesign. It also confirmed that a Scoping Report had been submitted – seeking feedback on the scope of the environmental assessment work – and provided a link to the project website where the Scoping Report and further information could be found.
- 3.1.3. Furthermore, the letter explained that the Applicant was planning public consultation events in the spring to consult with the community and gather views and feedback on the Proposed Development.
- 3.1.4. Contact details for the Applicant were also provided within the letter.

#### 3.2. Project website launched

- 3.2.1. A project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) was also launched by the Applicant in December 2021.
- 3.2.2. The website provided an overview of the Proposed Development - including a site location map, a copy of the Scoping Report for people to view, and confirmation that public consultation events would be held early in 2022 to engage with the local community and gather feedback.
- 3.2.3. Contact details for the Applicant were also provided on the website.

#### 3.3. Follow-up phone-calls with local Community Councils

- 3.3.1. During December 2021 and January 2022, the Applicant arranged introductory calls with representatives of each of the four ‘host’ Community Councils (closest to the site) to follow-up on their recent introductory letter, discuss the Proposed Development and any initial questions, and ensure that representatives knew how to reach the Applicant if they had further questions.
- 3.3.2. In February 2022 another round of calls were held with representatives from three of the four Community Councils (Buckie and District Community Council couldn’t be reached at that time) to discuss plans for the spring public consultation events and seek advice regarding suitable venues within their respective areas.
- 3.3.3. The Applicant also attended a scheduled (online) public meeting for Lennox Community Council on 23 February 2022 to introduce the project, listen to feedback, answers any initial questions, and summarise plans for the spring public consultation events.

## 4. PUBLIC CONSULTATION – SCOPING DESIGN (March- April 2022)

### 4.1. Event venue selection

- 4.1.1. The Applicant believes in meaningful and proportionate engagement. In line with this, a decision was made to go over and above the minimum expected pre-application consultation activity of holding one public consultation event in the local area (for the first round of consultation) and to hold four events instead – one within each of the ‘host’ Community Council areas.
- 4.1.2. Discussion was held with Cullen and Deskford Community Council about whether to hold an event in Deskford Hall (which was closer to the Proposed Development) or Cullen Community Centre (which was likely to attract more people), and the decision was taken to hold the event in Cullen but to ensure that it was advertised in the Deskford area so that people were aware.
- 4.1.3. With regards to Lennox Community Council area, the Applicant originally discussed holding an event in Clochan Hall with representatives of the Community Council; however, this wasn’t possible due to the Hall not having re-opened following the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, it was agreed to hold the event in Portgordon Hall instead which had the added benefit of being close to Buckie and District Community Council area – the relevance of which is explained in 4.1.4 below.
- 4.1.4. Due to the Applicant being unable to reach their Buckie and District Community Council contact at the time when the consultation events were being planned, it was agreed that an event would be held in Portgordon Hall which was located within the Lennox Community Council area but close to the boundary with Buckie and District Community Council to the east.
- 4.1.5. The proposed dates for the public consultation events were also discussed with the local Community Councils (and background research undertaken by the Applicant) to ensure that they didn’t clash with any key community events.
- 4.1.6. Following the engagement outlined above, the Applicant decided to organise a total of three public consultation events.

### 4.2. Advertising the public consultation events

- 4.2.1. The minimum expected pre-application consultation activity for advertising the public consultation events is the placement of one advert in a local newspaper. However, the Applicant decided that in order to maximise the opportunity for meaningful and proportionate engagement with the local community at an early stage in the design process, a number of adverts would be placed (in addition to other communications) to raise as much awareness as possible of the Proposed Development and upcoming public consultation events.
- 4.2.2. The Applicant placed an advert [[Appendix 2](#)] in the three local Banffshire newspapers (Banffshire Journal, Banffshire Advertiser, and Banffshire Herald) on 8 March 2022 – two weeks ahead of the events. A further advert was placed in these papers on 22 March 2022 during the week of the events. This resulted in a total of six adverts being placed in local newspapers. In line with pre-application consultation guidelines, the advert provided:
  - a description (including the location) of the Proposed Development;
  - details of where to obtain further information concerning the Proposed Development;
  - the date and place of the public events;
  - a statement explaining how, and by when, persons wishing to make comments to the Applicant relating to the Proposed Development may do so; and
  - a statement that comments made to the Applicant on the Proposed Development at that stage were not representations to the determining authority and that there would be an opportunity for lodging representations to the determining authority should an application be submitted.

These adverts were accompanied by a 300-word editorial.

- 4.2.3. In addition, the Applicant paid for 30,000 digital MPU (mid-page unit) adverts on the Grampian Online website at [www.grampianonline.co.uk](http://www.grampianonline.co.uk) to help highlight the events.

- 4.2.4. A press release was also issued to a number of wider media outlets on 8 March 2022, including the regional Press and Journal newspaper, providing details about the Proposed Development and events.
- 4.2.5. The project website [[Appendix 3](#)] was updated on 8 March 2022 with details of the events, including a copy of the newspaper advert. The update also explained that the information presented at the events would be available for people to view online on the project website from 22 March 2023 (the date of the first public consultation event) and that from that date there would also be information about how to provide feedback on the Proposed Development.
- 4.2.6. The Applicant also paid for Facebook posts, targeted at the local area, advertising the events.
- 4.2.7. The Applicant's various methods of advertising the public consultation events, as described above, far exceed the minimum expected pre-application consultation activity.

### 4.3. Communicating the public consultation events

- 4.3.1. In addition to the advertising described in section 4.2 above, the Applicant also issued communications to help raise further awareness of the Proposed Development and upcoming public consultation events.
- 4.3.2. On 9 March 2022, the Applicant sent update letters [[Appendix 4](#)] to Key Stakeholders confirming details of the events. Digital copies of the newspaper advert were also included – and the Applicant offered to provide copies of the advert to local Community Councils for posters if required.
- 4.3.3. The Applicant also mailed out a four-page A4 project newsletter [[Appendix 5](#)] to over 800 households (within approximately 3km of the Proposed Development site boundary), the week before the public consultation events, to help raise awareness of the Proposed Development and upcoming events.
- 4.3.4. In line with the newspaper advert, the update letters to Key Stakeholders and project newsletter to local households both included:
  - a description (including the location) of the Proposed Development;
  - details of where to obtain further information concerning the Proposed Development;
  - the date and place of the public events;
  - a statement explaining how, and by when, persons wishing to make comments to the Applicant relating to the Proposed Development may do so; and
  - a statement that comments made to the Applicant on the Proposed Development at that stage were not representations to the determining authority and that there would be an opportunity for lodging representations to the determining authority should an application be submitted.

They also provided details of the potential benefits that the Proposed Development could deliver.

### 4.4. Holding the public consultation events

- 4.4.1. The Applicant held three initial public consultation events in 2022 in the local area in the form of drop-in public exhibitions. These were held in three of the four 'host' Community Council areas, as explained in Section 4.1 above, to provide a good geographical spread of venues around the site. The events were carefully organised, taking into account venue availability, to provide a mix of daytime and evening events and make the exhibitions as accessible as practicable. Details of the events held are as follows:
  - Cullen Community Centre from 2pm-8pm on Tuesday 22 March 2022;
  - Portgordon Village Hall from 11am-2pm on Wednesday 23 March 2022; and
  - Newmill Village Hall from 5pm-8pm on Wednesday 23 March 2022.
- 4.4.2. Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic regulations regarding public events had eased, the Applicant required all team members as well as attendees to wear face masks at the events (unless exempt) and provided face masks and hand sanitiser at the entrance to each venue. The exhibition team were also all required to take a Lateral Flow Test (and confirm that they were clear) before heading to the area for the events.
- 4.4.3. The events [[Appendix 6](#)] were supported by a team of five representatives with a mix of knowledge, experience and expertise which included project management, public consultation and engagement, environmental impact assessment, and the operation of landscape and visual modelling software.

4.4.4. A range of information boards [[Appendix 7](#)] were provided at the public exhibitions which included a description of the Proposed Development and associated maps and plans, information about the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process and key considerations, and wireline visualisations to help give an impression of what the Proposed Development may look like from different viewpoints in the local area, as follows:

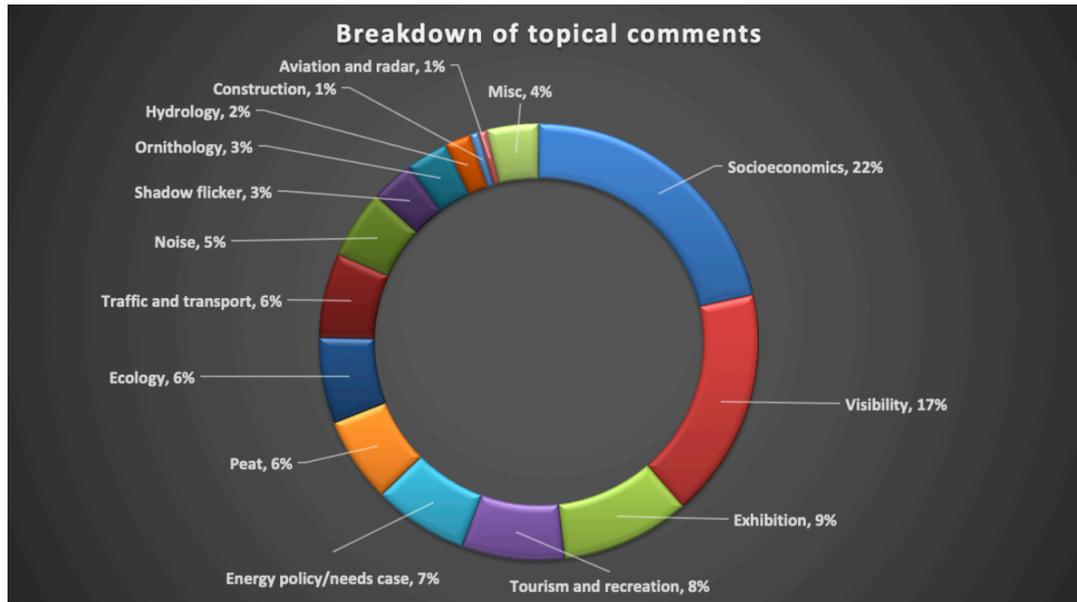
- Welcome to this exhibition board;
- Redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm board;
- Comparative site layout map;
- The evolution of onshore wind board;
- Protecting the environment board;
- Wireline visualisation boards x 3:
  - Kirktown of Deskford (viewpoint 6) and Castle Hill at Cullen (viewpoint 23);
  - Buckie (viewpoint 11) and Speyside Way – West of Portgordon (viewpoint 13);
  - Aultmore (viewpoint 4) and Keith – Broomhill road (viewpoint 9);
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) to Blade Tip map;
- Construction traffic and site access board;
- Investing in your community board;
- Working with the local supply chain board; and
- Your feedback and next steps board.

Hard copies of the information boards were also made available for anyone who requested this.

- 4.4.5. The Applicant provided 3D modelling software on a laptop to help give people an impression of how the Proposed Development may look at that stage of design from their chosen areas of interest.
- 4.4.6. In addition, the Applicant also provided copies of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document - as well as a copy of the spring project newsletter [[Appendix 5](#)].
- 4.4.7. Comments forms [[Appendix 8](#)] were made available for people to submit their written feedback on the Proposed Development to the Applicant. It was made clear that the comments forms could either be handed in at the public exhibition events, posted to the Applicant (address details were provided on the form), or filled in online on the project website. The comments forms also included a business registration form for local businesses to provide details to the Applicant of their services or goods. A QR code for the online comments form was also included on the 'Your feedback and next steps' board for people who preferred to access it digitally at the exhibition events.
- 4.4.8. The exhibition team endeavoured to speak to as many people as possible and encourage them to complete a comments form to help gather comments and views on the Proposed Development early in the design process.
- 4.4.9. The exhibition information explained the process for submitting comments to the Applicant – including confirming the consultation closing date for comments of Friday 22 April 2022 – and stated that any representations submitted at that time (to the Applicant) were not representations to the determining authority and that, should a Section 36 application be submitted for the Proposed Development, there would be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority.
- 4.4.10. The exhibition information (including the FAQs, newsletter, and comments form) was made available by the Applicant on the project website via a virtual village hall exhibition [[Appendix 9](#)] from the morning of the first exhibition event (Tuesday 22 March 2022) so that people who may not have been able to attend the events, or wished to review the information in their own time, could view the exhibition information online and submit comments. The information remained on the project website throughout the consultation period. More than 170 people viewed the virtual village hall exhibition during the consultation period (Tuesday 22 March 2022 to Friday 22 April 2022).

#### 4.5. Consultation feedback - overview

- 4.5.1. A total of 67 people ‘signed in’ as attending one of the three public exhibition events, with 38 people (approximately 57%) attending the Cullen event, 13 people (approximately 19%) attending the Portgordon event, and 16 people (approximately 24%) attending the Newmill event.
- 4.5.2. A total of 29 comments forms were submitted to the Applicant either at the event, by post afterwards, or online via the website, providing people’s comments on the Proposed Development. In addition to the comments forms, nine people provided comments by email and a further two people provided comments by email in addition to their comments form. As such, a total of 38 people provided feedback to the Applicant on the Proposed Development during the exhibitions and consultation period.
- 4.5.3. Across the 38 people who provided feedback on the proposal, over 150 topical comments were made outwith the multiple-choice questions. The breakdown of these topic areas is provided below:
- Socioeconomics: high level of interest in local benefits and supply chain opportunities, including the potential for using Buckie harbour for turbine components;
  - Visibility: concerns raised about turbine heights and visual impact, including some comments about relocating or removing certain turbines;
  - Exhibition: feedback on events including visualisations, staff, advertising, and information.
  - Tourism and recreation: interest in improving recreation opportunities on site for walkers and cyclists, as well as some concerns about potential impact on tourism;
  - Energy policy/needs case: preference for offshore wind farms or other technologies (including nuclear), as well as some concerns about rising energy costs;
  - Peat, ecology and ornithology: concerns about potential impact on peat and ecology as well as some bird species, and interest in habitat improvement opportunities;
  - Traffic and transport: concerns about potential impact on B9016 as well as Broadley Crematorium, in addition to interest in Buckie harbour being used for turbine deliveries;
  - Hydrology: concerns about potential impact on private water supplies; and
  - Noise and shadow flicker: concerns about potential noise impact and shadow flicker.



- 4.5.4. The Applicant included a multiple choice question on the comments form that asked how people felt about the redesigned turbine layout for the Proposed Development. More than 40% of responses stated that they were ‘happy’ with the redesigned turbine layout, 25% stated that they were ‘concerned’, another 25% selected ‘other’ (and stated either concerns, observations, or suggested considerations) and the remaining 7% stated that they felt neutral towards the layout.
- 4.5.5. Further detail regarding the consultation feedback from the March 2022 exhibitions and consultation period can be found in the Report on Feedback [[Appendix 10](#)] and in section 8 of this report.

## 5. FURTHER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS (May 2022- July 2023)

### 5.1. August 2022 meetings

5.1.1. In August 2022, the Applicant held meetings with representatives from the following Key Stakeholders to provide an update on the Proposed Development following the March exhibitions:

- Cullen and Deskford Community Council – 11 August 2022;
- Lennox Community Council – 11 August 2022;
- Portgordon Community Trust – 11 August 2022;
- Strathisla Community Council – 12 August 2022; and
- Keith and Cullen ward Councillor – 12 August 2022.

Attempts were made to meet with Buckie and District Community Council but were unsuccessful.

5.1.2. At the meetings the Applicant explained that they were reviewing the consultation feedback received and undertaking detailed site surveys and studies as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work. The Applicant also discussed any questions or concerns that the Key Stakeholders had.

### 5.2. December 2022 update letters

5.2.1. On 22 December 2022 the Applicant issued update letters [[Appendix 11](#)] to Key Stakeholders which provided a summary of the public feedback received during the spring 2022 consultation.

5.2.2. The letter provided a breakdown of topical comments and summarised the main themes (as outlined in 4.5.3 above).

5.2.3. The letter also explained that the Applicant was planning to organise a further set of public exhibitions during spring 2023 and that further details would be communicated in due course.

### 5.3. May 2023 meetings

5.3.1. In May 2023, the Applicant held further meetings with community representatives from the following Key Stakeholders to discuss plans for the second set of public exhibitions:

- Cullen and Deskford Community Council – 25 May 2023;
- Buckie Community Council – 26 May 2023;
- Lennox Community Council – 26 May 2023;
- Keith and Cullen ward Councillor – 26 May 2023; and
- Portgordon Community Trust – 27 May 2022.

Attempts were made to meet with Strathisla Community Council but were unsuccessful.

5.3.2. At the meetings the Applicant explained that they were now looking to hold a second set of exhibitions in the summer (rather than the spring, as originally planned), to present and gather feedback on the final design; potential venues were discussed, as well as the need to avoid the summer school holidays and other local events.

5.3.3. The Applicant also confirmed, in their discussions with the local Community Councils, their intention to hold an event in each of the four 'host' Community Council areas, as follows:

- A decision was made, following discussion with Cullen and Deskford Community Council, to hold an event in Cullen Community Centre again (which was likely to attract more people than an event in Deskford), and to plan it on the same day as a community lunch that was being held in the Cullen Community Centre – to encourage more people to attend. It was agreed that the Cullen event needed to be advertised in the Deskford area (through the project newsletter).
- The upcoming events were also discussed with Lennox Community Council and the Applicant confirmed that the commitment to hold an event in Clochan Community Centre for the second set of consultation events (as the Centre had been closed due to COVID-19 during the March 2022 consultation events) would be honoured.

- The Applicant had also been able to reach Buckie and District Community Council prior to the second round of consultation events and discussed holding an event in Buckie, preferably in the Fishermen’s Hall, if it was available.
- Whilst the Applicant wasn’t able to reach Strathisla Community Council to discuss venues, the Applicant proposed to book Newmill Hall again as this had been approved during previous discussions with Strathisla Community Council as a suitable venue.

The proposed dates for the public consultation events were also discussed with the local Community Councils (and background research undertaken by the Applicant) to ensure that they didn’t clash with any key community events.

- 5.3.4. Updates were also given on the technical design (such as the relocation of certain turbines in response to environmental constraints) as well as work that the Applicant was undertaking in response to key considerations raised within the consultation feedback (such as private water supplies, noise, visibility, turbine delivery route and potential for Buckie Harbour to be used, alternative options for the site access point off the B9016, and the consideration of Broadley Crematorium).
- 5.3.5. The Applicant also explained that, in response to the consistent level of interest from the public and key stakeholders in the socioeconomic benefits – specifically the community benefit fund and how that may work should the Proposed Development be consented – the Applicant was considering holding a potential pilot community benefit workshop and looking to gauge interest in such an event. Feedback from Key Stakeholders on this point was positive and suggestions were made about which other local anchor groups in the area may be interested in attending such an event.

#### 5.4. July 2023 meetings

- 5.4.1. In July 2023 the Applicant held further meetings with community representatives from the following Key Stakeholders to discuss and confirm details for the second set of public exhibitions as well as the community benefit workshop event:
- InKeith and Strathisla Development Trust – 18 July 2023;
  - Lennox Community Council – 18 July 2023;
  - Cullen and Deskford Community Council – 18 July 2023; and
  - Findochty and Buckie Development Trust – 19 July 2023.

Attempts were made to meet with Strathisla Community Council, but the Applicant was unable to reach them. Contact was made with Buckie and District Community Council but they were unavailable to meet.

- 5.4.2. At the meetings the Applicant provided a general update on the project and introduced a new Project Manager. It was also confirmed that the second set of exhibitions, to present and gather feedback on the final design, would be held at the end of August – and preferred venues were discussed in addition to how the Applicant was planning to advertise and communicate the events in the local area.
- 5.4.3. Furthermore, the Applicant confirmed that they had decided to go ahead with the community benefit workshop idea, in response to feedback, and that the event would likely be held in early September 2023. The Applicant committed to follow up with key anchor groups in the local area who may be interested in attending such an event.

#### 5.5. Other engagement activity

- 5.5.1. In addition to the meetings and update letters outlined above, the Applicant engaged with Key Stakeholders by phone-call, email, and virtual meetings.
- 5.5.2. The Applicant also responded to a number of enquiries from the general public, most of which were received by email, raising questions or requesting further information.
- 5.5.3. Engagement was also undertaken with local residents close to the site – the majority of which related to noise monitoring, private water supply identification, or residential visual amenity assessment – all of which form part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work and are therefore not covered within this PAC Report.

## 6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION – FINAL DESIGN (August- September 2023)

### 6.1. Advertising the public consultation events

- 6.1.1. The Applicant again committed to go over and above the minimum expected pre-application consultation activity (of placing one advert in a local newspaper) for advertising the public consultation events.
- 6.1.2. An advert [[Appendix 12](#)] was placed in the three local Banffshire newspapers (Banffshire Journal, Banffshire Advertiser, and Banffshire Herald) on 15 August 2023 - two weeks ahead of the events. A further advert was placed in these papers on 29 August 2023 during the week of the events. This resulted in a total of six adverts being placed in local newspapers. In line with pre-application consultation guidelines, the advert provided:
- a description (including the location) of the Proposed Development;
  - details of where to obtain further information concerning the Proposed Development;
  - the date and place of the public events;
  - a statement explaining how, and by when, persons wishing to make comments to the Applicant relating to the Proposed Development may do so; and
  - a statement that comments made to the Applicant on the Proposed Development at that stage were not representations to the determining authority and that there would be an opportunity for lodging representations to the determining authority should an application be submitted.

These adverts were accompanied by a 300-word editorial.

- 6.1.3. The Applicant also organised a 600-word online sponsored content to sit on the landing page of the Grampian Online website over a 48-hour period covering the dates of the public exhibitions (30 August and 31 August 2023).
- 6.1.4. In addition, the Applicant paid for 30,000 digital MPU (mid-page unit) adverts on the Grampian Online website at [www.grampianonline.co.uk](http://www.grampianonline.co.uk) to help highlight the events.
- 6.1.5. A press release was also issued to a number of wider media outlets on 15 August 2023, including the regional Press and Journal newspaper, providing details about the Proposed Development and events.
- 6.1.6. The project website was updated on 15 August 2023 with details of the events, including a copy of the newspaper advert. The update also explained that the information presented at the events would be available for people to view online on the project website from 30 August 2023 (the date of the first event) and that from that date there would also be information about how to provide feedback on the Proposed Development.
- 6.1.7. The Applicant also paid for Facebook posts, targeted at the local area, advertising the events.
- 6.1.8. The Applicant's various methods of advertising the public consultation events, as described above, far exceed the minimum expected pre-application consultation activity.

### 6.2. Communicating the public consultation events

- 6.2.1. In addition to the advertising described in section 6.1 above, the Applicant issued communications to help raise further awareness of the Proposed Development and upcoming public consultation events.
- 6.2.2. On 18 August 2023, the Applicant sent update letters [[Appendix 13](#)] to Key Stakeholders, confirming details of the events; digital copies of the newspaper advert were also included. The Applicant also offered to provide copies of the advert to local Community Councils for posters if required - and x30 laminated copies of the advert were sent out to various Key Stakeholders.
- 6.2.3. The Applicant also mailed out a six-page A4 project newsletter [[Appendix 14](#)] to over 800 households (within approximately 3km of the Proposed Development site boundary), the week before the public consultation events, to help raise awareness of the Proposed Development and upcoming events.

- 6.2.4. The update letters to Key Stakeholders and project newsletter to local households both included:
- details of where to obtain further information concerning the Proposed Development;
  - the date and place of the public events;
  - a statement explaining how, and by when, persons wishing to make comments to the Applicant relating to the Proposed Development may do so; and
  - a statement that comments made to the Applicant on the Proposed Development at that stage were not representations to the determining authority and that there would be an opportunity for lodging representations to the determining authority should an application be submitted.

The newsletter also provided a description (and location) of the Proposed Development, whereas the stakeholder letters simply referred to the project as details were provided in previous letters.

### 6.3. Holding the public consultation events

- 6.3.1. The Applicant held an event in each of the four ‘host’ Community Council areas, as explained in section 5.3 above, to provide a good geographical spread of venues around the site. The events were carefully organised, taking into account venue availability, to provide a mix of daytime and evening events and make the exhibitions as accessible as practicable. Details of the events held are as follows:

- Cullen Community Centre from 11am-2pm on Wednesday 30 August 2023;
- Clochan Community Centre from 5pm-8pm on Wednesday 30 August 2023;
- Newmill Village Hall from 11am-2pm on Thursday 31 August 2023; and
- Fishermen’s Hall, Buckie from 5pm-8pm on Thursday 31 August 2023

- 6.3.2. The events [[Appendix 15](#)] were supported by a team of five representatives with a mix of knowledge, experience and expertise which included project management, public consultation and engagement, environmental impact assessment, and landscape and visual assessment.

- 6.3.3. A range of information boards [[Appendix 16](#)] were provided at the public exhibitions which included a description of the Proposed Development and associated maps and plans, information about the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process and key considerations, and wireline and photomontage visualisations to help give an impression of what the Proposed Development may look like from different viewpoints in the local area, as follows:

- Welcome to this exhibition board;
- Redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm board;
- Climate change and onshore wind board;
- Design evolution board;
- 25km screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) to Blade Tip map;
- 45km unscreened Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) to Blade Tip map;
- Visualisation boards (photomontages and wirelines) x 6:
  - Aultmore (viewpoint 4);
  - Kirktown of Deskford (viewpoint 6);
  - Keith - Broomhill road (viewpoint 9);
  - Buckie (viewpoint 11);
  - Speyside Way, west of Portgordon (viewpoint 13); and
  - Castle Hill at Cullen (viewpoint 23).
- Protecting the environment board;
- Design considerations (hydrogeological) board;
- Design considerations (technical) board;
- Construction traffic and site access board;
- Community benefit board;
- Working with the local supply chain board; and
- Your feedback and next steps board.

Hard copies of the information boards were also made available for anyone who requested this.

- 6.3.4. The Applicant also provided copies of the Report on Feedback [[Appendix 10](#)], which summarised the feedback received from the spring 2022 consultation and explained any changes that had been made to the design in response to this feedback.
- 6.3.5. In addition, the Applicant also provided copies of an updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document - as well as a copy of the summer project newsletter [[Appendix 14](#)].
- 6.3.6. Comments forms [[Appendix 17](#)] were made available for people to submit their written feedback on the Proposed Development to the Applicant. It was made clear that the comments forms could either be handed in at the public exhibition events, posted to the Applicant (address details were provided on the form), or filled in online on the project website. The comments forms also included a business registration form for local businesses to provide details to the Applicant of their services or goods. A QR code for the online comments form was also included on the 'Your feedback and next steps' board for people who preferred to access it digitally at the exhibition events.
- 6.3.7. The exhibition team endeavoured to speak to as many people as possible and encourage them to complete a comments form to help gather comments and views on the Proposed Development early in the design process.
- 6.3.8. The exhibition information explained the process for submitting comments to the Applicant – including confirming the consultation closing date for comments of Friday 15 September 2023 – and stated that any representations submitted at that time (to the Applicant) were not representations to the determining authority and that, should a Section 36 application be submitted for the Proposed Development, there would be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority.
- 6.3.9. The exhibition information (including the FAQs, newsletter, and comments form) was made available by the Applicant on the project website via a virtual village hall exhibition [[Appendix 18](#)] from the morning of the first exhibition event (Wednesday 30 August 2023) so that people who may not have been able to attend the events, or wished to review the information in their own time, could view the exhibition information online and submit comments. The information remained on the project website throughout the consultation period. More than 66 people viewed the virtual village hall exhibition during the consultation period (Wednesday 30 August 2023 to Friday 15 September 2023).

#### 6.4. Consultation feedback - overview

- 6.4.1. A total of 130 people 'signed in' as attending one of the four public exhibition events which were held in the local area, with 25 people (approximately 19%) attending the Cullen event, 55 people (approximately 42%) attending the Clochan event, 24 people (approximately 19%) attending the Newmill event, and 26 people (approximately 20%) attending the Buckie event.
- 6.4.2. A total of 69 comments forms, designed to capture people's feedback on the Proposed Development, were received by the Applicant either at the event, by post afterwards, or online via the website, providing people's comments on the Proposed Development. In addition to the comments forms, five people provided comments by email and a further seven people provided comments by email in addition to their comments form. As such, a total of 74 people provided feedback to the Applicant on the Proposed Development during the exhibitions and consultation period – almost twice the number of people who engaged in the spring 2022 consultation.
- 6.4.3. The comments form for the summer 2023 consultation included a number of multiple-choice questions.
- 6.4.4. A multiple choice question was included to understand people's attitudes on climate change and renewables. The findings were as follows:
- Climate change: just over 70% of responses confirmed that they were 'very concerned' or 'concerned' about climate change (compared to 90% from the spring 2022 consultation);
  - Renewables: just under 60% of responses confirmed that they 'strongly supported' or 'supported' the transition towards renewable energy (compared to 90% from the spring 2022 consultation), with 30% confirming that they neither opposed or supported the transition;
  - Onshore wind: just under 50% of responses stated that they were 'strongly opposed' or 'opposed' to the use of onshore wind (compared to 20% from the spring 2022 consultation),

with just under 30% of responses stating they ‘strongly supported’ or ‘supported’ it (compared to just over 65% from the spring 2022 consultation), with the remaining responses falling somewhere in-between; and

- Onshore wind within the region: just under 60% of responses stated that they were ‘strongly opposed’ or ‘opposed’ to the development of onshore wind in the region, with just under 20% confirming that they neither supported nor opposed this (compared to just under 60% stating that they ‘strongly supported’ or ‘supported’ this from the spring 2022 consultation).

6.4.5. Another multiple-choice question sought to understand people’s attitudes on the Proposed Development. The findings were as follows:

- Redesigned layout: just under 80% of responses confirmed that they were concerned with the layout (i.e. around 60% of total responses were ‘concerned’ and 20% of total responses stated ‘other’ but provided comments that suggested concerns), with around 12% stating that they were ‘happy’, 9% stating that they were ‘neutral’, and the remainder not providing any response (compared to around 40% of responses from the spring 2022 consultation confirming that they were ‘happy’ with the proposal, 25% stating they were concerned, and 25% stating ‘other’ – and raising either concerns, observations or suggested considerations); and
- Key areas of interest: The three areas of greatest interest to people with regard to the Proposed Development were ‘landscape and visual’ (just under 30% of responses), ‘ecology and/or ornithology’ (just under 20% of responses), and ‘traffic and transport’ and ‘local economy’ (both at around 14% of responses). This is broadly in line with the spring 2022 consultation.

6.4.6. Further multiple-choice questions asked about people’s thoughts regarding community benefit and shared ownership. The findings were as follows:

- Greatest priority for community investment: just over 25% of responses selected ‘local skills and employment development’, just under 20% selected ‘local transport links’, and just over 15% selected ‘local environmental schemes’ with the remaining responses selecting ‘Other’. This follows similar trends to the spring 2022 consultation, although transport featured more as a priority in the summer 2023 consultation; and
- Shared ownership: just over 40% of responses stated that ‘no’ they were not interested in shared ownership, just over 20% stated ‘maybe’, and 20% stated ‘yes’ – with the remaining giving no response to the question (compared to 40% of responses stating that ‘Yes’ they were interested in the spring 2022 consultation, 30% stating ‘No’, and 30% stating ‘Maybe’).

6.4.7. The comments form also included some multiple-choice questions to understand how people found out about the exhibition events, which events they’d attended, and what they had found useful. The findings were as follows:

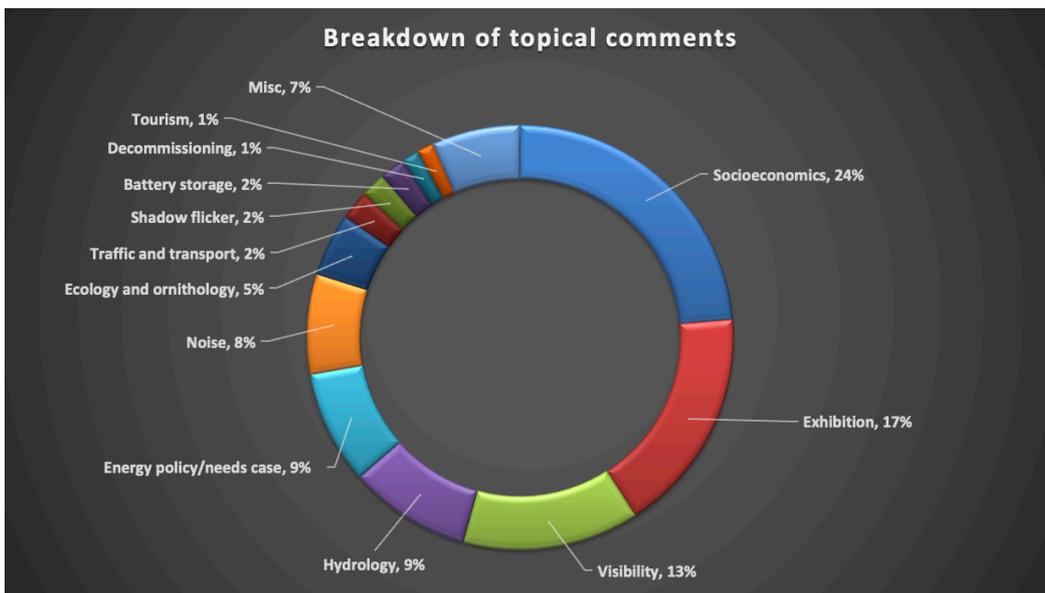
- Knowledge of exhibitions taking place: just under 30% of people found out about the exhibitions from ‘word of mouth’, just over 20% of people found out from the project newsletter, and around 35% of people found out through ‘other’ ways - mainly Facebook posts by either the Applicant or the community (compared to 35% of people finding out about the spring 2022 exhibitions from the ‘project newsletter’ and just under 25% by ‘word of mouth’).
- Online exhibition information: just under 60% of people who submitted comments forms viewed the exhibition information online on the project website (compared to around 60% of people who viewed the spring 2022 exhibition information online).
- Knowledge improvement: just under 45% of people stated that their knowledge had not improved ‘at all’ or very much and just over 35% stated that their knowledge had improved ‘a lot’ or quite a lot, with the remaining responses falling somewhere in-between (compared to just over 65% of people confirming that their knowledge had improved quite ‘a lot’ and just over 15% of people’s knowledge not improving much ‘at all’.)
- Most helpful parts of exhibition: people found the ‘information boards’ the most helpful (approximately 27% of ‘quite helpful’ and ‘very helpful’ scores) followed by the ‘maps’ (approximately 23% of scores) and then ‘talking to the project team’ (approximately 22% of scores). This is broadly in line with the spring 2022 consultation.

6.4.8. Several multiple-choice questions were also focused on understanding the demographic of people who attended the exhibition events. The findings were as follows:

- Community Council area: just under 40% of responses were from people living in the ‘Buckie and District’ Community Council area; just under 20% of responses were from within the ‘Cullen and Deskford’ Community Council area; just under 15% of responses were from the ‘Keith’ Community Council area; and just under 15% were from the Lennox Community Council area – with the remaining responses comprising the Strathisla, Portknockie or wider Moray areas (compared to just under 50% of responses being from the ‘Cullen and Deskford’ Community Council area for the spring 2022 consultation, just under 20% from the ‘Keith’ area and around 20% from the ‘Lennox’ Community Council area).
- Representative group: around 75% of responses were from ‘members of the public’, with a further 10% comprising ‘local businesses’ and ‘Community Council representatives’ (compared to just over 70% of responses being from ‘members of the public’ for the spring 2022 consultation, 15% from ‘local businesses’ and 10% from Community Council representatives’).
- Age range: around 30% of responses came from people aged between ‘55-64’, 20% from people aged ‘35-44’, 17% from people aged ‘45-54’, and 17% from people aged ‘65 and over’ (compared to just over 40% of response being from people aged ‘55-64’ from the spring 2022 consultation, just over 30% from people aged ‘65 and over’, around 10% from people aged ‘35-44’ and around 10% from people aged ‘25-34’).

6.4.9. Across the 74 people who provided feedback on the proposal, over 300 topical comments were made outwith the multiple-choice questions. The breakdown of these topic areas is provided below:

- Socioeconomics: high level of interest in community benefit, including ideas about what the fund could support as well as how it may work; some concern about property prices.
- Exhibition: feedback on events including visualisations, advertising, staff, and information.
- Visibility: concerns raised about turbine heights, residential amenity, and aviation lighting.
- Hydrology: concerns raised about private water supplies and potential impact.
- Energy policy/needs case: points raised about offshore wind, cost of electricity and planning process.
- Noise and shadow flicker: concerns about potential impact and predicted levels.
- Ecology and ornithology: concerns about potential impacts to wildlife and habitats.
- Traffic and transport: concerns about site access point on B9016 and construction traffic.
- Battery storage: concerns regarding safety.



Further detail regarding the consultation feedback from the August 2023 exhibitions and consultation period can be found in [\[Appendix 19\]](#) and section 8 of this report.

## 7. FURTHER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS (August - October 2023)

### 7.1. September 2023 ‘pilot’ community benefit workshop

- 7.1.1. In response to feedback from key stakeholders (and with consideration to the level of interest from the spring 2022 consultation feedback) regarding the community benefit that could be delivered from the Proposed Development, should it be granted consent, the Applicant decided to hold a community benefit workshop for the local Community Councils and key anchor organisations in the area.



- 7.1.2. The purpose of the workshop was to explore community benefit, in the context of the Applicant’s redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm proposal, and engage attendees in some exercises to build awareness and understanding of how a potential community benefit fund may operate as well as the potential benefits that it could deliver for the local area.
- 7.1.3. The Applicant wouldn’t typically hold a community benefit workshop at this stage in a project and so very much considered the event as a ‘pilot’, in response to community and stakeholder feedback, to find out if this type of event was useful for the community. Furthermore, the event was designed so that if the Proposed Development did not receive consent it would still be a useful information event for the community in relation to other community benefit opportunities that may arise in the local area.
- 7.1.4. Letter invites [[Appendix 20](#)] to the workshop were issued by the Applicant on 4 August 2023 to the local Community Councils and key anchor organisations to gauge interest in the event. Originally, it was intended to offer any remaining spaces at the workshop to the wider public on a first-come, first-served basis, however, the workshop proved popular, and all spaces were filled; as such, future events regarding community benefit will be offered if there is a clear interest in this.
- 7.1.5. The workshop took place on Friday 1 September 2023 at Portessie Hall from 5:30pm until 9pm.
- 7.1.6. The workshop was hosted by the Applicant and facilitated by Foundation Scotland ([www.foundationscotland.org.uk](http://www.foundationscotland.org.uk)), a grant-making charity with significant expertise in administering community benefit funds across Scotland.
- 7.1.7. The event also included a presentation from The Cabrach Trust ([www.cabrachtrust.org](http://www.cabrachtrust.org)) about their experience of Vattenfall’s Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund, near Huntly in Aberdeenshire, and the Trust’s community projects and initiatives that it had helped support.

7.1.8. The organisations which attended the workshop were as follows:

- Cullen and Deskford Community Council (3 representatives);
- Lennox Community Council (2 representatives);
- Strathisla Community Council (1 representative);
- Buckie and District Community Council (1 representative);
- Portknockie Community Council (3 representatives);
- Keith Community Council (1 representative);
- Findochty Community Council (2 representatives);
- Portgordon Community Trust (3 representatives);
- The Three Kings Cullen Association (2 representatives);
- Deskford and District Community Association (3 representatives);
- Findochty and Buckie Development Trust (1 representative);
- Buckie Area Forum (2 representatives);
- Business Gateway (1 representative);
- Moray Federation of Community Halls and Associations (1 representative);
- Rural Environmental Action Project – REAP (1 representative);
- Keith and Strathisla Regeneration Partnership/InKeith and Strathisla (2 representatives);
- Moray Council – Community learning and Engagement (1 representative); and
- tsiMORAY (1 representative).



7.1.9. A Community Benefit Fund Workshop Report [\[Appendix 21\]](#) was produced after the event to capture the content and findings of the workshop.



## 7.2. Clashindarroch Wind Farm ‘open doors’ day

- 7.2.1. Several Key Stakeholders also attended information days at the Applicant’s 18-turbine Clashindarroch Wind Farm near Huntly, as part of Aberdeenshire Open Doors, to experience an operational wind farm close-up.
- 7.2.2. The information days provided bus tours up to the wind farm and ran over a weekend as follows:
- Saturday 16 September 2023: 10am-12:30pm and 1:30pm-4pm; and
  - Sunday 17 September 2023: 10am-12:30pm and 1:30pm-3:30pm.
- 7.2.3. The tours provided the opportunity to see the wind farm up close, learn about how wind farms are developed and managed, and engage with the Applicant’s operations team.

## 7.3. October 2023 meetings

- 7.3.1. In October 2023 the Applicant held further meetings with community representatives from the following Key Stakeholders to update them on the project since the August 2022 public exhibitions and answer any questions that they had:

- Findochty and Buckie Development Trust – 17 October 2023;
- Buckie Community Council (scheduled public CC meeting) – 17 October 2023;
- Cullen and Deskford Community Council (scheduled public CC meeting) – 17 October 2023;
- The Three Kings Cullen Association – 18 October 2023;
- Lennox Community Council – 18 October 2023;
- Keith and Strathisla Regeneration Partnership/InKeith and Strathisla – 19 October 2023;
- Rural Environmental Action Project (REAP) – 19 October 2023;
- Portgordon Community Trust – 19 October 2023;
- Buckie Harbour – 19 October 2023;
- Moray Council (Community learning and Engagement) – 19 October 2023; and
- Lennox Community Council (scheduled public online CC meeting) – 25 October 2023.

Attempts were made to meet with Strathisla Community Council but, due to limited availability for attendance, no meeting was held.

- 7.3.2. The Applicant provided a general update on the project and confirmed that they were looking to submit their application before the end of 2023 – and that the application would be advertised, in addition to letters being sent to the Key Stakeholders and a project newsletter issued to local households (and anyone who had asked to be kept up to date) to help raise awareness.
- 7.3.3. The Applicant also confirmed that a report was being developed to capture the content and findings of the September community benefit workshop – and that the report would be circulated to Key Stakeholders in due course and made available for the public.

## 7.4. Key Stakeholder feedback on Applicant’s approach to engagement

- 7.4.1. The Applicant is committed to effective and meaningful engagement with both the local community and Key Stakeholders, in order to help identify the key concerns and issues as well as any benefits or opportunities.
- 7.4.2. Following the October 2023 meetings, some of the Key Stakeholders provided the Applicant with feedback on their engagement approach (excluding any opinions on the Proposed Development itself), as outlined below.
- 7.4.3. **Cullen and Deskford Community Council:**

*“Cullen and Deskford Community Council has been impressed with the level of engagement Vattenfall has shown, particularly in hosting the well-received Community Benefit Workshop.*

*It is possible digesting the volume of information within the 154 page Scoping Report can be somewhat daunting, leading to disengagement, and we wonder whether there may be an easier introductory process.”*

**7.4.4. Lennox Community Council:**

*“To date they have listened not only to Lennox Community Council but the surrounding councils, and the many households who are in the Aultmore Wind Farm area. As we are small communities, in Lennox, Strathisla and Cullen, we all meet regularly and talk about the proposed windfarm ..... we enjoy the newsletters and information that comes our way.”*

**7.4.5. Findochty and Buckie Development Trust:**

*“I just wanted to say ‘thank you’ for taking the time to meet with me recently to update me on progress regarding Vattenfall’s proposed wind farm at Aultmore. I have very much appreciated all the information you have provided, your patience in answering my questions and the queries from others, and the fact that you have listened carefully to local concerns and fed those back to the project team. I found the public meeting in The Fishermen’s Hall very informative. The wide range of information was detailed and clearly presented. Personally, I’d have liked a few more visuals as that’s how I take in information more easily, but you were on hand to answer my daft questions, so thank you!”*

**7.4.6. Keith and Strathisla Regeneration Partnership/InKeith and Strathisla:**

*“I’d also like to mention how useful and helpful the meetings with the team are, it’s great to be able to speak with them and let them know how things are going locally, as the local community development officer for the Keith & Strathisla area it also allows me to have a better understanding of the community’s views.*

*I found it [the September community benefit workshop] very useful both in terms of finding out new information and being able to network with others I would not normally have the chance to. In fact, following our presence at your event where we mentioned how we had received funding for resilience items, Portknockie Community Council contacted us at another event a few weeks later. They asked for our details because of what we discussed at the September workshop. Therefore, I think it would have been good to have been able to have a list of emails of those attended if GDPR would allow. This way we would have been able to catch up with people following the event easier. As many of the attendees were volunteers business cards etc. were not present so a shared list of emails could be useful for future events, of which I hope you will hold in another areas as it was very valuable.”*

**7.4.7. Portgordon Community Trust:**

*“Our organisation have been invited in to early conversations around potential Community Benefit relating to the proposed windfarm. It felt like Vattenfall really wanted to harness the experience that our community has and to seek to understand strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and how we see potential models for delivery of benefit.*

*What I enjoyed most was the different approaches to how they went about it. I enjoyed the informal face to face visits where they showed real interest in us and what we are doing in our communities, sharing there journey and and finding commonalities whilst following up and keeping in touch either by email or by phone.*

*They offered multiple opportunities to the wider community and what I can imagine a great cost to make the experiences meaningful and memorable. I feel that they really wanted to engage with and genuinely wanted to hear our thoughts and ideas, ending with a really interactive workshop that brought communities and diverse groups together, which was really energising. If I was to sum it up in one word, “Partnership”.”*

**7.4.8. The Applicant is grateful for this Key Stakeholder feedback regarding the approach to consultation and will consider this for future engagement on the Proposed Development as well as on other projects.**

## 8. RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

### 8.1. Overview

8.1.1. The following **Table 1** categorises the topical feedback received from the spring 2022 and summer 2023 public consultations and provides a response from the Applicant - together with a reference to the relevant Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) chapter, where applicable, for more information.

8.1.2. **Table 1: Summary of topics, key themes, and the Applicant’s response.**

#### SOCIOECONOMICS

The topical comments relating to SOCIOECONOMICS comprised the largest category of total feedback from the 2022 and 2023 consultations (approximately 25%), with the majority of comments focusing on the opportunities associated with community benefit. Below is a summary of the main themes:

Most socioeconomic comments focused on ideas for community benefit – with the most popular suggestion being reduced electricity costs for local residents. Other ideas included using the local supply chain, local transport improvements, investing in local halls, connecting rural households to mains water, road improvements, supporting health and well-being, funding environmental schemes, creating cycle paths, funding home eco-improvements, in addition to other individual ideas. Other comments related to how the community benefit fund would be delivered and managed, including which areas would benefit. A number of comments stated that there would not be any benefit from the project. Outwith community benefit, concerns were raised regarding property values and suggestions made regarding compensation for local residents.

#### Applicant’s response

*In response to the high level of interest in community benefit, a workshop was held by the Applicant in September 2023 and attended by representatives from 18 different anchor organisations - including local Community Councils. The workshop aimed to explore how a community benefit fund may operate as well as the benefits that it could deliver for the local area. Please see [Appendix 21](#) for further information.*

*Should the Proposed Development receive consent, a community benefit fund would be provided by the Applicant in line with the Scottish Government’s prevailing guidelines ‘to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project.’ Based on the 16-turbine 105.6MW Proposed Development, this could provide a community benefit fund of around £528,000 each year to the local community or £18.4 million over the 35-year operational life cycle.*

*The community benefit ideas and themes have been carefully logged by the Applicant so that, should the Proposed Development be consented, these ideas can be consulted on further with the community. The area of benefit would be established in consultation with the community and, usually, the communities that benefit are those closest to the proposal which host some of the infrastructure or which are impacted to a certain degree. It is likely that a local community organisation such as Keith-based Rural Environmental Action Project (which has experience in managing local wind farm funds), or a third party organisation such as Foundation Scotland (which has grant-making expertise), would be involved in administering the fund; however, the decision would ultimately be community-led, following further consultation, should the project receive consent.*

*The Applicant has a strong track record with regard to working with the local supply chain and maximising inward investment; for example, at its 18-turbine Clashindarroch Wind Farm near Huntly in Aberdeenshire, the site (which became operational in 2015) saw more than £12 million spent with 140 Scottish businesses – with around £5 million of this spent locally in Aberdeenshire and Moray. The Applicant has also been engaging with local businesses to build understanding of the local skills, services and materials available locally and explore opportunities to maximise the inward investment to the area. This includes Buckie Harbour which the Applicant is in dialogue with and, whilst the longer blades*

*and tower components are currently too large to come into Buckie, the Applicant is exploring whether it may be possible to deliver the turbine nacelles to Buckie. In addition, the Applicant recently announced plans to develop an onshore wind apprenticeship programme for Scotland that will support around 50 apprenticeships by 2030. To achieve this the Applicant will work closely with Tier 1 and Tier 2 contractors with the aim of securing 10 apprenticeships for each of their Scottish onshore wind projects. Aultmore is one of the developments that would be considered as part of this initiative should it receive consent.*

*The Applicant has also noted feedback regarding property values. Independent studies conducted over the years have concluded that house prices follow broader trends and that there was no evidence of a consistent negative effect on house prices (and that results vary across different areas).*

Further information regarding Socioeconomics can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 13 - Socioeconomics, Land Use, Tourism and Recreation** of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) which accompanies the planning submission.

## LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

The second highest area of topical feedback (approximately 14%) was LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL. The majority of comments raised general concerns regarding the visual impact within the local and wider area. In addition, there were specific comments about the height of the turbines, the impact on residential amenity, and concerns about night-time aviation lighting.

### **Applicant's response**

*The Applicant recognises the wide range of opinions people may have on the visual impact of wind farms. For some people they are problematic and unwelcome, for others they are welcome additions and a positive symbol of the changes needed to combat climate change. Others simply don't have an opinion.*

*The original (consented) scheme was for 13 turbines up to 110m to tip. The addition of three turbines has almost quadrupled the generating capacity of the site, from 29MW to just over 105MW. This uplift in energy production is due to technological advances and greater tip heights. This is why 200m is now a typical height for new onshore wind farms as we strive to meet the Scottish Government's target to double onshore wind from 9GW to 29GW by 2030.*

*A Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) has been undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the Proposed Development. The RVAA encompasses all residential properties within a 2km radius of the proposed turbines. Overall, it concludes that no residential property would receive effects of the highest magnitude and do not have the potential to reach the residential visual amenity threshold. All turbine locations have moved to some degree to improve the visual presentation of the scheme and avoid key constraints.*

*A reduced lighting scheme has been agreed with the Civil Aviation Authority consisting of steady red lights on nine of the 16 turbines and infra-red lighting (visible only when viewed through night vision goggles) on 15 of the sixteen turbines. By its nature, aviation lighting is designed to be seen by aircraft passing at height and therefore is directed upwards and less visible to those close by and at ground level.*

*The visual aspect of the Proposed Development is a key consideration of the design. The overall effects on outlook and visual amenity have been thoroughly investigated by the Applicant's technical experts assessing the impacts of the Proposed Development. They have concluded that in no case would the effects be of such a nature or magnitude that they would potentially affect the living conditions at any property within the study area - to the point where it becomes an unattractive place to live when judged objectively in the public interest.*

Further information regarding Landscape and Visual considerations can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 6 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission.

## EXHIBITION EVENTS

The third highest area of topical feedback (approximately 14%, with just slightly less comments than landscape and visual) related to the EXHIBITION EVENTS.

The majority of comments raised concerns about the accuracy of the visualisations or requested visualisations from different viewpoints. A mix of comments were received regarding the exhibition staff, with the majority stating that staff weren't able to answer any questions and the remainder commenting on the friendliness and helpfulness of the staff. Comments were also received stating that the events hadn't been advertised well and that the maps were poor quality. A small number of comments were received regarding the comments form not being accessible – in addition to a number of general individual comments regarding the exhibition events.

### **Applicant's response**

*The Applicant specifically sought feedback (on the comments form) about the exhibition events in order to understand what had worked well and where there may be areas for improvement.*

*The visualisations for both the 2022 and 2023 consultation events complied with strict industry standards set by NatureScot. Whilst there is no obligation to produce visualisations for these events, a range of visualisations were provided at both sets of exhibitions to give an indication of what the redesigned site may look like from different viewpoints within the community. A wider range of visualisations relating to 23 viewpoints in the local and wider area are provided as part of the planning submission.*

*At both sets of events the Applicant carefully selected a team of people comprising a range of expertise and knowledge of the project as well as experience engaging with people at exhibition events. Staff endeavoured to ensure that everyone who attended was spoken to, wherever possible. Due to the evolving nature of the Proposed Development it was not always possible to have the definitive answers to all questions raised pre-submission due to the design and/or assessment work not having been finalised.*

*With regard to advertising, the Applicant went over and above minimum pre-application consultation expectations in relation to raising awareness of both sets of events as outlined in sections 4.2 and 6.1 of this report.*

*The maps provided at the two sets of events reflected the quality that would be expected of maps provided for the planning submission.*

*With regards to the comments form, there was a technical hitch (outwith The Applicant's control) for a few hours on Friday 15 September 2023 (the consultation closing date) as explained in section 9.1.3 below. Once the Applicant became aware of the situation they took action and followed-up with anyone who had reported issues to ensure that they were aware the problem had been resolved.*

*For both sets of consultation events, the Applicant exceeded expected minimum pre-application consultation activity and delivered what they consider to be a comprehensive, meaningful and proportionate consultation and engagement process. However, they are grateful for people's feedback and will use it to improve future events.*

## ENERGY POLICY/NEEDS CASE

The fourth area of topical feedback (approximately 8%) related to ENERGY POLICY and the NEEDS CASE for onshore wind. The majority of comments focused on either a preference for offshore wind farms or questioned the needs case for onshore wind farms (and the Proposed Development). A number of comments also focused on the rising cost of electricity, with remaining comments focusing on the planning process and consultation.

### Applicant's response

*Both onshore and offshore wind play an important part in achieving a balanced energy mix of renewable generation across the UK. Onshore wind is one of the cheapest forms of electricity generation and can be built more quickly than offshore once consented. We already have 14GW of onshore wind built in the UK and it is estimated that by 2030, 30GW of onshore wind will be required across the UK to meet our climate targets at the lowest cost to the consumer.*

*The Scottish Government will launch a statutory consultation period upon submission of the Section 36 application which will enable the public, as well as key consultees, to submit representations on the Proposed Development. This feedback will then be assessed against the Proposed Development and a determination made by Scottish Ministers in due course.*

Further information regarding Energy Policy and the needs case for onshore wind can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 4 - Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Planning Policy** of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission.

## ECOLOGY AND ORNITHOLOGY

The fifth area of topical feedback (approximately 8%, with just slightly less comments than energy policy/needs case) related to ECOLOGY AND ORNITHOLOGY. The comments focused on concerns about the potential impact on either wildlife and/or habitat - including peatland.

### Applicant's response

*The Applicant is committed to the protection of nature and biodiversity – and strives to avoid or minimise impacts on the environment and ecosystems; where impacts can't be fully avoided or mitigated, potential compensation and restoration measures are considered.*

*A wide range of ecological and ornithological studies have been undertaken to build understanding of the wildlife, habitats, flora and fauna on site – including an extensive programme of peat probing. Our ornithologists have spent significant time on site logging the flight paths (including winter migration routes) of key bird species from vantage points around the site, mapping nesting sites, and considering breeding behaviour. The findings from this survey work, in addition to engagement with key consultees such as RSPB and NatureScot, have helped inform the design – and turbine infrastructure has been relocated to avoid impacts on key species or habitats.*

*Aultmore is not a particularly peaty site and the peat that does exist is mostly degraded due to the commercial forestry operations. We have undertaken extensive peat-probing on the site and avoided and/or minimised impacts on peat wherever possible through our design. There are a couple of areas of deep peat on site which offer significant potential for habitat improvement; as such, the Applicant's Biodiversity Enhancement and Restoration Plan proposes to restore such areas of degraded deep peat and return them back to bog. This restoration work will not only help protect the peat itself and enhance the habitat for wildlife, but will also result in a net positive impact and likely net gain in biodiversity.*

Further information regarding Ecology can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 8 – Ecology and Biodiversity** (including the Biodiversity Enhancement and Restoration Plan) of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission; further information regarding Ornithology can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 9 – Ornithology** of the EIAR; further information regarding peat can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 10 – Geology, Hydrology and Hydrogeology** (including the Peat Management Plan) of the EIAR.

## HYDROLOGY

The sixth area of topical feedback (approximately 7%) related to HYDROLOGY - specifically private water supplies. The comments focused on either general concerns about supplies being impacted, interest in how any potential impacts would be mitigated, or provision of details regarding private water supplies.

### Applicant's response

*The Applicant recognises that private water supplies are an area of particular concern to local residents – and takes the protection of people's supplies seriously. Detailed information has been gathered on private water supplies from SEPA, Moray Council, site walkover studies and engagement with residents – and changes made to the design in order to avoid any impacts during construction.*

*It's quite typical at this stage of a wind farm project not to have captured the details of every private water supply. Should the project receive consent the Applicant will be required to undertake further and more detailed surveys and assessment work to ensure that each area of ground is checked for any potential private water supplies before construction starts in that area of the site. The Applicant will also liaise with the water authorities and regulators throughout the construction and operational phases of the project and follow best practice. The Applicant is grateful to all residents who have taken the time to check their private water supply details with them.*

Further information regarding Hydrology and private water supplies can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 10 – Geology, Hydrology and Hydrogeology** of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission.

## NOISE

The seventh area of topical feedback (approximately 7%, with just slightly less comments than hydrology) related to NOISE. The comments focused on either general concerns about the potential impact, interest in the predicted levels of potential noise, or health concerns.

### Applicant's response

*Operational noise from wind farms must comply with ETSU-R-97 noise regulations. In line with this the Applicant has undertaken noise monitoring studies at locations around the site, agreed with Moray Council, to establish an accurate noise baseline.*

*The proposed development has been carefully designed and the turbines located sufficiently far from residential properties that predicted noise levels will fall within noise regulations. If at any point the wind farm exceeded permitted noise levels, Moray Council would have the authority to shut down certain turbines or the site as a whole, so it is in the Applicant's interest to ensure that they have accurately assessed potential noise impacts.*

Further information regarding Noise can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 12 – Noise** of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission.

## TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

The eighth area of topical feedback (approximately 3%) related to TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT. The comments focused on concerns about the site access point (either the original Mains of Oxhill access point or the new access point north of Croft of Ryeriggs), concerns about construction traffic in general, opportunities regarding Buckie Harbour (for turbine deliveries), or concerns about potential impacts to Broadley Crematorium.

### Applicant's response

*The original proposed access point, for the main construction traffic and turbine deliveries from the B9016, was via the Mains of Oxhill. This was also the access for the previous (consented) 13-turbine 29MW scheme. As the Proposed Development progressed, the access point changed in response to both technical*

*considerations and community feedback. The new proposed site access point from the B9016 is now located approximately 100m north of the Croft of Ryeriggs. This location has been carefully selected and assessed from a safety point of view - with the bellmouth junction designed to comply with road safety regulations.*

*The B9016 has been carefully assessed by the Applicant's transport consultants whose swept path analysis and engineering studies confirm that the road is suitable for construction traffic and turbine deliveries and does not require any upgrade or road-widening work to be undertaken.*

*The Applicant is in dialogue with Buckie Harbour to explore the feasibility of delivering turbine components into Buckie rather than via Inverness. Currently, the harbour is too small to accommodate the vessels carrying the turbine components; however, the Applicant is aware of the Harbour's masterplan and hopeful that this will open up further opportunities. Should this be the case, the Applicant would need to assess the route from the Harbour to the B9016 to understand whether any road improvement works were required.*

*With regard to Broadley Crematorium, turbine deliveries would be undertaken in consultation with the relevant authorities – including Moray Council, Transport Scotland and Police Scotland and could include movements during the night which would reduce effects on road users at busier daytime periods as well as any impacts on Broadley Crematorium.*

Further information regarding Traffic and Transport can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport** of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission.

## SHADOW FLICKER

The ninth area of topical feedback (approximately 2%) related to SHADOW FLICKER. The comments focused on general concerns about potential impact on residential properties.

### **Applicant's response**

*Shadow flicker can be easily avoided and designed out using sophisticated modelling software to control turbine operation. Shadow flicker control modules, consisting of light sensors and specialised software, will be installed on the turbines to prevent operation during periods when shadow flicker could be experienced at nearby properties. The correct operation of the installed shadow flicker control measures will ensure that there will be no impact from shadow flicker.*

Further information regarding Shadow flicker can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 15 – Shadow flicker and other issues** of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission.

## PROJECT PHASES

The ninth area of topical feedback (approximately 2%) related to PROJECT PHASES, with comments focusing on either concerns about turbine recycling upon decommissioning, or concerns about the general impact of construction on the site.

### **Applicant's response**

*Prior to both construction, and decommissioning, a comprehensive plan for the work would be drawn up in advance to ensure safety of the public and workforce and the best use of available techniques at that time.*

*The Applicant has committed to a landfill ban on decommissioned wind turbine blades and to recycle all wind turbine blades by 2030.*

Further information regarding Construction and Decommissioning (including further information regarding the carbon balance) can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 15 – Shadow flicker and other issues** of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission.

## TOURISM

The tenth area of topical feedback (approximately 2%) related to TOURISM. The comments comprised general concerns about potential impact on tourism.

### Applicant's response

*With regard to tourism, a number of independent studies over the years have consistently found that wind farms do not affect tourism. One of the most recent studies undertaken by BiGGAR Economics 'Onshore Wind and Tourism in Scotland' (2021) found 'no relationship between tourism employment and wind farm development at the level of the Scottish economy, across local authority areas nor in the locality of wind farm sites'. Nevertheless, the Applicant has assessed any potential impacts no tourism within the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).*

Further information regarding Tourism can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 13 – Socioeconomics, Land Use, Tourism and Recreation** of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission.

## BATTERY STORAGE

The smallest area of topical feedback (approximately 1%) related to the proposed BATTERY STORAGE. The comments largely related to safety concerns.

### Applicant's response

*As part of the Proposed Development the Applicant is proposing a Battery Storage Energy System (BESS) within the main substation compound. The BESS will help match the site's electricity generation to network energy demand and minimise potential grid constraint requirements. The BESS will have an indicative capacity of 115MWh and a peak power delivery of 50MW.*

*It is standard practice and a legal requirement for all substations and battery storage facilities to undergo a full design risk assessment which will take into consideration events such as; fire, explosion and gasses leaks. Mitigation measures will be incorporated into the final detailed design of the facility, as standard practice, to reduce or eliminate these risks.*

Further information regarding the proposed Battery Storage can be found in **Volume 2, Chapter 2 – Proposed Development Description** of the EIAR which accompanies the planning submission.

- 8.1.3. There were also a number of general comments received (approximately 6%) regarding general attitudes towards the Proposed Development, concerns about an extension, or other individual comments that fell outwith the topic areas above.

## 9. EVALUATION OF ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

### 9.1. National Standards of Community Engagement - evaluation

9.1.1. The National Standards for Community Engagement<sup>4</sup> comprise seven standards of community engagement and set out good-practice principles to help improve and guide the process of community engagement. The following **Table 2** seeks to evaluate the Applicant’s engagement and consultation approach for the Proposed Development against these standards.

#### 9.1.2. Table 2. Evaluation

THE STANDARD	EXAMPLES AND EVALUATION
<p><b>INCLUSION</b> We will identify and involve the people and organisations that are affected by the focus of the engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the start of the Proposed Development the Applicant undertook stakeholder mapping, as outlined in section 2.1, to identify initial ‘Key Stakeholders’ who were likely to have an interest in the Proposed Development and engage with them early in the process. In the early stages of the project this comprised mainly local Community Councils, ward Councillors, and constituency MSPs and MP but as the Proposed Development progressed the list of Key Stakeholders evolved, in response to the Applicant’s understanding of the area as well as feedback from the community and Key Stakeholders, to include key anchor groups (such as community development trusts) and local businesses (such as Buckie Harbour).</li> <li>• For the first set of consultation events in spring 2022 the Applicant decided, in addition to widely advertising the public exhibitions and consultation in the local media, to issue a project newsletter to around 800 households within approximately 3km of the site boundary to ensure that residents closest to the site were informed about the Proposed Development and aware of the upcoming consultation events. The Applicant also organised for the words ‘AULTMORE WIND FARM’ to be printed across the newsletter envelopes in large bold writing to reduce the likelihood of the newsletters being mistaken for junk mail and being put in the bin without people realising what the enclosed information related to.</li> <li>• All of the public exhibitions were accessible by wheelchair access to ensure that disabled people were not precluded from attending any of the events – and the presentation materials laid out with plenty of space for people in wheelchairs to manoeuvre. Tables and chairs were also provided at each event for all attendees to use but also for anyone with mobility issues (who perhaps wasn’t able to walk far or stand for long); the team also brought hard copy information over to the table for those with mobility issues and ensured that they were able to speak to those members of the team (who joined them at the table) who were best suited to answer their questions.</li> <li>• The Applicant endeavoured to follow-up with people who raised questions or required further information - and kept people (who asked to be kept informed about the Proposed Development) up to date through their newsletter mailing list. The Applicant also maintained two-way engagement with Key Stakeholders with regular updates at key project milestones.</li> <li>• All views were welcomed by the Applicant, whether they were supportive, neutral, or opposed to the Proposed Development – and people encouraged to submit their comments to the Applicant in writing as part of the consultation process.</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5943c23a440243c1fa28585f/t/63c6badff203e74f2ba4c4d3/1673968356909/NSfCE%2Bonline\\_October.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5943c23a440243c1fa28585f/t/63c6badff203e74f2ba4c4d3/1673968356909/NSfCE%2Bonline_October.pdf)

THE STANDARD	EXAMPLES AND EVALUATION
<p><b>SUPPORT</b> We will identify and overcome any barriers to participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant understood the need for as many individuals to have the opportunity to take part in the consultation process as possible. As such, a variety of methods of communication and engagement methods (as outlined above) were utilised – ensuring that people were able to engage face-to-face, by phone, by email, online, or by post depending on their preference.</li> <li>• The Applicant is aware that not everyone may be comfortable or competent online, and rural areas in particular often suffer from poor internet connection or broadband speeds. In response to this the Applicant ensured that hard copy newsletters were posted to local households nearest to the Proposed Development (as well as being available online) and that adverts were placed in hard copy newspapers in addition to online. Hard copies of the exhibition boards were also made available to people upon request.</li> <li>• In order to try and reach the younger generation and encourage them to get involved in the consultation, forms of engagement were used such as social media posts, sponsored online ads, and QR codes (on exhibition boards linking to the comments forms) which were likely to appeal more to the digitally engaged younger generation.</li> <li>• Public exhibition events were held in locations which were within reasonable travelling distance of each other and the nearest settlements, within the Community Council areas closest to the site, and provided a good geographical spread around the site. The events also took place across a range of dates and times (covering morning, afternoon and evening) to ensure that they were accessible and at suitable times for as many people as possible within the community as far as practicable. All of the events were accessible by wheelchair access to ensure that disabled people were not precluded from attending the events.</li> </ul>
<p><b>PLANNING</b> There is a clear purpose for the engagement, which is based on a shared understanding of community needs and ambitions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement and consultation took place over approximately two years, between November 2021 and October 2023, and throughout this period the Applicant carefully considered the resources required over this period - including the team present at the exhibition events in terms of knowledge and experience.</li> <li>• The Applicant engaged with the ‘host’ Community Councils (some couldn’t be reached at particular times due to changes in their membership or COVID19) ahead of both the spring 2022 and summer 2023 consultation events to discuss the proposed events, potential venues, dates, proposed advertisements and communications to ensure that they were considered suitable for the local area. School holiday periods were also avoided for the public consultation events.</li> <li>• Consultation events were held at times in the design process when they would be most effective; for example, at scoping stage (spring 2022) when people’s feedback could have the most influence on the early design, and at final design stage (August 2023) so that the Applicant could demonstrate how the design had changed and what would be submitted into planning.</li> <li>• The public exhibition events were carefully planned in terms of location, dates and time (as described above) and advertised a couple of weeks in advance to provide people with plenty of notice as well as during the week of the events to remind people closer to the time. The timing of the advertisements and communications was also carefully planned to provide a good spread of information over the two weeks leading up to the events.</li> <li>• Furthermore, the scope of exhibition board and FAQ information was designed to reflect the likely topics of interest within the community; for example, the summer 2023 consultation events provided more detail about private water supplies, noise mapping, peat depths across the site, and community benefit in response to feedback from the spring 2022 consultation.</li> </ul>

THE STANDARD	EXAMPLES AND EVALUATION
<p><b>WORKING TOGETHER</b> We will work effectively together to achieve the aims of the engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant clearly set out the purpose and scope of the consultation events in the advertisements and communications issued. For example, the ‘your feedback and next steps’ boards for both sets of consultation events provided a timeline, explained how to comment on the Proposed Development, and included clear statements that comments to the Applicant at that stage were not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government) and that, should an application be submitted, there would be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority. The stakeholder letters, adverts, and project newsletters also all explained how to comment on the Proposed Development.</li> <li>• Contact details for the Applicant were provided on all advertisements and communications.</li> <li>• At the public exhibition events the team endeavoured to speak to everyone who attended and encouraged people to submit their feedback on a comments form. The Applicant endeavoured to follow-up with people who requested further information or wished to engage further with the Applicant.</li> <li>• The Applicant also worked closely with various Key Stakeholders including local Community Councils and key anchor groups to keep them up to date, explain the key concerns and issues that had been raised from consultation and how these were being addressed, and to seek their advice on engagement and proposed consultation plans.</li> <li>• As described above, the methods of advertisement and communication were designed to meet the needs of all participants.</li> <li>• The Applicant endeavoured to engage and communicate in an open, honest, and clear manner.</li> </ul>
<p><b>METHODS</b> We will use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of methods for engagement and communication have been used throughout the Proposed Development as outlined above. These methods have been designed to be appropriate for the purposes required and suitable and accessible for the local community and Key Stakeholders. The Applicant has also gone over and above the minimum expected consultation activity for a Section 36 application (as outlined in section 4 and section 6 of this report) to ensure that consultation has been meaningful and proportionate.</li> <li>• The public exhibition events used a variety of materials including information boards – which provided written information, graphs, maps and infographics, visualisations – which included photomontages and wirelines, interactive wireline software (spring 2022 consultations only), reference documents – FAQs, newsletters, Report on Feedback (spring 2022 consultations only), comments forms, and verbal discussions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>COMMUNICATION</b> We will communicate clearly and regularly with the people, organisations and communities affected by the engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As outlined above, Key Stakeholder groups and organisations - together with residents who lived closest to the Proposed Development and were likely to have the greatest interest in the project - were identified early in the project and a range of communication and engagement methods utilised to reach them.</li> <li>• The Applicant has endeavoured to provide regular project updates to interested parties using a range of appropriate methods and formats, and to clearly explain the process for, and outcomes from, consultation and engagement.</li> <li>• The Report on Feedback reported on the feedback received from the spring 2022 consultation and how the design had changed in response to this, in addition to the maps on the ‘Design evolution’ boards for the summer 2023 consultation.</li> <li>• This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report, which will accompany the Section 36 application for consent, summarises the overall consultation and engagement activity undertaken and how feedback received has been considered by the Applicant.</li> </ul>

THE STANDARD	EXAMPLES AND EVALUATION
<p><b>IMPACT</b> We will assess the impact of the engagement and use what we have learned to improve our future community engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on how the consultation and engagement process has influenced the design is also explained, as outlined above, in both the Report on Feedback and this Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report.</li> <li>• The Applicant has evaluated their approach to consultation and engagement as set out in this Table 2.</li> <li>• The Applicant has also sought feedback from both the public and Key Stakeholders on their consultation and engagement activity so that this can be considered for future engagement.</li> </ul>

9.1.3. Despite the Applicant going over and above the expected minimum pre-application consultation activity and delivering what they consider to be a comprehensive, meaningful and proportionate consultation and engagement process, there is always room for improvement and the Applicant has identified the following learning points and considerations:

- COVID19 and changes in membership/operation of some of the ‘host’ Community Councils had an impact on the Applicant’s ability to engage with them at certain stages of the project. In hindsight the Applicant believes that they could have improved their consultation and engagement process further if they had been able to attend more ‘scheduled’ public Community Council meetings earlier in the design stages of the Proposed Development.
- The Applicant held three public exhibition events for the spring 2022 consultation and four events for the summer 2023 consultation, far exceeding the ‘one event’ pre-application consultation requirements. On reflection, the Applicant believes that they could have improved their consultation and engagement process further by holding an event in the Deskford area.
- A wide range of communication and engagement methods were used in order to reach a wide range of people. In hindsight, the Applicant believes that they could have improved their consultation and engagement process further by considering some radio announcements as well.
- Whilst the Applicant wasn’t sure how much interest there would be from Key Stakeholders or local anchor groups in the ‘pilot’ community benefit workshop in September 2023, based on the popularity of the event and the positive feedback received afterwards, in hindsight the Applicant believes that they could have improved their consultation and engagement process further by holding a larger event which would have enabled more groups to attend as well as members of the public.
- The information boards for the August 2023 exhibitions were printed on a specially selected recyclable cardboard material (rather than the usual correx polypropylene sheets) to achieve a more eco-friendly approach and improve the sustainability of the event. Whilst the print quality was good, and suitable for the event, it wasn’t as sharp as traditional (correx) materials and this was raised within some of the feedback. As such, the applicant will continue to explore other sustainable options for future events.
- The online comments form for the August 2023 consultation was provided via a link to a feedback-based platform known as ‘Netigate’. Through circumstances outwith the Applicant’s control, the external Netigate platform experienced a server glitch for a few hours on Friday 15 September 2023 (the consultation closing date). Once the Applicant became aware they contacted Netigate who rectified the situation; the Applicant then followed-up with anyone who had reported issues to ensure that they were aware the problem had been resolved. In hindsight, the Applicant may consider exploring alternative online platforms for further consultation work as well as scheduling periodical ‘end user’ testing of chosen software during future surveys.

## 10. CLOSING COMMENTS

### 10.1. Summary

- 10.1.1. This PAC Report demonstrates that the Applicant has sought to undertake effective, meaningful and proportionate engagement and consultation with Key Stakeholders regarding the Proposed Development - and has exceeded the minimum expected pre-application consultation activity.
- 10.1.2. The Applicant engaged early on the project, at scoping, to identify issues and concerns early (so that they could be considered) as well as opportunities (so that they could be explored) and ensure that people's comments had the greatest chance of influencing the design of the Proposed Development.
- 10.1.3. The Applicant has carefully considered community feedback and changed the design of the Proposed Development, or their proposed approach to its delivery, in response. For example:
- Site access point: changes were made in response to concerns regarding the original (Mains of Oxhill) site access point as well as technical considerations – and the site access moved to a more suitable location;
  - Broadley Crematorium (turbine deliveries): in response to concerns regarding potential impacts on the local crematorium (one of the main facilities between Inverness and Aberdeen) changes were made to the proposed delivery of the turbine components in order to avoid any impacts;
  - Buckie Harbour: in response to community feedback regarding the potential for turbine components to be delivered via Buckie Harbour (rather than Inverness), the Applicant is in dialogue with the Harbour regarding their Masterplan to explore whether potential redevelopment work may help facilitate the larger turbine delivery vessels;
  - Community benefit: a pilot workshop was held by the Applicant for local Community Councils and key anchor groups, in response to the high level of interest in community benefit, to build awareness and understanding of how a potential community benefit fund may operate as well as the potential benefits that it could deliver for the local area; and
  - Private water supplies: key changes have been made to the turbine layout in order to avoid impacts to private water supplies.
- 10.1.4. The Applicant also seeks to maximise inward investment around its onshore wind projects and this applies to both the design and development phase as well as construction should the project be consented. For example:
- Accommodation: local accommodation was used when working in the area;
  - Printing: an Elgin-based printing company was employed to print and mail out later editions of the project newsletter;
  - Local supply chain: in addition to the dialogue (described above) with Buckie Harbour, the Applicant has actively engaged with local businesses and developed a supply chain register to log details of their skills and services so that, should the project be consented, their details can be shared with the procurement team;
  - Community benefit workshop: a local Forres-based photographer and Fordyce-based caterer were employed to help support the community benefit workshop; and
  - Onshore wind apprenticeships: the Applicant has announced its commitment to supporting around 50 onshore wind apprenticeships across its portfolio by 2030 – with Aultmore being one of the projects that would be considered as part of this initiative should it receive consent.
- 10.1.5. The Applicant has evaluated their approach to consultation against the National Standards of Community Engagement (see section 9 for further details), in line with best practice. In addition, the Applicant has also identified learning points from the consultation and engagement to help improve future activity:
- 10.1.6. The Applicant is grateful to everyone who took the time to engage and share their views on the Proposed Development. The comments received, together with the site assessments and key consultee feedback, have helped to shape and improve the design.

## 11. APPENDICES

### 11.1. Appendices

- 11.1.1. [Appendix 1](#) – Introductory letter to Key Stakeholders (December 2021)
- 11.1.2. [Appendix 2](#) – Newspaper advert and editorial (March 2022)
- 11.1.3. [Appendix 3](#) – Website update confirming exhibition details (March 2022)
- 11.1.4. [Appendix 4](#) – Update letter to Key Stakeholders (March 2022)
- 11.1.5. [Appendix 5](#) – Project newsletter – Spring 2022 (March 2022)
- 11.1.6. [Appendix 6](#) – Public exhibition photos (March 2022)
- 11.1.7. [Appendix 7](#) – Exhibition information boards (March 2022)
- 11.1.8. [Appendix 8](#) – Comments form (March 2022)
- 11.1.9. [Appendix 9](#) – Virtual village hall exhibition – on project website (March – April 2022)
- 11.1.10. [Appendix 10](#) – Report on Feedback (Spring 2022 consultation period)
- 11.1.11. [Appendix 11](#) – Update letter to Key Stakeholders (December 2022)
- 11.1.12. [Appendix 12](#) – Newspaper advert and editorial (August 2023)
- 11.1.13. [Appendix 13](#) – Update letter to Key Stakeholders (August 2022)
- 11.1.14. [Appendix 14](#) – Project newsletter – Summer 2023 (August 2023)
- 11.1.15. [Appendix 15](#) – Public Exhibition photos (August 2023)
- 11.1.16. [Appendix 16](#) – Exhibition information boards (August 2023)
- 11.1.17. [Appendix 17](#) – Comments form (August 2023)
- 11.1.18. [Appendix 18](#) – Virtual village hall exhibition – on project website (August – September 2022)
- 11.1.19. [Appendix 19](#) – Graphs showing multiple choice question feedback (2023 consultation)
- 11.1.20. [Appendix 20](#) – Invite letters to community benefit workshop (August 2023)
- 11.1.21. [Appendix 21](#) – Community Benefit Fund Workshop Report (September 2023)

## 11.2. Appendix 1: Introductory letter to Key Stakeholders (December 2021)



██████████  
Secretary  
Cullen and Deskford Community Council



Sent by email to: [cullendesfordcc@gmail.com](mailto:cullendesfordcc@gmail.com)

Date:  
02/12/2021

Contact: Robert East  
E-mail: [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com)

### Proposed Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign

Dear ██████████

I am writing to inform Cullen and Deskford Community Council that Vattenfall is in the early stages of exploring a proposed redesign of its consented Aultmore Wind Farm, approximately halfway between Keith and Buckie, in Moray. Part of the proposed site lies within Cullen and Deskford Community Council's boundary area.

### About Vattenfall

[Vattenfall](#) is one of the largest producers of fossil-free electricity in Europe and for over a century we have electrified industries, supplied energy to people's homes, and modernised our way of living through innovation and cooperation. Vattenfall is a Swedish company and we've had an extensive presence in the UK for over a decade, developing projects since 2008 and investing more than £3.5 billion in enough wind to power 800,000 homes.

Vattenfall is on track to help save 8 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year by 2030, the same as taking 4 million cars off the road, and we now want to make fossil-free living possible within one generation. Therefore, we are driving the transition to a more sustainable energy system through growth in renewable production and climate smart energy solutions for our customers.

### Project background

Aultmore Wind Farm was originally consented by Moray Council in 2014 as a 13-turbine scheme with an installed capacity of 29MW. Since then, significant changes in both turbine technology and the UK electricity market have taken place. The turbine models originally proposed for the consented scheme are now difficult to obtain and the market support system existing at the time has been withdrawn.

Furthermore, it is considered that the turbine layout for the consented scheme underutilises the site's potential for clean energy generation. As such, Vattenfall is looking to redesign the scheme in order to optimise it.

Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd • Market Development  
St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3QQ • [info@vattenfall.com](mailto:info@vattenfall.com)  
VAT. GB927473303 • [www.vattenfall.com](http://www.vattenfall.com)



**Scoping Report for proposed redesign**

Following recent feasibility work we have submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU) seeking feedback on the proposed environmental assessment work which will take place over the coming months and help shape the redesign. The Report sets out a proposed 16-turbine scheme utilising up-to-date, modern turbines, with a maximum tip height of up to 200m, which will significantly improve the performance of the site.

Our understanding is that the ECU will consult with the key stakeholders identified within the Scoping Report, including Cullen and Deskford and other local Community Councils, to seek feedback on the Scoping Report. The consultation period is usually around 21-days, unless agreed otherwise.

The Scoping Report, together with further information, can be viewed on our project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore). We can also provide Cullen and Deskford Community Council with a hard copy and/or an electronic copy (on USB stick) of the Scoping Report if this would be helpful. Please let us know if you would like us to arrange this.

**Engagement and consultation**

Vattenfall is committed to early and meaningful engagement and we hope to establish a constructive dialogue with Cullen and Deskford and other local Community Councils, as the project progresses, in order to identify and address issues or concerns where possible and maximise the benefits that the proposed redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm could deliver to the local area.

We are planning to launch a public exhibition and consultation in the early part of spring next year, in order to consult on the project and gather views and feedback from the community and wider public.

Ruth Liddicoat (of Liddicoat PR Consultancy), who is supporting Vattenfall with the communications and engagement work on this project, will be in touch shortly to make introductions and follow-up with you regarding this letter.

Yours sincerely,



Robert East  
Project Manager

11.3. Appendix 2: Newspaper advert and editorial (March 2022)

# Vattenfall invites views on proposed redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm

Vattenfall is redesigning its consented 13-turbine Aultmore Wind Farm proposal located in Moray, approximately 6km north of Keith. The company is holding public exhibitions later this month for the local community to find out more about the proposal and provide feedback at an early stage.

Since the original consent in 2014 significant advances have been made in turbine technology, resulting in more powerful turbines being available. An environmental Scoping Report was recently submitted to the Scottish Government for a new 16-turbine layout with a blade tip height of up to 200m.

The site lies within an area identified by Moray Council as “likely to be most appropriate for onshore wind farms” and outwith any landscape



*meet the local community, understand their views, and provide them with the opportunity to discuss any questions that they may have. We are looking to design the best proposal possible, and this can only be achieved with community input.”*

**Frank Elsworth, Vattenfall's UK Development Director for Onshore Wind,**

**said:** “*New onshore wind is the cheapest way to generate electricity and has an important role to play in achieving the government's net-zero targets and tackling climate change. The redesign of Aultmore will help maximise the fossil-fuel free electricity generated from the site as well as the socio-economic benefits such as creating opportunities for local businesses, employment and community investment funds.*”

or ecological designations. Based on the 16-turbine redesigned layout, the 96MW scheme could provide a community benefit fund of around £480,000 a year to the local community and generate enough electricity annually for 70,000 homes, compared to the original scheme's 21,000 homes.

**Robert East, Senior Project Manager for Vattenfall,** explained: “*We are keen to*

## Public exhibitions

for redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm

**Vattenfall is holding public exhibitions this month to consult on plans to redesign its consented Aultmore Wind Farm scheme in Moray.**

The events will provide a variety of information as well as the opportunity to talk to the project team about the 16-turbine proposal which is located approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie.

<b>Cullen Community &amp; Residential Centre</b> Seafield Road, Cullen, AB56 4AF	<b>Tuesday 22 March</b> 2pm – 8pm
<b>Portgordon Village Hall</b> Cross Street, Portgordon, Buckie, AB56 5QW	<b>Wednesday 23 March</b> 11am – 2pm
<b>Newmill Village Hall</b> Mill Brae, Newmill, Keith, AB55 6TW	<b>Wednesday 23 March</b> 5pm – 8pm

The exhibition information will also be available online from Tuesday 22 March at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) where further project information can be found.

Feedback to Vattenfall on the proposal at this stage could help shape the design. Comments should be submitted in writing by filling in a 'comments form' at the exhibitions or online (from the project website), emailing [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com) or writing to Aultmore Redesign Project Team, Vattenfall Wind Power Limited, St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, NE46 3QQ. **The closing date for comments is Friday 22 April 2022.** There will be another opportunity to comment once the design has developed further.

Any comments submitted to Vattenfall on the proposal at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit). Should a formal Section 36 application for consent be submitted for this proposal there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority.

All those attending the exhibitions will be asked to respect any Covid measures in place.

Further information can be found on the project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore)



## 11.4. Appendix 3: Website updates: 1 - confirming exhibitions, and 2 - launching them (March 2022)

# Aultmore Wind Farm Project

Vattenfall is in the early stages of redesigning its consented Aultmore Wind Farm scheme, approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie in Moray, Scotland.

Aultmore Wind Farm was consented by Moray Council in 2014 as a 13-turbine scheme. Since then, significant advances in turbine technology have taken place with more powerful turbines becoming available. As such, Vattenfall is looking to redesign the scheme in order to increase the amount of fossil-free electricity that can be produced and increase the benefits to the local area.

### Public exhibitions

Our project team will be holding public exhibitions in March for people to find out more about the proposal at an early stage and provide feedback. The events will include a variety of information as well as the opportunity to talk to the project team. Details are as follows:

Cullen Community & Residential Centre	Tuesday 22nd March
Seafield Road, Cullen, AB56 4AF	2pm - 8pm
<hr/>	
Portgordon Village Hall	Wednesday 23rd March
Cross Street, Portgordon, Buckie, AB56 5QW	11am - 2pm
<hr/>	
Newmill Village Hall	Wednesday 23rd March
Mill Brae, Newmill, Keith, AB55 6TW	5pm - 8pm

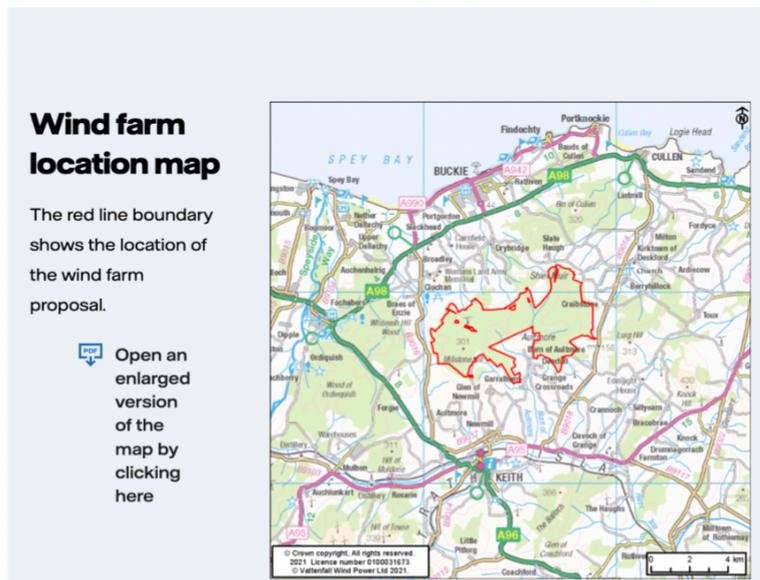
The events are being advertised in the local media and a copy of the advert can be found [here](#). A project newsletter will also be sent to local households to help raise awareness of the proposed redesign and upcoming exhibitions.

The exhibition information will also be available for people to view online from Tuesday 22nd March via this project webpage.

A consultation period will run between Tuesday 22nd March and Friday 22nd April for people to provide feedback which could help shape the design. More information on how to comment on the proposal will be provided once the consultation period has begun. In the meantime, if you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in touch. Contact details can be found at the end of this webpage.

### About Aultmore - redesign

The site lies on a raised plateau of land across several low-lying hills and consists predominantly of commercial forestry in an area known as Aultmore Forest.



A Scoping Report was submitted in November 2021 to the Scottish Government, as well as other key consultees, seeking feedback on the proposed scope of environment work which will help to inform the redesign.

The Report also sets out a proposed 16-turbine scheme utilising modern and efficient turbines, each with a maximum tip height of up to 200m and generation capacity of around 6MW, which will significantly increase the generation of renewable electricity from the site.

Based on the 16-turbine redesigned layout, the 96MW scheme could provide a community benefit fund of around £480,000 a year to the local community and generate enough electricity annually for 70,000 homes. Further information on Vattenfall's approach to community investment can be found [here](#).

### What's next?

In addition to the public exhibition events that we are holding in March, we will be engaging with key consultees - including local Community Councils - in order to understand any initial concerns, issues or questions in relation to the Scoping Report and proposal in general.

The comments that we receive from the public exhibitions, together with feedback from key consultees and the findings from the environmental survey work, will help to shape and inform the design development over the coming months.

We will also hold a second series of public exhibition events later in the design development process.

Based on the current project programme we are expecting to submit a Section 36 application to the Scottish Government in early 2023. The Scottish Government will be the determining authority for the redesigned scheme, rather than Moray Council, due to the installed capacity being over 50MW.

### Download the Scoping Report

 [Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign Scoping report](#)

 [Figure 1.1 Site Location](#)

 [Figure 2.1 Site Boundary](#)

 [Figure 2.2 Ecological Designations](#)

 [Figure 2.3 Landscape Designations](#)

 [Figure 2.4 Cultural Heritage Designations](#)

 [Figure 3.1 Site Layout](#)

 [Figure 6.1 Bare Ground ZTV 45km](#)

 [Figure 6.2 Screening ZTV 25km](#)

 [Figure 7.1 Designations within 10km](#)

 [Figure 9.1 Phase 1 Peat Probing](#)

 [Figure 10.1 Cultural Heritage Designations](#)

 [Figure 11.1 Indicative Noise Receptors](#)

### Why wind power?

Scotland has set its goal to reach net zero by 2045, and renewable energy projects such as the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm will provide the platform for the decarbonisation of homes, businesses and transport needed to reach this ambition. Onshore wind can make a significant contribution, and we can deploy more powerful turbines than ever before.

Onshore wind is now the cheapest way to generate electricity of any kind (in addition to large scale solar). Across the UK, there is already around 14GW of onshore wind built and it is now one of the cornerstones of the UK electricity mix. It is estimated that by 2030, 30GW of onshore and offshore wind will be required to meet our climate targets at the lowest cost to the consumer.

Onshore wind also brings benefits to host communities and the broader economy. We will offer a community investment package in line with prevailing Scottish Government guidance for local communities to invest in the priorities which matter to them.

Across the economy, there are also many opportunities for Scottish businesses to get involved in onshore wind projects - ranging from environmental studies and civil engineering through to site security and catering. Historically, over 70% of Vattenfall's onshore wind expenditure has been here in the UK, with British businesses.

### **About Vattenfall**

Vattenfall is one of Europe's leading energy suppliers with 20,000 employees. Owned by the Swedish state, for over a century we have worked to electrify society.

Over the last decade we've had an extensive presence in the UK, growing our wind business from one project in 2008 to 11 today and investing more than £3.5billion in enough wind to power 800,000 homes.

Today, Vattenfall is driven by the ambition to enable fossil free living within one generation. This is not our sustainability strategy - it's our business strategy. And it is sustainable. We are not just phasing out fossil-emissions from our own operations, we are working in close partnerships with our customers to help them do the same. We have more than 100 years of experience of innovation, and a large and growing portfolio of sustainable and fossil-free electricity.

We also have clear values and a strong ethos that places emphasis on working closely with local communities to make sure that we are developing projects which can bring a lasting sustainable benefit to the community and future generations.

### **Get in touch**

If you have any questions about the Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign at this early stage, or would like further information, you can get in touch directly with our project team by emailing [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com) or writing to them as follows:

Aultmore Redesign Project Team  
Vattenfall Wind Power Limited  
St Andrew's House  
Haugh Lane  
Hexham  
Northumberland  
NE46 3QQ

## 11.5. Appendix 4: Update letter to Key Stakeholders (March 2022)



Secretary  
Buckie and District Community Council

Sent by email to: buckieanddistrictCC@outlook.com

Date:  
09/03/2022

Contact: Robert East  
E-mail: aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com

### Proposed Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign – Public Exhibitions

Dear

Further to my previous letter to you in December, regarding the proposed redesign of our consented Aultmore Wind Farm scheme, I am writing to provide Buckie and District Community Council with details of public exhibition events that we are holding later this month.

#### Exhibition events

The purpose of the public exhibition events is to provide people with the opportunity to learn more about the proposal and for our project team to engage and consult with the community to gather feedback at an early stage.

We are keen to identify any concerns, issues, or opportunities to improve the delivery of the project so that these can be considered as part of the design development work over the coming months. The exhibition events will take place as follows:

- **Cullen Community & Residential Centre** on **Tuesday 22 March** from **2pm - 8pm**  
Seafield Road, Cullen, AB56 4AF
- **Portgordon Village Hall** on **Wednesday 23 March** from **11am - 2pm**  
Cross Street, Portgordon, Buckie, AB56 5QW
- **Newmill Village Hall** on **Wednesday 23 March** from **5pm - 8pm**  
Mill Brae, Newmill, Keith, AB55 6TW

A range of information will be available at the events, including: information boards (providing various project information); detailed maps (showing the site location, indicative turbine layout, and zone of theoretical visibility); indicative wireline visualisations and 3D modelling software (to help give an impression of what the proposal may look like at this stage within the area); FAQs; and 'comments forms' (for providing feedback to Vattenfall on the proposal).

Members of our project team will also be on hand to listen to people's views and discuss any questions that people may have. The exhibition information (with the exception of the 3D modelling software) and 'comments form' will be available online for people to access from Tuesday 22 March on the project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore).

All those attending the exhibitions will be asked to respect any Covid measures in place.

Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd • Market Development  
St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3QQ • info@vattenfall.com  
VAT: GB927473303 • www.vattenfall.com



#### **Raising awareness of the events**

It's important that we reach as many people as possible through the exhibition events (and subsequent consultation period) to maximise engagement and feedback. Adverts have been published today in the Banffshire Journal, Banffshire Advertiser and Banffshire Herald providing details of the exhibition events, and another set of adverts will appear in these papers during the week of the events.

I've included a digital copy of the newspaper advert with this letter, in case you wish to share this on community websites or social media pages. We can provide hard copies of the advert too (for local posters) if this would be helpful.

A project newsletter is also being mailed out to over 800 local households next week to help raise awareness of the proposed redesign and upcoming exhibition events, in addition to social media (Facebook) posts directed to people in the local area with information about the events. We are also writing out to other local Community Councils and wider stakeholders.

#### **Commenting on the proposal**

We believe the engagement and consultation process is vital to ensuring that those communities and stakeholders who may be affected by the proposal can comment on and potentially influence the design in a meaningful way.

The consultation closing date for written feedback to Vattenfall on the proposal at this stage is **Friday 22 April 2022** and we welcome feedback from local residents and members of the wider community as well as local businesses. Comments should be submitted in writing by:

- filling in a 'comments form' at the exhibitions or online (from the project website)
- emailing [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com)
- writing to Aultmore Redesign Project Team, Vattenfall Wind Power Limited, St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, NE46 3QQ

Any comments submitted to Vattenfall on the proposal at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit). Should a formal Section 36 application for consent be submitted for this proposal there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority.

Once we have refined the design, we will hold a second set of public exhibitions, closer to submission, to present the final design. These events will update people on the feedback received from this first exhibition and explain how this feedback may have influenced the design development or proposed delivery of the project.

#### **Designing the best wind farm that we can**

New onshore wind and large scale solar are now the cheapest forms of electricity generation in the UK<sup>1</sup>. We want to redesign Aultmore Wind Farm in a way that ensures optimal generation of vital fossil-free electricity whilst maximising benefits for community investment, delivering positive environmental and socio-economic impacts, and minimising adverse effects.

Vattenfall follows the prevailing Scottish Government guidance on community benefit<sup>2</sup> and we want to ensure maximum impact of community benefit contributions. Should the redesigned scheme be approved, it could provide a community benefit fund of around £480,000 each year to the local community<sup>3</sup> (or £12 million during a typical 25-year operational life cycle for a wind farm) based on the current 16-turbine 96MW design - and generate enough electricity annually to power the equivalent of 70,000<sup>4</sup> homes compared to the original scheme's 21,000 homes.



We are also considering offering local communities the opportunity to invest in the wind farm itself.

Furthermore, we are looking to build our awareness of the supply chain skills and capabilities in the local area in order to maximise inward investment opportunities. Historically, over 70% of Vattenfall's onshore wind expenditure is spent here in the UK with British businesses.

**Next steps**

Over the coming months we will review the comments forms received from the exhibitions, together with results from the environmental surveys (and key consultee responses), and consider this feedback and information in relation to the development of the design.

We will maintain contact with key stakeholders and initiate further engagement with the local Community Councils, local residents and relevant community groups based on the consultation feedback received and issues or opportunities raised.

Ruth Liddicoat (of Liddicoat PR Consultancy) will continue to support us with the communications and engagement work on this project and maintain regular contact with Buckie and District Community Council.

We hope that the information in this letter has been helpful – and that we will get the opportunity to meet some of your Community Council members at our March exhibitions. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch with either myself or Ruth if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



Robert East  
Project Manager

<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/911817/electricity-generation-cost-report-2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/911817/electricity-generation-cost-report-2020.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government guidance is "to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project."

<sup>3</sup> Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEDEexplained>

11.6. Appendix 5: Project newsletter – spring 2022 (March 2022)



Clashindarroch Wind Farm near Huntly in Aberdeenshire.

## About the project

Welcome to the first edition of the Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign newsletter from Vattenfall.

Vattenfall is in the early stages of redesigning its consented Aultmore Wind Farm scheme which is located approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie, in Moray.

### About the project

Aultmore Wind Farm was originally consented by Moray Council in 2014 as a 13-turbine scheme. Since then, significant advances in turbine technology have taken place with more powerful turbines becoming available. We are therefore looking to redesign the scheme in order to increase the amount of fossil-free electricity that can be produced and increase the benefits to the local area.

In November 2021 we submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government as well as other key consultees (including local Community Councils) seeking feedback on the proposed scope of environmental work which will help to inform the redesign.

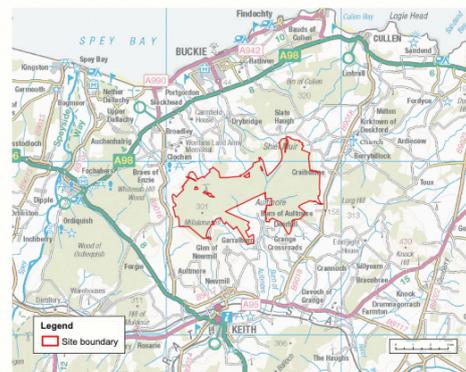
The Report set out a proposed redesigned 16-turbine scheme utilising modern and efficient turbines, each with a maximum tip height of up to 200m and generation capacity of around 6MW, which will significantly increase the generation of renewable electricity from the site.

The site consists predominantly of commercial forestry and lies in an area "likely to be most appropriate for onshore windfarms" within Moray Council's Local Development Plan Spatial Framework, in addition to being outwith any national or international landscape or ecological designations.

Over the next few months we will conduct detailed site surveys to explore the ecology, ornithology, flora,

fauna and overall biodiversity to ensure that we have a thorough understanding of the site and surrounding area. The findings from these surveys, together with feedback from key consultees and the community, will help to shape and develop the design.

### Site location map



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To view more detailed maps of the site, please visit the project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore).





## Early engagement

We are encouraging the local community (and wider public) to share their views with us on the proposed redesign at this early stage.

### Public exhibitions

We are holding a series of public exhibitions in March to engage with the local community and gather feedback on the redesigned proposal. The events will provide a variety of information as well as the opportunity to talk to the project team. All those attending the exhibitions will be asked to respect any Covid measures in place.

The exhibition information will also be available online from Tuesday 22nd March on the project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) where further project information can be found.

We want to hear from as many people as possible during our exhibition and consultation. Your thoughts, views and ideas can help us understand what matters to you and your community, and how we can develop the best possible proposal.

#### Cullen Community & Residential Centre

Seafield Road, Cullen, AB56 4AF

**Tuesday 22 March**  
2pm – 8pm

#### Portgordon Village Hall

Cross Street, Portgordon, Buckie, AB56 5QW

**Wednesday 23 March**  
11am – 2pm

#### Newmill Village Hall

Mill Brae, Newmill, Keith, AB55 6TW

**Wednesday 23 March**  
5pm – 8pm

### Commenting on the proposal

Anyone wishing to provide feedback to Vattenfall on the proposal at this stage can submit comments in writing on a 'comments form' which will be available at the public exhibition events or online (from the project website), by email to [aultmorewindfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmorewindfarm@vattenfall.com) or by post to the Aultmore Redesign Project Team at:

Vattenfall Wind Power Limited  
St Andrew's House  
Haugh Lane  
Hexham  
Northumberland  
NE46 3QQ

The consultation closing date for feedback to Vattenfall on the proposal is **Friday 22nd April 2022**. There will be a further opportunity to comment on the project later in the design development process.

Any comments submitted to Vattenfall on the proposal at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit). Should a formal Section 36 application for consent be submitted for this proposal there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority.

### Keeping you informed

For project updates please visit our website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) or get in touch using the contact details above if you would like to be added to our newsletter mailing list.



Walkers at Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm in South Wales (image by Michael Hall).

## Delivering meaningful benefits

If approved, the proposed redesign will not only help towards climate targets but also deliver potentially significant benefits for communities in the local area.

### Climate change emergency

Climate change has passed a major tipping point in society and it is now, without any doubt, understood to be the biggest issue that mankind faces. Carbon dioxide levels in the air are at their highest in 650,000 years<sup>1</sup> and 18 of the 19 hottest years on record globally have occurred since the year 2000<sup>2</sup>.

The Scottish and UK Governments have each declared a “climate emergency” and set legally binding targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To achieve these targets, transport, heating and industry will need to become increasingly electrified, meaning demand for electricity could double by 2050<sup>3</sup>.

Onshore wind (together with large scale solar) is now the cheapest way to generate electricity. The UK currently has 14GW of installed onshore wind capacity and it is estimated that by 2030, 30GW of onshore wind will be required across the UK to meet our climate targets at lowest cost to the consumer. As such, optimising sites like Aultmore could play an important role in this transition to a greener, low-carbon economy.

The redesigned Aultmore scheme could be capable of generating enough renewable electricity to power the equivalent of 70,000 homes<sup>4</sup> compared to the original scheme’s 21,000 homes.

<sup>1</sup> <https://scrippsco2.ucsd.edu/faq.html>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/global-temperature/>

<sup>3</sup> Climate Change Act [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27)

<sup>4</sup> [www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained](http://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained)

<sup>5</sup> Scottish Government guidance is “to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project”

<sup>6</sup> Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government’s ‘Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments’.

### Community investment

We believe our wind farms should be assets for local communities, supporting sustainable development locally and enhancing quality of life. It is only fair that the communities nearest our developments share in the benefits of harvesting the local wind resource.

Vattenfall has clear values and an ethos that places emphasis on working closely with local communities to make sure that we are developing projects that can bring a lasting sustainable benefit. We take a measured, paced and timely approach to explore the views of the community.

We follow the prevailing Scottish Government guidance on community benefit<sup>5</sup> and, based on the 16-turbine redesigned layout, the 96MW scheme could provide a community benefit fund of around £480,000 each year to the local community<sup>6</sup>. Vattenfall is also considering offering local communities the opportunity to invest in the wind farm itself.

### Local supply chain

In addition, we’re committed to maximising the opportunities for the local supply chain to work with us and our contractors during the construction and operation of our wind farms. Historically, over 70% of Vattenfall’s onshore wind expenditure is spent here in the UK with British businesses.



# Not just wind energy

## Introducing Vattenfall

We are one of Europe's leading energy companies. For more than 100 years we have been powering industry and supplied people's homes. We now want to make fossil-free living possible within one generation.

### About Vattenfall

Vattenfall is one of Europe's largest producers and retailers of electricity and heat<sup>7</sup>. We are 100% owned by the Swedish state and currently employ more than 20,000 people across Europe.

We've had an extensive presence in the UK for over a decade, having grown our wind business from one project in 2008 to 11 today, and invested more than £3.5 billion in enough onshore and offshore wind to power around 800,000 homes.

We believe in being a good neighbour in the places where we develop, build, and operate wind farms.

Vattenfall's wind farm expertise extends across Europe, with wind farms in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK.

We also generate electricity from many other energy sources, including over 100 hydro plants. In fact, the name Vattenfall is the Swedish word for waterfall.



### More than just wind

Vattenfall's activities extend beyond harnessing wind and water to generate electricity. For example, we're working with partners to develop fossil free steel, and we've helped build one of Europe's largest electric vehicle charging networks.

Here in the UK, we also design and build electric network infrastructure and are bringing low carbon heating solutions to developers and cities across the country.

### Environment

The environment on and near our wind farm projects is important to us too. At Vattenfall, we have our own internal bioscience research and development team. Their work helps us improve how we protect the natural environment when we build and operate our developments.

For the proposed redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm we will be undertaking a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in order to identify, assess and propose mitigation for any potential impacts of the development on the physical, natural and cultural environment.

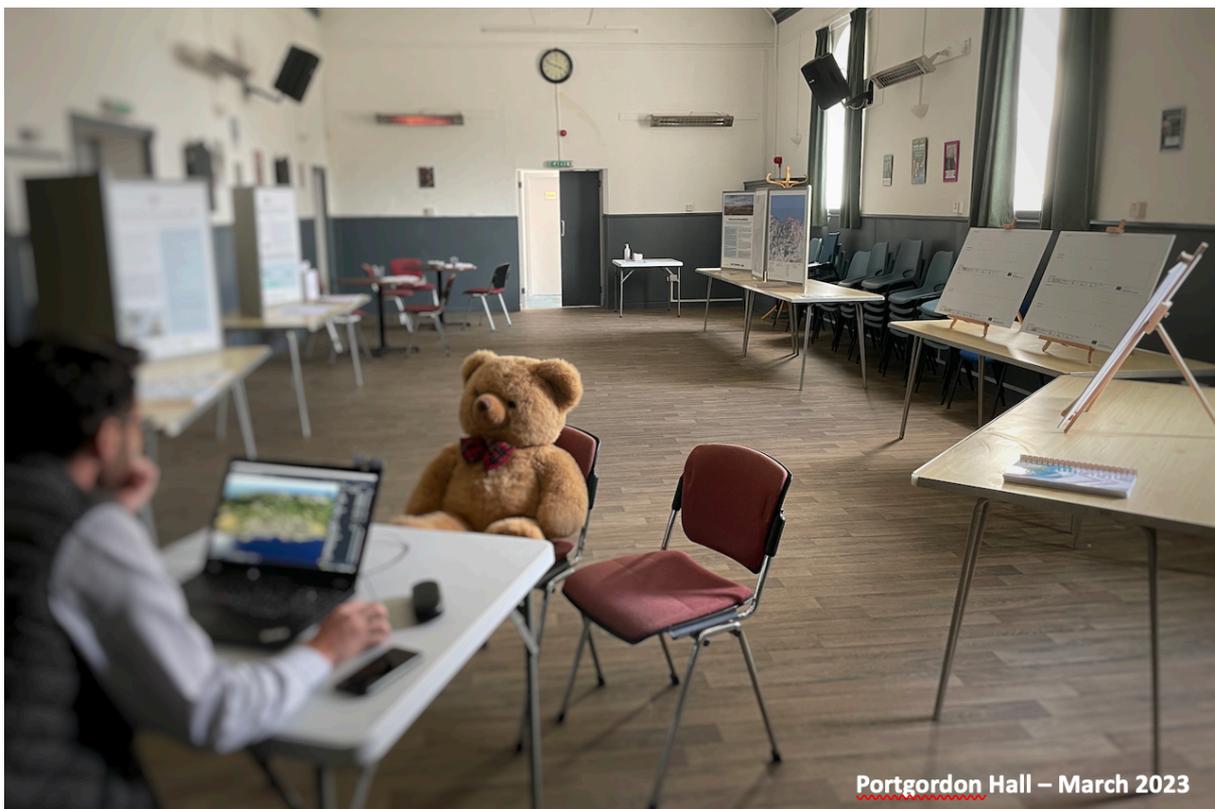


<sup>7</sup> [https://group.vattenfall.com/siteassets/corporate/investors/annual-reports/2020/vattenfall-annual-and-sustainability-report2020\\_.pdf](https://group.vattenfall.com/siteassets/corporate/investors/annual-reports/2020/vattenfall-annual-and-sustainability-report2020_.pdf)

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11.7. Appendix 6: Public exhibition photos - examples (March 2022)



These example photos show either the set-up or actual public exhibition events. Please note that the photos are deliberately blurred in places to help protect the identity of members of the general public.

## 11.8. Appendix 7: Exhibition information boards (March 2022)



Clashindarroch Wind Farm near Huntly in Aberdeenshire.

# Welcome to this exhibition

Thank you for taking the time to visit this exhibition for the proposed redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm. Please take the opportunity to look at the information provided and talk to our project team (or get in touch with us) about any questions that you may have about the proposal.

### About Vattenfall

Vattenfall is one of Europe's leading energy companies. For more than 100 years we have powered industry and supplied electricity to peoples' homes. We are 100% owned by the Swedish state and currently employ more than 20,000 people across Europe.

We've had an extensive presence in the UK for over a decade, having grown our wind business from one project in 2008 to 11 today, and invested more than £3.5 billion in enough onshore and offshore wind to power around 800,000 homes.

We believe in being a good neighbour in the places where we develop, build, and operate wind farms. We have clear values and an ethos that places emphasis on working closely with local communities to make sure that we are developing projects that can bring a lasting sustainable benefit.

### Our mission

At Vattenfall our goal is to **make fossil-free living possible within one generation.**

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. Our world urgently needs to change and find alternative ways of powering and heating. Renewable energy has a vital role to play, so we are grateful to you for taking the time to consider our proposed redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm and share your views with us.

### Your views matter

We believe the engagement and consultation process is vital to ensuring that those communities and stakeholders who may be affected by the proposal can comment on and potentially influence the design in a meaningful way.

Your thoughts, views and ideas can help us understand what matters to you and your community, and how we can develop the best proposal possible. We welcome engagement and feedback from local residents and members of the wider community as well as local businesses.

### This exhibition

This exhibition provides you with the opportunity to learn more about our proposed redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm and share feedback with us at an early stage in the project's development. Please have a good look through the information provided and talk to our project team (or get in touch with us) if you have any questions that you'd like clarified, before submitting any feedback that you may have on the proposal.

### Your feedback

Please provide your feedback in writing so that it can be fed into the design development process. Comments forms are available as part of this exhibition, in both hard copy and electronic format, for this purpose.

Correct at time of publication (March 2022).

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The red line boundary on the map above indicates the location of the site.

# Redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm

Vattenfall is in the early stages of redesigning its consented Aultmore Wind Farm scheme, a renewables project which could generate enough electricity to power approximately 70,000 homes<sup>1</sup> each year.

## Project background

Aultmore Wind Farm was consented by Moray Council in 2014 as a 13-turbine scheme with an installed capacity of 29MW. Since then, significant advances in both turbine technology and the UK electricity market have taken place.

As a result, the layout and turbines proposed originally do not make full use of the site's potential for clean energy generation.

We are therefore looking to redesign the scheme to increase the amount of fossil-free electricity that can be produced and increase the benefits to the local area.

## Scoping Report

In November 2021, following initial feasibility work, we submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government and other key consultees seeking feedback on the proposed environmental assessment work which will take place over the coming months.

The Scoping Report set out a proposed 16-turbine scheme utilising modern and efficient turbines, each with a maximum tip height of up to 200m and generation capacity of around 6MW, which will significantly increase the generation of renewable electricity from the site.

## Site overview

Located approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie, in Moray, the site sits on a raised plateau of land across several low-lying hills in an area known as Aultmore Forest.

The area consists predominantly of commercial forestry in addition to some relatively small areas of bog, heath and ancient woodland.

The site has long been identified as suitable for wind power generation and lies within an area "likely to be most appropriate for onshore windfarms" within Moray Council's Local Development Plan Spatial Framework, in addition to being outwith any national or international landscape or ecological designations.

The 16-turbine redesign includes turbines on the previously unutilised western portion of the site.

## Designing the best wind farm we can

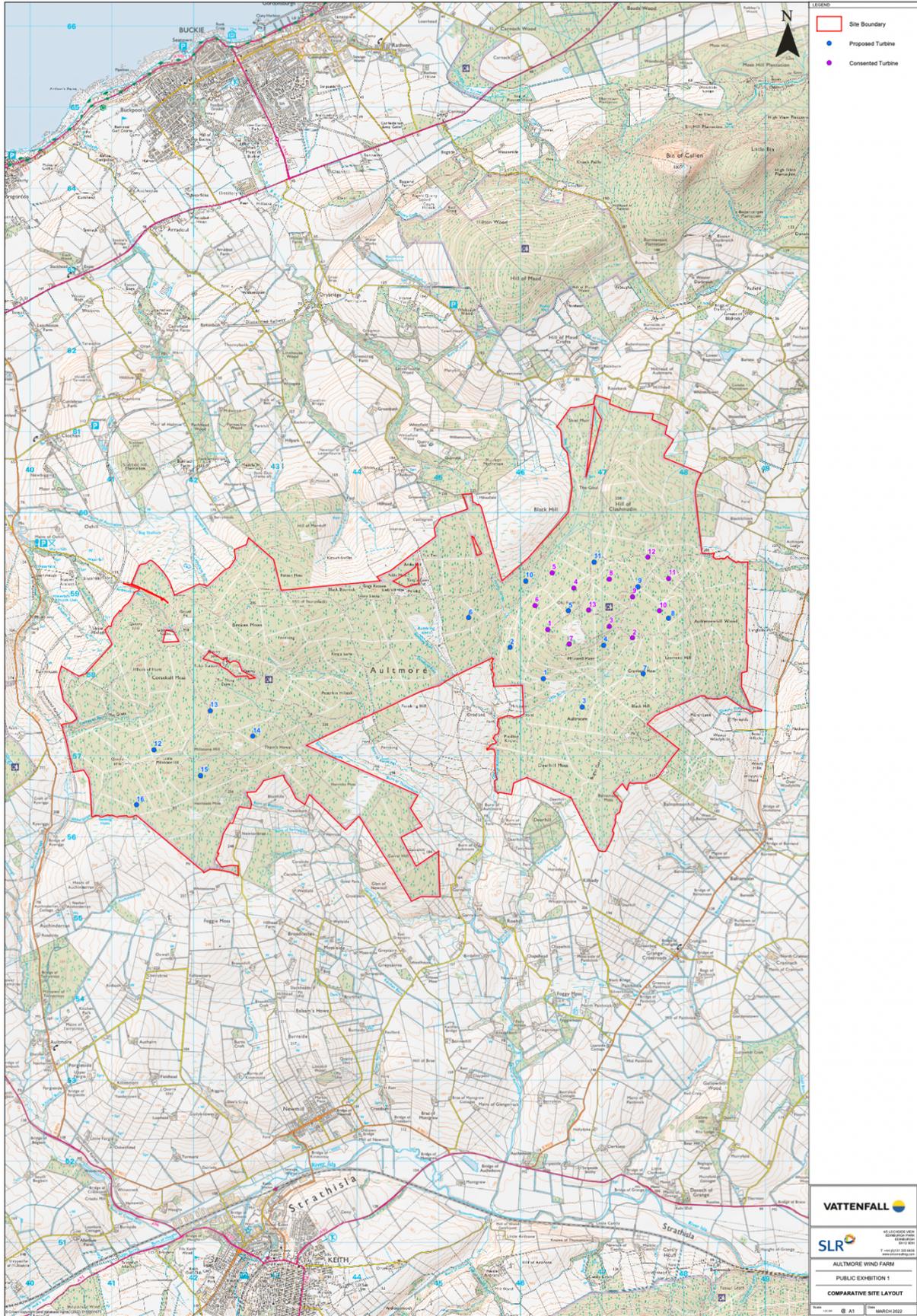
New onshore wind and large scale solar are now the cheapest forms of electricity generation<sup>2</sup> in the UK. We want to redesign Aultmore Wind Farm in a way that ensures optimal generation of vital fossil-free electricity whilst maximising benefits for community investment, delivering positive environmental and socio-economic impacts, and minimising adverse effects.

<sup>1</sup> [www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained](http://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained)

<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/911817/electricity-generation-cost-report-2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/911817/electricity-generation-cost-report-2020.pdf)

Correct at time of publication (March 2022).







Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm in South Wales.

## The evolution of onshore wind

Over the last few years there have been significant developments in the onshore wind industry as well as advances in energy policy and renewables targets to help tackle climate change.

### The need for taller turbines

Today, through major advances in turbine technology, turbines are able to generate more electricity than ever before. Taller turbines can access higher wind speeds and capture more energy from the wind which can significantly increase the amount of renewable electricity generated.

The original 13-turbine (110m tip height) consented Aultmore Wind Farm had an installed capacity of around 29MW and would have been capable of generating enough electricity to power approximately 21,000 homes by today's standards.

The redesigned 16-turbine Aultmore Wind Farm proposal (with tip heights up to 200m) would have an installed capacity of around 96MW and the capability to power approximately 70,000 homes<sup>1</sup> by comparison – creating a much better performing site.

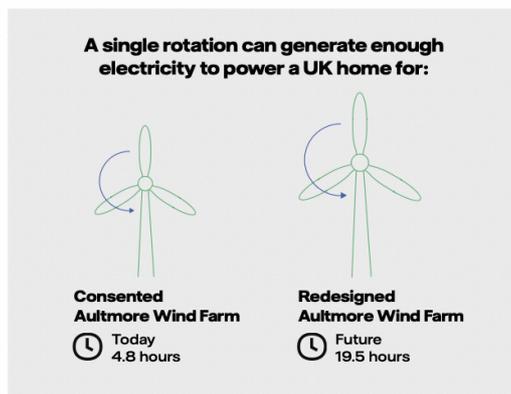
### Climate emergency and energy policy

Our climate is changing. Carbon dioxide levels in the air are at their highest in 650,000 years<sup>2</sup> and 18 of the 19 hottest years on record globally have occurred since the year 2000<sup>3</sup>.

In 2019, the Scottish and UK Governments each declared a "climate emergency" and set legally binding greenhouse gas emissions targets – with Scotland targeting 'net zero' by 2045 and the UK now targeting 'net zero' by 2050. The UK Government also set a target in December 2021 for all of the UK's electricity to come from clean sources by 2035.

To achieve these targets, transport, heating and industry will need to become increasingly electrified, meaning demand for electricity could double by 2050<sup>4</sup>.

The UK (and Scotland specifically) has the best wind resource in Europe and onshore wind is one of the most established technologies, with 14GW already built in the UK<sup>5</sup>. New onshore wind and large scale solar are now the cheapest ways to generate electricity<sup>6</sup> and it is estimated that by 2030, 30GW of onshore wind will be required across the UK to meet our climate targets at the lowest cost to the consumer. As such, optimising sites like Aultmore could play an important role in this transition to a greener, low-carbon economy.



<sup>1</sup> [www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained](http://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained)

<sup>2</sup> <https://scrippsco2.ucsd.edu/faq.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/global-temperature>

<sup>4</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27)

<sup>5</sup> [www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-refresh-2021-consultative-draft/pages/3/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-refresh-2021-consultative-draft/pages/3/)

<sup>6</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/911817/electricity-generation-cost-report-2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/911817/electricity-generation-cost-report-2020.pdf)

Correct at time of publication (March 2022).

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Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm in South Wales (image by Michael Hall).

## Protecting the environment

There are a wide range of considerations when designing a wind farm to ensure that the local environment is protected and any potential impacts are minimised as much as possible.

### Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Vattenfall is committed to the protection of nature and biodiversity. We strive to avoid and minimise impacts on the environment and ecosystems and where impacts can't be fully avoided or mitigated, we consider potential compensation and restoration measures. We also engage with stakeholders and conduct research and development to build knowledge and reduce impacts.

For the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm we will be undertaking a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in order to identify, assess and propose mitigation for any potential impacts on the physical, natural and cultural environment.

This EIA work can often involve many hundreds of hours of field surveys and studies which are undertaken by independent experts and specialists. The areas assessed will include:

- Ecology
- Ornithology
- Aviation and radar
- Landscape and Visual
- Cultural Heritage
- Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Peat
- Access, Traffic and Transport
- Noise and shadow flicker

The findings from this survey work will build on the extensive EIA data collected in relation to the previous proposal and, together with feedback from key consultees and the community, will help to inform the design development process over the coming months.

### Wildlife and habitats

We will be conducting detailed surveys to explore the ecology, ornithology, flora, fauna and overall biodiversity to ensure that we have a thorough understanding of the site and surrounding area. We will also consult with key consultees such as NatureScot and RSPB to share and review data.

### Forestry

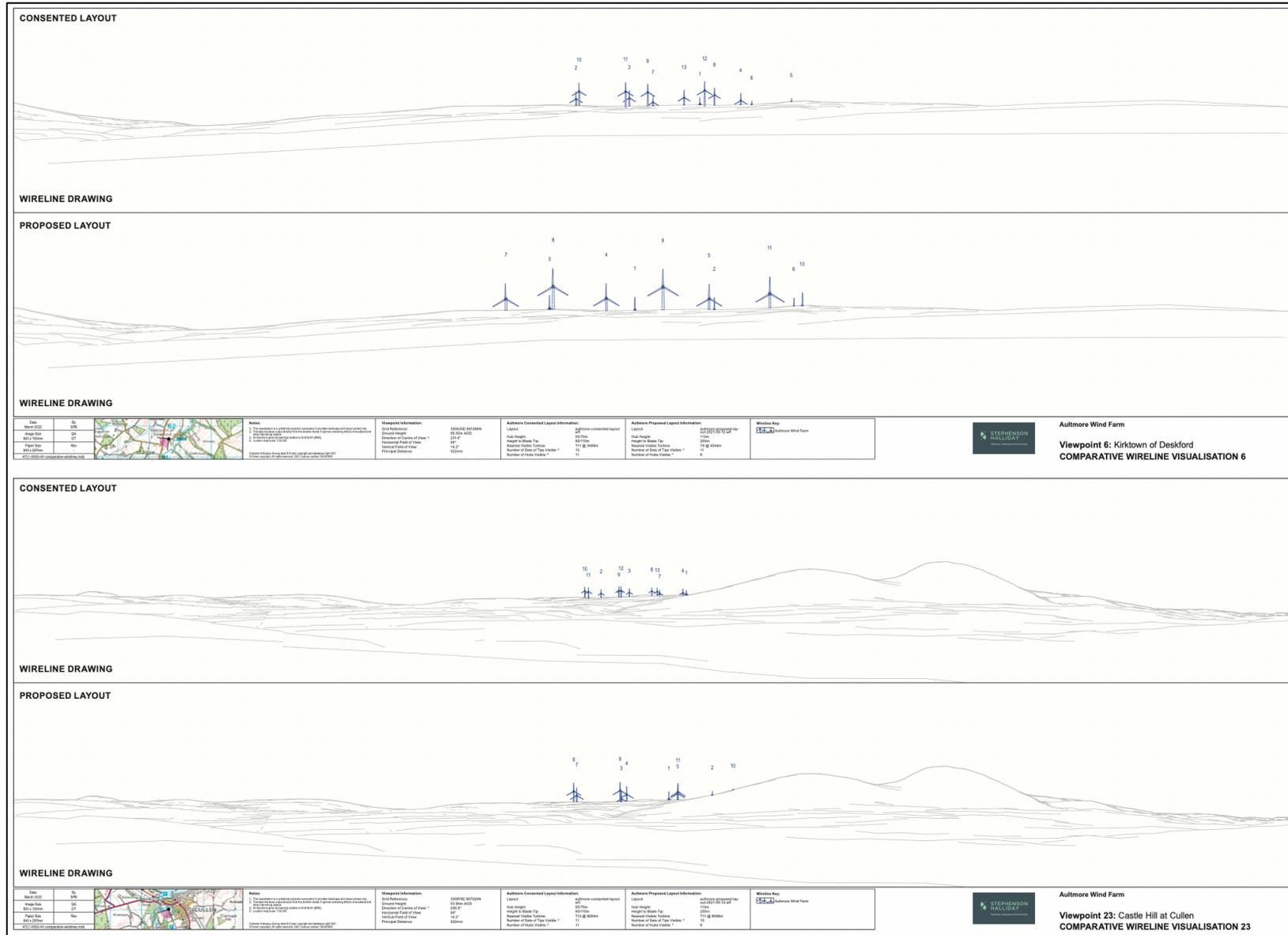
The commercial forestry on site is managed by Forestry and Land Scotland on behalf of Scottish Ministers. It is of varying ages and will be felled at the appropriate time in accordance with FLS's Aultmore Land Management Plan (LMP). There may be some specific felling necessary for the proposed development and this would be discussed with FLS. Any felled trees would be replanted, either on site or elsewhere in the region, and native broadleaf species would be used wherever possible.

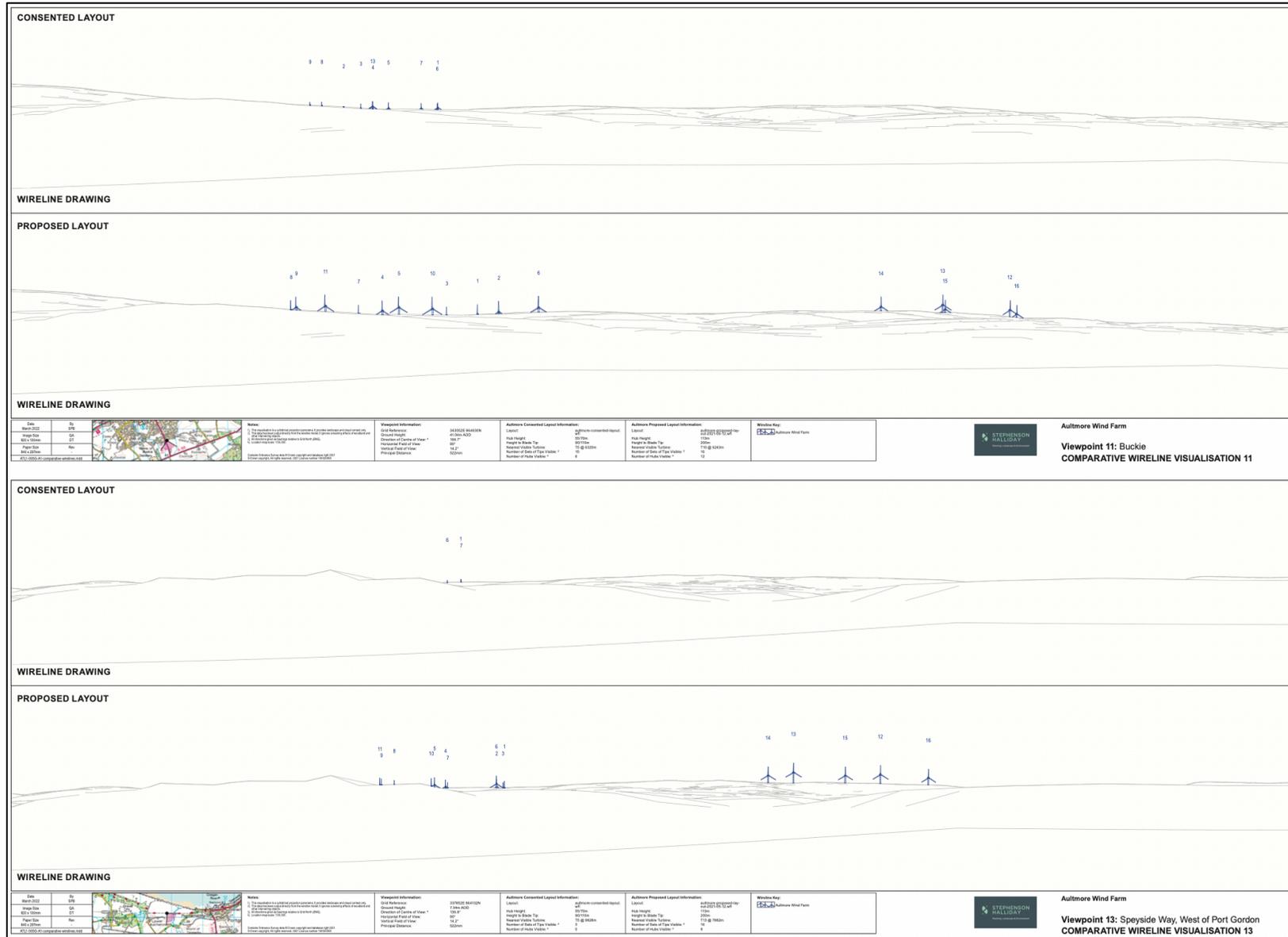
### Landscape and visual

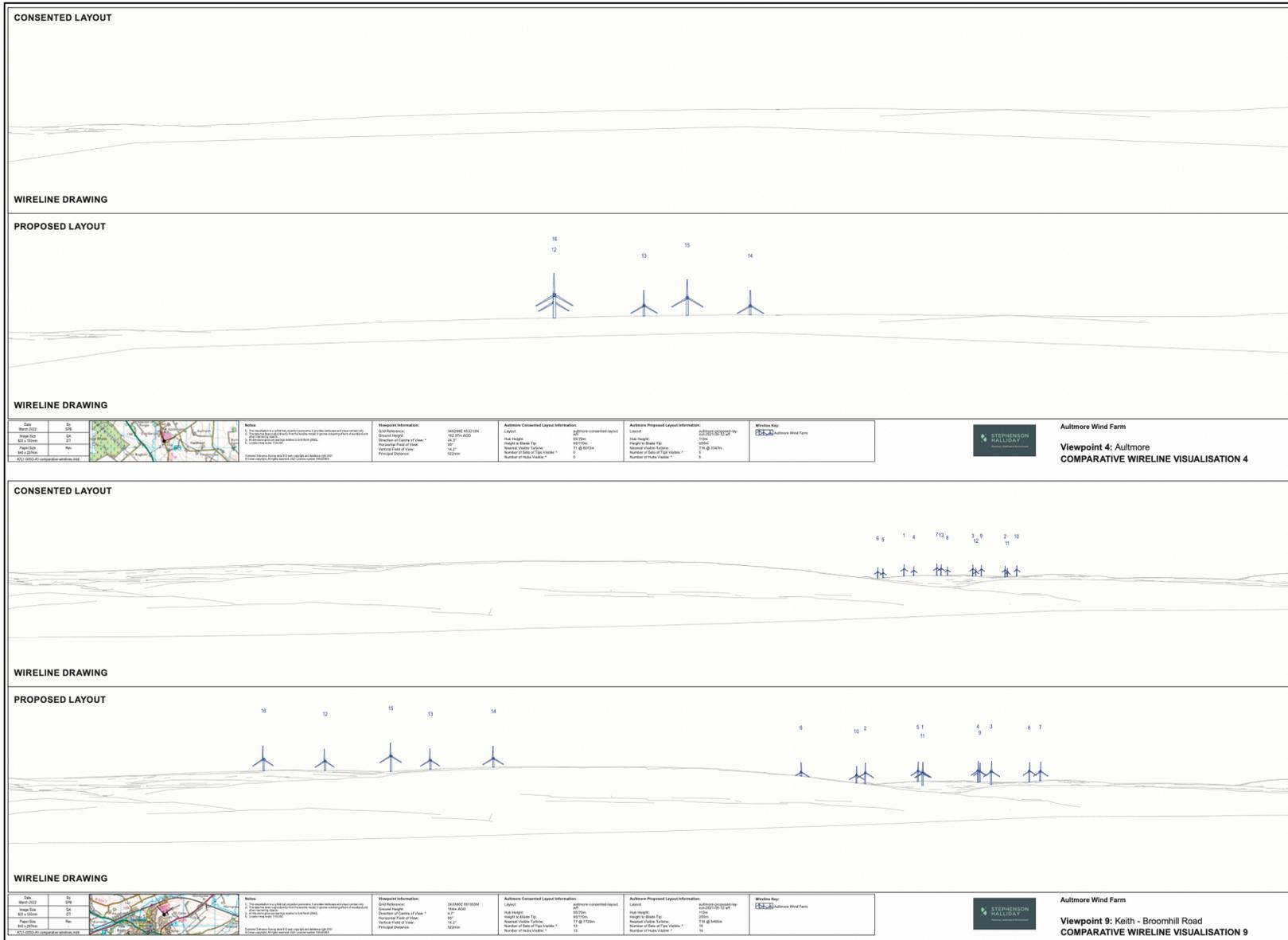
How the site looks in the landscape is of considerable importance to the project team. Over the coming months we will be working closely with specialised landscape architects to critically assess the visual impact and ensure that key design objectives are achieved. Whilst the project is at an early stage of development, we have included a few wirelines within this exhibition from viewpoints in the area to help give an impression of what the redesigned proposal may look like within the landscape.

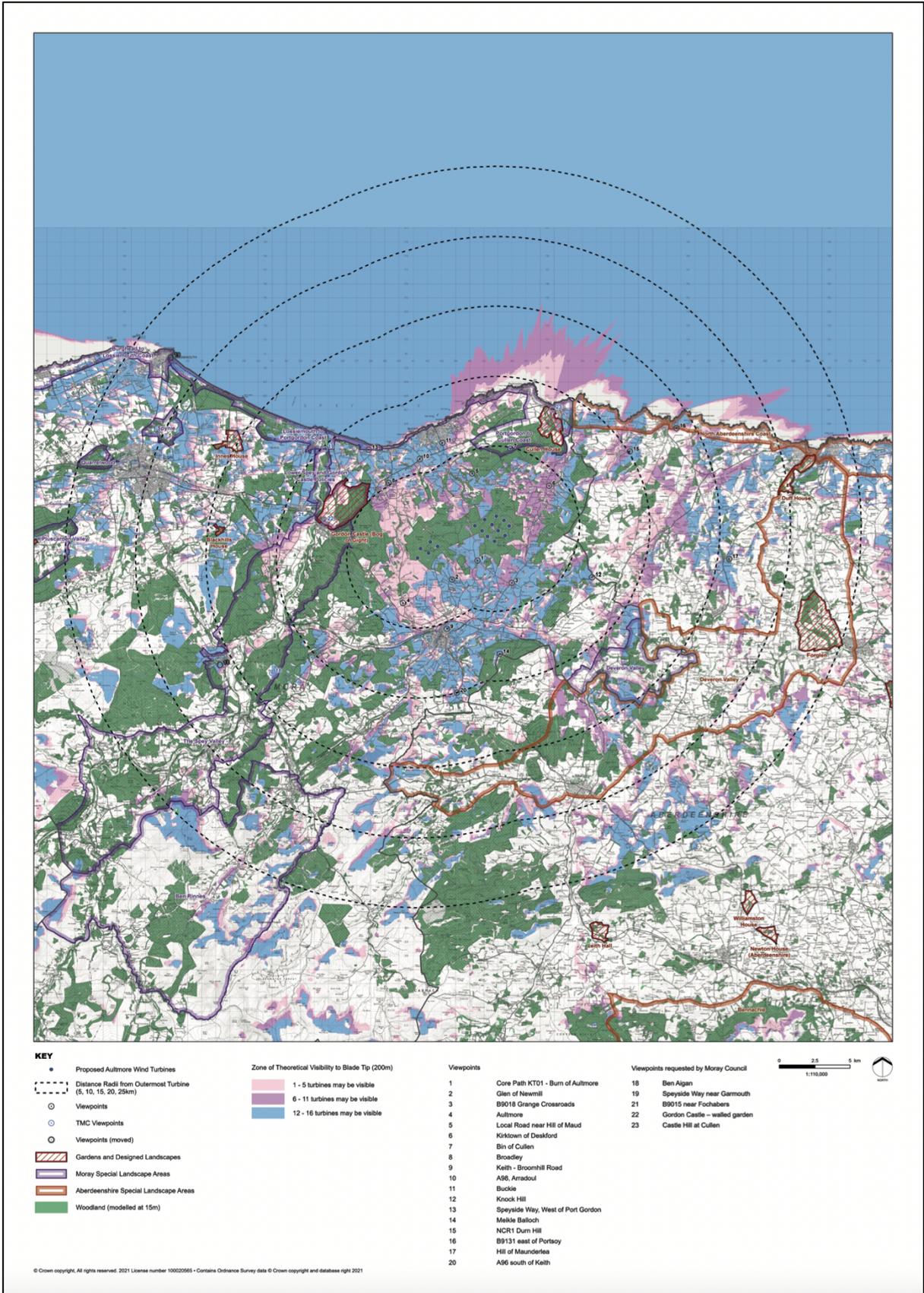
Correct at time of publication (March 2022).

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Clashindarroch Wind Farm near Huntly in Aberdeenshire.

## Construction traffic and site access

One of the key considerations of any wind farm development is the proposed transport route for the delivery of the turbine blades, towers, hubs and nacelles.

### Turbine delivery route

The turbine delivery route takes careful planning as most of the turbine components need to be transported on specially designed longer vehicles which have multi-axle steering and are extendable. These vehicles usually travel in convoy and are referred to as Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs).

It is likely that the turbine components will arrive at Inverness Harbour and then travel east along the A96 and A98 before turning south onto the B9016 towards site.

### Site access point

There are currently a number of existing access points into the site, developed by Forestry Land Scotland (FLS) for forestry activities. The most likely access point for wind farm construction traffic will be from the B9016 public road near Braes of Enzie along an existing forestry logging track which heads east up onto the site. This was also the proposed access for the consented Aultmore Wind Farm.

It is anticipated that improvements may be required at the existing access junction off the B9016 at Braes of Enzie, or an alternative junction constructed to accommodate the deliveries. We would welcome feedback from the local community on this proposed turbine delivery route and access point into site so that we can understand any potential concerns, issues or opportunities which may need to be addressed.

### Traffic assessment

In order to properly assess the suitability of the proposed turbine delivery route, as well as the potential impacts of these deliveries and other construction traffic on road users, we will undertake a transport assessment as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work.

The assessment will include a visual inspection of the route, as well as traffic count surveys.

Should the project be consented, we would then undertake a full Traffic Management Plan which would require to be agreed with Moray Council's roads department as well as with the police.

### Minimising impacts

Whilst some traffic disruption during construction would be inevitable, we will seek to design the project in a way that minimises any potential disruption from construction traffic. The sort of things that we will be looking at are avoiding peak traffic times (such as school drop-off and pick up) as well as a swept path analysis to ensure that there is enough room for the longer AILs to manoeuvre safely along the turbine delivery route.

In addition, aggregate for the construction of onsite tracks and other infrastructure would be sourced, wherever possible, from borrow pits within the site in order to reduce construction traffic within the local area as well as overall environmental impact.



Walkers at Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm in South Wales (image by Michael Hall).

## Investing in your community

If approved, the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm has the potential to generate significant benefits for communities in the local area.

### Working with the community

Vattenfall believes our wind farms should be assets for local communities, supporting sustainable development locally and enhancing quality of life. It is only fair that the communities nearest our developments share in the benefits of harvesting the local wind resource.

Onshore wind farms provide a unique opportunity for communities to receive benefits over the lifetime of a project, often 25 years. Usually, those areas that benefit are the communities closest to the proposal which host some of the infrastructure or which are impacted to a certain degree.

We take a measured, paced and timely approach to explore the views of the community. This involves research and engagement in the early stages of the project, to explore and understand community needs and priorities as well as challenges and issues. We seek views on what the community would like to see as part of the community benefit arrangement and the areas or communities the community benefit should be focused on.

Dialogue is usually paused once our planning application is submitted and then resumed afterwards (should the proposal be consented), with discussions focusing on how the community benefit will be managed and the required governance and legal agreements.

### Community investment

Our investment in local communities comes in many forms, with community benefit packages, skills, training and education programmes, shared ownership and benefits in kind being the most common. These are voluntary contributions, designed to deliver meaningful benefit aligned with community needs for the future.

We follow the prevailing Scottish Government guidance on community benefit<sup>1</sup> and want to ensure maximum impact of community benefit contributions. Based on

the 16-turbine redesigned layout, the 96MW scheme could provide a community benefit fund of around £480,000 each year to the local community<sup>2</sup>.

### Shared ownership

In addition to community investment, local communities could also benefit from shared ownership in the redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm project. Vattenfall is considering offering local communities the opportunity to invest in the wind farm itself.

Investing in projects can create the potential for an additional income stream for the lifetime of the project. There are different ways that shared ownership can be realised. One of the most common is to create a model for sharing revenues from the operation of the wind farm with local communities.

### Your feedback

We want to understand your views on community investment and shared ownership so that we can make sure our project delivers real benefits to the local area. Please take the time to talk to (or get in touch with) our project team to discuss your views and then submit your feedback to us in writing on a comments forms.

<sup>1</sup> Scottish Government guidance is "to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project."

<sup>2</sup> Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'.

Correct at time of publication (March 2022).

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## Working with the local supply chain

Vattenfall is keen to understand the skills and capabilities within the local area in order to maximise the opportunities for local businesses to get involved in the project.

### Our approach

Vattenfall is committed to working closely with the local supply chain and maximising the opportunities for local businesses to work with us and our contractors during the construction and operation of our wind farms.

The redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm proposal could help to facilitate economic development by creating inward investment in the form of local contracts, local jobs, and local spend with businesses in the area.

Historically, over 70% of Vattenfall's onshore wind expenditure is spent here in the UK with British businesses. To achieve this, we strive to not only buy local wherever feasible but to proactively seek out local businesses and enterprises who can help us build our wind farms. We work with all sizes of companies from large multi-nationals through to small and medium enterprises as well as sole traders.

### Clashindarroch Wind Farm

Our 18-turbine Clashindarroch Wind Farm, near Huntly in Aberdeenshire, is a good example of the inward investment which our wind farms can deliver to the local area.

The site, which became operational in 2015, saw more than £12 million spent with 140 Scottish businesses. Around £5m was spent locally (Aberdeenshire/Moray) and £10m spent regionally (Aberdeenshire/Moray/Highland).



### Supply chain opportunities

There are a wide range of skills, services and materials required during the construction and operation of a wind farm, including:

- Civil engineering
- Electrical works and cabling
- Quantity surveyors
- Environmental surveyors
- Crane operators and lifting plans
- Labourers and plant operators
- Haulage and transport
- Cleaners (site offices)
- Garages (fuel, vehicle maintenance)
- Accommodation (hotels, B&Bs)
- Restaurants and local shops
- Groundworks
- Plant hire and generators
- Concrete pouring
- Steel fixing
- Site catering
- Fuel and oil supplies
- Turbine technicians
- Hydro-seeding
- Office administrators
- Site security
- Signage

If you, or a local business you know, have something to offer to the project please talk to our project team (or get in touch with us).

We are also building a register of local services and suppliers so that we are aware of the skills and capabilities within the area. This register will be used by Vattenfall and our main contractors to help procure skills, services and materials for the redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm, should it go ahead, as well as other potential developments across Scotland.

To add details of a local business to our register please complete a comments form with your views on the proposal and fill in the Business Registration Form at the end of the comments form. Comments forms are available as part of this exhibition, in both hard copy and electronic format, or by getting touch with our project team.

Correct at time of publication (March 2022).

**VATTENFALL**



## Your feedback and next steps

It is important to provide any comments that you may have at this stage, regarding our proposal to redesign Aultmore Wind Farm, so that they can be considered in relation to the design development process.

### Commenting on the proposal

Your thoughts, views and ideas can help us understand what matters to you and your community. This includes specific comments on the turbine layout and overall design of the project. Please take the time to talk to our project team or get in touch with us to discuss any questions that you may have before providing feedback.

Feedback to Vattenfall on the proposal at this stage should be provided in writing. There are three ways to do this:

- Complete a 'comments form' at the exhibition events or online (on our project website)
- Email [aultmorewindfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmorewindfarm@vattenfall.com)
- Write to Aultmore Redesign Project Team, Vattenfall Wind Power Limited, St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, NE46 3QQ.

Please scan the QR code opposite for access to the online comments form.



### Next steps

Over the coming months we will review the comments forms received from the exhibitions together with results from the environmental surveys (and key consultee responses) and consider this feedback and information in relation to the development of the design.

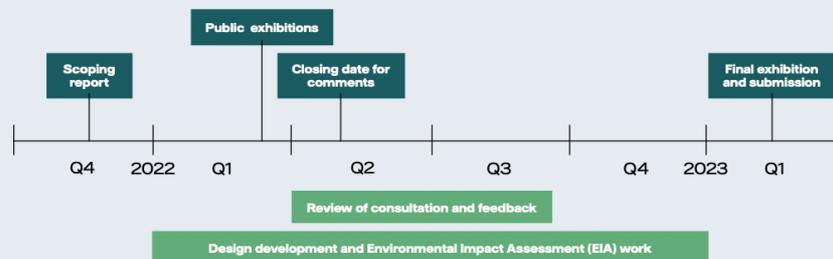
We will maintain contact with key stakeholders and initiate further engagement with the local Community Councils, local residents and relevant community groups based on the consultation feedback received and issues or opportunities raised.

Once we have refined the design, we will hold a second public exhibition closer to submission to present the final design and update you on the feedback received from this first exhibition. We will also explain how this feedback may have influenced the design development or proposed delivery of the project.

Further information about the proposal can be found on our project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore).

**The closing date for comments to Vattenfall at this stage in the project is Friday 22 April 2022.** Any comments submitted at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government). Should a formal Section 36 application for consent be submitted for this proposal there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority.

### Indicative timeline for submission



Correct at time of publication (March 2022).



## 11.9. Appendix 8: Comments form (March 2022)



### **Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign – Comments Form**

#### **Terms and conditions**

Vattenfall takes very seriously the opinions of those living near to or visiting places where we plan to build a wind farm. We value feedback throughout the design process and we firmly believe, with your help, that we can design the best wind farm possible which works for the community.

Starting today, we will ask for your opinions and ideas throughout the planning process. We will report back to you on what we've heard and this feedback will feature in a further public event that we will hold later in the design development process of this project. It will also feature in the Pre-application Consultation (PAC) Report which will accompany our application to Scottish Ministers for permission to build the project.

The feedback that you provide will be used by us in aggregate to understand how communities affected by our proposals feel about the development. No responses will be directly attributable to any person or organisation nor made public by us. We will retain this data until we have received a response to our planning application from Scottish Ministers, at which point it will be deleted.

You have a number of rights under data protection law and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You will find more information about how Vattenfall handles your personal data in our **privacy policy – a printed copy of which is available at this exhibition** (an online version can be found by searching for 'Privacy Policy' on our company website at <https://group.vattenfall.com/uk>).

By completing a comments form you are confirming that you have read the above and understand the Terms and Conditions.

Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd • Market Development  
St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3QQ • [info@vattenfall.com](mailto:info@vattenfall.com)  
VAT. GB927473303 • [www.vattenfall.com](http://www.vattenfall.com)



**1. Your views on energy and climate change**

How concerned are you about climate change, sometimes referred to as 'global warming'?

- Very concerned
- Fairly concerned
- Not very concerned
- Not at all concerned
- Don't know

Leaving aside the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm for a moment, generally do you support or oppose the following?

**The transition towards renewable energy?**

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

**The use of onshore wind?**

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

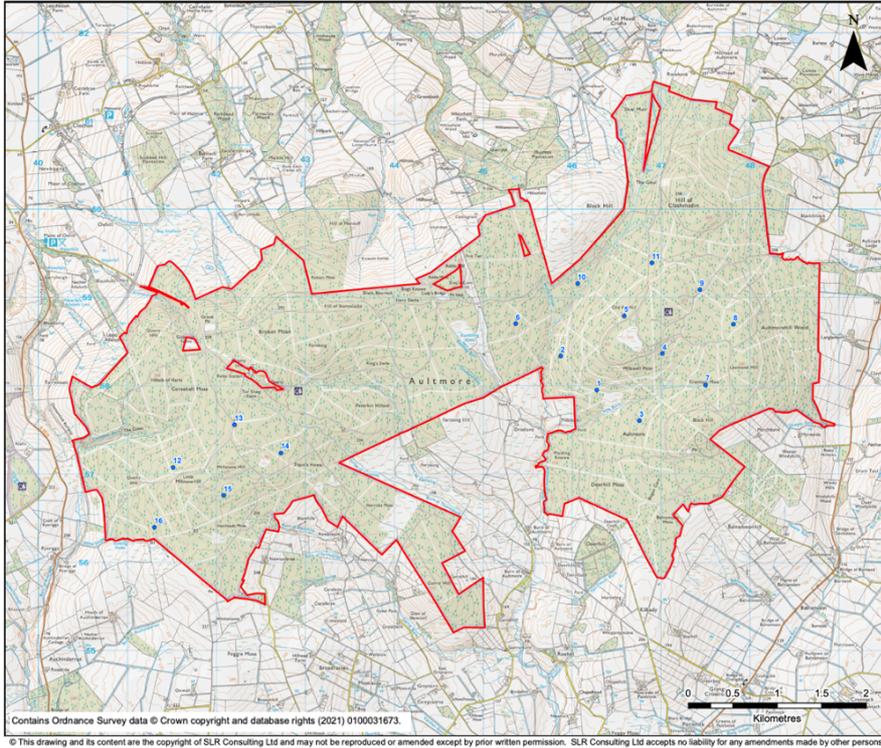
**The development of wind farms in this region?**

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose



## 2. Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign

The redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm is at an early stage of development and we welcome input from the local community and wider public.



How do you feel about the redesigned turbine layout for Aultmore Wind Farm (larger map can be viewed at the public exhibition events or on our project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore))?

- Happy
- Neutral
- Concerned
- Other

If 'other' please explain more:



Thinking specifically about the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm, what do you regard as the **key areas** of interest in relation to the proposal (please select no more than three answers from the options below)?

- Landscape and visual
- Turbine delivery route and/or construction traffic
- Ecology and/or ornithology
- Tourism
- Local economy
- Community investment and/or shared ownership
- Other

If 'other' please explain more:

Are there any **design opportunities** that you would like us to consider in relation to the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm?

Nothing further to add at this time

Yes, please consider.....



Do you have any **concerns about the proposal**? Please tell us more – including any suggestions you may have for ways in which we may be able to address or mitigate these concerns:

Nothing further to add at this time

Yes, please consider....

**3. Community investment and shared ownership**

Our investment in local communities comes in many forms. Community benefit packages, skills, training and education programmes, shared ownership and benefits in kind are most common.

If Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign goes ahead, please tell us what you think is the greatest priority in your area for community investment (please select one answer from the options below)?

- Local environmental schemes
- Local skills and employment development
- Local transport links
- Local housing and built environment
- Other

If 'other' please explain more:



Are there any other significant considerations or opportunities in the community that you think community benefit could help address?

Are you interested in the concept of Shared Ownership in renewable energy (and potentially Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign if it goes ahead)?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

**4. This exhibition**

How did you find out about the public exhibition events?

- Project newsletter
- Advert in local paper
- Project website
- Word of mouth
- Other (please specify)

What public exhibition event did you attend?

- Cullen Community Centre
- Newmill Village Hall
- Portgordon Village Hall
- None



Have you viewed the online exhibition information on the project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore)?

Yes   
No

How has your knowledge of the project improved since you visited the public exhibition and/or viewed the online exhibition information on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being 'not at all' and 10 being 'a lot')?

Not at all  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  A lot

If you attended, which parts of the public exhibition information did you find most helpful?

	Not very helpful	Quite helpful	Very helpful
Information boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wireline visualisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3D visualisation software (laptop)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talking to the project team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FAQs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any other comments regarding this public exhibition event?



**5. About you**

In which Community Council area do you live?

- Cullen and Deskford
- Strathisla
- Lennox
- Keith
- Findochty
- Portknockie
- Wider Moray area
- Outwith Moray
- Prefer not to say
- Other

In what capacity are you responding to this questionnaire?

- Community Council representative
- Member of the public
- Local business
- School or university student
- A regular visitor to the area
- Prefer not to say

Please indicate your age range?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 and over
- Prefer not to say

If you would like to be kept up to date with the Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign project, please provide your email address and we will provide updates as and



when we have them. If you do not have an email address, please provide your postal address instead:

**6. Local businesses**

UK businesses are an integral part of onshore wind farms. Vattenfall has invested £3.5 billion in the UK energy system over the last 10 years and, of our expenditure on our onshore wind farms, 70% has been spent with UK-based businesses.

When developing or building a wind farm the opportunities are often very local and include things like environmental services, timber felling and processing, civil and electrical engineering through to site security, catering and accommodation for workers.

Would you, or a business you know, like to provide goods and services to the development, construction, or operation of Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign (should it be consented)?

- Yes
- Not at this time

**If you've answered 'yes' please complete the BUSINESS REGISTRATION FORM overleaf.**

**Thank you** for taking the time to complete this comments form with your views and feedback.

There will be a further opportunity to comment on the project later in the design development process.

Any comments submitted to Vattenfall on the proposal at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit). Should a formal Section 36 application for consent be submitted for this proposal there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority.



**7. BUSINESS REGISTRATION FORM**

**Terms and Conditions**

The purpose of this business registration form is to help Vattenfall identify local suppliers. The information you provide will be collated and shared with our supply chain partners.

Your privacy is important to Vattenfall and you can find more information about how Vattenfall handles your personal data in our **privacy policy – a printed copy of which is available at this exhibition** (an online version can be found by searching for 'Privacy Policy' on our company website at <https://group.vattenfall.com/uk>).

By completing a comments form you are confirming that you have read the above and understand the Terms and Conditions.

What type of goods or services does the business provide?

- Communications
- Electrical works
- Environmental management
- Felling works
- Foundation construction
- Foundation materials
- General
- Grid
- Plant/equipment hire
- QHSE
- Road construction
- Road materials
- Site Design
- Site set-up
- Turbine supply
- Wholesalers
- Wind assessment
- Accommodation
- Other (please specify)



Business name

Business website

Business postcode

Please tell us more about the business and the goods or services it offers:

Number of employees?

- |         |                          |
|---------|--------------------------|
| 0-9     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10-49   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 50-99   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 100-499 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 500+    | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Your name

Job title

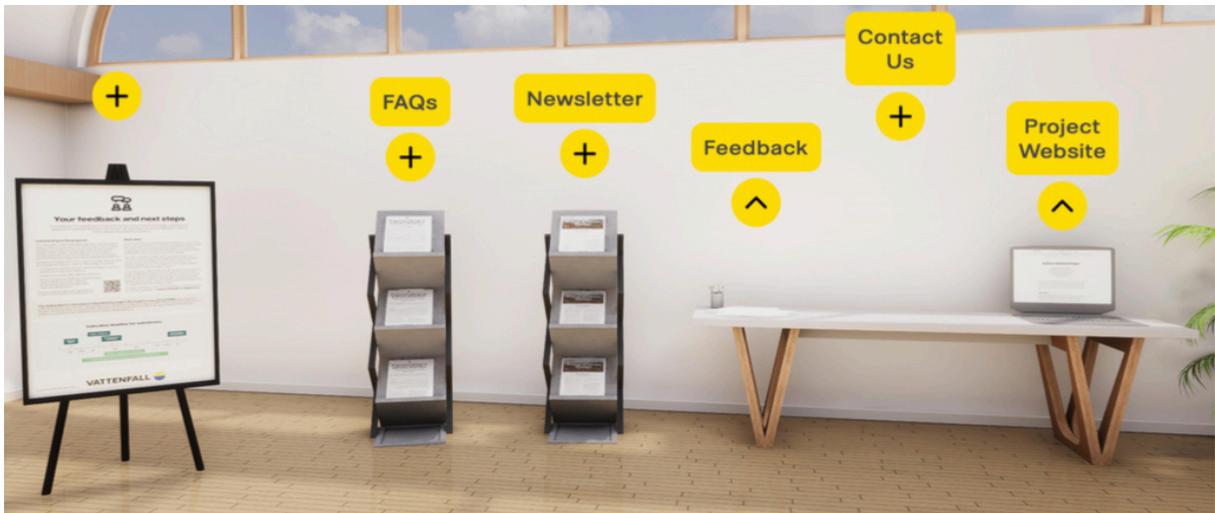
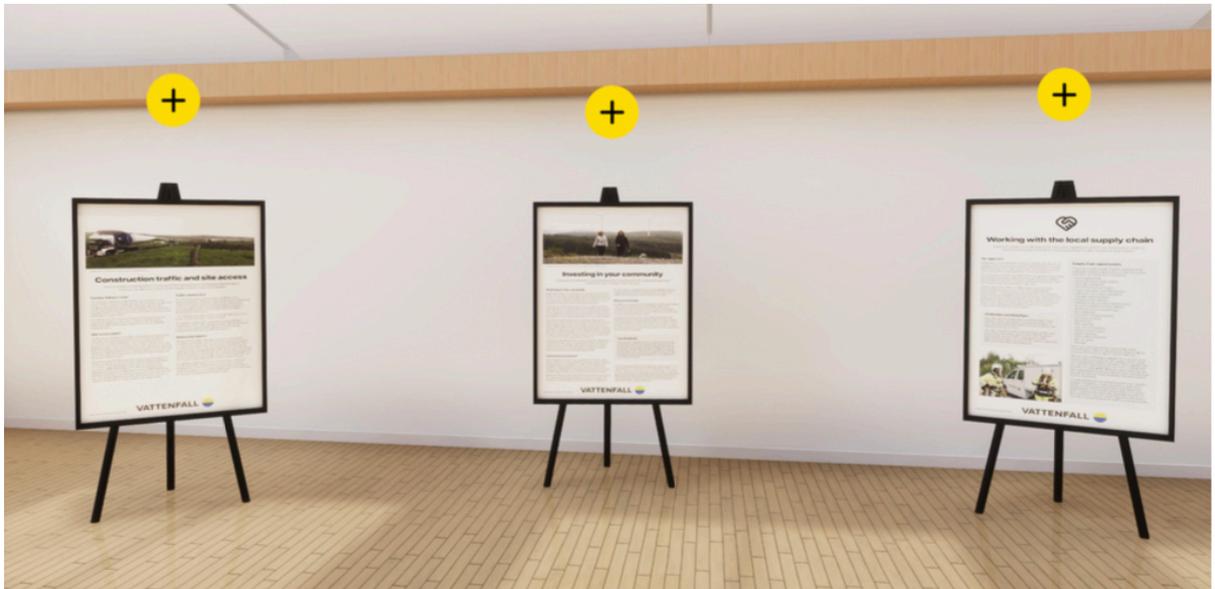
Your email address

11.10. Appendix 9: Virtual village hall exhibition – on project website (March – April 2022)

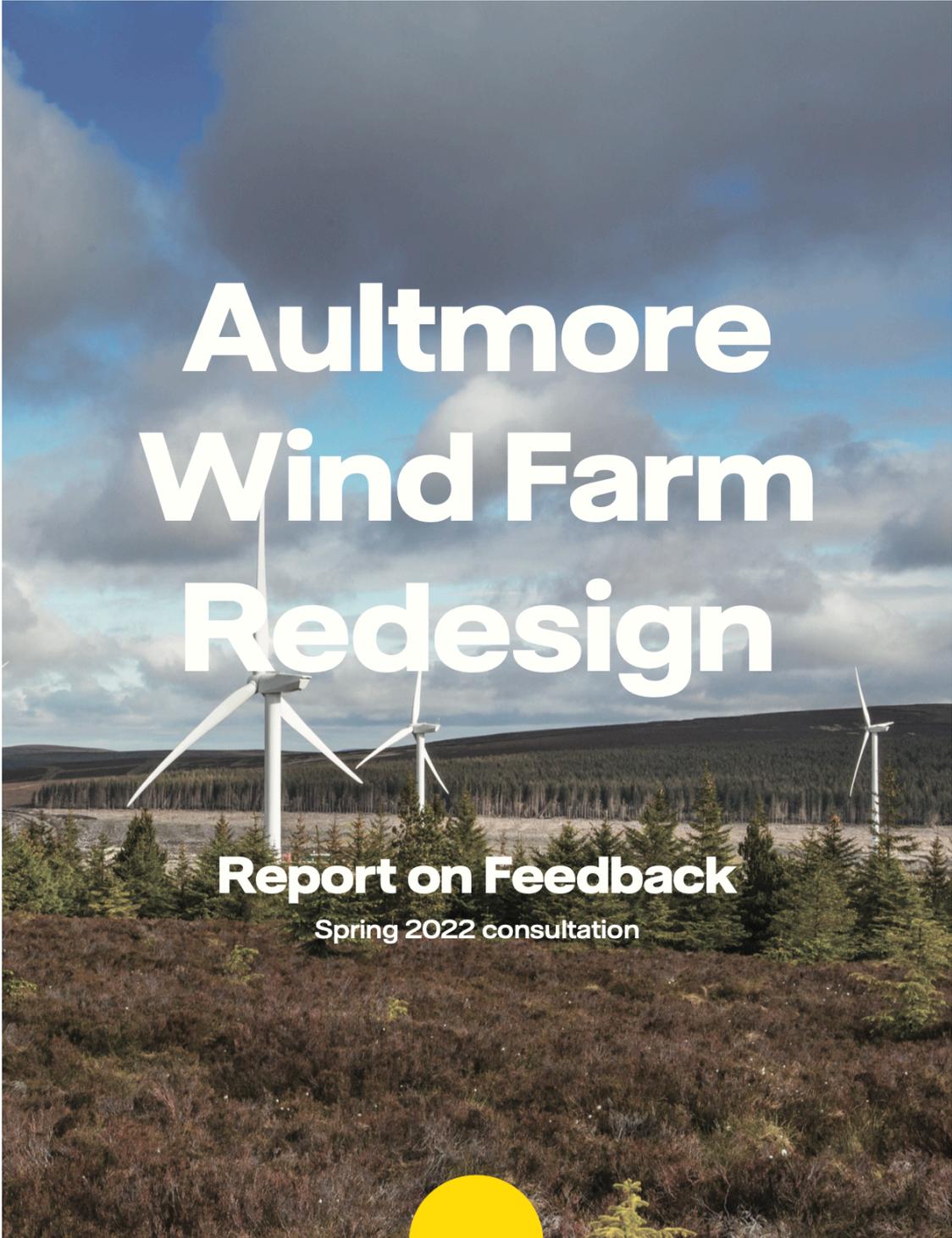
The screenshot shows the Vattenfall website's navigation structure. The top menu includes 'Who we are', 'What we do', 'Newsroom', and 'Careers'. A secondary menu under 'What we do' lists 'Our business', 'Our UK business', 'Roadmap to fossil freedom', 'Wind projects in the UK', 'Innovation', and 'Fossil freedom in action'. A third menu includes 'Environment', 'Investing in local communities', and 'Wind energy supply chain'. The main content area features a heading 'Public Exhibitions' and a sub-heading 'To view the information that was presented at the local public exhibition events just click on the link below.' Below this is a link labeled 'Exhibition information' with a document icon. To the right is a photograph of a virtual exhibition room with information boards and a 'Project Website' sign.

The screenshot displays the virtual exhibition interface. At the top left is the Vattenfall logo. Below it is a 'Welcome!' message. The main text reads: 'In this virtual 'village hall' you will find the information presented at our March 2022 exhibition events, which we held in the local area. There is information about Vattenfall, the proposal itself - including maps and wirelines, as well as potential benefits for the community and local economy.' A second paragraph states: 'We hope that this exhibition provides a useful resource for you to learn about the proposed scheme at a time that is convenient to you. Please pan the room and click on the information boards to learn more. You can read as many of the boards as you like in any order, although we recommend starting on the right and working your way around.' A third paragraph provides contact information: 'At the front of the room, you will find a 'Feedback' section for you to submit any comments that you may have on the proposal. The closing date for comments is Friday 22nd April 2022.' The final paragraph says: 'In the meantime, if you have any questions about the proposal before providing feedback, please get in touch with the team directly at [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com) or write to Aultmore Redesign Project Team, Vattenfall Wind Power Limited, St Andrew's House, Haugh lane, Hexham, NE46 3QQ.' A yellow 'X' icon is visible in the top right corner of the interface.





11.11. Appendix 10: Report on Feedback (Spring 2022 consultation period)



**Aultmore  
Wind Farm  
Redesign**

**Report on Feedback**  
Spring 2022 consultation

Clashindarroch Wind Farm in Aberdeenshire.

**VATTENFALL**

August 2023

# Contents

<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	3	<b>4. Topical Feedback</b> .....	6
1.1 Project overview .....	3	4.1 Breakdown of topical feedback .....	6
1.2 Purpose of this Report .....	3	4.2 Socioeconomics (22% of feedback) .....	6
1.3 Spring 2022 exhibitions and consultation overview .....	3	4.3 Visibility (17% of feedback) .....	7
<b>2. General Attitudes</b> .....	4	4.4 Exhibition events (9% of feedback) .....	7
2.1 Climate change .....	4	4.5 Tourism and recreation (8% of feedback) .....	7
2.2 Renewables .....	4	4.6 Energy policy/needs case (7% of feedback) .....	8
2.3 Onshore wind .....	4	4.7 Peat (6% of feedback) .....	8
2.4 Onshore wind within the region .....	4	4.8 Ecology (6% of feedback) .....	8
2.5 Redesigned turbine layout (scoping) .....	4	4.9 Traffic and transport (6% of feedback) .....	9
2.6 Key areas of interest with redesign .....	4	4.10 Noise (5% of feedback) .....	9
2.7 Community benefit priorities .....	4	4.11 Shadow flicker (3% of feedback) .....	9
2.8 Shared ownership .....	4	4.12 Ornithology (3% of feedback) .....	10
<b>3. Exhibition Event</b> .....	5	4.13 Hydrology (2% of feedback) .....	10
3.1 Knowledge of exhibitions taking place .....	5	4.14 Other feedback .....	10
3.2 Exhibition attended .....	5		
3.3 Online exhibition information .....	5		
3.4 Knowledge improvement .....	5		
3.5 Most helpful parts of exhibition .....	5		
3.6 Community Council area .....	5		
3.7 Representations .....	5		
3.8 Age range .....	5		

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Project overview

Aultmore Wind Farm was originally consented in March 2014 by Moray Council as a 29MW 13-turbine scheme. Since then, significant advances in turbine technology have taken place with more powerful turbines becoming available. This led to Vattenfall's decision to redesign the wind farm to increase the amount of fossil free electricity that could be produced and the benefits that could be delivered to the area.

In November 2021 we announced that we were redesigning the site and submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government, and other key consultees, seeking feedback on the proposed scope of environmental survey work. In spring 2022 we held public exhibitions in the local area to present the initial proposed redesign of the project. These events initiated a consultation period to gather feedback from the community at an early stage of design.

The feedback received from the spring 2022 consultation, together with findings from the site surveys and key consultee feedback, have helped to shape and inform the final design.

## 1.2 Purpose of this Report

As part of the pre-application consultation process for our proposed redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm we are required to report on the feedback received from the spring 2022 consultation and explain any changes that may have been made to the design in response to this feedback. This Report is intended to meet that requirement.

## 1.3 Spring 2022 exhibitions and consultation overview

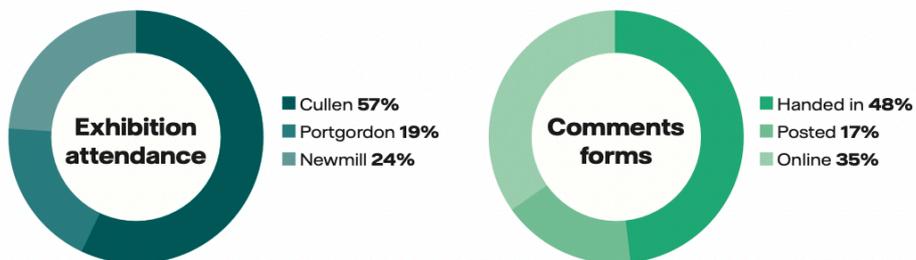
In March 2022 Vattenfall held three public exhibition events to engage with the community on the initial 'scoping' layout and gather feedback from people at an early stage of design. These events were held in Cullen Community Centre, Portgordon Hall, and Newmill Hall to ensure a good geographical spread around the site.

A total of 67 people attended the three public exhibition events which were held in the local area - with 38 people attending the Cullen event, 13 people attending the Portgordon event, and 16 people attending the Newmill event.

The feedback from the comment forms confirmed that most people found out about the events from either the local newsletter mailing (roughly 34%), social media (roughly 28%), or word of mouth (roughly 24%).

Of the 67 people that attended the public exhibitions, 25 people submitted comments forms (roughly 37% of attendees) either at the event, posted in afterwards, or completed online. A further 4 online comments forms were received during the consultation period (Tuesday 22 March to Friday 22 April) by people who didn't attend the exhibition events. Altogether, a total of 29 comments forms were received from the public exhibitions and consultation period.

In addition to the comment forms, 9 people provided written feedback during the consultation period via email to Vattenfall which was also logged and a further 2 people provided email comments in addition to their comment forms. This means that a total of 38 people provided comments or feedback on the proposal during the exhibitions and consultation period.



## 2. General Attitudes

The comments forms for the spring 2022 consultation included some multiple-choice questions to understand people's attitudes on the wider energy industry as well as the redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm proposal. The findings are summarised below.

### 2.1 Climate change

Around 90% of responses confirmed that they were 'very concerned' or 'fairly concerned' about climate change and global warming.

### 2.2 Renewables

Over 90% of responses confirmed that they 'strongly supported' or 'supported' the transition towards renewable energy.

### 2.3 Onshore wind

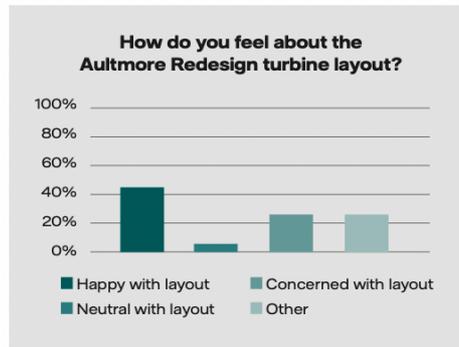
Just over 65% of responses stated that they 'strongly supported' or 'supported' the use of onshore wind with around 20% saying that they 'strongly oppose' the use of onshore wind, and the remaining responses falling somewhere in-between.

### 2.4 Onshore wind within the region

Just under 60% of responses stated that they 'strongly supported' or 'supported' the development of wind farms in the region with just over 20% confirming that they 'strongly opposed' this, and the remaining responses falling somewhere in-between.

### 2.5 Redesigned turbine layout (scoping)

More than 40% of responses stated that they were 'happy' with the redesigned turbine layout. Of the remaining feedback, 25% stated that they were 'concerned with the layout' with another 25% selecting 'other' and stating either concerns, observations or suggested considerations. The remaining 7% stated that they felt neutral towards the layout.



### 2.6 Key areas of interest with redesign

The comments form asked people what they regarded as the key areas of interest in relation to the proposal (with people being able to select up to three answers). The top three responses were 'Landscape and Visual' (29%), 'Ecology and Ornithology' (23%), and 'Community benefit' (16%).

### 2.7 Community benefit priorities

The comments form asked people what the greatest priority in their area for community investment would be if the project was consented. Over 30% of comments forms selected 'Local skills and employment development', just under 25% selected 'Local environmental schemes', and just under 35% selected 'Other' (and suggested more specific community benefit ideas).

### 2.8 Shared ownership

Just over 40% of responses stated that 'Yes' they were interested in the concept of shared ownership, with just over 30% stating that 'No' they weren't interested and the remaining 30% stating 'Maybe'.

## 3. Exhibition Events

The comments forms for the spring 2022 consultation also included some multiple-choice questions to understand how people had found out about the exhibitions, which events they'd attended, and what they had found useful. The findings are summarised below.

### 3.1 Knowledge of exhibitions taking place

Just under 35% of people found out about the exhibitions from the 'Project newsletter' mailed to local households, just under 25% of people through 'Word of mouth', around 6% from either the 'Advert in local paper' or the 'Project website', and the remaining 'Other' 35% found out mainly from social media.

### 3.2 Exhibition attended

In relation to the people that completed comments forms, around 55% of people attended the 'Cullen Community Centre' exhibition, around 15% attended the 'Portgordon Hall' exhibition, around 15% attended the 'Newmill Village Hall' exhibition, and the remainder didn't attend any of the exhibitions but instead looked at the exhibition information online on the project website and then completed an online comments form.

### 3.3 Online exhibition information

Around 60% of people also viewed the exhibition information online on the project website with the remainder not viewing any of the online exhibition information.

### 3.4 Knowledge improvement

Just over 65% of people confirmed that their knowledge had improved 'a lot' (7, 8, 9, or 10 out of 10), 16% of people confirmed that their knowledge had not improved 'at all' (1, 2, 3, or 4 out of 10) with the remainder falling somewhere in-between (5 or 6 out of 10).

### 3.5 Most helpful parts of exhibition

Just under 25% of people found the 'Maps' very helpful, just under 25% found 'Talking to the project team' very helpful, just under 20% found the 'Information boards' very helpful, and just under 20% found the '3D visualisation software' very helpful. Just under 10% of people found the 'Wireline visualisations' very helpful and just under 10% found the 'FAQs' very helpful.

### 3.6 Community Council area

Just under 50% of people who provided feedback on a comment forms lived in the 'Cullen and Deskford' Community Council area, just under 20% lived in the 'Keith' area, and just under 20% lived in the 'Lennox' area with the remainder living in the 'Portknockie', 'Strathisla', or 'Other' Community Council areas.

### 3.7 Representations

Just over 70% of the people who filled in comments forms were 'Members of the public', just under 15% were 'Local businesses', and the remaining 10% were 'Community Council representatives'.

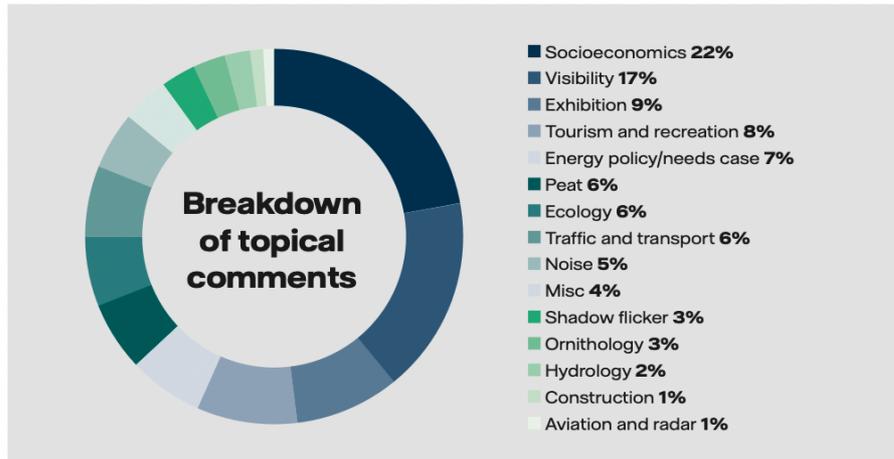
### 3.8 Age range

Just over 40% of people who filled in comments forms were aged '55-64', just over 30% were aged '65 and over', around 10% were aged '35-44', just under 10% were aged '25-34', with the remaining age groups being between '45-54' or 'prefer not to say'.

## 4. Topical Feedback

### 4.1 Breakdown of topical feedback

Across the 38 people who provided comments or feedback on the proposal, over 150 topical comments were made outwith the multiple-choice questions. The breakdown of these topic areas is shown on the graph below:



### 4.2 Socioeconomics (22% of feedback)

The topical area of most feedback from the spring 2022 consultation was 'socioeconomics'. Comments focused primarily on community benefit and suggestions such as: free or discounted electricity; support for community centres/hubs; shared ownership in the project; community development officer; installation of fibre broadband; road improvements; improved bus transport; contiguous cycling tracks on site; outdoor activities for mental and physical health; gardening activities and allotments. Opinions were also given about the eligible area for benefit, and there was interest in Vattenfall involving the local supply chain where possible and considering Buckie Harbour for turbine deliveries. A few concerns were raised that the benefit may not outweigh the impacts, that there wouldn't be any benefit, or that compensation should be offered to offset any impact on local property prices.

#### Vattenfall response:

These comments and community benefit suggestions have been noted. In response to the interest shown in the spring 2022 consultation feedback, as well as ongoing engagement since then, we are trialling a community benefit workshop in September for Community Councils and local anchor groups to learn more about how community benefit funds work. Should the project be consented, we will consult the wider community further on community benefit and how the fund could be set up, managed, and distributed. We have also been engaging with local businesses to build our understanding of the local skills, services and materials available locally and explore opportunities to maximise the inward investment to the area. This includes Buckie Harbour who we are in dialogue with and, whilst the longer blades and tower components are too large to come into Buckie, Vattenfall is exploring whether it may be possible to deliver the turbine nacelles to Buckie.

#### 4.3 Visibility (17% of feedback)

The second highest area of feedback was the visual aspect of the proposal, with the majority of comments focusing on the size of the turbines followed by the visual impact of the proposal on the local area. Some comments received also raised concerns about the cumulative impact with other schemes.

In addition, there were some comments focusing on specific turbines being particularly visible or requests for certain turbines to be relocated.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

The visual aspect of the proposal is a key consideration within the redesign of the project. Specialist landscape architects have critically assessed and provided input into the design to ensure that the best layout possible is achieved from a visual perspective, including from a cumulative angle. A Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) has also been undertaken for properties within 2km of the turbine locations to assess and mitigate any potential impact. All turbine locations have moved to some degree to improve the visual presentation of the scheme and avoid key constraints.

#### 4.4 Exhibition events (9% of feedback)

A number of comments were received which stated that the wirelines were misleading, that the project team was unsympathetic, and that the exhibitions were badly advertised. There were also a range of comments criticising the maps, project website cookies, information boards, event in general, comments period as well as some positive feedback about the exhibition team being very helpful in answering questions.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

The wireline visualisations were produced to the required NatureScot standards and helped to give an indication of what the redesigned scheme may look like from key viewpoints within the local area. Our project team comprised people with a range of expertise and knowledge of the project as well as experience engaging with people at exhibition events. The advertisement of the exhibitions went over and above the required minimum pre-application requirements of one advert in a local paper; an advert was placed twice in three local papers in the weeks leading up to the events and a project newsletter was sent out to over 800 local households ahead of the events.

#### 4.5 Tourism and recreation (8% of feedback)

A number of comments were received which showed an interest in access to the site for walkers and cyclists including contiguous cycling tracks. In addition, a few comments were received which raised concerns about the potential impact on tourism and the local economy, potential impact on the woodland, or how access would be managed.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

We are aware that the forest is used by walkers and cyclists and that there are some core paths which pass through the site. During construction, access will be restricted to certain areas of the site in the interests of public safety, however, once constructed full access will return. Public access to the site (after construction has been completed) would remain the same as the current situation, with some specific improvements to footpath infrastructure to facilitate public access which have been proposed as part of the development.

#### 4.6 Energy policy/needs case (7% of feedback)

Just over half of the comments relating to energy policy and the needs case for onshore wind focused on a preference for offshore wind farms instead. Just under 20% of comments raised concerns about the reliability and cost of onshore wind and the preference for alternative technologies. The remaining comments focused on nuclear, on the preference for onshore wind farms to be built outwith the UK and the impact to be where the profits would end up, or raised concerns about energy costs and fuel poverty.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

Both onshore and offshore wind play an important part in achieving a balanced mix of renewable generation across the UK. Onshore wind is one of the cheapest forms of electricity generation and can be built more quickly than offshore once consented. We already have 14GW of onshore wind built in the UK and it is estimated that by 2030, 30GW of onshore wind will be required across the UK to meet our climate targets at the lowest cost to the consumer.

#### 4.7 Peat (6% of feedback)

Around 70% of the comments about peat raised concerns about the damage to peatlands and peat bogs on the site. Around 20% of comments showed interest in peat restoration and habitat improvement on the site, and around 10% of comments raised concerns about impacts on peat-cutting areas.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

Aultmore is not a particularly peaty site overall and the peat that does exist is mostly degraded due to the commercial forestry on the site. Nevertheless, peat is an important carbon sink and we have carefully designed the site to avoid disturbing peat wherever possible. We are also proposing peat restoration work as part of the Biodiversity and Habitat Management Plan for the scheme.

#### 4.8 Ecology (6% of feedback)

Around 50% of the comments regarding ecology focused on concerns about the potential impact on wildlife. Around 30% of comments raised concerns about the potential impact on habitats, and the remaining 20% of comments raised interest in planning around deer or compensatory planting.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

Vattenfall is committed to the protection of nature and biodiversity. We strive to avoid and minimise impacts on the environment and ecosystems and where impacts can't be fully avoided or mitigated, we consider potential compensation and restoration measures. We have undertaken a wide range of ecological (and ornithological) studies to build our understanding of the wildlife, habitats, flora and fauna on site. The findings feed into our extensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work which identifies, assesses and proposes mitigation for any potential impacts.

#### 4.9 Traffic and transport (6% of feedback)

Around 30% of comments received about traffic and transport focused on minimising impacts at the site access point, 20% raised concerns about traffic on the B9016, 20% of comments raised concerns about the potential impact on Broadley Crematorium, 20% of comments raised an interest in Buckie Harbour being used for turbine deliveries, and the remaining 10% of comments raised general concerns about the impact of construction traffic on the local area.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

The site access point has changed from the preferred access (at Mains of Oxhill) presented at the spring 2022 exhibitions and is now proposed further south on the B9016, north of the Ryeriggs area, and will require a new track to be built from the B9016. With regards to Broadley Crematorium, turbine deliveries are likely to be transported either at night-time or in the early hours of the morning to avoid funerals as well as other busy periods such as school drop-off and pick-up times as well as when people are travelling to work. Furthermore, should the project be granted consent a detailed Traffic Management Plan will be developed in consultation with Moray Council to ensure that any potential disruption is limited. We are also proposing to source the majority of aggregate required from borrow pits on site, to reduce construction traffic and overall environmental impact.

#### 4.10 Noise (5% of feedback)

Around 75% of the comments raised concerns about the potential noise impact generally, with the remaining comments raising concerns about noise from specific turbines.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

Operational noise from wind farms must comply with ETSU-R-97 noise regulations. In line with this we have undertaken noise monitoring studies at locations around the site, agreed with Moray Council, to establish an accurate noise baseline - and moved certain turbines to ensure that we are within acceptable noise limits. Should the project be consented, strict noise limits will be imposed. If exceeded, the Council would have the power to shut down individual turbines or the wind farm as a whole. As such, it is as much in our interest, as it is the public's, to ensure that we are well within the required noise parameters.

#### 4.11 Shadow flicker (3% of feedback)

Around 60% of the comments regarding shadow flicker raised concerns about the potential impact on properties, and the remaining 40% of comments raised concerns about the potential impact on health.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

Shadow flicker can be easily avoided and designed out using sophisticated modelling software to control turbine operation. The software tracks the sun in relation to each turbine and predicts when shadow flicker will occur, thus enabling wind turbines to be turned off for short periods to prevent any issues.

#### 4.12 Ornithology (3% of feedback)

All of the comments received regarding ornithology related to concerns about the impact on bird species on the site.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

As part of the extensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work that we have undertaken, our ornithologists have spent significant time on site logging the flight paths (including winter migration routes) of key bird species from vantage points around the site, mapping nesting sites, and considering breeding behaviour. The findings from this survey work, in addition to engagement with key consultees such as RSPB and NatureScot, have helped inform the design – and turbine infrastructure has been relocated to avoid impacts on key species or habitats.

#### 4.13 Hydrology (2% of feedback)

Around 30% of comments regarding hydrology related to concerns about the potential impact on private water supplies generally, with the remaining comments focusing on specific turbines and their potential impact on private water supplies.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

We take the protection of private water supplies seriously. Hydrological visits and site surveys have been undertaken and the locations of private water supplies incorporated into the design of the wind farm to ensure that these supplies remain protected during any construction activity on the site should the project be consented.

#### 4.14 Other feedback

The remaining feedback comprised: 1% focused on concerns regarding potential impact on the area from 'Construction'; 1% focused on concerns about the potential impact of aviation lighting and light pollution; and 4% focused on a mix of 'Miscellaneous' concerns including: unexploded ordnance on site; whether the site would be extended in the future; looking forward to the project being consented and built; and concerns about recycling of turbine components.

##### **Vattenfall response:**

Over the last year or so we have undertaken a wide range of technical and environmental surveys to ensure that any impacts from the proposal, during construction or operation, are minimal. Due to the turbines being over 150m tip height they will require night-time aviation lighting and we are currently in consultation with the relevant aviation bodies and exploring a reduced aviation lighting proposal. With regard to unexploded ordnance we have undertaken site surveys to assess the area and will undertake further detailed studies, should the project be consented, prior to construction. Our redesign of the scheme has maximised the site's capacity for wind turbines, reducing the potential for a future extension. Vattenfall has committed to a landfill ban on decommissioned wind turbine blades and to recycle all wind turbine blades by 2030.

Aultmore Redesign Project Team  
Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd  
St Andrew's House  
Haugh Lane  
Hexham  
NE46 3QQ  
aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com  
www.vattenfall.co.uk

**VATTENFALL** 

11.12. Appendix 11: Update letter to Key Stakeholders (December 2022)



Chairperson  
Lennox Community Council

Sent by email to: [lennoxcommunitycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:lennoxcommunitycouncil@gmail.com)

Date:  
22/12/2022

Contact: Robert East  
E-mail: [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com)

**Proposed Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign – Public Exhibitions**

Dear

I realise that it has been a while since we last wrote to you regarding our proposed redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm and thought that a project update may be helpful.

Project overview

As you may recall, Aultmore Wind Farm is located approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie and was originally consented by Moray Council in 2014 as a 13-turbine scheme with an installed capacity of 29MW. Since then, significant advances in turbine technology have taken place with more powerful turbines becoming available. As such, Vattenfall has been exploring a 'redesigned' scheme which would significantly increase the amount of fossil-free electricity that could be produced as well as the community benefit delivered to the local area from the project.

In November 2021 we submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government, and other consultees, which presented a 16-turbine redesigned scheme utilising modern and efficient turbines with a maximum tip height of up to 200m and installed site capacity of 96MW. This scheme would be capable of generating enough electricity each year for around 70,000<sup>1</sup> homes and providing community benefit of around £480,000<sup>2</sup> annually to the local area.

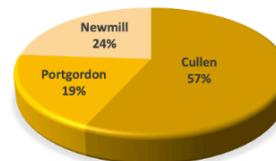
In spring this year we held public exhibitions to provide people with the opportunity to find out more about the proposal, meet the project team, discuss any questions or concerns, and provide feedback to Vattenfall on the scheme at an early stage in the design process. We have provided a summary below of the feedback received from these events.

More information about the project, including a copy of the Scoping Report and exhibition information, can be found on our project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore).

Public exhibitions

The public exhibition events were held in Cullen Community Centre on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, and in Portgordon Village Hall and then Newmill Village Hall on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. The events were advertised in the local newspaper, on social media, and through a project newsletter issued to over 850 households in the local area.

A total of 67 people attended the three public exhibition events and 38 people provided written feedback to Vattenfall on the project on 'comments forms' (29) or by email (9) during the consultation period which closed on 22<sup>nd</sup> April. The breakdown of attendance across the three events is shown in the graph opposite.



Exhibition event attendance

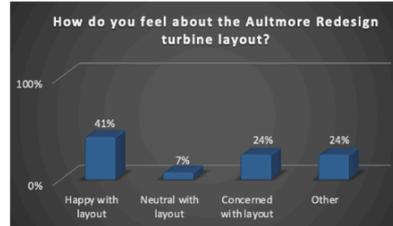
Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd • Market Development  
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VAT: GB927473303 • [www.vattenfall.com](http://www.vattenfall.com)



**Consultation feedback (summary)**

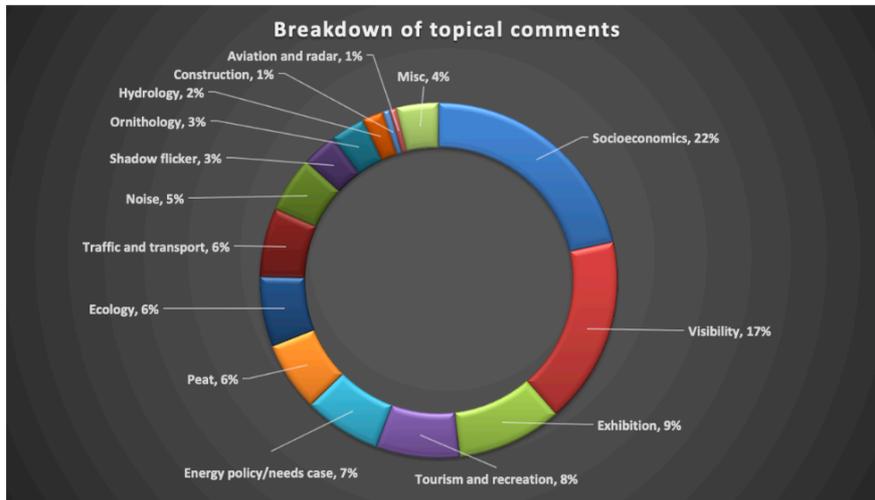
The consultation feedback received has helped give the project team a sense of the general community feeling towards the project and topic areas which people are most interested in.

Of the 29 people who provided written feedback to Vattenfall on a 'comments forms', 41% of respondents confirmed that they were 'happy' with the redesigned turbine layout, 7% were 'neutral', and the remaining 48% confirmed that they were either 'concerned' or 'other' (with the majority of 'other' responses reflecting concerns). The breakdown is shown on the graph opposite.



In addition, a further 9 people provided written feedback to Vattenfall via email, with the majority of these responses raising questions or concerns about the proposal.

Over 150 'topical' comments were also received in people's feedback and the breakdown of these can be seen in the graph below.



The key 'topical' project themes arising out of the feedback were:

- **Socioeconomics:** high level of interest in local benefits and supply chain opportunities, including the potential for using Buckie harbour for turbine components;
- **Visibility:** concerns raised about turbine heights and visual impact, including some comments about relocating or removing certain turbines;
- **Tourism and recreation:** interest in improving recreation opportunities on site for walkers and cyclists, as well as some concerns about potential impact on tourism;
- **Energy policy/needs case:** preference for offshore wind farms or other technologies (including nuclear), as well as some concerns about rising energy costs;
- **Peat, ecology and ornithology:** concerns about potential impact on peat and ecology as well as some bird species, as well as interest in habitat improvement opportunities;
- **Traffic and transport:** concerns about potential impact on B9016 as well as Broadley crematorium, as well as interest in Buckie harbour being used for turbine deliveries;
- **Hydrology:** concerns about potential impact on private water supplies; and
- **Noise and shadow flicker:** concerns about potential noise impact and shadow flicker.



Design development work

Since the public exhibition events our project team has been reviewing the consultation feedback received, together with feedback from key consultees (such as Moray Council, NatureScot, SEPA, etc) on the Scoping Report, and developing the design further.

We have also been undertaking further technical and environmental surveys (such as swept path analysis of the turbine delivery route, phase 2 peat-probing, further ecology and ornithological surveys), as part of our environmental impact assessment work.

Next steps

We will continue to refine the design over the coming months as our environmental impact assessment work is completed.

A second set of public exhibitions will be organised in the spring to present the final design to the community and seek feedback before the planning application is submitted. These events will also explain how the consultation feedback from the spring 2022 public exhibitions has been taken into consideration and will give people the opportunity to provide comments to Vattenfall on the final design as well before it is submitted into planning. The exhibitions will be advertised in advance in the local media as well as via our project newsletter which will be distributed to local households and anyone else who has asked us to keep them up to date on the project.

I hope that you have found this update helpful. We will get in touch again in due course to discuss the details of the spring 2023 public exhibitions. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me or Ruth Liddicoat (of Liddicoat PR Consultancy, who continues to support us with the communications and engagement work on this project), if you have any questions.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas.

Yours sincerely,



Robert East  
Project Manager

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEDEexplained>

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government guidance is "to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project." Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'.

11.13. Appendix 12: Newspaper advert and editorial (August 2023)

# REDESIGNED BANFFSHIRE WIND FARM

could deliver £15 million in community funds



**V**attenfall's Aultmore Wind Farm was originally consented as a 13-turbine 29MW scheme by Moray Council in 2014. Since

then, significant advances in turbine technology have taken place - with more powerful turbines becoming available - leading to Vattenfall redesigning the scheme.

The new 16-turbine proposal with a blade tip height of 200m, significantly increases the site's generating capacity. The redesigned 105.6MW scheme could generate enough electricity annually for around 83,000 homes\*, compared to the original scheme's 22,000 homes\*, and provide a community benefit fund of around £15.8 million over its 30-year operational life cycle.

Vattenfall held public exhibitions in March 2022, to discuss their plans and gather feedback from the community on the early scoping design, and will hold further exhibitions at the end of August to present the final design.

**Lucy Blake, Vattenfall's Project Manager for Aultmore Wind Farm, explained:**

*"We are very grateful to everyone who shared their views with us on the early design during our consultation last year. Their feedback, together with our detailed environmental and technical surveys and key consultee input, has helped inform and shape the proposal. We feel that we have made meaningful improvements to the scheme as a result and look forward to presenting the final design at our upcoming August exhibitions."*

*"In addition to the sizeable community fund that the project could provide, we want to work closely with the local supply chain. Independent analysis at our South Kyle Wind Farm in East Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway has found that the wind farm's development and construction spend within the local area amounts to £44 million. We want to build on this approach at Aultmore so that we can maximise the benefits to the local area."*

**Further information can be found on the project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore)**

**\*<https://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained/Statistics-Explained.htm>**

## Aultmore Wind Farm Public Exhibitions

Vattenfall is holding public exhibitions to present final plans for the redesign of its consented Aultmore Wind Farm scheme in Moray.

The events will provide a variety of information as well as the opportunity to talk to the project team about the 16-turbine proposal which is located approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie.

<b>Cullen Community Centre</b> Seafield Road, Cullen, Buckie, AB56 4AF	<b>Wednesday 30 August</b> 11am-2pm
<b>Clochan Community Centre</b> Clochan, Buckie, AB56 5HS	<b>Wednesday 30 August</b> 5pm-8pm
<b>Newmill Village Hall</b> Mill Brae, Newmill, Keith, AB55 6TW	<b>Thursday 31 August</b> 11am-2pm
<b>The Fishermen's Hall</b> 16 North Pringle Street, Buckie, AB56 1HT	<b>Thursday 31 August</b> 5pm-8pm

The exhibition information will also be available online from Wednesday 30 August at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) where further project information can be found.

Anyone wishing to provide feedback to Vattenfall on the final redesign plans for Aultmore Wind Farm can do so in writing from Wednesday 30 August by filling in a 'comments form' at the exhibitions or online (from the project website), by emailing [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com) or writing to Aultmore Project Team, Vattenfall Wind Power Limited, St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, NE46 3QQ. **The closing date for comments is Friday 15 September 2023.**

Any comments submitted to Vattenfall on the proposal at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit). Should a formal S36 application for consent be submitted there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments on this proposal to the determining authority.

**VATTENFALL**

11.14. Appendix 13: Update letters to Key Stakeholders (August 2023)



  
Secretary  
Cullen and Deskford Community Council

Sent by email to: [cullendeskfordcc@gmail.com](mailto:cullendeskfordcc@gmail.com)

Date: 18/08/2023  
Contact: Lucy Blake  
E-mail: [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com)

**Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign – project update**

Dear 

Further to my previous letter regarding the community benefit workshop that we are holding on 1<sup>st</sup> September, I am now writing with details of the public exhibition events that are taking place later this month (in the same week as the workshop).

**Exhibition details**

The exhibition events will present final plans for the redesign of our consented Aultmore Wind Farm. You may recall that the original 13-turbine 29MW scheme was consented by Moray Council in 2014 but since then, there have been significant advances in turbine technology with more powerful turbines becoming available – hence our decision to redesign the project.

The events will enable people to review the updated plans, since the last exhibitions in March 2022, and talk to our project team about the proposal. There will be a range of information available including visualisations to help give an indication of how the project may look from different viewpoints within the local area. The details of the exhibitions are as follows:

Wednesday 30 August

- **Cullen Community Centre** from 11am - 2pm  
Seaford Road, Cullen AB56 4AF
- **Clochach Community Centre** from 5pm - 8pm  
Clochach, Buckie, AB56 5HS

Thursday 31 August

- **Newmill Village Hall** from 11am - 2pm  
Mill Brae, Newmill, Keith, AB55 6TW
- **The Fishermen's Hall** from 5pm - 8pm  
15 North Pringle Street, Buckie, AB56 1HT

All key exhibition information will also be available for people to view online from Wednesday 30 August at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) where further project information can be found.

**Raising awareness of the events**

We have placed an advert this week in the Banffshire Journal, Banffshire Advertiser and Banffshire Herald providing details of the exhibition events and another set of adverts will appear in these papers on Tuesday 29 August (the week of the events). I've included a digital copy of the advert with this letter in case you wish to share the advert on community websites or social media pages. I have also posted some laminated hard copies of the advert (for local posters) out to Cullen Community Centre.

Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd • Market Development  
St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3QQ • [info@vattenfall.com](mailto:info@vattenfall.com)  
VAT: GB927473303 • [www.vattenfall.com](http://www.vattenfall.com)



A project newsletter is also being mailed out to over 800 local households (in addition to anyone else who has asked us to keep them up to date with the project), which will arrive early next week, to further help raise awareness of the exhibition events. I've included a digital copy of the newsletter in case you wish to share it on community websites or social media pages. In addition we have paid for digital online adverts on the Grampian online website as well as targeted social media (Facebook) posts over the next few weeks to help raise awareness. We are also writing out to other local Community Councils and wider stakeholders.

#### **Commenting on the final design**

Anyone wishing to provide feedback to Vattenfall on the final redesign plans for Aultmore Wind Farm can do so in writing from Wednesday 30 August by filling in a 'comments form' at the exhibitions or online (from the project website), by emailing [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com) or writing to Aultmore Project Team, Vattenfall Wind Power Limited, St Andrew's House, Haugh Land, Hexham, NE46 3QQ. **The closing date for comments is Friday 15 September 2022.**

Any comments submitted to Vattenfall on the proposal at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit). Should a formal S36 application for consent be submitted there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments on this proposal to the determining authority.

#### **Benefits of the redesign**

Onshore wind is one of the cheapest forms of electricity generation. In addition, it is quick to build, increases energy security by reducing reliance on imports, and has a short carbon payback time (usually 1-3 years).

The new 16-turbine proposal utilises modern 200m 6.6MW turbines, significantly increasing the site's generating capacity. The 105.6MW redesigned scheme could generate enough fossil-free electricity annually for around 84,000<sup>1</sup> homes, almost four times the original 29MW scheme's 22,000<sup>1</sup> homes. The redesigned scheme would help offset approximately 125,825 tonnes<sup>1</sup> of carbon emissions, in addition to providing a sizeable annual community benefit fund of £528,000<sup>2</sup> for the local area which would total £18.4 million over the wind farm's 35-year operational life cycle.

It is estimated that by 2030, 30GW of onshore wind will be required across the UK to meet our climate targets at the lowest cost to the consumer. As such, optimising sites like Aultmore could play an important role in this transition to a greener, low-carbon economy.

#### **Next steps**

Based on our current programme we expect to submit a Section 36 application for consent to Scottish Ministers by the end of 2023. Once submitted, the application will be advertised and a formal consultation held by the Energy Consents Unit to gather feedback from the public and consultees, before a final determination is made.

Yours sincerely,



Lucy Blake  
Aultmore Project Manager

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEDEXplained>

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government guidance is 'to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project.' Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'.

11.15. Appendix 14: Project newsletter – Summer 2023 (August 2023)



Clashindarroch Wind Farm in Aberdeenshire.

## Project overview

Welcome to the Summer 2023 newsletter for the Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign proposal.

### About the project

Vattenfall is in the final stages of redesigning its consented Aultmore Wind Farm scheme in Banffshire, Moray.

The scheme was originally consented by Moray Council in 2014 as a 29MW 13-turbine scheme. Since then, significant advances in turbine technology have taken place with more powerful turbines becoming available. This led to our decision to redesign the wind farm to increase the amount of fossil free electricity that could be produced and the benefits that could be delivered to the area.

Onshore wind is also one of the cheapest forms of electricity generation. In addition, it is quick to build, increases energy security by reducing reliance on imports, and has a short carbon payback time (usually 1-3 years).

If approved, the redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm will not only help towards climate targets, energy security, and consumer bills, but will also deliver a community benefit fund for the local area as well as inward investment opportunities for local businesses and contractors.

### Site location

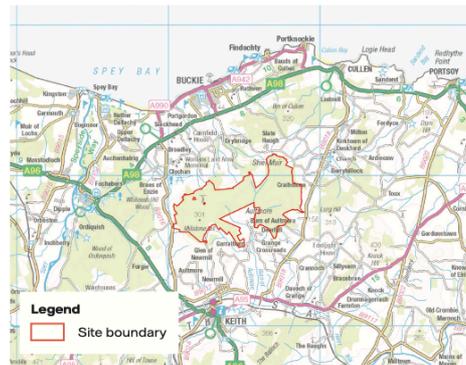
The site is located approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie. It consists predominantly of commercial forestry and lies outwith any national or international landscape or ecological designations.

The site has long been identified as suitable for wind power generation and lies within an area 'likely to be most appropriate for onshore windfarms' within Moray Council's Local Development Plan Spatial Framework.

### Project benefits

The redesigned 105.6MW 16-turbine proposal utilises modern 200m turbines, significantly increasing the site's generating capacity. The redesigned scheme could generate enough fossil free electricity annually for around 84,000<sup>1</sup> homes, almost four times the original 29MW scheme's 22,000<sup>1</sup> homes.

The scheme would offset approximately 125,825<sup>2</sup> tonnes of carbon emissions, making a valuable contribution to government net zero targets, and provide a community benefit fund totalling around £18.4 million<sup>2</sup> over the wind farm's 35-year operational life cycle.



To view more detailed maps of the site, please visit the project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore).

<sup>1</sup> [www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEDEExplained/Statistics-Explained.htm](http://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEDEExplained/Statistics-Explained.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government guidance is 'to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project'. Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'.



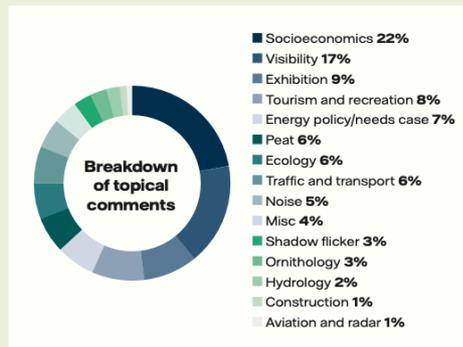


## Engaging with the community

### Spring 2022 exhibition feedback

In spring 2022 we held public exhibitions to provide people with the opportunity to find out more about the proposal and provide feedback to Vattenfall on the scheme at an early stage in the design process.

From the written feedback submitted during the consultation period we received over 150 'topical' comments. The breakdown of this feedback by topic area can be seen in the graph below.



The key 'topical' themes arising from the feedback were:

- **Socioeconomics:** interest in community benefits and supply chain opportunities, including potential for using Buckie Harbour for turbine deliveries.
- **Visibility:** concerns about turbine heights and visual impact, including some comments about relocating or removing certain turbines.
- **Tourism and recreation:** interest in improving walking and cycling recreation opportunities on site; concerns about potential impacts on tourism.
- **Energy policy/needs case:** preference for offshore wind farms or other technologies (including nuclear); concerns about rising energy costs.
- **Peat, ecology and ornithology:** concerns about potential impacts on peat, ecology, bird species; interest in habitat improvement opportunities.
- **Traffic and transport:** concerns about potential impact on B9016 as well as Broadley crematorium; interest in Buckie Harbour for turbine deliveries.
- **Hydrology:** concerns about potential impacts on private water supplies.
- **Noise and shadow flicker:** concerns about potential noise impact and shadow flicker.

### Upcoming August 2023 exhibitions

We are holding a final round of public exhibitions at the end of August for people to share their views on the updated proposal. These events will provide a variety of information as well as the opportunity to talk to the project team and ask questions about the scheme.

A 'Report on feedback' summarising the feedback received from the spring 2022 consultation will also be available.

The exhibition information, including the comments form, will be available online on the website from Wednesday 30 August at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) where further information can be found.

**Cullen Community Centre**  
Seafield Road, Cullen, Buckie, AB56 4AF  
**Wednesday 30 August from 11am-2pm**

**Clochach Community Centre**  
Clochach, Buckie, AB56 5HS  
**Wednesday 30 August from 5pm-8pm**

**Newmill Village Hall**  
Mill Brae, Newmill, Keith, AB55 6TW  
**Thursday 31 August from 11am-2pm**

**The Fishermen's Hall**  
16 North Pringle Street, Buckie, AB56 1HT  
**Thursday 31 August from 5pm-8pm**

### Commenting on the proposal

Anyone wishing to provide feedback to Vattenfall on the final redesign plans for Aultmore Wind Farm can do so in writing from Wednesday 30 August by **filling out a 'comments forms'** at the exhibitions or online (from the project website), by emailing [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com) or writing to:

Aultmore Project Team, Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd,  
St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham,  
Northumberland, NE46 3QQ

**The consultation closing date for comments is Friday 15 September 2023.** Any comments submitted to Vattenfall on the proposal at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit). Should a formal Section 36 application for consent be submitted there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments for this proposal to the determining authority.

### Keeping you informed

For project updates please visit our website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) or get in touch using the contact details above if you would like to be added to our newsletter mailing list.



## Creating a nature-positive future

### Nature and biodiversity

Biodiversity and nature protection are a priority at Vattenfall. It is one of the focus areas in our Environmental Policy and therefore also a central part in our environmental work.

For us, the environment on and near our wind farm projects is important and biodiversity is a key issue for many new projects and operations.

We invest heavily in long-term biodiversity research and conduct many voluntary biodiversity projects to enhance local biodiversity values.

At Vattenfall we also have our own internal bioscience research and development team. Their work helps us improve how we protect the natural environment when we build and operate our developments.

### Environmental Impact Assessment

In November 2021 we submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government and other consultees, seeking feedback on the proposed scope of environmental work.

Since then, we have undertaken a wide range of technical and environmental studies to build our understanding of the site and the wildlife, habitats, and flora and fauna that exist, including:

- Ecology
- Ornithology
- Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Peat
- Cultural Heritage
- Landscape and Visual
- Noise and Shadow flicker
- Access, Traffic and Transport
- Aviation and Radar

The findings from these studies feed into our detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work. The EIA identifies, assesses and proposes mitigation for any potential impacts from the development on the physical, natural and cultural environment. This helps inform and improve the design.



### Case study - Peatland restoration

Vattenfall has been carrying out peatland restoration work at two of its UK wind farms, Clashindarroch in Aberdeenshire and Pen y Cymoedd in South Wales. At both sites we have been restoring land that was previously under commercial conifer plantation to open peatland habitats. Not only does restoring the peatland ecosystem increase biodiversity it crucially allows the potential to store carbon in these vast areas of interconnected blanket bog.

In addition to the habitat management plan onsite, these are some examples of our ongoing peatland activities:

- we run peatland and biodiversity days at the wind farm, to explore the learnings of our work
- we fund a forest bog research PhD programme, in partnership with Swansea University
- we match funded the Lost Peatlands programme, which has expanded the peatland restoration programme as well as supporting the community to upskill and engage with the peatland restoration on site and beyond



Walkers at Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm in South Wales (image by Michael Hall).

## Wind farms must ensure that local people feel the benefit

### Our approach

Vattenfall is a company of Swedish heritage, which is important to the way we approach our business and our work with communities. We believe in being a good neighbour in the places where we develop, build and operate wind farms.

We have clear values and an ethos that places emphasis on working closely with local communities to make sure we are developing projects that can bring lasting, sustainable benefit to the community and future generations.

Many wind farms and energy installations linked to wind farms are located in rural areas. In each case, we look to try and work with local communities to develop the best possible approach to our local investment – to make sure that it delivers something that is aligned with community needs for the future.

### What is 'community benefit'?

Vattenfall invests more than £3 million each year into local communities hosting wind farm projects. This investment comes in many forms but is typically delivered as an annual cash payment to communities closest to the wind farm, for the operational lifetime of the project.

Community benefit can also take the form of community benefit packages, training and education programmes, sponsorship, shared ownership and benefits in kind.

It is important to note that community benefit is a voluntary contribution by the developer. It is not a material consideration in the planning process.

### What does this mean for Aultmore Wind Farm?

Vattenfall follows the prevailing Scottish Government guidance on community benefit<sup>1</sup>.

Based on the redesigned 16-turbine proposal, the 105.6MW scheme could provide a community benefit fund of around £528,000 each year to the local community<sup>2</sup>. This would amount to around £18.4 million over the wind farm's 35-year operational life cycle.



**Aultmore Wind Farm could deliver around £18.4 million in community benefit over its 35-year life cycle.**

### Shared ownership

When developing a wind farm, Vattenfall offers local communities and organisations the opportunity to invest in the project itself. Investing in projects is a very exciting opportunity for local communities as it creates the potential for an additional income stream for the lifetime of the project.

There are different ways that shared ownership can be realised in different regions. One of the most common is to create a model for sharing revenues from the operation of the wind farm with local communities.

<sup>1</sup> Scottish Government guidance is 'to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project.'

<sup>2</sup> Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives planning consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'.



## Maximising inward investment



### Supply chain opportunities

Vattenfall is committed to working closely with the local supply chain and maximising the opportunities for local businesses and contractors to get involved during the construction and operation of our wind farms.

The redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm proposal could help to facilitate economic development by creating inward investment in the form of local contracts, local jobs, and local spend with businesses in the area.

There are a wide range of skills, services and materials required during the construction and operation of a wind farm, including:

- Civil engineering
- Electrical works and cabling
- Quantity surveyors
- Environmental surveyors
- Crane operators and lifting plans
- Labourers and plant operators
- Haulage and transport
- Cleaners (site offices)
- Garages (fuel, vehicle maintenance)
- Accommodation (hotels, B&Bs)
- Restaurants and local shops
- Groundworks
- Plant hire
- Concrete pouring
- Steel fixing
- Site catering
- Fuel and oil supplies
- Turbine technicians
- Hydro-seeding
- Office administrators
- Site security
- Signage

We are gradually building up our knowledge of local businesses and the services, materials, skills and capabilities that they can offer.

If you, or a local business you know, have something to offer to the project please get in touch at [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com).

### Clashindarroch Wind Farm

Our 18-turbine Clashindarroch Wind Farm, near Huntly in Aberdeenshire, is a good example of the inward investment which our wind farms can deliver to the local area. The site, which became operational in 2015, saw more than £12 million spent with 140 Scottish businesses. Around £5 million of this was spent locally in Aberdeenshire and Moray.

### South Kyle Wind Farm

Our 50-turbine South Kyle Wind Farm, located in East Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway, is due to be commissioned later this year and is another great example of working closely with the supply chain to maximise inward investment.

Independent analysis has found that the wind farm's development and construction spend within the local area amounts to £44 million. We want to build on this approach at Aultmore so that we can maximise the benefits to the local area.

### Onshore wind apprenticeships

We recently announced plans to develop an onshore wind apprenticeship programme for Scotland that will secure around 50 apprenticeships through its delivery of onshore wind in Scotland by 2030. The scheme, which will open up opportunities across Vattenfall's onshore wind supply chain, will be rolled out on all our future consented projects.

As well as offering 'traditional' apprenticeship opportunities such as Wind Farm Technicians, projects will also offer apprenticeships in a wider range of industry jobs such as Project Management, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Construction, Habitat Management and Project Communications.

## Who are Vattenfall?

We are one of Europe's leading energy companies. For more than 100 years we have powered industry and supplied people's homes. **We now want to make fossil free living possible within one generation.**

### About Vattenfall

Vattenfall means 'waterfall' in Swedish and originates from our heritage of pioneering large scale hydro power in Sweden.

We have a long history, having been established in 1909, and are now one of Europe's largest producers and retailers of electricity and heat. 100% owned by the Swedish state, we currently employ approximately 20,000 people across Europe.

Our wind expertise extends across Europe, with wind farms in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. We also generate electricity from other energy sources, including over 100 hydro power plants.

In addition to harnessing wind and water to generate electricity, we are also involved in other fossil free

initiatives such as working with partners to develop fossil free steel, and helping build one of Europe's largest electric vehicle charging networks.



### Vattenfall in the UK

We've had an extensive presence in the UK for almost 15 years, developing fossil free energy projects. We have grown our wind and battery storage business from one project in 2008 to 11 today, and invested more than £3.5 billion in enough onshore and offshore wind to power around 800,000 homes.

Vattenfall is a key partner in enabling the UK to reach net zero. We are on track to help save 8 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year by 2030, the same as taking 4 million cars off the road. We also continue to grow our power networks business and our heat business. We're working to deliver low-carbon heat to homes and businesses in London, Bristol and Edinburgh.

#### Technology type

- Battery
- Offshore wind
- Onshore wind
- Solar
- Heat networks
- Hydrogen
- Renewable energy park
- Electrical connections

#### Project status

- Operational
- Construction
- Development
- Vattenfall office location



Newsletter printed by Moravian Press in Elgin, Moray.

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11.16. Appendix 15: Public exhibition photos – examples (August 2023)



These example photos show the set-up of the Newmill Village hall and Clochan Community Centre events before they opened to the public.

11.17. Appendix 16: Exhibition information boards (August 2023)



Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm in South Wales.

## Welcome to this exhibition

### About this event

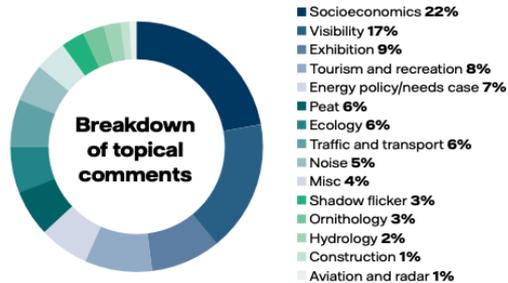
Thank you for taking the time to visit this event and view our final plans for the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm. This exhibition provides you with the opportunity to review our updated proposal and talk to our project team (or get in touch) with any questions that you may have.

The design has been subject to extensive considerations and carefully developed since our first set of exhibitions in March 2022. Comments received from the local community, together with key consultee feedback and survey findings, have all helped to shape and inform the design.

The proposal is now at final design stage, and we are inviting further feedback on the scheme before it is submitted into planning later this year. Please provide any feedback in writing. Comments forms are available as part of this exhibition, in both hard copy and electronic format for this purpose.

### March 2022 exhibition feedback

The graph below shows a breakdown of the 'topical' comments received from our first set of exhibitions in March 2022:



### About Vattenfall

Vattenfall is one of Europe's largest producers and retailers of electricity and heat with approximately 20,000 employees.

For more than 100 years we have electrified industries, supplied energy to people's homes and modernised our way of living through innovation and cooperation. **Our goal is to make fossil free living possible within one generation.**

We have been in the UK since 2008 and have invested more than £3.5 billion in enough wind to power 800,000 homes. We are on track to help save 8 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> a year by 2030, the same as taking 4 million cars off the road.

The key areas of interest were:

- **Socioeconomics:** local benefits, supply chain opportunities
- **Visibility:** turbine heights, visual impact, location of turbines
- **Tourism and recreation:** opportunities as well as impacts
- **Energy policy:** alternative technologies, energy prices
- **Habitats and wildlife:** peat, ecology, and ornithology
- **Traffic and transport:** turbine route, construction traffic
- **Hydrology:** private water supplies
- **Noise and shadow flicker:** residential amenity

A 'Report on Feedback' is available as part of this exhibition which provides more detail on the 2022 consultation feedback.

Correct at time of publication August 2023.





Map showing site location

## Redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm

### Project overview

The proposed Aultmore Wind Farm site lies approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie, in Moray.

The site has long been identified as suitable for wind power generation and lies within an area 'likely to be most appropriate for onshore windfarms' within Moray Council's Local Development Plan Spatial Framework. The site also lies outwith any national or international landscape or ecological designations.

Aultmore Wind Farm was originally consented by Moray Council in 2014 as a 13-turbine scheme with an installed capacity of 29MW. Since then, significant advancements in turbine technology have taken place - with more powerful turbines becoming available. This led to Vattenfall redesigning the scheme to maximise the fossil free electricity that can be produced.

In November 2021 we submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government and other key consultees seeking feedback on the proposed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work. Since then, we have undertaken extensive technical and environmental surveys to inform the development of the design.

### Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

In November 2021 we submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government and other key consultees seeking feedback on the proposed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work. The EIA is a fundamental part of the design process and involves independent experts and specialists undertaking hundreds of hours of technical and environmental studies to build our understanding of the site. These studies include:

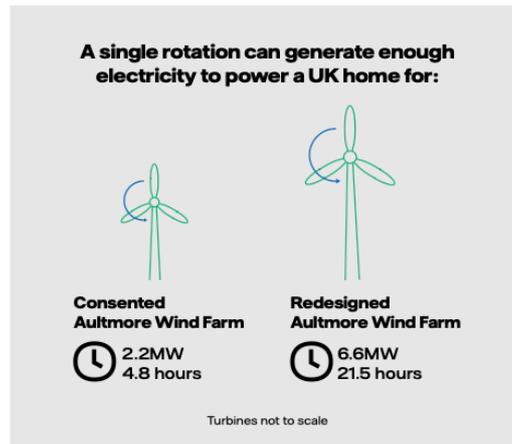
- Landscape and visual
- Ecology and ornithology
- Cultural heritage
- Aviation and radar
- Noise and shadow flicker
- Hydrology, hydrogeology and peat
- Access, traffic and transport

The findings from these studies have been assessed to identify any impacts, and changes made to the design to avoid or mitigate these impacts. The findings are now being written up into an extensive Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) which will accompany the planning application.

### Benefits of the redesign

The new 16-turbine proposal utilises seven modern 200m 6.6MW turbines, significantly increasing the site's generating capacity.

The 105.6MW redesigned scheme could generate enough fossil free electricity annually for around 84,000<sup>1</sup> homes, almost four times the original 29MW scheme's 22,000<sup>1</sup> homes!



The redesigned scheme would help offset approximately 125,825 tonnes of carbon emissions<sup>1</sup>, in addition to providing a sizeable annual community benefit fund of £528,000<sup>2</sup> for the local area - a total of £18.4 million over the wind farm's 35-year operational life cycle.

<sup>1</sup> [www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained/Statistics-Explained.htm](http://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEExplained/Statistics-Explained.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government guidance is 'to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project. Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'.

Correct at time of publication August 2023.





Turbine engineer on nacelle

## Climate change and onshore wind

### Climate change

The earth's climate has changed and evolved throughout history. However, the current rate of global warming has not been seen in the last 10,000 years<sup>1</sup> and 'human activities have raised the atmosphere's carbon dioxide content by 50% in less than 200 years' (NASA)<sup>2</sup>.

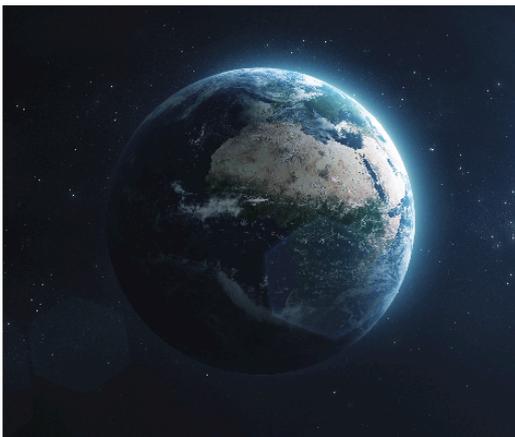
Evidence of climate change is all around us. Globally, we are seeing more frequent extreme weather events such as floods, severe storms, soaring temperatures and droughts. 'Habitats are suffering; sea levels are rising, the arctic is melting, coral reefs are dying, oceans are acidifying, and forests are burning' (UN)<sup>3</sup>.

Countries across the world, including the UK, recognise that action must be taken, and fundamental changes made to decarbonise the way that we live and work if we are to tackle climate change. Reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and increasing our renewable energy generation from sources like onshore wind is a vital part of this.

### Net Zero targets

In 2019, the Scottish and UK Governments each declared a "climate emergency" and set legally binding greenhouse gas emissions targets – with **Scotland targeting 'net zero' by 2045 and the UK now targeting 'net zero' by 2050**.

To achieve these targets, transport, heating and industry will need to become increasingly electrified, meaning demand for electricity could double by 2050<sup>4</sup>. A significant increase in renewable generation including onshore wind, offshore wind, hydro, and solar will be required to help reach these targets.



### Onshore wind

The UK (and Scotland specifically) has some of the best wind resource in Europe, with 14GW of onshore wind already built in the UK<sup>4</sup>. It is estimated that by 2030, 30GW of onshore wind will be required across the UK to meet our climate targets at the lowest cost to the consumer.

Onshore wind is one of the most established renewable technologies and plays an important role in meeting net zero targets because it:

- increases energy security by reducing reliance on imports
- is quicker to build than, for example, offshore wind
- has a short carbon payback time (usually 1-3 years)
- is one of the cheapest forms of electricity generation.

Advancements in turbine technology as well as energy storage solutions mean that sites can now generate significantly greater outputs and offset much greater levels of carbon emissions.

As such, optimising sites like Aultmore could play an important role in the transition to a greener, low-carbon economy.

<sup>1</sup> <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/carbon-dioxide/>

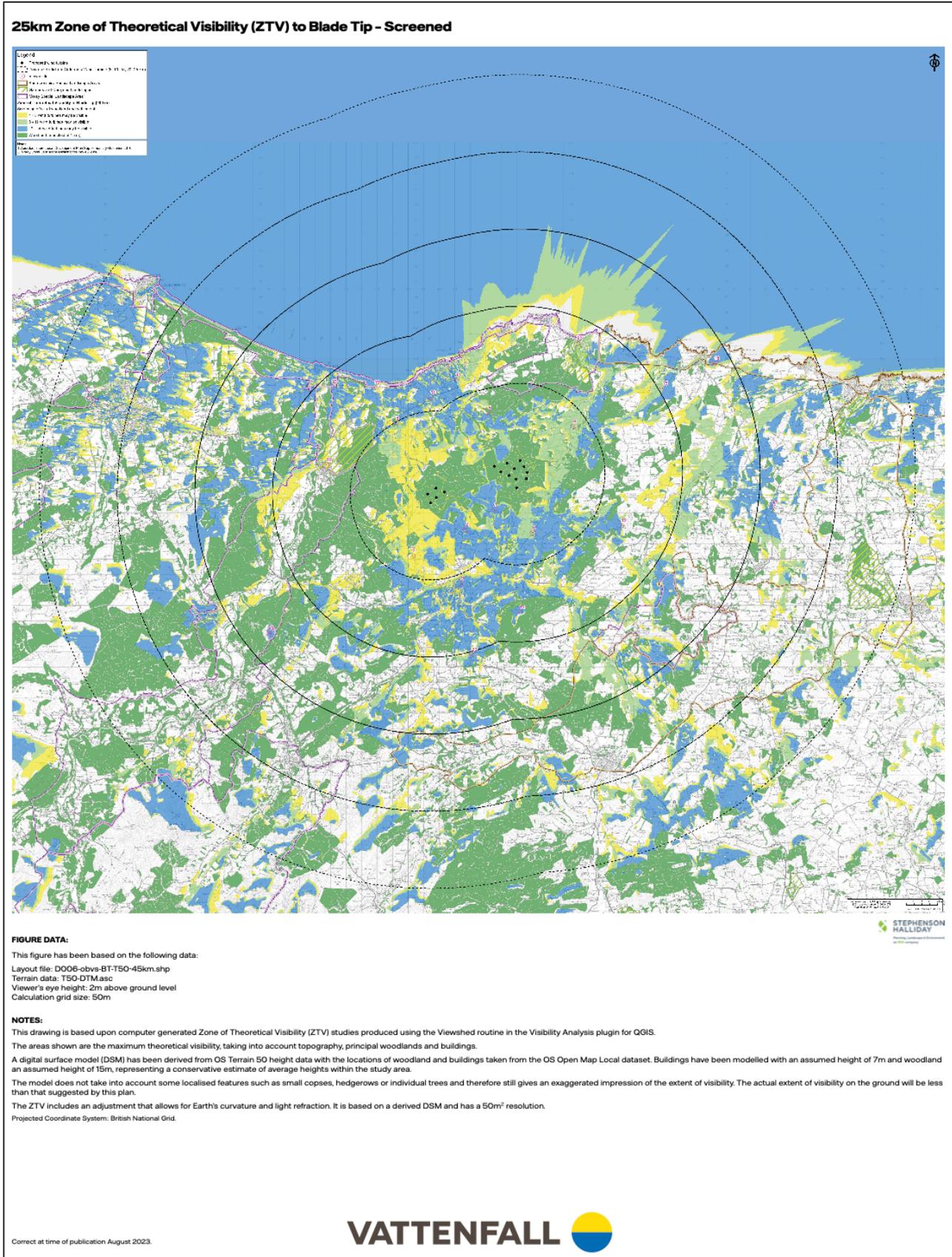
<sup>3</sup> [www.un.org/en/un75/climate-crisis-race-we-can-win](http://www.un.org/en/un75/climate-crisis-race-we-can-win)

<sup>4</sup> [www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/)

Correct at time of publication August 2023.

**VATTENFALL** 







## Visualisations: Viewpoint 4 - Aultmore

### Existing view

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.

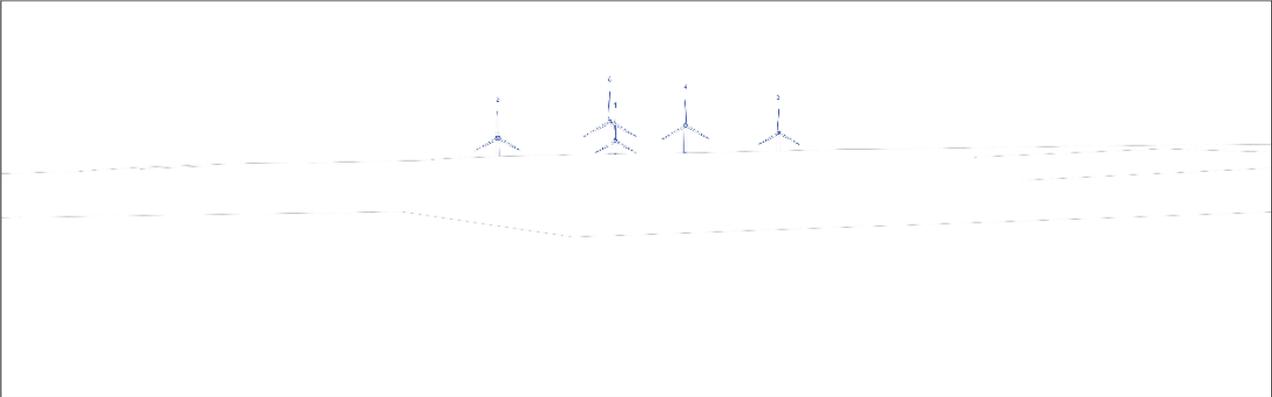


<p>1. The information is a general guide only. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any legal proceedings.</p> <p>2. The information is subject to change without notice.</p> <p>3. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>	<p>4. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>5. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>6. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>	<p>7. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>8. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>9. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>	<p>10. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>11. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>12. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>
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### Final design - wireline

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



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### Final design - photomontage

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



<p>1. The information is a general guide only. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any legal proceedings.</p> <p>2. The information is subject to change without notice.</p> <p>3. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>	<p>4. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>5. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>6. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>	<p>7. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>8. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>9. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>	<p>10. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>11. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>12. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>
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Grid reference: 340293E 853217N  
 Direction of view: 019.80°  
 Horizontal field of view: 53.5°  
 Distance to nearest turbine: T5 @ 3.626km

#### Viewpoint location



Correct at time of publication August 2023.



## Visualisations: Viewpoint 6 - Kirktown of Deskford

### Existing view

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.

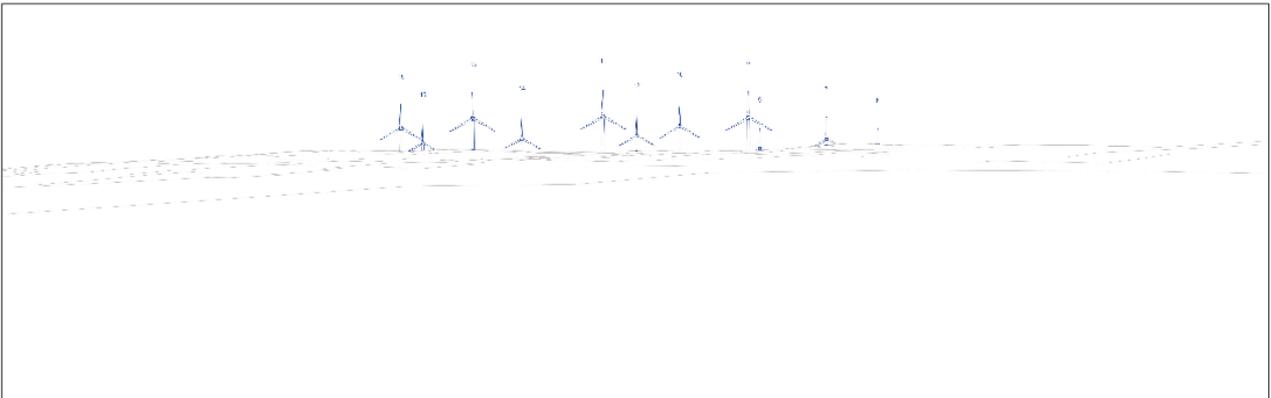


<p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a computer-generated image for illustrative purposes only. It is not a photograph of the actual site.</li> <li>The image is intended to provide a visual impression of the proposed development and its surroundings.</li> <li>The image is not to scale and should not be used for any other purpose.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Project Information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Name: Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</li> <li>Client: Vattenfall</li> <li>Location: Kirktown of Deskford</li> <li>Date: 2023</li> </ul>	<p><b>Image Details:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viewpoint: Viewpoint 6</li> <li>Direction: 232.40°</li> <li>Field of View: 53.5°</li> <li>Distance to Nearest Turbine: 4.072km</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scale:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1:1000</li> </ul>
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STEPHENSON HALLIDAY  
Planning, Landscape & Environment  
an RFL company

### Final design - wireline

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



<p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a computer-generated image for illustrative purposes only. It is not a photograph of the actual site.</li> <li>The image is intended to provide a visual impression of the proposed development and its surroundings.</li> <li>The image is not to scale and should not be used for any other purpose.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Project Information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Name: Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</li> <li>Client: Vattenfall</li> <li>Location: Kirktown of Deskford</li> <li>Date: 2023</li> </ul>	<p><b>Image Details:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viewpoint: Viewpoint 6</li> <li>Direction: 232.40°</li> <li>Field of View: 53.5°</li> <li>Distance to Nearest Turbine: 4.072km</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scale:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1:1000</li> </ul>
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STEPHENSON HALLIDAY  
Planning, Landscape & Environment  
an RFL company

### Final design - photomontage

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



<p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a computer-generated image for illustrative purposes only. It is not a photograph of the actual site.</li> <li>The image is intended to provide a visual impression of the proposed development and its surroundings.</li> <li>The image is not to scale and should not be used for any other purpose.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Project Information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Name: Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</li> <li>Client: Vattenfall</li> <li>Location: Kirktown of Deskford</li> <li>Date: 2023</li> </ul>	<p><b>Image Details:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viewpoint: Viewpoint 6</li> <li>Direction: 232.40°</li> <li>Field of View: 53.5°</li> <li>Distance to Nearest Turbine: 4.072km</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scale:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1:1000</li> </ul>
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STEPHENSON HALLIDAY  
Planning, Landscape & Environment  
an RFL company

Grid reference: 350640E 861588N  
Direction of view: 232.40°  
Horizontal field of view: 53.5°  
Distance to nearest turbine: T8 @ 4.072km

#### Viewpoint location



Correct at time of publication August 2023.

VATTENFALL 

### Visualisations: Viewpoint 9 - Keith - Broomhill Road

**Existing view**

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.

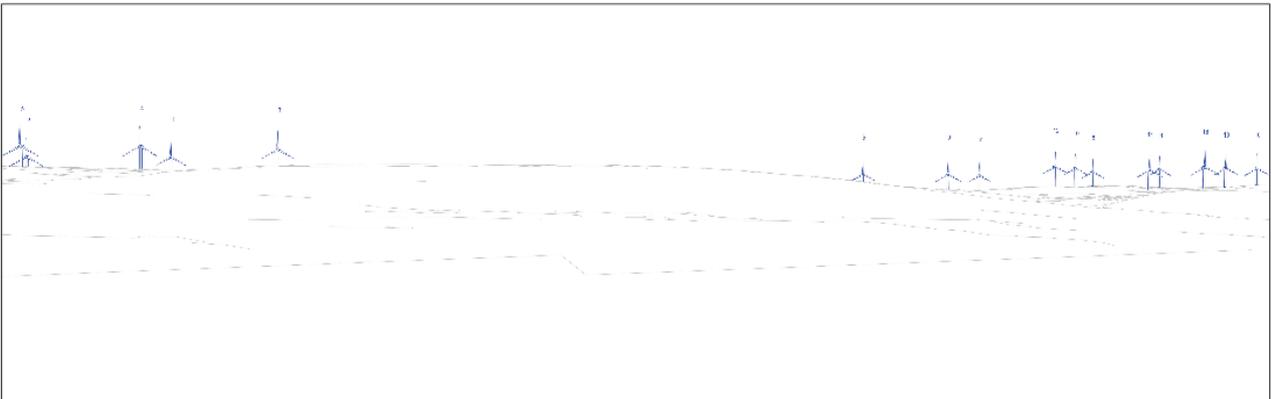


<p><b>Notes:</b></p> <p>1. This visualization is a computer-generated image. It is not a photograph and should not be used as evidence of the actual appearance of the proposed development.</p> <p>2. The visualization is based on the best available information at the time of publication. It is not intended to represent the final design of the proposed development.</p> <p>3. The visualization is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute an offer of any financial product or service.</p>	<p><b>Project Name:</b> Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</p> <p><b>Project Reference:</b> AULT/2023/001</p> <p><b>Project Location:</b> Keith, Aberdeenshire</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Pre-Application Consultation</p> <p><b>Project Date:</b> August 2023</p>	<p><b>Client:</b> Vattenfall</p> <p><b>Project Manager:</b> [Name]</p> <p><b>Project Engineer:</b> [Name]</p> <p><b>Project Designer:</b> [Name]</p> <p><b>Project Photographer:</b> [Name]</p>	<p><b>Scale:</b> 1:1000</p> <p><b>Orientation:</b> North</p> <p><b>Weather:</b> Clear</p> <p><b>Time of Day:</b> Day</p>
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**Final design - wireline**

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



<p><b>Notes:</b></p> <p>1. This visualization is a computer-generated image. It is not a photograph and should not be used as evidence of the actual appearance of the proposed development.</p> <p>2. The visualization is based on the best available information at the time of publication. It is not intended to represent the final design of the proposed development.</p> <p>3. The visualization is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute an offer of any financial product or service.</p>	<p><b>Project Name:</b> Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</p> <p><b>Project Reference:</b> AULT/2023/001</p> <p><b>Project Location:</b> Keith, Aberdeenshire</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Pre-Application Consultation</p> <p><b>Project Date:</b> August 2023</p>	<p><b>Client:</b> Vattenfall</p> <p><b>Project Manager:</b> [Name]</p> <p><b>Project Engineer:</b> [Name]</p> <p><b>Project Designer:</b> [Name]</p> <p><b>Project Photographer:</b> [Name]</p>	<p><b>Scale:</b> 1:1000</p> <p><b>Orientation:</b> North</p> <p><b>Weather:</b> Clear</p> <p><b>Time of Day:</b> Day</p>
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**Final design - photomontage**

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



<p><b>Notes:</b></p> <p>1. This visualization is a computer-generated image. It is not a photograph and should not be used as evidence of the actual appearance of the proposed development.</p> <p>2. The visualization is based on the best available information at the time of publication. It is not intended to represent the final design of the proposed development.</p> <p>3. The visualization is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute an offer of any financial product or service.</p>	<p><b>Project Name:</b> Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</p> <p><b>Project Reference:</b> AULT/2023/001</p> <p><b>Project Location:</b> Keith, Aberdeenshire</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Pre-Application Consultation</p> <p><b>Project Date:</b> August 2023</p>	<p><b>Client:</b> Vattenfall</p> <p><b>Project Manager:</b> [Name]</p> <p><b>Project Engineer:</b> [Name]</p> <p><b>Project Designer:</b> [Name]</p> <p><b>Project Photographer:</b> [Name]</p>	<p><b>Scale:</b> 1:1000</p> <p><b>Orientation:</b> North</p> <p><b>Weather:</b> Clear</p> <p><b>Time of Day:</b> Day</p>
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**Grid reference:** 343418E 851404N  
**Direction of view:** 005.40°  
**Horizontal field of view:** 53.5°  
**Distance to nearest turbine:** T5 @ 5.607km

**Viewpoint location**



Correct at time of publication August 2023.

### Visualisations: Viewpoint 11 - Buckie

**Existing view**

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.

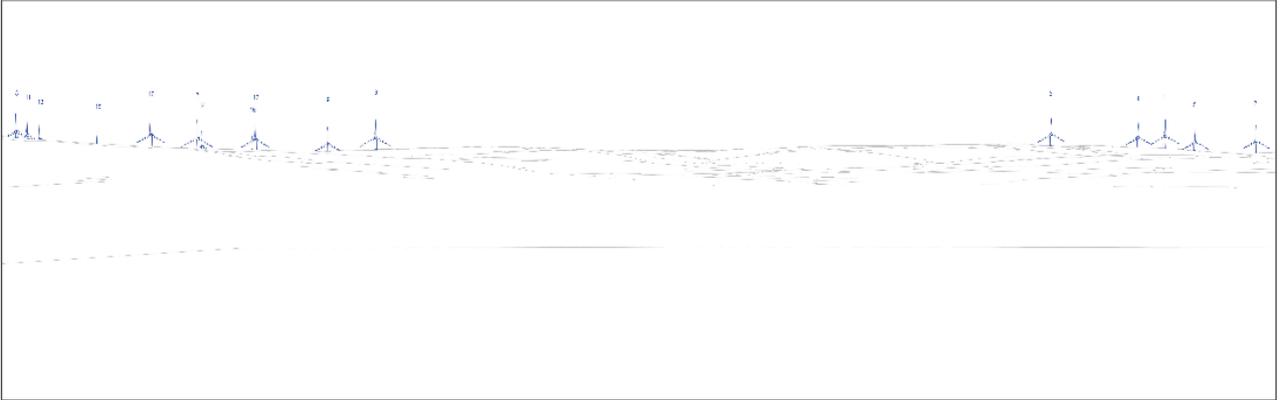


<p>1. This visualisation is a computer-generated image. It is not a photograph and should not be used as a reference for the actual appearance of the proposed development.</p> <p>2. The visualisation is based on the current design of the proposed development. It is subject to change without notice.</p> <p>3. The visualisation is based on a clear day. It does not show the effect of weather conditions or time of day.</p> <p>4. The visualisation is based on a view from a distance of 6.130km. It does not show the effect of distance on the appearance of the proposed development.</p>	<p><b>Project Information</b></p> <p>Project Name: Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</p> <p>Client: Vattenfall</p> <p>Location: Buckie, Aberdeenshire</p> <p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Date: August 2023</p>	<p><b>Visualisation Information</b></p> <p>Viewpoint: Viewpoint 11 - Buckie</p> <p>Direction of View: 167.70°</p> <p>Horizontal Field of View: 53.5°</p> <p>Distance to Nearest Turbine: T6 @ 6.130km</p>	<p><b>Weather &amp; Time</b></p> <p>Weather: Clear</p> <p>Time: Day</p>	<p><b>Scale &amp; Distance</b></p> <p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Distance: 6.130km</p>
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**Final design - wireline**

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



<p>1. This visualisation is a computer-generated image. It is not a photograph and should not be used as a reference for the actual appearance of the proposed development.</p> <p>2. The visualisation is based on the current design of the proposed development. It is subject to change without notice.</p> <p>3. The visualisation is based on a clear day. It does not show the effect of weather conditions or time of day.</p> <p>4. The visualisation is based on a view from a distance of 6.130km. It does not show the effect of distance on the appearance of the proposed development.</p>	<p><b>Project Information</b></p> <p>Project Name: Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</p> <p>Client: Vattenfall</p> <p>Location: Buckie, Aberdeenshire</p> <p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Date: August 2023</p>	<p><b>Visualisation Information</b></p> <p>Viewpoint: Viewpoint 11 - Buckie</p> <p>Direction of View: 167.70°</p> <p>Horizontal Field of View: 53.5°</p> <p>Distance to Nearest Turbine: T6 @ 6.130km</p>	<p><b>Weather &amp; Time</b></p> <p>Weather: Clear</p> <p>Time: Day</p>	<p><b>Scale &amp; Distance</b></p> <p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Distance: 6.130km</p>
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**Final design - photomontage**

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.

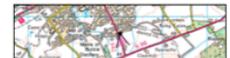


<p>1. This visualisation is a computer-generated image. It is not a photograph and should not be used as a reference for the actual appearance of the proposed development.</p> <p>2. The visualisation is based on the current design of the proposed development. It is subject to change without notice.</p> <p>3. The visualisation is based on a clear day. It does not show the effect of weather conditions or time of day.</p> <p>4. The visualisation is based on a view from a distance of 6.130km. It does not show the effect of distance on the appearance of the proposed development.</p>	<p><b>Project Information</b></p> <p>Project Name: Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</p> <p>Client: Vattenfall</p> <p>Location: Buckie, Aberdeenshire</p> <p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Date: August 2023</p>	<p><b>Visualisation Information</b></p> <p>Viewpoint: Viewpoint 11 - Buckie</p> <p>Direction of View: 167.70°</p> <p>Horizontal Field of View: 53.5°</p> <p>Distance to Nearest Turbine: T6 @ 6.130km</p>	<p><b>Weather &amp; Time</b></p> <p>Weather: Clear</p> <p>Time: Day</p>	<p><b>Scale &amp; Distance</b></p> <p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Distance: 6.130km</p>
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**Grid reference:** 343056E 864622N  
**Direction of view:** 167.70°  
**Horizontal field of view:** 53.5°  
**Distance to nearest turbine:** T6 @ 6.130km

**Viewpoint location**



Correct at time of publication August 2023.

### Visualisations: Viewpoint 13 – Speyside Way, west of Portgordon

**Existing view**

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



<p>1. This information is a preliminary design only. It is not intended to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>2. The information is subject to change without notice.</p> <p>3. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>4. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>	<p>Project Name: Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</p> <p>Client: Vattenfall</p> <p>Project Manager: [Name]</p> <p>Design Lead: [Name]</p> <p>Author: [Name]</p> <p>Check: [Name]</p> <p>Date: [Date]</p>	<p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Projection: UTM</p> <p>Units: Meters</p> <p>Version: 1.0</p>	<p>Sheet No: 13</p> <p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Projection: UTM</p> <p>Units: Meters</p> <p>Version: 1.0</p>
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**Final design – wireline**

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



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**Final design – photomontage**

View flat at a comfortable arm's length. If viewing this image on a screen enlarge to fill screen height.



<p>1. This information is a preliminary design only. It is not intended to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>2. The information is subject to change without notice.</p> <p>3. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p> <p>4. The information is not to be used for any other purpose.</p>	<p>Project Name: Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign</p> <p>Client: Vattenfall</p> <p>Project Manager: [Name]</p> <p>Design Lead: [Name]</p> <p>Author: [Name]</p> <p>Check: [Name]</p> <p>Date: [Date]</p>	<p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Projection: UTM</p> <p>Units: Meters</p> <p>Version: 1.0</p>	<p>Sheet No: 13</p> <p>Scale: 1:1000</p> <p>Projection: UTM</p> <p>Units: Meters</p> <p>Version: 1.0</p>
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**Grid reference:** 337828E 864129N  
**Direction of view:** 135.50°  
**Horizontal field of view:** 53.5°  
**Distance to nearest turbine:** T1 @ 7.641km

**Viewpoint location**



Correct at time of publication August 2023.







## Protecting the environment

### Ecology and ornithology

Vattenfall is committed to the protection of nature and biodiversity. We strive to avoid and minimise impacts on the environment and ecosystems and where impacts can't be fully avoided or mitigated, we consider potential compensation and restoration measures.

Detailed EIA surveys have explored the ecology, ornithology, flora, fauna and overall biodiversity to ensure that we have a thorough understanding of the site and surrounding area.

Our ecologists have spent many hours walking the site, identifying and mapping the species and habitats that are present, and our ornithologists have spent significant time on site logging the flight paths (including winter migration routes) of key bird species from vantage points around the site, mapping nesting sites, and considering breeding behaviour.

The findings from this survey work, in addition to engagement with key consultees such as RSPB and NatureScot, have helped inform the design – and turbine infrastructure has been relocated to avoid impacts on key species or habitats.

### Biodiversity enhancement

Due to the nature of the site being a commercial forestry plantation the biodiversity level is fairly low. However, there are opportunities to improve it and so we are in the process of developing a proposed Biodiversity Habitat Management Plan to enhance the biodiversity in selected areas of the site to achieve an overall net gain for the proposed development.

In addition, any trees that require to be felled would be replanted, either on site or elsewhere in the region, and native broadleaf species would be used wherever possible.

### Landscape and visual

Whilst the visual impact of a wind farm may appear to be subjective, there are clear planning guidelines and principles that need to be applied when designing a wind farm proposal.

Specialist landscape architects have critically assessed and provided input into the design to ensure that the best layout possible is achieved from a visual perspective. A Residential Visual amenity Assessment (RVAA) has also been undertaken for properties within 2km of the turbine locations to assess and mitigate any potential impact.

Visualisations have been produced as part of this exhibition to help give an indication of how the redesigned proposal may look from different viewpoints within the landscape. These visualisations, together with more from the wider area, will be submitted as part of our planning application to the Energy Consents Unit.

### Cultural heritage

As part of our EIA work, we have considered the key cultural heritage assets within 10km of the site to ensure that any potential impacts are avoided or mitigated.

<sup>1</sup> <https://biggareconomics.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/BIGGAR-Economics-Wind-Farms-and-Tourism-2021.pdf>



### Case study - peatland restoration

Vattenfall has been carrying out peatland restoration work at two of its UK wind farms, Clashindarroch in Aberdeenshire and Pen y Cymoedd in South Wales.

At both sites we have been restoring land that was previously under commercial conifer plantation – to open peatland habitats.

In addition to the habitat management plan on site, these are some examples of our ongoing peatland activities:

- we run peatland and biodiversity days at the wind farms, to explore the learnings of our work
- we fund a forest bog research PhD programme, in partnership with Swansea University
- we match funded the Lost Peatlands programme, which has expanded the peatland restoration programme as well as supporting the community to upskill and engage with the peatland restoration on site and beyond

Not only does restoring the peatland ecosystem increase biodiversity it crucially allows the potential to store carbon in these vast areas of interconnected blanket bog.

### Tourism and Recreation

Should the wind farm be consented a detailed Access Management Plan will be developed for the construction phase. During construction, access will be restricted to certain areas of the site in the interests of public safety, however, once constructed full access will return. The wind farm is likely to open up more recreation potential once built to due to the new tracks that will link the turbines to the main site tracks.

With regard to tourism, a number of independent studies over the years have consistently found that wind farms do not affect tourism. One of the most recent studies undertaken by BIGGAR Economics 'Onshore Wind and Tourism in Scotland' (2021) found 'no relationship between tourism employment and wind farm development at the level of the Scottish economy, across local authority areas nor in the locality of wind farm sites'<sup>1</sup>.

Correct at time of publication August 2023.

**VATTENFALL** 





# Construction traffic and site access

## Turbine deliveries

The turbine components are expected to arrive at Inverness port and travel east along the A96 for a few miles before turning onto the B9090, through Cawdor, to avoid Nairn. The loads will then re-join the A96 at Auldearn and travel towards Buckie before turning south onto the B9016 towards site.

Turbine components are likely to be delivered at night-time or in the early hours of the morning to avoid funerals at Broadley Crematorium as well as school drop-off and pick-up times and busy periods when people are travelling to work.

Multi-axle abnormal load vehicles will be used to transport the longer turbine blades and tower sections. These loads travel more slowly (typically 20mph-40mph) due to their size and tend to be escorted by the police. The remaining components such as the hubs and nacelles are usually transported by HGV vehicles.

Swept path analysis, traffic count surveys, and engineering studies have been undertaken to assess the route feasibility.

## Construction traffic

Should the project be granted consent a detailed Traffic Management Plan will be developed in consultation with Moray Council to ensure that any potential disruption is limited. We are also proposing to source the majority of aggregate required from borrow pits on site, to reduce construction traffic and overall environmental impact.

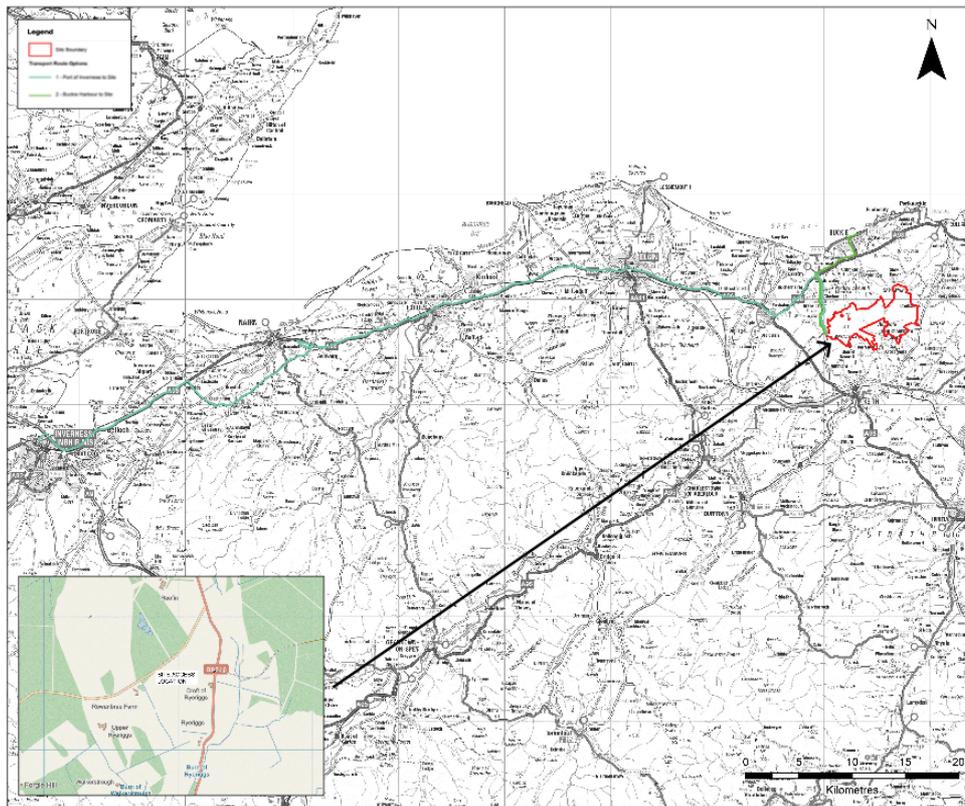
## Site access

A number of site access options off the B9016 for the turbine deliveries and HGVs have been explored. The preferred Mains of Oxhill access which was proposed in the early design stages has now changed to a point further south as shown on the inset map below. The Mains of Oxhill access may still be used by lighter vehicles (such as white vans and 4x4s) to access the site during construction.

## Buckie Harbour

Buckie Harbour is too small to bring in the larger blade and tower components. However, we are in consultation with the Harbour and are exploring the feasibility of the nacelles being delivered to Buckie.

## Turbine delivery route map



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Correct at time of publication August 2023.





## Community benefit

### What is 'community benefit'?

Vattenfall invests more than £3 million each year into local communities hosting wind farm projects. This investment comes in many forms but is typically delivered as an annual cash payment to communities closest to the wind farm, for the operational lifetime of the project.

Community benefit can also take the form of community benefit packages, training and education programmes, sponsorship, shared ownership and benefits in kind. These are voluntary contributions, designed to deliver meaningful benefit aligned with community needs for the future.

Usually, the areas that benefit are the communities closest to the proposal which host some of the infrastructure or which are impacted to a certain degree. Community benefit is not a material consideration in the planning process.

### Being a good neighbour

Vattenfall is a company of Swedish heritage, which is important to the way we approach our business and our work with communities. We believe in being a good neighbour in the places where we develop, build and operate wind farms.

We believe that our wind farms should be assets for local communities, supporting sustainable development locally and enhancing quality of life. It is only fair that the communities nearest our developments share in the benefits of harvesting the local wind resource.

We take a measured, paced and timely approach to explore the views of the community and develop the best possible approach to our investment.

### How much is the Aultmore Fund?

We follow the prevailing Scottish Government guidance on community benefit<sup>1</sup> and want to ensure maximum impact of community benefit contributions.

Based on the redesigned 16-turbine proposal, the 105.6MW scheme could provide a community benefit fund of around £528,000 each year to the local community<sup>2</sup>. This would amount to around £18.4 million over the wind farm's 35-year operational life cycle.



**Aultmore Wind Farm could deliver around £18.4 million in community benefit over its 35-year life cycle.**

<sup>1</sup> Scottish Government guidance is 'to continue at a national level to promote community benefits of the value equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index linked for the operational lifetime of the project.'

<sup>2</sup> Turbine numbers and technology (as well as Scottish Government guidance on community benefit) can change, which means that the community benefit figure may go up or down. The final figure will be confirmed when (and if) the project receives planning consent. More information can be found in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'.

### Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Fund

This year our Clashindarroch Wind Farm, near Huntly in Aberdeenshire, celebrated distributing more than £1 million pounds in community funding. The fund, which was launched in 2015, is now in its eighth year and has supported 131 projects across the local area with £1.2 million of funding awarded to date.

Clashindarroch's Community Fund has also helped to generate a further £9 million into the local area since its launch, via match funding. This funding has supported local heritage projects such as the new Cabrach Distillery and Heritage Centre – the cornerstone of the Cabrach Trust's regeneration plan for the area, as well as local facilities such as Gordon Rural Action Hub which houses joined-up services to those people most vulnerable to the community such as those hardest hit by the cost-of-living crisis.



The Clashindarroch Community Fund Panel visiting the site of the Cabrach Distillery development in June 2023 left to right: Hazel McIntosh, George Wordie, Peter Johnson, Michael Cowie, Tony Gill, Sam Dowdall (Chair).

### Shared ownership

Vattenfall offers local communities and organisations the opportunity to invest in the project itself. Investing in projects is a very exciting opportunity for local communities as it creates the potential for an additional income stream for the lifetime of the project.

There are different ways that shared ownership can be realised in different regions. One of the most common is to create a model for sharing revenues from the operation of the wind farm with local communities.

### Your feedback

We want to understand your views on community investment and shared ownership so that we can make sure our project delivers real benefits to the local area. Please take the time to talk to (or get in touch with) our project team to discuss your views and then submit your feedback to us in writing on a comments forms.

Correct at time of publication August 2023.





## Working with the local supply chain

### Our approach

Vattenfall is committed to working closely with the local supply chain and maximising the opportunities for local businesses and contractors to get involved during the construction and operation of our wind farms.

To achieve this, we strive to not only buy local wherever feasible but to proactively seek out local businesses and enterprises who can help us build our wind farms. We work with all sizes of companies from large multi-nationals through to small and medium enterprises as well as sole traders.

The redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm proposal could help to facilitate economic development by creating inward investment in the form of local contracts, local jobs, and local spend with businesses in the area.



### Supply chain opportunities

There are a wide range of skills, services and materials required during the construction and operation of a wind farm, including:

- Civil engineering
- Electrical works and cabling
- Quantity surveyors
- Environmental surveyors
- Crane operators and lifting plans
- Labourers and plant operators
- Haulage and transport
- Cleaners (site offices)
- Garages (fuel, vehicle maintenance)
- Accommodation (hotels, B&Bs)
- Restaurants and local shops
- Groundworks
- Plant hire
- Concrete pouring
- Steel fixing
- Site catering
- Fuel and oil supplies
- Turbine technicians
- Hydro-seeding
- Office administrators
- Site security
- Signage

We are also building a register of local services and suppliers so that we are aware of the skills and capabilities within the area. This register will be used by Vattenfall and our main contractors to help procure skills, services and materials for the redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm, should it go ahead, as well as other potential developments across Scotland.

If you, or a local business you know, have something to offer to the project please talk to our project team, fill in a comments form, or get in touch.

### Clashindarroch Wind Farm

Our 18-turbine Clashindarroch Wind Farm, near Huntly in Aberdeenshire, is a good example of the inward investment which our wind farms can deliver to the local area. The site, which became operational in 2015, saw more than £12 million spent with 140 Scottish businesses. Around £5 million of this was spent locally in Aberdeenshire and Moray.

### South Kyle Wind Farm

Our 50-turbine South Kyle Wind Farm, located in East Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway, is due to be commissioned later this year and is another great example of working closely with the supply chain to maximise inward investment.

Independent analysis has found that the wind farm's development and construction spend within Scotland amounts to £93.4 million, with £44 million of spend awarded to businesses with a presence in Ayrshire, and Dumfries and Galloway. We want to build on this approach at Aultmore so that we can maximise the benefits to the local area.

### Onshore wind apprenticeships

We recently announced plans to develop an onshore wind apprenticeship programme for Scotland that will secure around 50 apprenticeships through its delivery of onshore wind in Scotland by 2030. The scheme, which will open up opportunities across Vattenfall's onshore wind supply chain, will be rolled out on all our future consented projects.

As well as offering 'traditional' apprenticeship opportunities such as Wind Farm Technicians, projects will also offer apprenticeships in a wider range of industry jobs such as Project Management, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Construction, Habitat Management and Project Communications.

With a pipeline of more than 500 MW in Scotland, such as Quantans Hill near Carsphairn in Dumfries and Galloway and Clashindarroch II near Huntly in Aberdeenshire, the scheme will aim to support the development of well-paid jobs in rural communities. Work will now begin with local specialist stakeholders and supply chain companies to develop bespoke programmes tailored to each local area.

Correct at time of publication August 2023.





## Your feedback and next steps

### Commenting on the final design

Whilst the proposal is now finalised, we welcome your feedback on the updated design as well as your thoughts about the local priorities, community projects and initiatives, and local groups that you would like to see supported by the community fund, should the project be consented.

Please take the time to talk to our project team at the exhibition or get in touch with us to discuss any questions that you may have before providing feedback.

Feedback to Vattenfall on the proposal at this stage must be provided in writing. There are three ways to do this:

- Complete a 'comments form' at the exhibition events or online (on our website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore))
- Email [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com)
- Write to Aultmore Redesign Project Team, Vattenfall Wind Power Limited, St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, NE46 3QQ.

Copies of the exhibition information, including the comments form (which can be filled in online or downloaded), can also be found on our project website at [vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) where further project information can be found.

**The closing date for feedback on the final design is Friday 15 September 2023.**

Any comments submitted to Vattenfall on the proposal at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government).

Should a formal Section 36 application for consent be submitted for this proposal there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority.

Scan the QR code



### Next steps

Once the consultation period for feedback on the final design has closed, we will review the comments received and summarise them (together with the Spring 2022 consultation feedback) in a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report which will accompany the planning application.

We will also finish writing the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), an extensive document which documents and assesses the findings of the technical and environmental survey work undertaken. The EIAR will also accompany the planning submission.

Because the redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm proposal is over 50MW it will be submitted to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (the Electricity Act) and determined by Scottish Ministers. Moray Council will be a statutory consultee in the planning process.

### Planning process

**Based on our current programme we expect to submit our planning application by the end of 2023**, likely in the Autumn. Upon submission we will write to key stakeholders - including the local Community Councils, local households, and anyone who has asked us to keep them up to date with the proposal, to confirm this.

A formal statutory consultation will be advertised and held by the Scottish Government once they have registered the application. This consultation will provide members of the public and consultees the opportunity to comment on the proposal before a final determination is made.

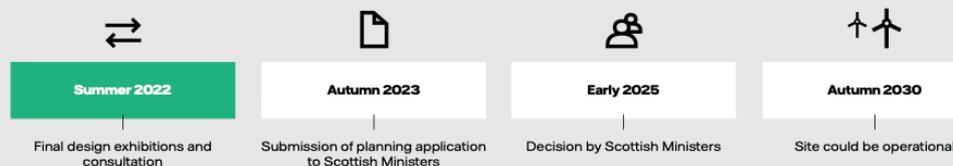
### Keeping you informed

For project updates please visit our website at [vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore) where further information can be found about the project - including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) which also feature as part of this exhibition.

If you would like to be added to our project mailing list, please talk to our project team at the exhibition or get in touch with us using the details above.



### Indicative Timeline



Correct at time of publication August 2023.



11.18. Appendix 17: Comments form (August 2023)



## Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign – Comments Form

### **Terms and consent**

Vattenfall takes very seriously the opinions of those living near to or visiting places where we plan to build a wind farm.

The feedback that you provide will be used by us in aggregate to understand how communities affected by our proposals feel about the development. It will also feature in the Pre-application Consultation (PAC) Report which will accompany our application to Scottish Ministers for permission to build the project.

No responses will be directly attributable to any person or organisation nor made public by us. We will retain this data until we have received a response to our planning application from Scottish Ministers, at which point it will be deleted.

You have a number of rights under data protection law and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You will find more information about how Vattenfall handles your personal data in our **privacy policy – a printed copy of which is available at this exhibition** (an online version can be found by searching for 'Privacy Policy' on our company website at <https://group.vattenfall.com/uk>).

By completing a comments form you are confirming that you have read the above and understand the Terms and Conditions.

Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd • Market Development  
St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3QQ • [info@vattenfall.com](mailto:info@vattenfall.com)  
VAT. GB927473303 • [www.vattenfall.com](http://www.vattenfall.com)

Page 1 of 11



**1. Your views on energy and climate change**

How concerned are you about climate change, sometimes referred to as 'global warming'?

- Very concerned
- Fairly concerned
- Not very concerned
- Not at all concerned
- Don't know

Leaving aside the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm for a moment, generally do you support or oppose the following?

**The transition towards renewable energy?**

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

**The use of onshore wind?**

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

**The development of wind farms in this region?**

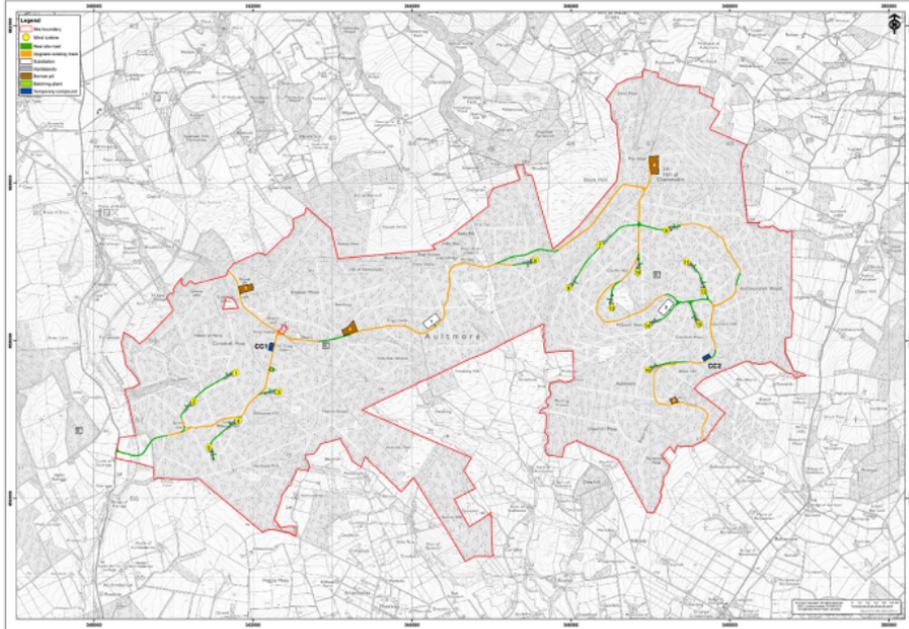
- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose



**2. Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign**

Aultmore Wind Farm is at final design stage and we welcome feedback from the local community and wider public.

A larger version of this map can be viewed at the public exhibition events or on our project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore).



How do you feel about the redesigned infrastructure layout for Aultmore Wind Farm?

- Happy
- Neutral
- Concerned
- Other

If 'other' please explain more:



What are the **key areas** of most interest to you in relation to the proposal (please select no more than three answers)?

- Landscape and visual
- Turbine delivery route and/or construction traffic
- Ecology and/or ornithology
- Tourism
- Local economy
- Community investment and/or shared ownership
- Other

If 'other' please explain more:

Do you have any further comments about the proposal?

Nothing further to add at this time

Yes, please consider.....



**3. Community investment and shared ownership**

Our investment in local communities comes in many forms. Community benefit packages, skills, training and education programmes, shared ownership and benefits in kind are most common.

Based on the redesigned 16-turbine proposal, the 105.6MW scheme could provide a community benefit fund of around £528,000 each year to the local community - amounting to around £18.4 million over the wind farm's 30-year operational life cycle.

If Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign goes ahead, please tell us which of the below is the greatest priority in your area for community investment?

- Local environmental schemes
- Local skills and employment development
- Local transport links
- Local housing and built environment
- Other

If 'other' please explain more:

Are there any other significant considerations or opportunities in the community that you think community benefit could help address?

Yes, please consider.....

Are you interested in the concept of Shared Ownership in renewable energy (and potentially Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign if it goes ahead)?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe



**4. This exhibition**

How did you find out about the public exhibition events?

- Project newsletter
- Advert in local paper
- Project website
- Word of mouth
- Other (please specify)

Which public exhibition event did you attend?

- Cullen Community Centre
- Clochach Community Centre
- Newmill Village Hall
- Fishermen’s Hall, Buckie
- None

Have you viewed the online exhibition information on the project website at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore)?

- Yes
- No

How has your knowledge of the project improved since you visited the public exhibition and/or viewed the online exhibition information on a scale of 1 to 7 (with 1 being 'not at all' and 7 being 'a lot')?

- Not at all A lot
- 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
- |



If you attended, which parts of the public exhibition information did you find most helpful?

	Not very helpful	Quite helpful	Very helpful
Information boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wireline/photomontage visualisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talking to the project team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FAQs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any other comments regarding this public exhibition event?



**5. About you**

In which Community Council area do you live?

- |                     |                          |                   |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Cullen and Deskford | <input type="checkbox"/> | Findochty         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strathisla          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Portknockie       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lennox              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wider Moray area  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Keith               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Outwith Moray     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Findochty           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prefer not to say | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Buckie and District | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other             | <input type="checkbox"/> |

In what capacity are you responding to this questionnaire?

- |                                  |                          |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Community Council representative | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Member of the public             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local business                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| School or university student     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A regular visitor to the area    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prefer not to say                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please indicate your age range?

- |                   |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Under 18          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18-24             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25-34             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35-44             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 45-54             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 55-64             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 65 and over       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prefer not to say | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you would like to be kept up to date with the Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign project, please provide your email address and we will provide updates as and when we have them. If you do not have an email address, please provide your postal address instead:



**6. Local businesses**

Vattenfall is committed to working closely with the local supply chain and maximising the opportunities for local businesses and contractors to get involved during the construction and operation of our wind farms.

When developing or building a wind farm the opportunities are often very local and include things like environmental services, timber felling and processing, civil and electrical engineering through to site security, catering and accommodation for workers.

Would you, or a business you know, like to provide goods and services to the development, construction, or operation of Aultmore Wind Farm Redesign (should it be consented)?

Yes

No

**If you've answered 'yes' please complete the BUSINESS REGISTRATION FORM overleaf.**

**Thank you** for taking the time to complete this comments form with your views and feedback.

Any comments submitted to Vattenfall on the proposal at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit). Should a formal Section 36 application for consent be submitted for this proposal there will be an opportunity at that time for people to submit formal comments to the determining authority.

If you would like to get in touch with the project team, please email us at: [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com) or write to us at:

Aultmore Project Team,  
Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd.  
St. Andrew's House  
Haugh Lane  
Hexham  
NE46 3QQ



**BUSINESS REGISTRATION FORM**

**Terms and Conditions**

The purpose of this business registration form is to help Vattenfall identify local suppliers. The information you provide will be collated and shared with our supply chain partners.

What type of goods or services does the business provide?

- Communications
- Electrical works
- Environmental management
- Felling works
- Foundation construction
- Foundation materials
- General
- Grid
- Plant/equipment hire
- QHSE
- Road construction
- Road materials
- Site Design
- Site set-up
- Turbine supply
- Wholesalers
- Wind assessment
- Accommodation
- Other (please specify)

Business name

Business website

Business postcode



Please tell us more about the business and the goods or services it offers:

Number of employees?

- 0-9
- 10-49
- 50-99
- 100-499
- 500+

Your name

Job title

Your email address

11.19. Appendix 18: Virtual village hall exhibition – on project website (August - September 2023)

## Public Exhibitions

All of the key exhibition information presented at the recent August exhibitions can be viewed by clicking this link



 [Virtual Exhibition](#)



**VATTENFALL** 

**Welcome!**

**In this virtual 'village hall' you will find the information presented at our August 2023 exhibition events on our final plans for the redesign of Aultmore Wind Farm. There is information about Vattenfall, the proposal itself - including maps and visualisations - as well as the potential benefits for the community and local economy.**

We hope that this exhibition provides a useful resource for you to learn about the updated scheme and final design at a time that is convenient to you. Please pan the room and click on the information boards to learn more. You can read as many of the boards as you like in any order, although we recommend starting on the right and working your way around.

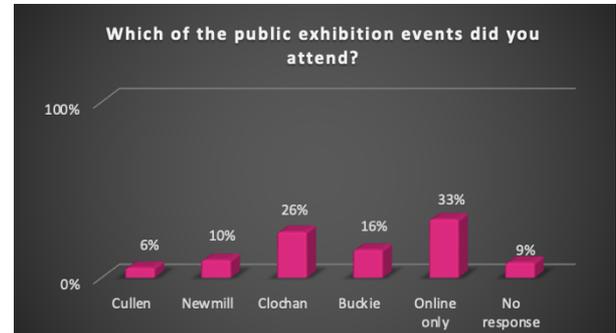
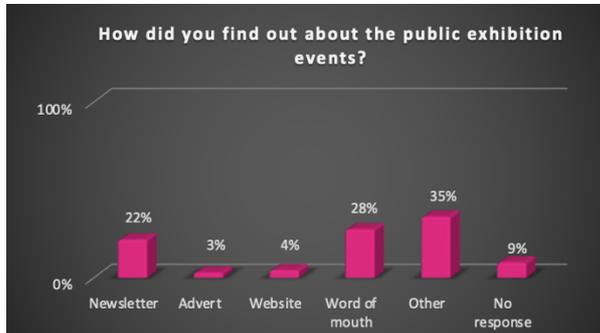
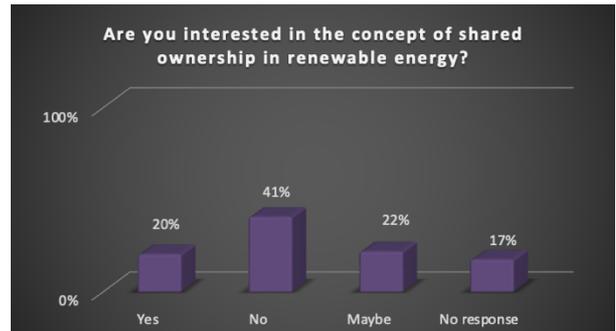
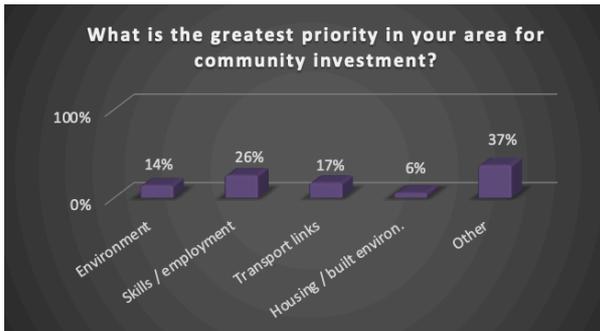
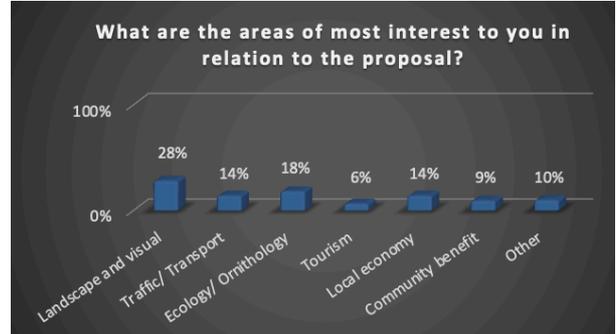
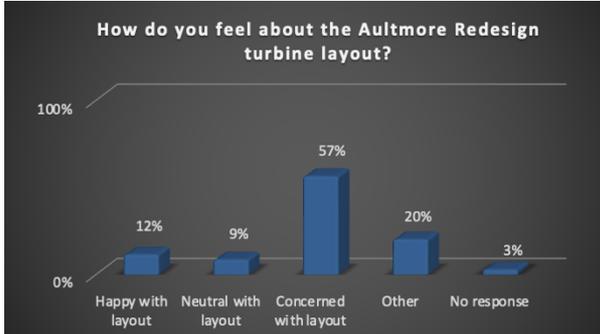
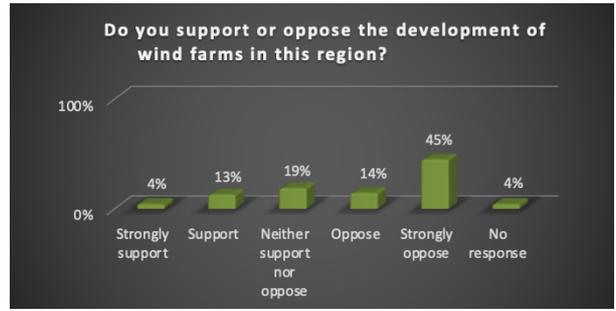
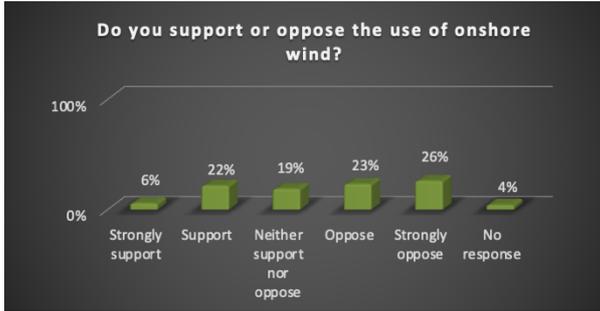
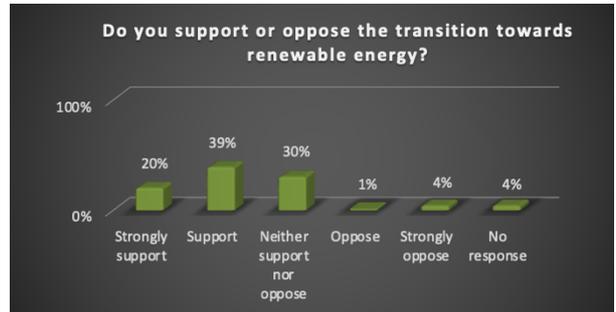
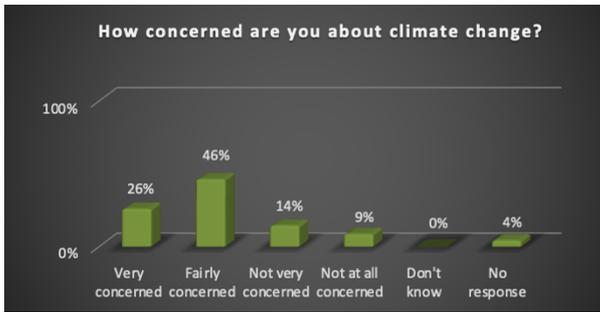
At the front of the room, you will find a 'Feedback' section for you to submit any comments that you may have on the proposal. The closing date for comments is Friday 15th September 2023.

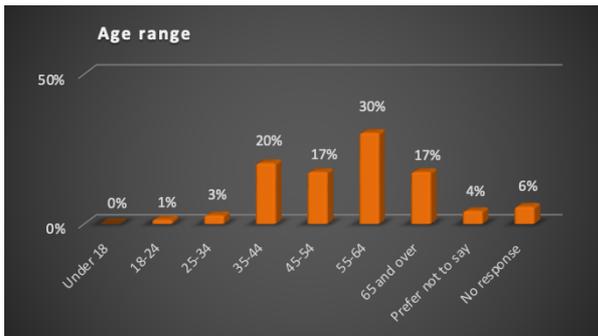
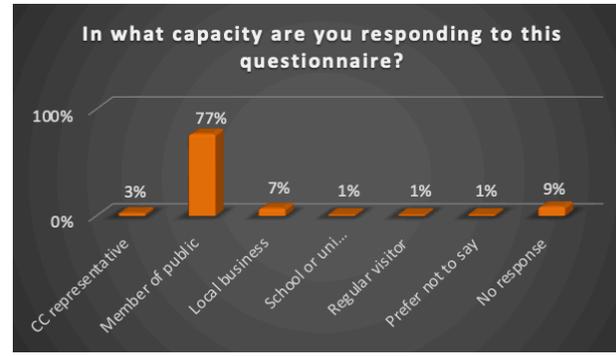
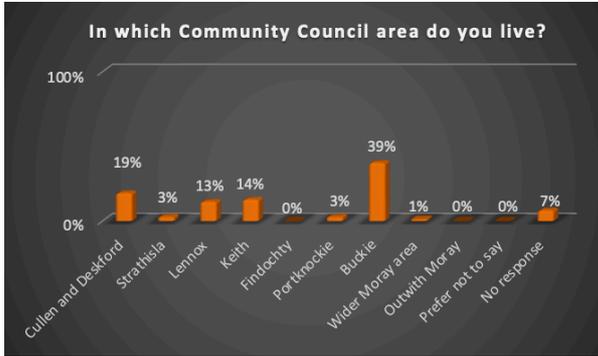
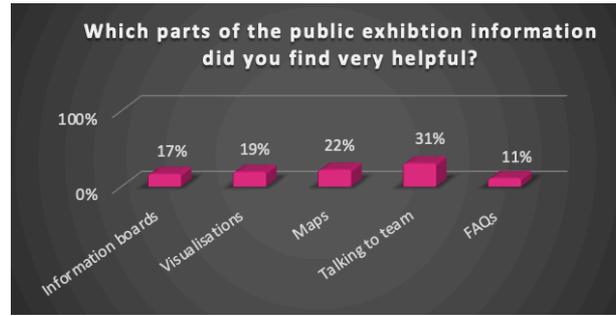
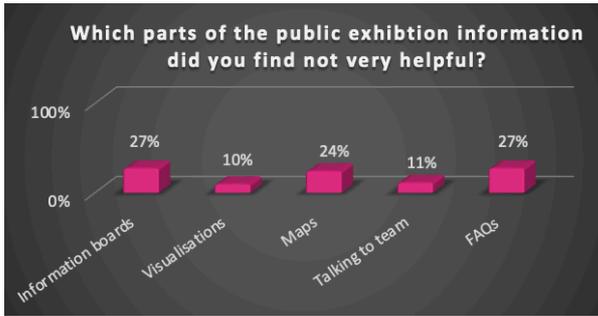
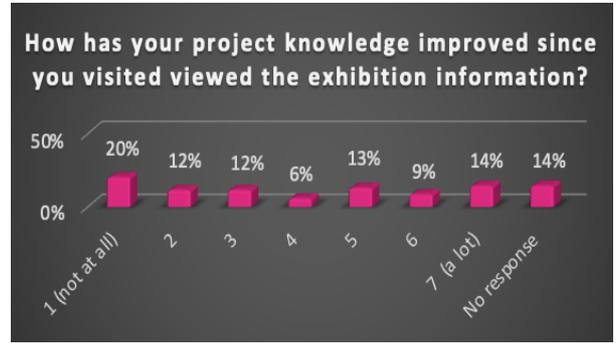
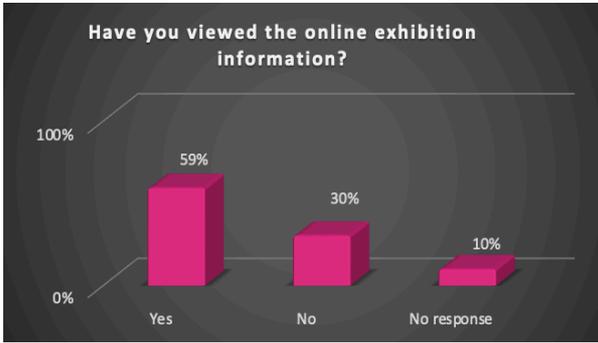
In the meantime, if you have any questions about the proposal before providing feedback, please get in touch with the team directly at [aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com](mailto:aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com) or write to Aultmore Project Team, Vattenfall Wind Power Limited, St Andrew's House, Haugh lane, Hexham, NE46 3QQ.





11.20. Appendix 19: Graphs showing multiple choice question feedback (2023 consultation)





11.21. Appendix 20: Invite letters to community benefit workshop (August 2023)

**VATTENFALL** 

Sent by email to: 

  
Chairperson  
Findochty and Buckie Development Trust  
17 East Church Street  
Buckie  
AB56 1ET

Date: 04/08/2023      Contact: Lucy Blake  
E-mail: lucy.blake@vattenfall.com

**INVITE to Aultmore Wind Farm community benefit workshop**  
**1<sup>st</sup> September from 5:30pm - 9pm (buffet dinner included)**

Dear 

Thank you again for meeting with my colleague, Ruth Liddicoat, last month regarding Vattenfall's Aultmore Wind Farm which we have been redesigning.

As you may recall, one of the key items that Ruth discussed with you was our decision (in response to community feedback), to hold a **community benefit workshop** to provide more information on the benefits that could be delivered from Vattenfall's redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm, should it receive consent. The project is currently at final design stage and will be submitted into planning later this year.

The purpose of the community benefit workshop is to:

- **Share and exchange** knowledge, understanding and experience of community benefit.
- **Understand** how community benefit funds are making a difference to communities.
- **Learn and explore** how community benefit funds can be structured and governed.
- **Identify** issues to consider in relation to the Aultmore community benefit opportunity.
- **Have positive and productive discussions** about community benefit with representatives from different communities in the area.

The event will take place on **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September at Portessie Hall from 5:30pm until 9pm** with a half-hour break at 7pm for a **buffet dinner**. Teas and coffees will be served from 5pm onwards.

We would like to invite **up to three representatives** from **Findochty and Buckie Development Trust** to this event. Each person who wishes to attend can click this [link](#) to register. We require confirmation of those attending **by Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> August**.

Places are limited, so we are initially writing out to local Community Councils and anchor organisations. If you have suggestions of other suitable organisations that may be interested, please let us know. Should the event be oversubscribed, we will consider running a further event.

The workshop will be hosted by Vattenfall and facilitated by Foundation Scotland, a Scottish grantmaking charity, with significant expertise in this area. We very much hope that you can join us at this event. Further information regarding the project, Vattenfall, Foundation Scotland, and the venue, can be found overleaf.

Yours sincerely,  
  
Lucy Blake  
Aultmore Project Manager

Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd • Aultmore Wind Farm Project  
St Andrew's House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3QQ • aultmore.windfarm@vattenfall.com  
VAT: GB927473303 • www.vattenfall.com



## FURTHER INFORMATION

### About the project

Aultmore Wind Farm is located approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie and was originally consented by Moray Council in 2014 as a 13-turbine scheme with an installed capacity of 29MW. Since then, significant advances in turbine technology have taken place with more powerful turbines becoming available. As such, Vattenfall has been exploring a 'redesigned' scheme which would significantly increase the amount of fossil-free electricity that could be produced as well as the community benefit delivered to the local area from the project. We are now in the process of finalising the design and will be holding another set of exhibitions in the local area at the end of August to present the updated proposal; details of these events will be communicated and advertised in due course. We expect to submit a Section 36 application for consent to Scottish Ministers towards the end of the year. More information about the project can be found at [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore).

### About Vattenfall

Vattenfall is one of Europe's largest producers and retailers of electricity and heat. 100% owned by the Swedish state, Vattenfall has a long history having been established in 1909. Vattenfall means 'waterfall' in Swedish and originates from the company's heritage of pioneering large scale hydro power in Sweden. Operating mainly across Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, and the UK, Vattenfall is committed to building a future where everyone can choose affordable, fossil-free ways to move, make, and live and wants to **make fossil-free living possible within one generation**. Vattenfall has been in the UK since 2008 and is a key partner in enabling the UK to reach net zero. Vattenfall's wind business has grown from one project in 2008 to 11 today. The company also continues to grow its power networks business and heat business. Vattenfall has invested more than £3.5 billion in enough wind to power 800,000 homes and is on track to help save 8 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> a year by 2030, the same as taking 4 million cars off the road. Vattenfall invests more than £3 million annually into local communities hosting wind farm projects. More information about Vattenfall's approach to community benefit can be found [here](#).

### About Foundation Scotland

Foundation Scotland is a Scottish charity (SC022910) and a company limited by guarantee (SC152949) with 25 years' experience in managing charitable funds and making grants to local causes across Scotland. Through the provision of varying levels of specialist fund design, grant-making, and fund management services, it currently supports over 70 community benefit funds benefitting more than 350 communities. Community benefit donations for distribution through Foundation Scotland totaled over £7,300,000 in 2022/23. In its work to drive up good practice in the design and delivery of community benefit funds, Foundation Scotland favours a long-term view, which promotes and harnesses community strengths and supports decision making processes that are inclusive, accountable and community led. More information about Foundation Scotland can be found at [www.foundationscotland.org.uk](http://www.foundationscotland.org.uk).

### Portessie Hall

The workshop event will be held at Portessie Hall.

Portessie Hall  
9 Chancellor Road  
Buckie  
AB56 1TD

The hall can be seen here on [Streetview](#). On-road parking is available on Chancellor Road and the other streets off Chancellor Road (including School Road out of School hours). Car-sharing is encouraged where possible.



11.22. Appendix 21: Community Benefit Fund Workshop Report (September 2023)



**Aultmore Wind Farm Proposal**  
**Community Benefit Fund Workshop**  
**Report**  
**September 2023**



## Contents

1 Introduction	Page 3
2 Workshop Aim, Objectives and Agenda	Page 3
3 Project Overview and Workshop Purpose	Page 5
4 Exercise 1: Community Benefits - Fact or Fiction	Page 6
5 Exercise 2: Making a Difference	Page 11
6 Cabrach Trust – Clashindarroch Wind Farm Fund	Page 14
7 Exercise 3: Fund Structures	Page 15
8 Workshop – Key Learning Points	Page 21
9 Reflection and Feedback	Page 23
10 Conclusion	Page 25
11 Next Steps	Page 27
Appendix 1	Page 28
Appendix 2	Page 29

## 1 Introduction

Vattenfall is in the final design stages of a wind farm proposal at Aultmore Forest, approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie, in Banffshire, Moray. The proposal is expected to be submitted into planning by the end of 2023.

In response to feedback from community stakeholders, Vattenfall held a workshop to provide more information to Community Council representatives and anchor organisations about the community benefit that could be delivered from Aultmore Wind Farm should it be granted consent. It was also recognised by Vattenfall that the workshop could be a useful information event for the community in relation to other community benefit opportunities that may arise in the local area.

The workshop was held in Portessie Hall on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 and this report seeks to capture the content and findings of the workshop.

## 2 Workshop Aim, Objectives and Agenda

The aim of the workshop was to explore community benefit, in the context of Vattenfall's Aultmore Wind Farm proposal, and engage participants in a few exercises to help build awareness and understanding of how a potential community benefit fund may operate as well as the potential benefits that it could deliver for the local area.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- **Share and exchange** knowledge, understanding and experience of community benefit.
- **Understand** how community benefit funds were making a difference to communities.
- **Learn** how community benefit funds could be structured and governed.
- **Identify** issues to consider in relation to the Aultmore community benefit opportunity.
- **Have positive and productive discussions** about community benefit with representatives from different communities in the area.

The event was attended by 31 people representing 18 different organisations with a specific interest in, or role serving, one or more of the seven Community Council areas associated with the Aultmore Wind Farm proposal.

The workshop was hosted by Vattenfall and facilitated by Foundation Scotland, a Scottish grantmaking charity, with significant expertise in community benefit linked to renewables.

**The agenda was comprised as follows:**

- 5.00 pm Doors open, registration, teas and coffees
- 5.30 pm Welcome and introductions  
Project overview and Workshop purpose  
Exercises 1 and 2  
Cabrach Trust: Clashindarroch Wind Farm Fund
- 7.00 pm Buffet supper
- 7.30 pm Exercise 3
- 9.00 pm Reflection and feedback, event end, teas and coffees



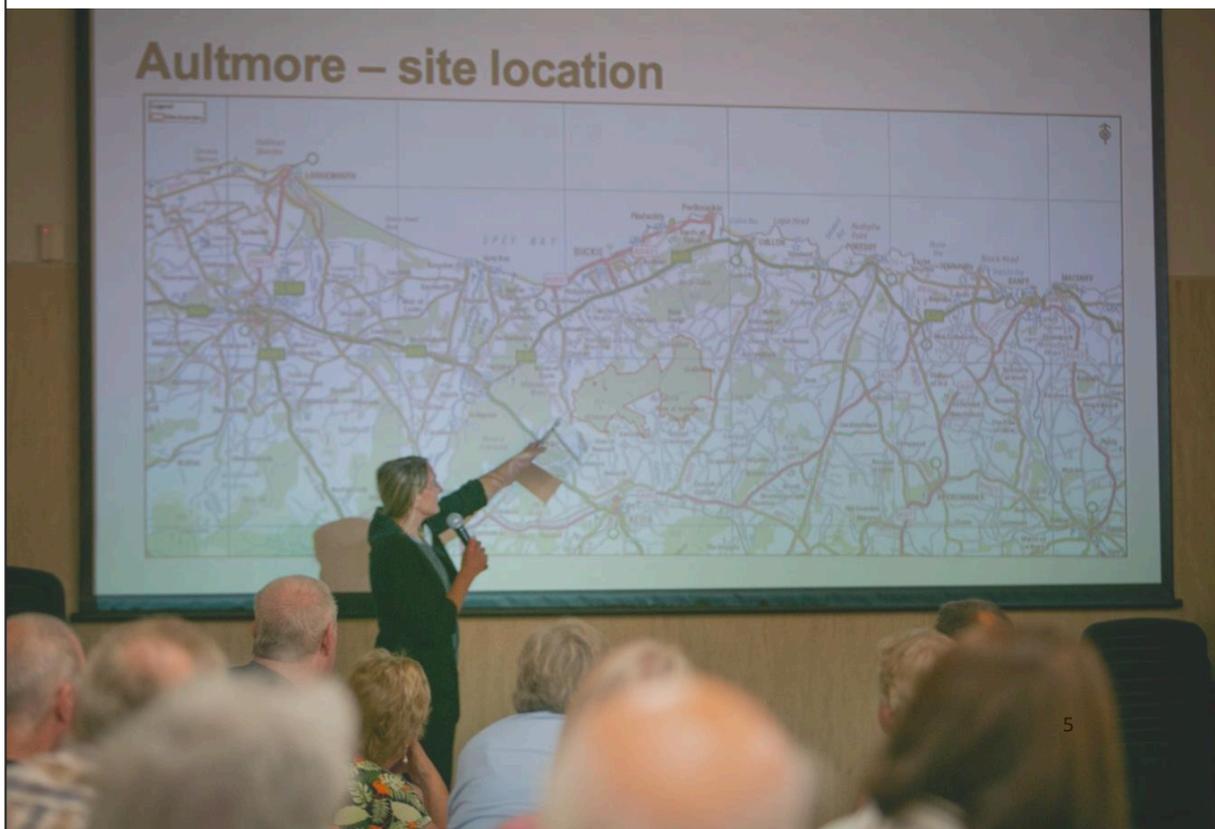
### 3 Project Overview and Workshop Purpose

The workshop was opened by Vattenfall providing a short project update followed by introductions from the workshop facilitators.

Vattenfall explained that this event was a step towards exploring the opportunities presented by the community benefit fund, should the redesigned Aultmore Wind Farm receive planning consent, and developing a collective understanding of community benefit.

Vattenfall added that they wouldn't typically hold a community benefit workshop at this stage in a project and emphasised that the workshop was very much a 'pilot', in response to community feedback, to find out if this sort of event was useful.

If so, similar events could perhaps be held for the wider community and considered for other Vattenfall projects.



#### **4 Exercise 1: Community Benefits - Fact or Fiction**

Working in groups, participants were given a few statements about community benefit and asked to consider whether these were **fact or fiction**.

Each statement was then considered in plenary, followed by a number of key points being confirmed about community benefit as outlined below.

##### ***Community benefit funds last for 20-25 years***

The duration of an onshore wind farm community benefit fund can vary depending on what's agreed. It's fairly standard for a fund to be provided for the operational lifetime of a project.

In a few instances, payments may be frontloaded in the earlier years - to perhaps support larger strategic projects - which results in a fund then ending earlier.

When community benefit funds for onshore wind farms started being set up in Scotland the operational life of most projects was expected to be around 20 years; this then increased to 25 years, and now turbine designs mean that the operational lifetime of some projects is 30-40 years or more.

The terms for offshore wind farm funds are presently less defined.

If consented, Aultmore Wind Farm is expected to have a 35-year operational life cycle and could deliver a community benefit fund to the local area of £18.4 million over that period.

##### ***Community benefit funds are mandatory for onshore wind projects***

Most operational onshore wind farms offer community benefit in one form or another. However, community benefit is provided on a purely voluntary basis by project owners and there are no legal obligations underpinning the provision of community benefit funds.

***Community benefit funds are managed by the owner and they make the funding decisions***

Community benefit funds are managed or 'administered' in different ways depending on the context.

A few wind farm owners are involved directly in administering funds and have a specialised in-house team.

In certain areas of Scotland, the local authority has control over how community benefit funds are spent.



However, most wind farm owners work with local community organisations and /or third parties, like Rural Environmental Action Plan (REAP) - who were represented at the workshop event - or Foundation Scotland, to administer the funds on their behalf as these organisations have the grant-making expertise.

This approach to administration helps take the burden of financial responsibility and fund governance off the community so that they can focus on the things that really matter such as which projects they'd like to support.

In this context, funding decisions are usually made through a community decision-making panel comprised of community representatives, appointed through an open and transparent process, and which meets regularly to discuss and agree funding decisions.

In some scenarios a community organisation manages the fund and is sometimes expressly established to undertake this role. That organisation may then contract an administrator to operate the fund or they may have the skills and capacity to do it themselves.

Should Aultmore Wind Farm receive consent, Vattenfall would consult with the local community on how best to administer and manage the fund.

***Most communities are short changed and receive less than the Scottish Government's recommended £5,000 per MW***

In 2012 the Scottish Government worked with an Advisory Group (which involved Vattenfall and Foundation Scotland) to develop the first [Good Practice Principles](#) for Community Benefit from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments in Scotland.

This recommended that all onshore projects provide community benefit at the rate of £5,000 per MW. This rate was endorsed again when the Principles were reviewed in 2019.

It is uncommon for owners of onshore wind farm projects, consented since 2014, not to meet this recommendation but there are some projects consented pre 2014 that are not providing this rate of community benefit.

Vattenfall follows the prevailing Scottish Government guidelines on community benefit which means that, based on the current community benefit rate of £5,000/MW, the 105.6MW Aultmore Wind Farm project would deliver an annual community benefit fund of £528,000 for the local area should it receive consent.

***Areas of benefit are usually too small. This means too few communities are ending up with lots of money***

From the early days of community benefit, project owners and communities sought to be thoughtful and not selfish – and were doing their best with what they had and knew at the time.

For example, one particular group of communities in the Highlands agreed from an early point (back in 2006) that any onshore wind farm community benefit which involved any one of them would be shared with all three of them – and they were strategic from the outset.

Another early project in the Highlands, which involved about eight communities, took a similar approach.

Another example is in Dumfries and Galloway where three funds which Foundation Scotland works with could be described as 'area' or 'sub regional' funds (depending on how an area is defined); one benefits 13 communities, another 28 and another 42.

The area of benefit will be one of the issues which Vattenfall would consult the community on in the event of Aultmore Wind Farm securing consent.



For example, what would an area of benefit look like that was coherent, reflected how communities operate and connect, and gave communities the optimum opportunity to help ensure the money really did make a difference?

Community benefit is usually distributed and shared by Community Council area. Usually, the 'host' Community Council areas which are closest to the project and likely to experience the most impact are automatically included – and the bigger question is which other Community Council areas, if any, should be included.

For example, in relation to the Aultmore Wind Farm proposal, the four host Community Councils are Cullen and Deskford, Lennox, Buckie and District, and Strathisla - all of which were represented at the workshop.

In addition, Vattenfall has also engaged with the wider Community Councils of Portknockie, Findochty, and Keith - who are the next closest Community Councils to the project - and invited them to attend the workshop.

Whilst the workshop event was not intended to make any decisions on the area of benefit – this is something longer term that would need to be decided and which Vattenfall would consult with the community on, should the project be consented.

***Community benefit is just paying for gold plated taps, in some lucky village halls, and more football strips and outings for the elderly.***

There are some instances where community benefit may not be being used particularly strategically and spend appears to be a bit more scatter gun - although often focused on supporting activity that builds social connections and helps maintain low level but critical community activity.

For a community that may only have a small amount of community benefit money to distribute, it's important not to underestimate the value of that funding for services or activities often organised by volunteer-led groups.

It's also important not to underestimate how this funding can help build the capacity and confidence of a community to then plan other more ambitious projects which meet more strategic community needs.

In some settings, community benefit is already achieving this. Across Scotland, community benefit funding is contributing to affordable housing projects and helping communities purchase and operate assets like woodlands, hotels, hubs, harbours, and supporting the delivery of local services that improve people's lives.

One transformative approach in some areas is to use the community benefit fund to help pay for Development Officers or other paid staff who can support the delivery of activities and projects.

This approach, for example, has helped shape Vattenfall's South Kyle Wind Farm Fund in South Scotland where communities have agreed to ringfence a portion of the Fund for the next 5 years to support paid staff; in this instance, the Fund is not only creating employment opportunities – it's creating employment opportunities that will then help deliver further value and impact.

## 5 Exercise 2: Making a Difference

In this next exercise, participants were invited to consider what kinds of things community benefit funding could support that would enable positive change/ make the most difference in their community.

Working in small groups the participants provided a range of ideas. What follows is a verbatim record of the comments made by the participants.

### Comments referring to specific locations:

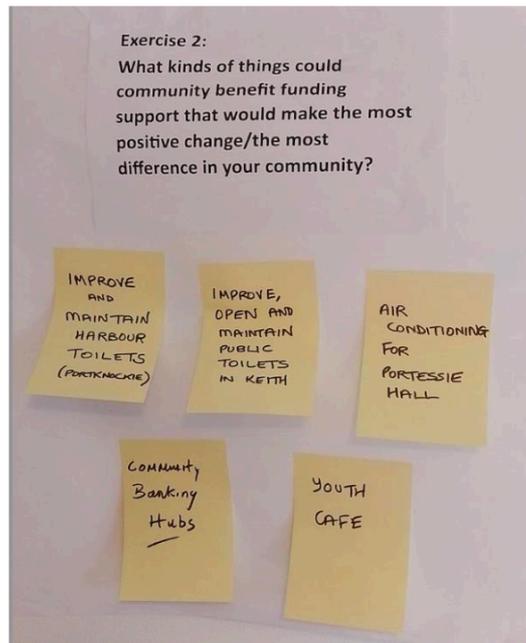
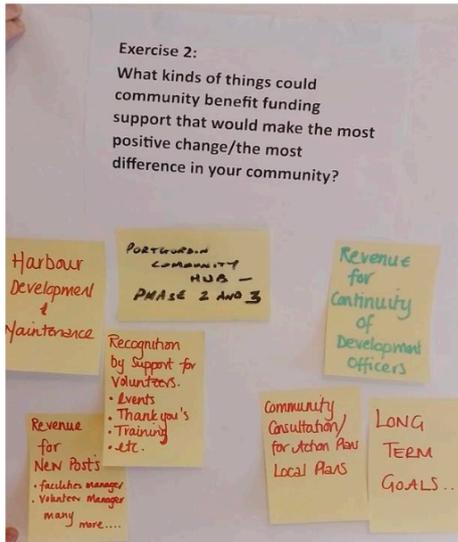
- Improve and maintain Harbour toilets in Portknockie
- Improve and maintain public toilets in Keith
- Provide air conditioning for Portessie Hall
- Deliver Portgordon community hub phases 2 and 3

**General responses are on the page below.**



- Community Banking Hubs
- Complete refurbishment of village halls, including accessible toilets, new toilets, new heating, roof repairs, window replacement
- Youth Café and youth development opportunities
- Pathway to connect parts of community to railway line, connecting communities, transport and safer routes
- Harbour development and maintenance
- Provision of a development trust officer to be able to apply for funds, minimum time commitment e.g., a five-year funded post to ensure longevity of projects
- Revenue for new posts (e.g., facilities manager, volunteer manager Community development officers etc) x2
- Increase awareness of community benefit funding for everyone in the community
- Recognition for volunteer support – events, thank yous, training, etc
- Community liaison worker/ community development officer/ continued funding
- Revenue for continuity of Development Officers
- Financial support to ease the burden of volunteers
- Community consultation for local and community action plans
- Professionalism
- Ensuring energy generated does not 100% get exported out of Moray - develop community energy
- Grants for redeveloping town/village centres
- Pop up shops, small business grants (but not 100% funded)
- Long term goals...
- Local annual volunteering event to recognise and appreciate volunteers that community support workers attend
- Low cost battery top ups for residents
- Actions in the community action plans
- Tourism – e.g. land train to be shared with other communities
- Long term goals – e.g. housing and employment
- Apprenticeships
- Village halls – community spaces that are energy efficient and generate power.
- Community hubs
- Rural footpaths improvement both recreation and active travel
- Tennis court revamp
- Reintroduction of the railway
- Social enterprise to supply young people with employability opportunities
- Harbour improvements
- Recreational facilities
- People employed to support volunteer effort and community led action
- Climate hub

The photos below show some examples of the above comments.



## 6 Cabrach Trust – Clashindarroch Wind Farm Fund

Following the group sharing their ideas, a representative from the Clashindarroch Community Fund Panel (who was also a member of the Cabrach Trust) was introduced and provided a presentation about their experience of being both a member of the Fund Panel as well as a grantee of the Clashindarroch Community Fund.

### Key points from the presentation included:

- Now in its ninth year, the Clashindarroch Fund had delivered £1,637,810 to 155 projects.
- The fund was relevant and understanding of local context.
- At a local level, the Cabrach community had been awarded 13 grants totalling £257,344.
- Funding from Clashindarroch had enabled the Carbrach Trust to lever in additional sums from other funding sources.
- The continued support of the projects delivered by the Cabrach Trust had increased the capacity of the community and delivered a legacy in line with the objectives of the fund.



Images courtesy of Cabrach Trust (showing local projects undertaken)

## 7 Exercise 3: Fund Structures

The third exercise focused on discussion about the different ways that a community benefit fund could be structured and governed when it involved more than one community. This was very relevant in relation to the Aultmore Wind Farm proposal given that the project is likely to involve different communities and certainly more than one Community Council area.

Foundation Scotland emphasised that across all the many varied and different community benefit arrangements in Scotland they knew of, or were linked with, it was likely that at their most basic they would fall into one of the following three types of structure:

- i) Fund is retained as a 'Single' amount for the area
- ii) Fund is 'Proportioned' between communities
- iii) A 'Hybrid' arrangement is set up where some of the money is retained as a single amount for the area and some is devolved to each community to distribute.

Whatever the structure of a fund, consideration also needs to be given to how it is governed (i.e. who is making decisions about strategy and spend) and administered (i.e. who is undertaking the back-office work to then operationalise those decisions). Sometimes both functions are carried out by the same body and sometimes they are separated.



With this in mind, the participants, in small groups, were invited to consider the different pros and cons, challenges and opportunities, that each structure presented.

Their responses, noted verbatim in each table below, were then shared in plenary. Key points from the plenary discussion are captured under each table.

**Single Fund – initial post-it note comments**

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
Big build ideas	Small units are ignored
Agreed and feasible plan	Not fully thought through and unforeseen issues are possible
Clarity	Strict
Community decision and involvement	Bias is possible due to geography
Could fund larger projects	A new group of volunteers will need to be set up
Easier accounting	No long term vision
Can fund legacy projects	No legacy projects
	No equality, expertise in applying and the number of groups

**Further comments raised during the plenary about the Single Fund structure**

**Pros**

- Feasible for bigger projects to be funded and delivered.
- Easier for the developer to have a single point of contact/delivery.
- Allows for the development of legacy projects (a legacy project being something that has impact long after the CBF has ended).

**Cons**

- Risk of bias towards bigger projects and developments, with only a few benefits and concerns about how levels of equity are ensured.

As an aside, Community Energy Moray was mentioned as an example of this format with subgroups to be set up for decision making.

**Proportioned Fund – initial post-it note comments**

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
Easier to apply	How is the amount agreed to make it fair? Is it the size of population or the geography?
You know how much is available	Areas might not need all their allocation
Planning	Larger projects take longer to achieve
Smaller communities have ring-fenced funding	Can't plan strategically
Clear funding, can plan your allocation	How to proportion fairly
Decisions are local	How to get the community involved
Local areas can divide money to focus on age/ gender/ area as needed	
Opportunity, if time lapses, to move into main account and provide long term funding	
Potential for real deep community participation and development	

**Further comments raised during the plenary about the Proportioned Fund structure**

**Pros**

- Ringfenced funding guaranteed for smaller communities.
- Different pots can be allocated to key things that the different communities need.

**Cons**

- Money might not be used by the individual communities and may accumulate.
- It would be important to strategically address the shortfall or accumulation of funds throughout the different communities in the area of benefit.
- How do you get engagement across the area?
- It depends on how the funds are proportioned; smaller communities may not have the capacity to access a larger funding pot.
- Allocating the proportions can be a tough call to make.
- It is good to have smart questions when thinking about this.
- Communities co-operating and having agreements can be a difficult and lengthy process.

**Hybrid Fund – initial post-it note comments**

<b><u>Pros</u></b>	<b><u>Cons</u></b>
Flexible	Smaller communities might not have the people resource
Long term planning	Some areas do not have a development officer
Target those in need – fuel poverty and retrofitting	Not a level playing field
Quick response	Could be confusing, who can apply?
Everyone gets something	Conflict
Extra cash for special projects	Needs a lot of engagement
	Bias
	Proportioned by what? Would larger areas get more cash?

**Further comments raised during the plenary about the Hybrid Fund structure:**

**Pros**

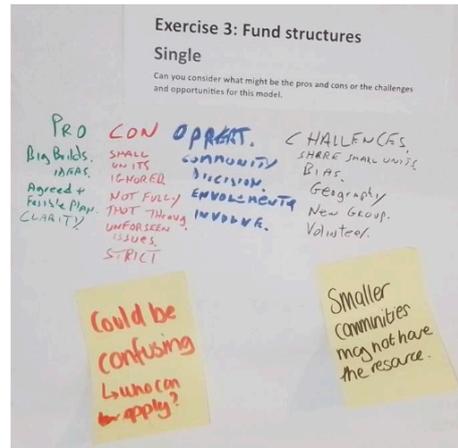
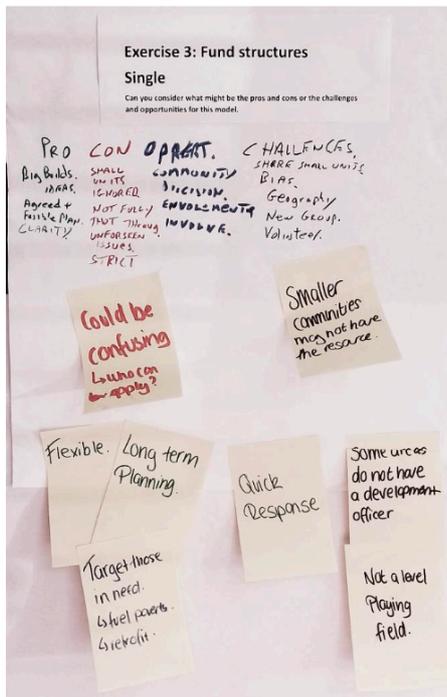
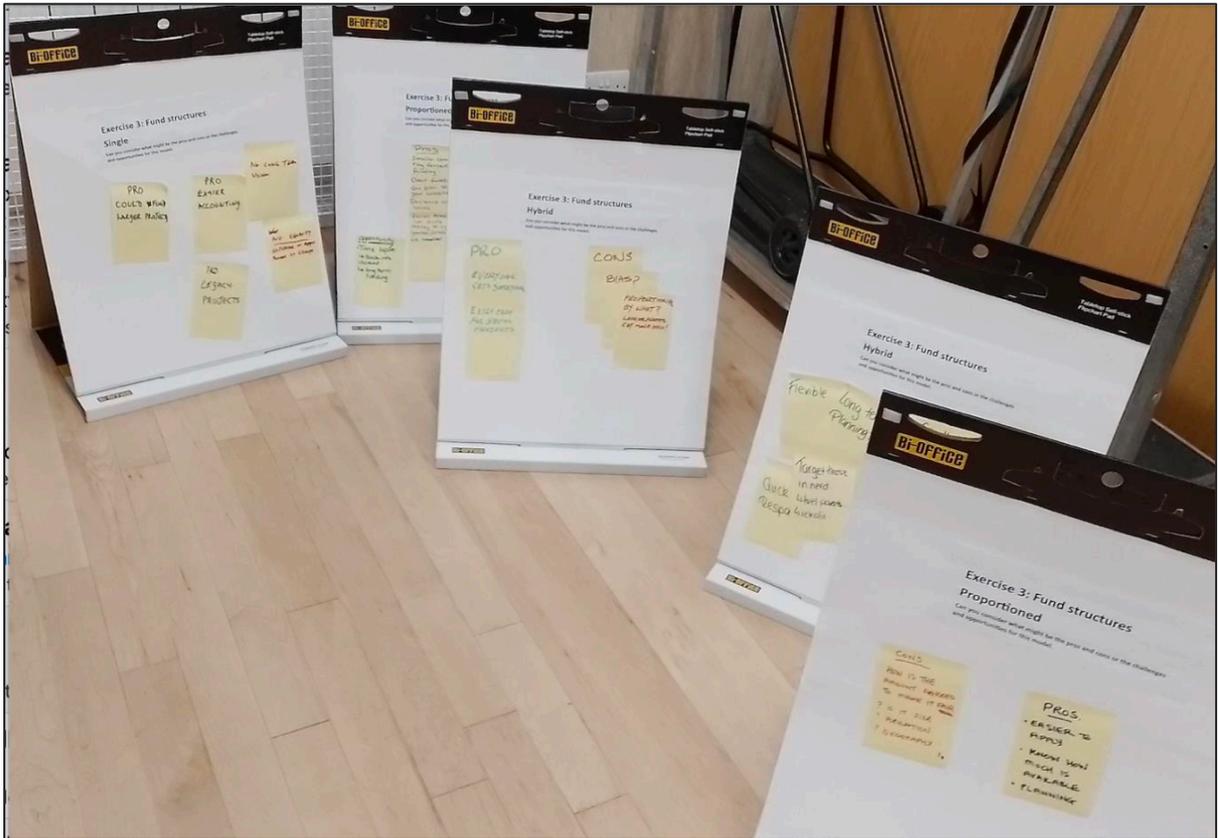
- It is a flexible and long-term approach and can address issues that need a quick fix (e.g. fuel poverty, cost of living rises, pandemics) for people in need.
- Everyone will get something.
- If there is a larger project or special event the retained pot could be used to top up the proportioned funds.

**Cons**

- The proportioned fund aspect might experience a bias of allocation.
- How to reach agreement at the beginning about the proportionality.

A participant commented that the hybrid structure still required agreement on the criteria for determining the proportioning and that process may cause conflict.

The photos below show some examples of the initial post-it note comments regarding the different fund structures.



## 8 Workshop – Key Learning Points

Participants maintained a high level of engagement with each of the exercises in the workshop. A large number of participants willingly offered comments and ideas into the main plenary sessions and participants were busy talking with each other throughout the small group discussions. This demonstrated a real willingness by participants to listen and learn from each other which bodes well for any further discussions about the Aultmore Wind Farm community benefit opportunity.



In the scene setting section of the event, at the beginning of the workshop, some introductory questions were asked to the group regarding i) community benefit funds that they were aware of locally, ii) whether any of them



represented a group that had received funding from a community benefit fund and iii) whether any of them were involved in making decisions from a community benefit fund. The range of responses indicated there was already a good level of knowledge and experience about community benefit although it was also clear that attendees were generally only familiar with the one or two example fund arrangements that they had experienced.

There were a range of strategic, long-term ambitions that the communities share – alongside more localised, shorter-term goals. The longer-term ambitions included:

- Preservation and development of community buildings.
- Environmental improvements.
- Capacity building in communities including employing community development officers, and developing and supporting volunteers.
- Provision of training and employment for young people - including apprenticeships.

There was a general consensus that investing in paid staff could bring a diverse range of benefits to local community organisations as well as helping develop cross-community strategic activity.

## 9 Reflection and Feedback

Before the workshop closed, participants were asked to consider three questions. The collated responses are provided verbatim below.

### What will you take away from tonight?

- That there are more opportunities for funding out there.
- Future plans for Aultmore Wind Farm.
- Vattenfall is open to engaging with communities.
- Different approaches and opportunities are available.
- There are a range of ways that the fund could be distributed.
- Realised that funding is so complicated!
- Have gained a better understanding about what happens next
- Many helpful connections made with other communities.
- How much talent there is in our communities.
- Really liked the opportunity to participate.
- Workshop was well structured, friendly, engaging.
- Appreciated the interaction with different community groups.
- It is in our hands.
- There seems to be good support from developers, Foundation Scotland, and consultants.
- This is the start of the conversation, let's keep talking.
- A better understanding of community benefit funds and how they work.



### What did you like best?

- The food 😊.
- Flow of the workshop.
- Individual dialogue has been strong.
- They (Vattenfall) didn't have to do this ... front-loading community engagement.
- Input from the Cabrach Trust.
- Exhibitions were helpful.
- The buffet.
- The pilot study (Vattenfall's Clashindarroch Wind Farm Fund).
- Really good to learn about the background of the funding, thank you.
- Good discussion, good to be engaging the communities at an early stage 😊
- Lovely food, well done to the caterers, much welcomed, yum!
- Buffet.
- Cabrach presentation.
- Meeting representatives face to face.
- Networking with other communities.



### What could be done differently next time?

- More about the process of applications, support with applications for funding.
- Examples need to be brief and more than one.
- Nothing, got the balance right.
- Who organises the 'committee' that distributes the fund?
- Wine!! Or on a weeknight.
- A daytime session would be preferred.
- Ask for feedback after the event.
- Have it on a week night.

One participant reflected how much they enjoyed the workshop and valued the fact that it 'got the story across' about community benefit without 'being too technical'. They commented on how much they had learnt 'by talking with others' and that 'they'd have never known some of these people otherwise'.

## 10 Conclusion



The workshop was well attended, and participants engaged fully throughout the event.

It was clear that all those present were interested and cared about where they lived and understood the purpose and value of attending this workshop - to learn about the benefit that could be delivered from Vattenfall's Aultmore Wind Farm, should it receive consent.

The workshop gave the opportunity for key community representatives to meet, discuss the possibilities of how community benefit could be distributed and begin to think about what the priorities might be for the different Community Council areas.

Across the room, there were many similarities about what people felt was needed and an appetite for further workshops and meetings to continue to develop the potential of the community benefit that would be derived from the project if it was consented and built.

Apart from the need within communities to improve their facilities and physical assets, there was a strong desire to build the capacity of the different communities.

This included an appetite to work together strategically to ensure that any funding addressed not only the local issues but contributed to helping tackle climate change – in addition to helping address other key issues such as the rising cost-of-living that was affecting people, especially those who were most vulnerable or disadvantaged already.



By delivering this workshop at an early stage it has enabled Vattenfall to further develop relationships with the different communities and communicate clearly that, in the event of consent, the community benefit opportunity will be explored and designed very much in partnership with the community.

It has also emphasised how the process has the potential to build on learning from other Vattenfall projects and highlight the creative ways that other communities have utilised the benefits of wind farm funding for their area. This approach will enable Vattenfall and the communities in the area of benefit to work together more effectively long term, should the project be consented, to design and deliver a community benefit model which meets the needs and priorities of the local area.

## 11 Next steps

This report will be shared initially with the workshop participants, as well as key stakeholders that Vattenfall has been engaging with, and uploaded onto the project website to enable the general public to access it.

This report will also form part of the Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report (summarising the consultation activity undertaken by Vattenfall) which will accompany the Section 36 application for consent that Vattenfall will submit to the Scottish Government for their Aultmore Wind Farm proposal in due course.

Vattenfall will offer further information and events in the future to engage with the wider community regarding community benefit, should there be a clear interest in this.



## APPENDIX 1

### Workshop organisers and facilitators

Organisation
Vattenfall (x 3 representatives)
Foundation Scotland (x 2 representatives)
Community and Stakeholder Engagement Consultancy (x 1)

### Attendee list

Organisation
Cullen and Deskford Community Council (x 3 representatives)
Lennox Community Council (x 2 representatives)
Strathisla Community Council (x 1 representative)
Buckie and District Community Council (x 1 representative)
Portknockie Community Council (x 3 representatives)
Keith Community Council (x 1 representative)
Findochty Community Council (x 2 representatives)
Portgordon Community Trust (x 3 representatives)
The Three Kings Cullen Association (x 2 representatives)
Deskford and District Community Association (x 3 representatives)
Keith and Strathisla Regeneration Partnership (x 2 representatives)
Findochty and Buckie Development Trust (x 1 representative)
Buckie Area Forum (x 2 representatives)
Moray Federation of Community Halls and Associations (x 1 rep)
REAP - Rural Environmental Action Project (x 1 representative)
Business Gateway (x 1 representative)
Moray Council (x 1 representative)
tsiMORAY (x 1 representative)



## APPENDIX 2

### About the project

Aultmore Wind Farm is located approximately 6km north of Keith and 7km south of Buckie and was originally consented by Moray Council in 2014 as a 13-turbine scheme with an installed capacity of 29MW. Since then, significant advances in turbine technology have taken place with more powerful turbines becoming available. As such, Vattenfall has been exploring a 'redesigned' scheme which would significantly increase the amount of fossil-free electricity that could be produced as well as the community benefit delivered to the local area from the project.

We expect to submit a Section 36 application for consent to Scottish Ministers towards the end of 2023. More information about the project can be found at: [www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore](http://www.vattenfall.co.uk/aultmore).

### About Vattenfall

Vattenfall is a Swedish company, 100% state owned, and has a long history having been established in 1909. Vattenfall means 'waterfall' in Swedish and originates from the company's heritage of pioneering large scale hydro power in Sweden. Vattenfall is now one of Europe's largest producers and retailers of electricity and heat – operating mainly across Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, and the UK. Vattenfall is committed to building a future where everyone can choose affordable, fossil-free ways to move, make, and live and wants to **make fossil-free living possible within one generation**. Vattenfall has been in the UK since 2008 and is a key partner in enabling the UK to reach net zero. Vattenfall has invested more than £3.5 billion in enough wind to power 850,000 homes and is on track to help save 8 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> a year by 2030, the same as taking 4 million cars off the road. Vattenfall invests more than £3 million annually into local communities hosting wind farm projects. More information about Vattenfall's approach to community benefit can be found [here](#).

### About Foundation Scotland

Foundation Scotland is a Scottish charity (SC022910) and a company limited by guarantee (SC152949) with 25 years' experience in managing charitable funds and making grants to local causes across Scotland.

Through the provision of varying levels of specialist fund design, grant-making, and fund management services, it currently supports over 70 community benefit funds benefitting more than 350 communities. Community benefit donations for distribution through Foundation Scotland totalled over £7,300,000 in 2022/23. In its work to drive up good practice in the design and delivery of community benefit funds, Foundation Scotland favours a long-term view, which promotes and harnesses community strengths and supports decision making processes that are inclusive, accountable and community led. More information about Foundation Scotland can be found at [www.foundationscotland.org.uk](http://www.foundationscotland.org.uk).