

Document history

Author Simon Cleary 12/07/2024

Client Details	
Contact	Simon Lejeune
Client Name	Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd

Issue	Date	Revision Details
A	12/07/2024	Initial Draft
B	03/10/2024	Update
C	11/10/2024	Final

Chapter 14.

Socioeconomics Assessment

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Environmental Impact Assessment	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a means of carrying out, in a systematic way, an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects from a development.
Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations	The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations)
Environmental Impact Assessment Report	A document reporting the findings of the EIA and produced in accordance with the EIA Regulations
Proposed Development	The South Kyle II Wind Farm development as detailed in Chapter 1: Introduction, section 1.3.2 (Volume 1).
Proposed Development Area	The area within the “Site boundary” as illustrated on Figure 1.1 which the Proposed Development will be located

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
GVA	Gross Value Added
MW	Mega Watt
NS	NatureScot
DECC	Department for Energy and Climate Change
ONS	Office for National Statistics
NSET	National Strategy for Economic Transformation
NPF4	The Fourth National Planning Framework
TS2020	Tourism Scotland 2020
AEM	Ayrshire Energy Masterplan

14.1. Statement of Competence

14.1.1. The socioeconomics, tourism and recreation assessment were undertaken by BiGGAR Economics. The authors have considerable experience in carrying out socioeconomics, tourism and recreation assessments of onshore wind farms, including across the Southwest of Scotland.

14.2. Executive Summary

- 14.2.1. This chapter assesses the potential socioeconomic, recreation and tourism effects of the Proposed Development.
- The population of East Ayrshire is projected to decline over the next two decades, in contrast to the expected population growth of Scotland. At the same time, the population of East Ayrshire is expected to age, growing older than that of Scotland as a whole. While the Local Area (defined as Doon Valley, the electoral ward surrounding the Proposed Development) is less deprived than Scotland as a whole, economic activity is concentrated in a few sectors, including wholesale and retail trade and human health and social work, which collectively employ 40% of those in employment.
- 14.2.2. During the development and construction phase, it is estimated that the Proposed Development could generate up to:
- £9.5 million GVA and 138 years of employment in East Ayrshire; and
 - £29.6 million GVA and 467 years of employment in Scotland.
- 14.2.3. During each year of the operational phase, it is estimated that the Proposed Development could generate up to:
- £0.7 million GVA and 6 jobs in East Ayrshire; and
 - £1.6 million GVA and 18 jobs in Scotland.
- 14.2.4. The Proposed Development would also provide community benefit funding for the Local Area which (subject to turbine selection) could be of up to £462,000 annually (based on assumed 8.4MW turbine).
- 14.2.5. It was estimated that the Proposed Development would pay £1.1 million each year in non-domestic rates, helping to support local government services.
- 14.2.6. A Skills and Employment Plan has also been provided that sets out the Developers approach to strategies and initiatives aimed at maximising local economic benefits through skill development and job creation . This has been submitted alongside the EIA.
- 14.2.7. The most recent evidence on the relationship between wind farms and tourism suggests that there are no adverse effects on the tourism economy resulting from the development of onshore wind. An assessment of the likely effects of the Proposed Development on specific local tourism assets, accommodation providers and routes found no significant adverse effects are expected.
- 14.2.8. Overall, there were no significant adverse effects identified. While the beneficial construction and operation socioeconomic effects are not significant in EIA terms, they would be important to the local and national economies, contributing to sustainable economic growth.

14.3. Introduction

14.3.1. This chapter considers the potential effects of the Proposed Development on socioeconomics, tourism, and recreation. In doing so, it first describes the existing socioeconomic, tourism, and recreation baseline conditions. It then assesses any effects associated with the construction and operational phase of the Proposed Development.

The assessment was conducted on the basis of 11 turbines being built, each with an assumed generating capacity of around 8.4 Megawatts ('MW'), and a total installed capacity of 92.4 MW.

14.4. Legislation, Policy, and Guidance

- 14.4.1. There is no specific legislation, policy or guidance available on the methods that should be used to assess the socioeconomic impact of a proposed onshore wind farm. The methodology adopted here has, however, been based on established best practice, including that used in UK Government and industry reports on the sector.
- 14.4.2. In particular, the assessment draws on studies by BiGGAR Economics on the UK onshore wind energy sector, including a report published by RenewableUK and the then Department for Energy and Climate Change ('DECC')¹ in 2012 on the direct and wider economic benefits of the onshore wind sector to the UK economy. An update to this analysis featured in a report published by RenewableUK².
- 14.4.3. The economic impact assessment methodology from those assessments has been integrated with evidence from BiGGAR Economics' experience in assessing the impact from similar developments across Scotland, and the United Kingdom (UK).
- 14.4.4. Similarly, there is no formal guidance on the methods that should be used to assess the effects that wind farms may have on tourism and recreation. The assessment has been undertaken in line with established best practice in assessing the tourism and recreation effects of onshore wind farm proposals.
- 14.4.5. For recreational assets, guidance has been provided by NatureScot ('NS')³ on how to assess effects on recreational amenity and the approach outlined has been used. This takes into consideration a number of potential effects, including direct effect on facilities, such as limitation or restrictions on access, and effects on the intrinsic quality of the resources enjoyed by people. In general, this guidance would consider recreational and access impacts to potentially be significant if:
- permanent or long-term effects on the resources on which enjoyment of the natural heritage depends, in particular where facilities have been provided by NS or others under statutory powers;
 - permanent or long-term change that would affect the integrity and long-term sustainable management of facilities which were provided by NS or others under statutory powers;
 - where there are recreational resources for open air recreation pursuits affected by the Proposed Development which have more than local use or importance, especially if that importance is national in significance;
 - major constraints on or improvements for access or accessibility to designated natural heritage sites; and
 - where mitigation and/or compensatory or alternative recreational provision is considered to be inadequate.
- East Ayrshire Council have published non-statutory guidance on skills and employment in the LDP2. The Developer has submitted a skill and employment plan alongside the EIA.

14.5. Method of Assessment

Effects Assessed

- 14.5.1. The following effects were identified at the scoping stage for consideration in this assessment:
- Direct, indirect and induced effects on economic activity during construction, including:
 - Changes in GVA; and

- Changes in employment.

- Direct, indirect, and induced effects on economic activity during the operation and maintenance phase, including:
 - Changes in GVA; and
 - Changes in employment.
- Effects on the tourism economy of East Ayrshire via impacts on key visitor attractions;
- Effects on tourism and recreation assets, including accommodation providers, located within 15km of the Proposed Development;
- Effect from the payment of non-domestic rates throughout the operation and maintenance phase;
- Cumulative effects during construction on economic activity;
- Cumulative effects during construction on tourism and recreation activity; and
- Cumulative effects during operation on economic activity, tourism, and recreation.

Effects Scoped Out

- 14.5.2. On the basis of the desk-based work undertaken, the professional judgement of the Environment Impact Assessment ('EIA') team and experience from other relevant projects, the following topic areas have been 'scoped out' of detailed assessment:
- Direct, indirect, and induced effects on economic activity during decommissioning; and
 - Effects on the tourism economy during decommissioning.

Assessment of Socioeconomic Effects

- 14.5.3. No specific legislation or guidance is available on the methods which should be used when assessing the socioeconomic effects of a proposed wind farm for an EIA Report. For this reason, to identify and assess the significance of predicted socioeconomic effects, the assessment has been based on professional judgement for the degree of change resulting from the Proposed Development, using methods commonly used in EIAs for onshore windfarm developments, as outlined below.
- 14.5.4. The assessment of economic effects was undertaken using a model that has been developed by BiGGAR Economics specifically to estimate the socioeconomic effects of wind farms.
- 14.5.5. The units of measurement which are used to quantify the economic impacts of the Proposed Development are:
- GVA;
 - Years of employment; and
 - Jobs.

Stages in Socioeconomic Analysis

- 14.5.6. To begin estimating the economic activity supported by the Proposed Development, it was first necessary to consider the expenditure carried out during the construction and development, and operation and maintenance phases. The total expenditure figure was then divided into its main components using assumptions regarding the share that could be expected by the main contractor and sub-contractors. This provides an estimate for each main contract category that could be secured in each study area, as defined in section 14.7.
- 14.5.7. There are three sources of economic activity:

¹ RenewableUK (2012). Onshore Wind: Direct and Wider Economic Impacts.

² RenewableUK (2015). Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014.

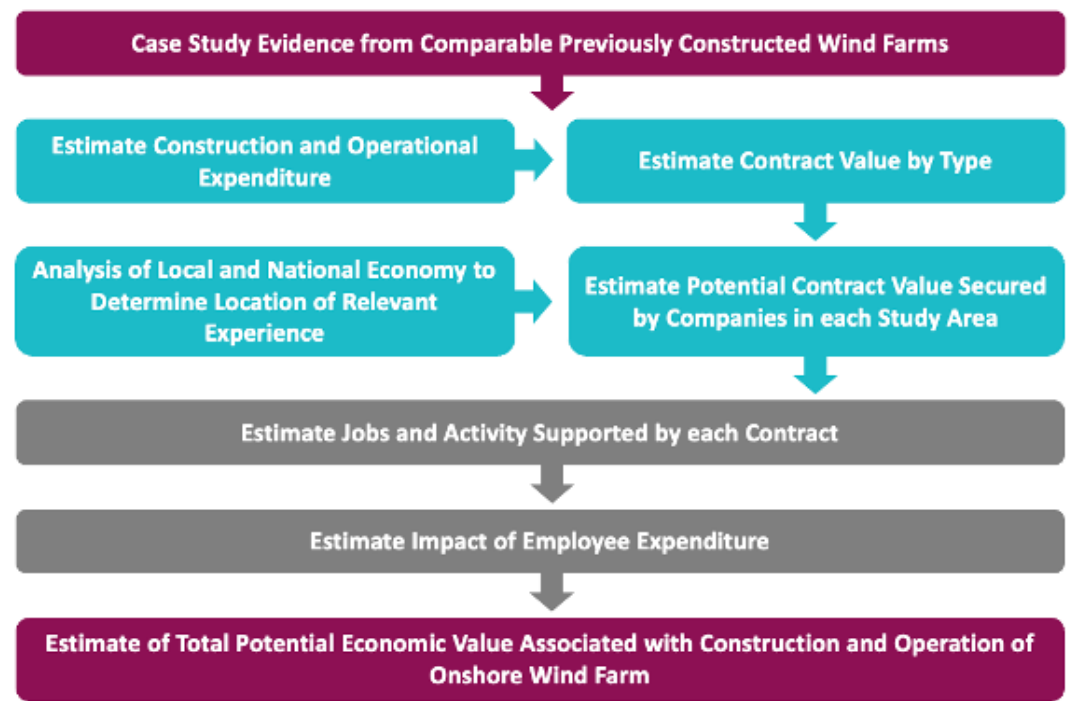
³ Scottish Natural Heritage (2018). Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook.

- Primary contracts and the jobs they support;
- Wider spending in the supply chain (indirect effect); and
- Spending of people employed in these contracts (induced effect).

14.5.8. There are four key stages of this model, which are illustrated in Figure 14-1.

- Estimation of the capital and operational expenditures;
- Estimation of the value of component contracts that make up total expenditure;
- Assessment of the capacity of businesses in the study areas to perform and complete component contracts; and
- Estimation of economic impact from resultant figures.

Figure 14-1: Approach to Economic Impact Assessment



Stages in Tourism and Recreation Analysis

- 14.5.9. The potential effects of wind farms on tourism and recreation have been the subject of several research studies. A review of the latest available research evidence has been undertaken. These include reference to the following studies:
- The Economic Impact of Wind Farms on Scottish Tourism⁴;
 - Wind Farms and Tourism Trends in Scotland⁵; and
 - Wind Farms and Tourism Trends in Scotland: Evidence from 44 Wind Farms⁶.
- 14.5.10. The evidence from these studies provides the context for the assessment of effects on individual visitor attractions, accommodation providers and recreational trails. The analysis is based on understanding how the Proposed

Development will interact with the underlying features of each receptor and the magnitude of change experienced by each.

Study Areas

- 14.5.11. The baseline description considered the study areas of:
- Local Area (defined as Doon Valley, the electoral ward surrounding the Proposed Development);
 - East Ayrshire; and
 - Scotland.
- 14.5.12. The study areas considered for the economic analysis were:
- East Ayrshire; and
 - Scotland.
- 14.5.13. For the tourism and recreation assessment, the analysis focussed on the area within a 15km radius of the Proposed Development (i.e., from the closest turbine). This is consistent with the approach commonly used in similar assessments.

Assessing Significance

- 14.5.14. The process for determining the significance of effects is a two-stage process that involves defining the magnitude of the potential impacts and the sensitivity of the receptors. This section describes the criteria applied in this chapter to assign values to the magnitude of potential impacts and the sensitivity of the receptors.

Sensitivity

The sensitivity of receptors has been assessed based on professional judgement and previous experience of comparable developments elsewhere. The criteria used to do this is shown in Table .

Table 14.1: Sensitivity Criteria

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	The asset/receptor has little or no capacity to absorb change without fundamentally altering its present character and/or is of very high tourism, recreational or socio-economic value, or of national importance. For example, it is a destination in its own right (for attractions), with a substantial proportion of visitors on a national level.
High	The asset /receptor has low capacity to absorb change without fundamentally altering its present character and/or is of high tourism, recreational or socio-economic value, or of importance to Scotland.
Medium	The asset/receptor has moderate capacity to absorb change without substantially altering its present character, has some tourism, recreational or socio-economic value and/or is of regional importance. For example, it is a popular destination among current visitors, with a significant contribution to the regional economy.
Low	The asset/receptor is tolerant to change without detriment to its character, has low tourism, recreational and/or socio-economic value, or is of local importance. For example, it is an incidental destination for current visitors.

⁴ Glasgow Caledonian University/Moffat Centre (2008). The Economic Impacts of Wind Farms on Scottish Tourism.

⁵ BiGGAR Economics (2017). Wind Farms and Tourism in Scotland.

⁶ BiGGAR Economics (2021). Wind Farms and Tourism Trends in Scotland: Evidence from 44 Winds Farms.

Sensitivity	Description
Negligible	The asset/receptor is resistant to change and/or is of little tourism, recreational or socio-economic value. For example, an incidental destination with low current numbers of visitors.

Magnitude

14.5.15. The magnitude of economic impacts on the Scottish and East Ayrshire economies has been assessed using BiGGAR Economics economic impact model and the criteria provided in Table 14.. The magnitude of change on tourism and recreation assets has been assessed with reference to published research evidence and experience of comparable wind farms. The criteria used to do this are provided in Table 14..

Table 14.2: Magnitude Criteria

Magnitude	Description
High	<p>Major loss/improvement to key elements/features of the baseline conditions such that post development character/composition of baseline condition will be fundamentally changed. For example, a major reduction/improvement of recreational assets, or a substantial change to tourism spend. The assessment of magnitude relies on professional judgement and experience from other large scale onshore wind farms.</p> <p>For the economic impacts, an effect would be considered to have a high magnitude if it was equivalent to all of the typical economic growth per capita. Specifically, for each study area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Peak employment supported is greater than, or equal to, 1% of the total number of jobs in the area or sector.
Medium	<p>Loss/improvement to one or more key elements/features of the baseline conditions such that post development character/composition of the baseline condition will be materially changed. For example, a moderate reduction/improvement in the recreational asset, or a moderate change to tourism spend. The assessment of magnitude relies on professional judgement and experience from other large scale onshore wind farms.</p> <p>For the economic impacts, an effect would be considered to have a medium magnitude if it was equivalent to all of the typical economic growth per capita. Specifically, for each study area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Peak employment supported is greater than, or equal to, 0.5% but less than 1% of the total number of jobs in the area or sector.
Low	<p>Changes arising from the alteration will be detectable but not material; the underlying composition of the baseline condition will be similar to the pre-development situation. For example, a small reduction/improvement in the recreational asset, or a small change in tourism spend. The assessment of magnitude relies on professional judgement and experience from other large scale onshore wind farms.</p> <p>For the economic impacts, an effect would be considered to have a low magnitude if it was equivalent to all of the typical economic growth per capita. Specifically, for each study area:</p>

Magnitude	Description
Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Peak employment supported is greater than, or equal to, 0.25% but less than 0.5% of the total number of jobs in the area or sector. <p>Very little change from baseline conditions. Change is barely distinguishable, approximating to a 'no change' situation. The assessment of magnitude relies on professional judgement and experience from other large scale onshore wind farms.</p> <p>For the economic impacts, an effect would be considered to have a negligible magnitude if it was equivalent to all of the typical economic growth per capita. Specifically, for each study area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Peak employment supported is less than 0.25% of the total number of jobs in the area or sector.

Significance

14.5.16. The predicted significance of the effect was determined through a standard method of assessment based on professional judgement, considering both sensitivity and magnitude of change as detailed in Table 14.. Major and moderate effects are considered significant in the context of the EIA Regulations.

Table 14.3: Significance Criteria

Magnitude of Change	Sensitivity				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Major	Major	Moderate	Moderate	Minor
Medium	Major	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

14.5.17. For the assessment of recreational effects, magnitude and significance criteria will be assessed following guidelines provided by NatureScot. The criteria for this are outlined in Table 14..

Table 14.4: NatureScot Assessment of Scale of Effects Criteria

Assessment Factor	Description
The magnitude of impacts on access, or on settings in which recreation takes place	Direct physical effects may vary from complete loss of a resource to minor and/or marginal impacts. Visual or noise effects might be accommodated or open to mitigation in an urban edge setting, but much less acceptable or even beyond amelioration in remoter countryside.
The nature, intensity, frequency of occurrence or timing of the effect	These will be important factors in the assessment of the acceptability of effects on recreation. At the less intense levels of effect, the outcomes may be acceptable or open to mitigation either in intensity or through time limitations on certain activities within the development.
Potential for the effects to increase over time	This is a precautionary point of reasonable anticipation of how effects might increase in scale over the years and thereby make mitigation ineffective.

Assessment Factor	Description
Scarcity value of the recreation resource on a wider strategic scale	This factor recognises there are considerable geographic imbalances in the supply of recreation opportunities, and where a resource is in short supply then less compromise may be feasible. As examples, some parts of the country are very poorly endowed with accessible open water space.
Recognition of the recreation opportunity spectrum ('ROS')	The recreation opportunity spectrum is a basic principle of recreation planning that provision should be made for people's recreation needs along a range which provides for gregarious, active and some noisy recreations at one end of the scale, and solitude and quiet enjoyment at the other.

Assessment Limitations

- 14.5.18. Publicly available statistics, including those on employment and economic activity published by the Office for National Statistics ('ONS')⁷, are usually published with a time lag of between one and two years. To ensure the analysis reflects the latest available evidence, the baseline has been compiled close to the chapter's submission.
- 14.5.19. The baseline data used to describe tourism activity, number of visits and visitor spending is based on evidence from 2019. This is because 2019 was the latest year that the tourism economy was not affected by travel restrictions aimed at containing the spread of Covid-19. Using data for 2020 or 2021 would provide insights into tourism activity during the pandemic, rather than being a useful reference point for the 'typical' level of annual tourism activity. Additionally, the Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) report regional domestic tourism based on three-year annual averages, due to small sample sizes. As 2020 and 2021 both represent atypical tourism activity due to Covid-related restrictions on travel, data for 2017-2019 has been provided to give a more typical view on the performance of the sector.
- 14.5.20. Whilst some information gaps have been identified, it is considered that there is sufficient information to enable an informed decision to be taken in relation to the identification and assessment of likely significant environmental effects on socioeconomics, tourism, and recreation.

14.6. Consultation

- 14.6.1. In undertaking the assessment, consideration has been given to the scoping responses received. These are set out in Table 14., alongside reference of where they have been addressed within the chapter.

Table 14.5: Consultation Responses

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	Response/Action Taken
East Ayrshire Council (14 th June 2022)	Formal Scoping Consultation	It will be important to ensure that any recreational or tourist receptors which may face significant impacts as a result of landscape and visual impacts are considered. Whether this is fully addressed within an LVIA chapter or within the socioeconomic chapter is not important, as long consideration of such impacts has been taken into account and reported.	The analysis within this chapter considers impacts on recreational routes, whilst drawing on evidence from Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

⁷ Scottish Government (2022). National Strategy for Economic Transformation: Delivering Economic Prosperity.

Consultee and Date	Scoping/Other Consultation	Issue Raised	Response/Action Taken
East Ayrshire Council (14 th June 2022)	Formal Scoping Consultation	The proposed approach set out in chapter 12 of the Scoping Report seems reasonable, with the inclusion of assessments of impacts on a range of recreational and tourist receptors proposed, including recreational routes (such as core paths) and other visitor attractions within the area. Core paths and rights of way exist immediately to the north and west of the application site where views towards the wind farm are likely. It is noted that the A713 forms the Galloway – Ayrshire Tourist Route and impacts on the qualities and experience of this route, predominantly by road users, should be assessed.	Potential impacts on recreational and local users are considered, including those from use of core paths and recreational trails.
East Ayrshire Council (14 th June 2022)	Formal Scoping Consultation	The EIA Report should also detail any proposed community benefits or shared ownership proposals. The Planning Authority would agree that ice throw and lightning can be scoped out of the EIA Report.	The proposed community benefits that the Applicant has committed to has been outlined in the chapter.
East Ayrshire Council	Gatecheck 1 Response	Requested the Developer has a Skills and Employment in line with non-statutory guidance on skills and employment in the LDP2.	The Developer will draft a Skills and Employment Plan that will be submitted alongside the EIA.

14.7. Baseline

Strategic Context

Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation

- 14.7.1. In March 2022, the Scottish Government published the National Strategy for Economic Transformation⁸ ('NSET'), which set out its ambition for Scotland's economy over the next 10 years. The Scottish Government's vision is to create a wellbeing economy where society thrives across economic, social and environment dimensions, which delivers prosperity for all Scotland's people and places. Of particular importance is the ambition to be greener, with a just transition to net zero, a nature-positive economy and a rebuilding of natural capital.
- 14.7.2. To deliver its vision and address the economy's challenges, five programmes of action have been identified (with a sixth priority of creating a culture of delivery), including:
 - Establishing Scotland as a world-class entrepreneurial nation;

⁸ Scottish Government (2022), National Strategy for Economic Transformation: Delivering Economic Prosperity.

- Strengthening Scotland's position in new markets and industries, generating new, well-paid jobs from a just transition to net zero;
- Making Scotland's businesses, industries, regions, communities and public services more productive and innovative;
- Ensuring that people have the skills they need to meet the demands of the economy, and that employers invest in their skilled employees; and
- Reorienting the economy towards wellbeing and fair work.

14.7.3. The strategy notes that Scotland has substantial energy potential and that it has developed a growing green industrial base. Renewable energy developments (both new or repowered projects) will continue to play a significant role in supporting productive businesses and regions across Scotland.

National Planning Framework 4

14.7.4. The Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4)⁹ is Scotland's national spatial strategy, setting out the principles to be applied to planning decisions, regional priorities and national developments.

14.7.5. The first of six spatial principles to be applied is a just transition that ensures the transition to Net Zero is fair and inclusive, as is rural revitalisation, supporting sustainable development in rural areas.

Scotland's National Performance Framework

14.7.6. The National Performance Framework¹⁰ sets out the ambitions of the Scottish Government to provide a vision for national wellbeing across a range of economic, social, and environmental factors. The framework includes 'increased wellbeing' as part of its purpose and combines measurement of how well Scotland is doing in economic terms with a broader range of wellbeing measures. The National Performance Framework is designed to give a more rounded view of economic performance and progress towards achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth and wellbeing across Scotland. The aims for Scotland set out in the National Performance Framework are to:

- Create a more successful country;
- Give opportunities to all people living in Scotland;
- Increase the well-being of people living in Scotland;
- Create a sustainable and inclusive growth; and
- Reduce inequalities and give equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress.

Onshore Wind Sector Deal

14.7.7. The Onshore Wind Sector Deal¹¹, published in September 2023, outlines the commitment from the Scottish Government and the onshore wind sector to reach 20 GW of onshore wind by 2030, ensuring maximisation of benefits to Scotland. The Deal highlights the increased potential of onshore wind for a low-carbon and prosperous future, the creation of high-quality job opportunities and the empowerment of local communities in Scotland.

14.7.8. The document emphasises the following aspects, and the collaborative, sector and government action required to support the development of onshore wind in each of the following:

- Supply chain, skills and the circular economy: support the enhancement of the current skills and training provision to deliver the needs of the wind industry;

- Community: onshore wind will continue to collaborate with local communities, offering impactful community benefits;
- Land use and environment: onshore wind projects will enhance biodiversity and optimise land use and environmental benefits;
- Planning: reduce the time it takes to determine applications for onshore wind projects by increasing skills and resources;
- Legislative and regulatory: develop evidence to support a strategic approach to delivering investment and transporting wind turbine components, and improve network connections;
- Technical: enable cooperative coexistence between onshore wind and safe aviation operations; and
- Implementation and governance: key milestones to be delivered by agreed dates

14.7.9. The Scottish Government highlights the economic opportunities associated with increased deployment of onshore wind. It views supply chain engagement, and the subsequent creation of jobs, as strong stimulants to widespread economic benefit. Generating these impacts provides an opportunity for Scotland to build a skilled work force and to position itself at the forefront of growing markets.

14.7.10. To support lasting economic and social benefits, the government encourages community benefit and shared ownership. Ensuring all communities across Scotland feel the benefits of the energy transition is at the core of this ambition.

Tourism Strategy: Scotland's Outlook 2030

14.7.11. Following on from the Tourism Scotland 2020 (TS2020) strategy, a collaborative network of industry experts created Scotland's Outlook 2030, a strategy document which is focused on creating a world-leading tourism sector in Scotland that is sustainable in the long-term. The strategy is focused on four key priorities:

- People;
- Places;
- Businesses; and
- Experiences.

14.7.12. The strategy recognises the effects on tourism of climate change, technological advancements, Brexit and changing consumer behaviour and highlights the need for collaboration between government, communities, and the public and private sectors.

14.7.13. There are six conditions that the strategy has highlighted as being crucial for success:

- using technological advancements and information to understand changes and trends in tourist behaviours;
- ensuring policies are in place that support the vision;
- enabling investment opportunities into Scotland's tourism market;
- improving transport and digital infrastructure;
- greater collaboration between businesses in the industry; and
- positioning Scotland as a great place to live and visit locally and globally.

A main commitment of the strategy is to address the effects of energy demand associated with tourism and make the sector commit fully to Scotland's ambition of becoming a net-zero society by 2045.

⁹ Scottish Government (2023), National Planning Framework 4

¹⁰ Scottish Government (2019), National Performance Framework

¹¹ Scottish Government (2023), Onshore Wind Sector Deal

East Ayrshire Council Strategic Plan

- 14.7.14. The East Ayrshire Council Strategic Plan 2022-2027 sets out the high-level ambitions and priorities for the communities of East Ayrshire over the next five years. The overarching vision of the strategy is to create a place with strong and vibrant communities, where everyone has a good quality of life and access services which are sustainable. Taking into consideration the needs and circumstances of the local communities within the council area, the plan outlines a set of priorities aimed at achieving this ambition. These priorities include:
- Building a fairer economy;
 - Tackling poverty and inequality;
 - Improving community wellbeing;
 - Supporting children and young people;
 - Delivering a clean green East Ayrshire; and
 - Ensuring financial sustainability and resilience.

Clean Green East Ayrshire Climate Change Strategy

- 14.7.15. The Clean Green Climate Change Strategy¹² outlines East Ayrshire Council's goals to support climate action locally, nationally, and globally. Introduced in 2019, the strategy lays out the key themes to make the council carbon-neutral by 2030. These themes provide a clear plan to guide the council's efforts in achieving its environmental objectives. The four themes are:
- Energy;
 - Transport;
 - Waste; and
 - Natural environment.
- 14.7.16. As a key goal within the energy theme, the East Ayrshire Council sets out the ambition to increase the proportion of power and heat from low and zero carbon sources. This includes energy generated from wind power, highlighting the considerable potential of East Ayrshire in harnessing wind resources.
- 14.7.17. East Ayrshire Council are currently working alongside North, and South Ayrshire councils, Scottish Enterprise and University West of Scotland to develop an Ayrshire Energy Masterplan (AEM). The overall objective of the energy masterplan is to identify opportunities to reduce energy use and present pathway that maximises socioeconomic benefits for Ayrshire as the country transition to net zero. It is expected this will be published in late 2024.

Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy

- 14.7.18. The Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy¹³ was launched in June 2023 to provide a strategic direction to the economic performance of Ayrshire & Arran over the next ten years. In following a purpose-led approach, centred around the principles of Community Wealth Building, it sets out a series of priorities designed to deliver meaningful economic regeneration throughout the region. The strategy reflects the collective ambitions of a number of stakeholders in the region, including East Ayrshire Council and the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee. The six key priority themes are:
- Support for enterprise;
 - Fair work;
 - Innovation;
 - Good health and wellbeing;

- Stronger places and communities; and
- Enhancing natural capital.

- 14.7.19. The plan recognises the opportunity of using carbon reduction as a means to support and increase economic activity in the region. The construction and operation of the Proposed Development will contribute to job creation within key sectors of the local economy, whilst supporting growth of sustainable energy generation.

Summary of Strategic Context

- 14.7.20. The Scottish Government considers the renewable energy sector as a key driver of economic growth, having the potential to make a substantial contribution to economic transformation. Nationally, regionally, and locally, the renewables sector provides substantial opportunities for economic growth. The construction and operation of the Proposed Development will support these aims and contribute to job creation within key sectors of the local economy.

Socioeconomic Context

- 14.7.21. This section considers the socioeconomic context of the Proposed Development, including population structure, economic activity, skills, and relative deprivation.

Study Areas

- 14.7.22. The aim of the socioeconomic baseline is to set the Proposed Development and its potential for economic benefits within existing socioeconomic conditions. This section considers the socioeconomic structure of three study areas:
- Local Area (defined as Doon Valley, the electoral ward surrounding the Proposed Development);
 - East Ayrshire; and
 - Scotland.

Population Estimates

- 14.7.23. In 2021 the population of East Ayrshire was 122,020 or 2.2% of the total population of Scotland (Table 14.). The population of the Local Area was 11,592 or 9.5% of the total population of East Ayrshire.
- 14.7.24. The proportion of Local Area residents aged 16-64 years old (61.3%) is broadly in line with the average for East Ayrshire (62.0%), but lower than the national average (63.8%). The relatively lower share of working age population in the Local Area could suggest a lack of employment opportunities in the area, leading to migration.
- 14.7.25. The Local Area and the wider local authority have a higher share of residents aged 65+ than Scotland as a whole. In the Local Area, 22% of residents were aged over 65 years old in 2021, a larger population share than that accounted by the same age group across East Ayrshire (21.0%) and Scotland (19.6%).

Table 14.6: Population Estimates, 2021

	Local Area	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Total	11,592	122,020	5,479,900
0-15	16.8%	17.0%	16.6%
16-64	61.3%	62.0%	63.8%
65+	22.0%	21.0%	19.6%

Source: National Records of Scotland (2022), Mid-2021 population estimates Scotland.

¹² East Ayrshire Council (2020). The Clean Green East Ayrshire Climate Change Strategy

¹³ East Ayrshire Council (2023). The Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy

Population Projections

- 14.7.26. As shown in Table 14.7, the population of East Ayrshire is expected to decrease by 6.7% in the period to 2043. This is in contrast with the overall trend for Scotland as a whole, where the population is expected to increase by 1.7%.
- 14.7.27. The share of the population of East Ayrshire aged under 16 is expected to decrease over time and reach 15.5% by 2043. A similar trend is expected across Scotland as a whole, where the same age group will account for 14.8% of the total population from 16.6% in 2021.
- 14.7.28. In East Ayrshire, the proportion of those aged 16-64 is expected to decrease to 57.5% by 2043. This decrease is larger than that occurring across Scotland over the same period, with the population aged 16-64 expected to reach 60.3% of the total population. The population of East Ayrshire aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 27.0%, above the Scottish average of 24.9%.
- 14.7.29. As East Ayrshire is set to experience a declining working age population and an increasingly old population, it becomes more important for the region to attract and retain people of working age. The economic opportunities created by the Proposed Development will contribute towards this.

Table 14.7: Population Projections, 2021-2043

	East Ayrshire		Scotland	
	2021	2043	2021	2043
Total	122,020	113,792	5,479,900	5,574,820
0-15	17.0%	15.5%	16.6%	14.8%
16-64	62.0%	57.5%	63.8%	60.3%
65+	21.0%	27.0%	19.6%	24.9%

Source: National Records of Scotland (2022), Population Projections 2018--2043.

Industrial Structure

- 14.7.30. The industrial structure of the Local Area, East Ayrshire and Scotland is set out in Table 14.8. The wholesale and retail trade sector, alongside the human health and social work sector, are the largest employers in the Local Area, collectively employing 40% of those in employment. Employment in Education (15%) is also relatively more important locally than across East Ayrshire (7%) and plays a larger role regionally than in Scotland as a whole (8.4%).
- 14.7.31. In terms of the construction sector, 13.3% of workers in the Local Area were employed in this sector, compared to 5.8% in East Ayrshire and 5.6% in Scotland. This industry could particularly benefit from contracts relating to the Proposed Development. Employment in manufacturing, another sector that is likely to be involved in the construction phase, is in line marginally higher in the Local area (6.7%) and East Ayrshire (7.0%) than across Scotland (6.6%).
- 14.7.32. The opportunities that could arise during the construction of the Proposed Development have the potential to address the ageing population of the local and regional areas, by retaining the local workforce and by attracting younger workers.

Table 14.1: Industrial Structure, 2022

	Local Area	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Wholesale and retail trade	20.0%	14.0%	12.8%
Human health and social work activities	20.0%	23.3%	15.0%
Education	15.0%	7.0%	8.4%
Construction	13.3%	5.8%	5.6%
Transportation and storage	10.0%	2.9%	4.0%
Accommodation and food service activities	8.3%	8.1%	8.2%
Manufacturing	6.7%	7.0%	6.6%
Public administration and defence	3.3%	7.0%	6.2%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2.3%	4.7%	7.4%
Administrative and support service activities	1.7%	7.0%	7.8%
Other service activities	1.7%	1.4%	1.7%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1.3%	4.7%	3.4%
Information and communication	1.0%	1.2%	3.1%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	<1%	3.5%	2.9%
Mining and quarrying	-	<1%	1.0%
Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply	-	<1%	<1%
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	-	<1%	<1%
Financial and insurance activities	-	<1%	3.2%
Real estate activities	-	<1%	1.3%

Source: Office for National Statistics (2022), Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) 2021.

Economic Activity

- 14.7.33. As shown in Table 14.9, in 2022 East Ayrshire has a smaller share of its working age population which is economically active (73.3%) compared to Scotland as a whole (77.1%). The current economic activity in East Ayrshire is at the lowest rate the region has experienced since 2016.
- 14.7.34. The unemployment rate in East Ayrshire (2.7%) was below the Scottish average (3.4%) in 2022. The median annual gross wage in 2023 was slightly higher for residents of East Ayrshire (£35,726) than for residents of Scotland (£35,518).

Table 14.9: Activity Rate, 2022

	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Economically Active (%)	73.3%	77.1%
Unemployment Rate (%)	2.7%	3.4%
Median Annual Gross Wage (resident analysis)	£35,726*	£35,518*

Source: ONS (2023), Annual Population Survey Jan 2022-Dec 2022 and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – resident analysis 2023. *2023 data.

Education

- 14.7.35. As shown in Table 14.10, East Ayrshire has a smaller proportion of residents with no qualifications (5.7%) than the Scottish average (7.8%). Additionally, the proportion of East Ayrshires population aged 16-64 with other qualifications (8.2%) is above the Scottish average (5.8%).
- 14.7.36. However, the share of the population who have at least an NVQ3 qualification (57.1%) is lower than the Scottish average (64.8%). Similarly, the proportion of residents with NVQ4+ qualifications, which are equivalent to degree level, is 41.7% in East Ayrshire compared to the national average of 50.0%.

Table 14.14-2: Qualification Levels, 2021

	East Ayrshire	Scotland
NVQ4+	41.7%	50.0%
NVQ3+	57.1%	64.8%
NVQ2+	77.9%	79.6%
NVQ1+	86.1%	86.4%
Other Qualifications	8.2%	5.8%
No Qualifications	5.7%	7.8%

Source: ONS (2023), Annual Population Survey Jan 2021 – Dec 2021.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

- 14.7.37. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation which ranks small areas of Scotland across seven dimensions: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime, and housing. These areas can be ranked based on which quintile (fifth of the distribution) they belong to, with a small area in the first quintile being in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.
- 14.7.38. There are 163 small areas in East Ayrshire, 9.1% of which are in the most deprived quintile, and 8.1% of which are ranked in the 40% most deprived areas in the country. In comparison, out of the 17 small areas that make up the Local Area, 5.9% are within the 40% most deprived areas in Scotland, a slightly smaller proportion than that of East Ayrshire. The Local Area, which includes the area of the Proposed Development, has a 41.2% of its data zones within the first most deprived quintile, higher than that of East Ayrshire (36.4%).

Table 14.11: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation by Quintile, 2020

	East Ayrshire	Scotland
1 (most deprived quintile)	41.2%	36.4%
2	35.3%	30.3%
3	17.6%	16.2%
4	5.9%	8.1%
5 (least deprived quintile)	0.0%	9.1%

Source: Scottish Government (2020), Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020.

Summary of Socioeconomic Context

- 14.7.39. The population of East Ayrshire is projected to decline over the next two decades, in contrast to the expected population growth of Scotland. At the same time, the population of East Ayrshire is expected to age, growing older than that of Scotland as a whole. It is likely that the population of the Local Area will follow the same trend, given

the already above-average share of the population that are no longer of working age. Such features suggest that there are limited opportunities for people of working age in both the Local Area and East Ayrshire, with people seeking employment opportunities elsewhere in the country.

- 14.7.40. While the Local Area is less deprived than Scotland as a whole, economic activity is concentrated in a few sectors, including wholesale and retail trade and human health and social work, which collectively employ 40% of those in employment. Expansion of the onshore wind sector in the area could provide an opportunity for a diversification of its economic base.

Tourism and Recreation Context

Scotland’s Outlook 2030

- 14.7.41. In 2020 the Scottish Tourism Alliance, a collaborative network of industry experts, published Scotland’s Outlook 2030 (Scottish Tourism Alliance, 2020), a strategy focused on creating a world-leading tourism sector in Scotland that is sustainable in the long-term. The strategy is focused on four key priorities:
 - people;
 - places;
 - businesses; and
 - experiences.
- 14.7.42. The strategy recognises the effects of climate change, technological advancements, Brexit and changing consumer behaviour on tourism and highlights the need for collaboration between government, communities, and the public and private sectors. There are six conditions that the strategy has highlighted as being crucial for success:
 - using technological advancements and information to understand changes and trends in tourist behaviours;
 - ensuring policies are in place that support the vision;
 - enabling investment opportunities into Scotland’s tourism market;
 - improving transport and digital infrastructure;
 - greater collaboration between businesses in the industry; and
 - positioning Scotland as a great place to live and visit locally and globally.
- 14.7.43. A main commitment of the strategy is to address the effects of energy demand associated with tourism and make the sector commit fully to Scotland’s ambition of becoming a net-zero society by 2045.

Ayrshire and our Islands Visitor Economy Strategy 2023

- 14.7.44. The Ayrshire and Islands visitor Economy Strategy sets out the strategic vision out its vision for a thriving, inclusive visitor economy across Ayrshire. Published in 2023 by the Ayrshire and Arran Visitor Economy Leadership Group, this strategy reflects the joint efforts of several regional stakeholders, including East Ayrshire Council, North Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council, Scottish Enterprise, VisitScotland, and Ayrshire & Arran Destination Alliance.
- 14.7.45. The strategy identifies four regional strategic priorities to successfully “build a thriving, inclusive visitor economy across Ayrshire and our islands that delivers transformative experiences for our visitors, builds prosperity for our communities and nurtures the natural environment.” These are:
 - connect the regions high quality memorable experiences;

- connect the diverse businesses to grow and build community prosperity
- regenerate the region through the talent and creativity of people; and
- harness the natural and place-based assets to enhance the environment for the benefit of visitors and communities.

14.7.46. As part of the achieving strategic priority one, to connect high quality memorable experiences, the plan aims to position the region as a leader in environmental education for both professional and leisure audiences. This includes supporting “carbon free” power generation proposals alongside infrastructure development that enables better access in rural areas.

Local Tourism Context

14.7.47. As shown in Table 14, in 2021 the tourism sector generated £23.8 million GVA in East Ayrshire, accounting for 0.7% of the total £3,365.8 million GVA generated by the sector across Scotland. In the same year, the tourism sector employed 3,000 people in East Ayrshire. This represented 1.3% of the total 209,000 people employed in the sector across Scotland.

Table 14.12 Tourism Employment and GVA, 2021

	East Ayrshire	Scotland
GVA (£million)	23.8	3,365.8
Employment	3,000	209,000

Source: Scottish Government (2021) Growth Sector Statistics

Visitors

- 14.7.48. Employment in tourism was highly impacted by Covid-19 as the sector was particularly sensitive to the regulations and behaviour changes caused by the pandemic. The Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) report regional domestic tourism based on three-year annual averages, due to small sample sizes. As 2020 and 2021 both represent atypical tourism activity due to Covid-related restrictions on travel, data for 2017-2019 has been provided to give a more typical view on the performance of the sector.
- 14.7.49. As Table 14 shows, there was on average 1.8 million visitors to East Ayrshire between 2017 and 2019, with tourist spend in the region amounting to £108.6 million. Day visitors accounted for 92% of visitors to East Ayrshire, followed by international overnight visitors (5%) and domestic overnight visitors (4%).
- 14.7.50. East Ayrshire accounted for 1.1% of total visitors across Scotland, which in 2019 received 160.9 million visitors, spending £10.6 billion. Day visitors accounted for the largest share of visitors across Scotland (90.1%), followed by domestic overnight visitors (7.7%) and international overnight visitors (2.2%). Data for Ayrshire and Arran shows that international overnight visitors had the highest spend per visitor (£617), followed by domestic overnight visitors (£239) and domestic day visitors (£26).

Table 14.13 Number of Visitors and Spending in East Ayrshire and Scotland

Visitors (million)	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Day Visitors	1.6	144.9
Domestic Overnight Visitors	0.7	12.4
International Overnight Visitors	0.8	3.5
Total	1.8	160.9

Visitors (million)	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Spend (£ million)		
Day Visitors	42.6	5,186.6
Domestic Overnight Visitors	16.0	2,989.3
International Overnight Visitors	50.0	2,459.0
Total	108.6	10,634.9

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey (2019), Great Britain Day Visits Survey (2019). *International Overnight Visitors looks at Ayrshire and Arran.

Local Visitor Attractions

14.7.51. A series of visitor attractions located within 15km from the Proposed Development are shown in Table 14. These attractions were identified through an online search and the VisitScotland portal. Additionally, other important attractions to the region, that are beyond 15km, have also been identified.

Table 14.14 Local Visitor Attractions

Description		Distance from Proposed Development
New Cumnock outdoor swimming pool	One of Scotland's few heated open air swimming pools, the attraction is open seven days a week between May and September for public swimming and children's lessons.	10km
Loch Doon Castle	Loch Doon Castle is a small, ruined castle situated on the banks of Loch Doon. The castle is free to visit and is open all year round.	11km
Heritage Centre Cumnock	A heritage centre, home to a vast collection of historic memorabilia and containing different exhibits ranging across transport, farming, emergency services and steam engines.	12km
Dumfries House	Dumfries House is a Palladian country house, located within a large estate west of Cumnock. Visitors can book guided tours around the interiors or explore the estate grounds.	13km
Baird Institute	The Baird Institute lies in the centre of the town of Cumnock provides leisure facilities for local people including a museum, billiard room and reading rooms.	13km
Blackstone Clydesdales Experiences	Blackstone Experiences offer a range of horse-riding experiences, carriage driving, walking tours, and digger experiences.	14km
Burns House Museum	Robert Burns lived in Mauchline during his most creative and productive period. It was at his farm, Mossgiel, close to the town that he composed many of his best-loved poems.	18km
Robert Burns Birthplace Museum	The Robert Burns Birthplace Museum houses collections relating to the life of Robert Burns, Scotland's national Bard. It is run by the National Trust for Scotland and is located within Alloway in Ayrshire.	22km
Culzean Castle	Culzean Castle was built for the Kennedy family, one of the oldest clans in Scotland, whose ancestry that can be traced back to Robert the Bruce.	29km
Burns Monument and Centre	The Burns Monument and Centre is located in Kay Park, Kilmarnock, and hosts cultural and educational events alongside offering local history services.	30km
Dean County Country Park	A country park, covering over 200 acres features a 14th century castle, a rural life centre, woodland walks, adventure playground, cafe and gift shops.	31km
Dick Institute	The Dick Institute is a museum and library in Kilmarnock, Scotland. It is an important cultural venue in the south-west of Scotland, featuring the largest museum and art gallery space in Ayrshire as well as the central library for East Ayrshire.	32km

Accommodation Providers

14.7.52. Accommodation providers were identified using VisitScotland's accommodation database and a web search of local accommodation on Google Maps. As shown in Table 14.15, 28 accommodation providers were identified within 15km of the Proposed Development. These include 0 providers within 5km, 7 between 5km and 10km, and between 20 10km and 15km.

Table 14.15 Local Accommodation Providers (Within 15km)

Distance from Proposed Development	Number of Providers
0-5km	0
5-10km	7
10-15km	20
Total	27

14.7.53. A split of accommodation providers by their type and the area in which they are located (based on geographical features or closest settlement). The largest cluster is located around Straiton and surrounding areas (12-14km from the Proposed Development), followed by New Cumnock (8-10km from the Proposed Development). Self-catering are the most numerous accommodation providers in both areas.

Table 14.16 Accommodation by Type and Location

Location within 15km of the Proposed Development	Number of Accommodation Providers by Type				Total
	B&B & Guest House	Camping and Caravan	Hotel	Self-Catering	
Dalmellington/Craigengillan		1		3	4
Straiton/North Straiton				7	7
North West Knowehead				5	5
New Cumnock		2		4	6
Cumnock	1		2	1	4
Total	1	7	2	18	78

Recreational Trails

- 14.7.54. Within 15km of the Proposed Development, six recreational trails have been identified based on a web search of walkhighlands.com. These are described with reference to their distance from the Proposed Development at their closest point within Table 14.
- 14.7.55. Two recreational walks are located between 5km and 10km from the Proposed Development. These two trails are located on Loch Doon. Most recreational trails (4 out of 6) are located between 10km and 15km from the Proposed Development.

Table 14.17 Recreational Trails, within 15km of Proposed Development

Description		Distance from Proposed Development
Ness Glen, near Loch Doon	A 3km route through a wooded gorge following the River Doon.	5km
Loch Finlas Loop	A short 4km walk through a deep wooded glen from Loch Finlas to Loch Doon.	8km
Craiglea Trail and Loch Doon Castle	The Craiglea Trail begins from the ruins of Loch Doon castle on the shores of the loch, climbing above the north side to give a view over the water.	11km
Lady Hunter Blair's walk, Straiton	A short circuit of a wooded glen featuring dramatic waterfalls and native trees.	12km
Monument and Bennan Hill, Straiton	An 8km circuit over the hills overlooking one of Scotland's villages, located in what is known as Ayrshire's 'Rambling Territory'.	12km
Cornish Hill and Loch Circuit, Stinchar bridge	This circular walk climbs up above the vast forests of the Carrick onto the wild open hills, giving views of Cornish Loch.	15km

Core Paths

14.7.56. Using East Ayrshire Council's database of core paths, 27 core paths were identified within 15km of the Proposed Development. These are described in Table 14. All paths are located between 3km-15km from the Proposed Development.

Table 14.18 Core Paths, within 15km of Proposed Development

Area	Core Path Name
Dalmellington	(D13) Auchenroy Hill & Dalcairnie Falls
	(D18) Carmlary
	(D12) Dalmellington to Bogton Plantation
	(D14) Dalemellington to Loch Doon, via Ness Glen
	(D16) Craigengillian to Knockdon
	(D17) Scottish Coal Cycle Roue from Loch Doon
New Cumnock	(D11) Loch Doon Forest Road
	(C10) Coalfield Cycle Route
	(C14) Glen Afton
	(C13) Castle Path
	(C11) Knockshinnoch Lagoon
Cumnock	(C12) New Cumnock Circular
	(C4) Glaisnock Water Path
	(C1/C2) Woodroad Path
	(C3) Lord Butes Walk
	(C6) Dumfries Estate
Drongan	(D2) Drongan to Barbieston Circular
	(D1) Hannahston
	(C9) Ochiltree to Drongan
	(C7) Ochiltree Circular
	(C8) Ochiltree Pool Pad
Patna	(D10) Patna and Waterside Circular
	(D4) Patna to Rankinston
	(D6) Patna to Straiton
	(D5) Patna Bridleway
	(D7) Hollybush Estate
	(D9) Skeldon Estate

Summary of Tourism and Recreation Context

- 14.7.57. The tourism sector is as important in East Ayrshire as it is in Scotland. In East Ayrshire, 8.1% of the workforce is employed in accommodation and food service activities, slightly lower than the 8.2% average across Scotland.
- 14.7.58. Accommodation providers within 15km of the Proposed Development are generally self-catering facilities and camping or caravan sites. The nearest accommodation cluster is south of Dalmellington, approximately 5-7 km from the Proposed Development. This cluster includes three caravan and camping parks and one self-catering provider.
- 14.7.59. Recreational trails are primarily located on the outskirts of Galloway Forest Park, west of the Proposed Development. Core paths are concentrated in the areas of Dalmellington, New Cumnock, Cumnock, Patna, and Drongan, which are primarily residential areas.

14.8. Assessment of Potential Effects

Economic Impact

Development and Construction

- 14.8.1. The assessment of the economic impact arising from the development and construction of the Proposed Development utilises the extensive work that BiGGAR Economics has carried out in the onshore wind sector. This includes an evaluation of existing wind farm developments carried out in 2015 by BiGGAR Economics on behalf of RenewableUK. The analysis has been updated over time drawing on evaluations of individual wind farm developments and on experience with developers working across Scotland. This body of research and experience provides the evidence to estimate costs per MW based on a development’s number of turbines and its capacity.
- 14.8.2. The Proposed Development is expected to be 11 turbines with a total generating capacity (subject to final turbine selection) of up to 92.4 MW. It was estimated that the total development and construction expenditure would be approximately £104.8 million. The expenditure was split according to the following component contracts:
 - development and planning;
 - turbine;
 - balance of plant; and
 - grid connection.
- 14.8.3. The greatest expenditure component is associated with turbines, equivalent to £69.8 million, or 67% of total development and construction spend. The following largest expenditure was associated with balance of plant contracts, amounting to £21.1 million (20% of total expenditure). It was estimated that development and planning would account for 7% of spending, and that grid connection would account for 7% of total expenditure.

Table 14.19: Development and Construction by Contract Type

	% CAPEX	Value (£m)
Development and Planning	7%	£7.0m
Turbines	67%	£69.8m
Balance of Plant	20%	£21.1m
Grid Connection	7%	£6.9m
Total	100%	£104.8m

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis of case study evidence from comparable previously constructed wind farms. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

- 14.8.4. In assessing the economic impacts arising from the development and construction of the Proposed Development, it was necessary to make assumptions on the ability of businesses within each study area to carry out contracts.
- 14.8.5. Based on the evidence from similar developments within East Ayrshire, and Vattenfall’s established work with contractors, it was estimated that approximately 34% of the Proposed Development’s contracts will be carried out by Scottish businesses, with a value of £35.7 million. It was estimated that spending on businesses based in East Ayrshire would be approximately £13.6 million, equivalent to 13% of total development and construction expenditure. The greatest opportunity for Scottish businesses is expected to be in contracts associated with balance of plant, which would be worth up to £18.7 million. Balance of plant contracts are also likely to be the largest opportunity for businesses in East Ayrshire, worth up to £7.2 million.

Table 14.20: Development and Construction Expenditure by Study Area

	East Ayrshire		Scotland	
	%	£m	%	£m
Development and Planning	35%	£2.5m	75%	£5.3m
Turbines	2%	£1.0m	10%	£6.7m
Balance of Plant	34%	£7.2m	89%	£18.7m
Grid Connection	35%	£2.5m	73%	£5.1m
Total	13%	£13.6m	34%	£35.7m

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

- 14.8.6. Having estimated the size of the contracts that could benefit each of the study areas, it was possible to estimate the Gross Value Added (GVA) and short-term employment that these are likely to support. This was done by splitting each contract category into its component contracts and assigning each to an industrial sector, based on its Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)¹⁴ code. Direct GVA was then estimated by applying the relevant turnover per GVA from the UK Annual Business Survey (ABS)¹⁵.
- 14.8.7. It was estimated that the development and construction of the Proposed Development is likely to generate £7.6 million direct GVA in East Ayrshire and £18.1 million direct GVA in Scotland.

Table 14.21: Development and Construction, Direct GVA by Study Area (£m)

	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Development and Planning	£1.9m	£3.3m
Turbines	£0.8m	£3.4m
Balance of Plant	£3.7m	£8.8m
Grid Connection	£1.2m	£2.6m
Total	£7.6m	£18.1m

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

- 14.8.8. Similarly, it was feasible to estimate the number of direct jobs supported by spending in construction and development contracts. This was achieved by dividing the expenditure in each contract by the turnover per job ratio for the relevant sector. It was estimated that the development and construction of the Proposed Development will generate 112 direct years of employment in East Ayrshire and 297 direct years of employment in Scotland.

Table 14.22: Development and Construction, Direct Employment by Study Area (Years of Employment)

	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Development and Planning	6	31
Turbines	21	77
Balance of Plant	64	147
Grid Connection	21	41
Total	112	297

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

¹⁴ Office for National Statistics (2009), Standard Industrial Classification of industrial Activities (SIC 2007).

¹⁵ Office for National Statistics (2020), Annual Business Survey 2018 - Revised.

- 14.8.9. Expenditure in development and construction contracts is also expected to generate ‘knock-on’ effects across the economy. Specifically, it will be associated with further rounds of expenditure along the supply chain and with the spending of the wages and salaries of those involved in the development and construction of the Proposed Development. These are referred to as ‘indirect’ and ‘induced’ impacts.
- 14.8.10. To estimate indirect and induced impacts, it was necessary to apply the relevant Type 1 and Type 2 GVA and employment multipliers from the Scottish Government Input-Output Tables¹⁶ to direct GVA and direct employment. Since the multipliers refer to sectoral interactions occurring at the level of the Scottish economy, it was necessary to adjust them when considering impacts taking place in East Ayrshire.
- 14.8.11. By combining the direct, indirect, and induced impacts it was estimated that the development and construction of the Proposed Development will generate a total of:
- £9.5 million GVA and 138 years of employment in East Ayrshire; and
 - £29.6 million GVA and 467 years of employment in Scotland.
- 14.8.12. The peak level of employment during development and construction of the Proposed Development was estimated to be:
- 49 years of employment in East Ayrshire; and
 - 141 years of employment in Scotland.
- 14.8.13. The peak employment supported by the Proposed Development represents less than 0.25% of East Ayrshire’s employment and was therefore considered of **negligible** magnitude. Economic activity with respects to the Scottish economy was also considered to be of **negligible** magnitude, as the peak employment supported by the Proposed Development represents far less than 0.25% of Scotland’s workforce.
- 14.8.14. Given its expected socioeconomic trends, the sensitivity of the East Ayrshire economy compared to the Scottish one was considered **low**.
- 14.8.15. Based on this, the effect of activity associated with the Proposed Development and construction of the Proposed Development on the East Ayrshire economy was assessed as **negligible (beneficial)**. The effect significance with respects to the Scottish economy was assessed as **negligible (beneficial)**.

Operations and Maintenance

- 14.8.16. The initial stage in determining the economic impact stemming from the operations and maintenance of the Proposed Development involved assessing the annual total expenditure necessary for its operation. Based on the number of turbines and the Proposed Development’s capacity, it was estimated that the annual cost of operations and maintenance (OPEX) is likely to amount to approximately £2.5 million.
- 14.8.17. It was further assumed that businesses in East Ayrshire could benefit from a total £1.0 million in operations and maintenance contracts (43% of OPEX) annually, and that annual expenditure in Scottish contractors could be up to £2.1 million (83% of OPEX).

Table 14.23: Development and Construction Expenditure by Study Area

	East Ayrshire		Scotland	
	%	£m	%	£m
Operations and Maintenance	43%	£1.0m	83%	£2.1m

¹⁶ Scottish Government (2020), Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables.

¹⁷ Scottish Assessors Association (2023). Practice Note 2: Valuation of Onshore Wind Turbines.

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

- 14.8.18. The total turnover generated in each study area was then divided by the turnover per GVA and turnover per job ratios of the sectors expected to carry out operations and maintenance contracts. In this way, it was estimated that the Proposed Development is likely to generate £0.5 million direct GVA and 5 direct jobs in East Ayrshire, and £1.0 million direct GVA and 11 direct jobs across Scotland.
- 14.8.19. As with the development and construction of the Proposed Development, it was necessary to estimate the indirect and induced impacts associated with operations and maintenance contracts. This was done by applying the relevant Type 1 and Type 2 GVA and employment multipliers.
- 14.8.20. By combining the direct, indirect, and induced impacts it was estimated that the operations and maintenance of the Proposed Development will generate:
- £0.7 million GVA and 6 jobs in East Ayrshire; and
 - £1.6 million GVA and 18 jobs in Scotland.
- 14.8.21. Based on the levels of economic activity relative to the size of their economies, the magnitude of these impacts was assessed as **negligible** with respect to the economies of East Ayrshire and Scotland. The sensitivity of the East Ayrshire economy was considered as **low**.
- 14.8.22. Therefore, the effect of the Proposed Development during its operation has been assessed as **negligible (beneficial)** with respect to the East Ayrshire and Scottish economies.

Wider Economic Impacts

Non-Domestic Rates

- 14.8.23. The Proposed Development is expected to generate a stream of revenue to East Ayrshire Council through the annual payment of non-domestic rates.
- 14.8.24. To estimate the economic impact generated by non-domestic rates, it was first necessary to consider the rateable value of the development and apply the appropriate poundage rate. This was done by applying guidance developed by the Scottish Assessors Association¹⁷ to information about the performance of the Proposed Development.
- 14.8.25. Using this approach, it was projected that over its operational period, the Proposed Development is expected to make an annual contribution of approximately £1.1 million to public finances. Across its 40-year operational lifespan, this contribution towards non-domestic rates is anticipated to accumulate to around £44.4 million.
- 14.8.26. The Proposed Development would strengthen the financial position of the Council, supporting additional spending on public services, though in practice not all of the income would necessarily go to the Council since the distribution of non-domestic rate revenues are determined nationally.
- 14.8.27. The magnitude of the impact has been assessed as negligible for both the East Ayrshire and Scottish economies. When combined with the sensitivity to change of economic activity within these two study areas, it is assessed that this effect would be **negligible (beneficial)** for either of these receptors.

Community Benefit Fund

- 14.8.28. In its publication outlining good practice principles for community benefits arising from onshore wind developments¹⁸, the Scottish Government discusses the approach that developers should take when developing

¹⁸ Scottish Government (2019). Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Developments.

community benefit proposals with the local community. The recommended community benefit of £5,000 per MW, has the intention of creating value and achieving a lasting legacy for communities.

- 14.8.29. The Applicant has committed to offering £5,000 per MW of usable capacity per year in community investment for the local area. The community investment fund from the Proposed Development is (assuming an 8.4MW turbine) equivalent to £462,000 annually, or £18.5 million during the 40-year operational lifetime of the Proposed Development. The Community Investment Fund will be distributed to support projects across the communities living in proximity of the Proposed Development.
- 14.8.30. The money invested through the Community Investment Fund will, in turn, contribute to local economic activity. To estimate the number of jobs supported by this level of investment, it was assumed that the type of economic activity stimulated would be similar to that associated with the voluntary activities sector. This sector in 2018 (latest available data) had a total income of £6.06 billion and supported 108,000 jobs¹⁹. By applying the turnover per job ratio for this sector to the spending associated with the Community Investment Fund, it was possible to estimate that the Community Investment Fund could support each year up to 6 jobs across East Ayrshire.

Tourism Assessment

Evidence on the Impacts of Wind Farms on Tourism

- 14.8.31. In 2008, the Moffat Centre at Glasgow Caledonian University studied the potential effects of wind farms on tourism²⁰. The study analysed the possible effects of wind farm development and concluded that, while tourism may be affected in small numbers, the overall impact on tourism expenditure and employment would be limited. This study is now dated and since 2008, wind farms have become increasingly common across Scotland. It would be expected that, with the growth in onshore wind since the completion of the Moffat Centre study, any negative effects wind farms have on tourism would now be apparent in tourism employment statistics.
- 14.8.32. BiGGAR Economics produced a study on the effect that onshore wind has on tourism employment in 2021²¹. The study, which analysed 16 onshore wind farms constructed between 2015 and 2019 in Scotland, reported on the effect these wind farms had on tourism employment at the national, regional, and local level.
- 14.8.33. In the study, tourism employment was considered over the period 2015 to 2019. During this period, the number of wind farms increased in Scotland and in almost all local authority areas, while employment in tourism also grew. The analysis found no correlation between tourism employment and the number of turbines at the national or local authority level.
- 14.8.34. The study also analysed the impact onshore wind has on tourism employment proximate to developments. Areas within 15 km areas of the wind farms constructed between 2015 and 2019 were analysed, comparing employment in tourism in 2015 and 2019, before the construction of the wind farms and after, allowing for the exclusion of construction impacts on tourism (such as wind farm related workers staying at local accommodation).
- 14.8.35. The study found no link between the development of a wind farm and employment in the tourism sector. Of the 16 local areas included in the study, 11 experienced an increase in tourism employment between 2015 and 2019. In 12 of the local areas, employment grew faster or decreased less than the rate for the corresponding local authority.
- 14.8.36. The 2021 study also reassessed 28 wind farms constructed between 2009 and 2015 analysed in a previous 2017 study finding that, in the years following the construction of the 28 wind farms, 19 of the small areas experienced an increase in tourism employment, including four areas where tourism employment had fallen between 2009 and

2015. In 16 local areas, employment grew quicker or decreased less than in the corresponding local authority area.

- 14.8.37. The study concluded that there was no pattern suggesting the development of a wind farm would result in a reduction in tourism employment at a national, regional or local level.
- 14.8.38. Nevertheless, tourism makes an important contribution to the economy in East Ayrshire and so following assessment considers whether there may be any impact on specific tourism-related businesses.

Determinants of Tourism Activity

- 14.8.39. Based on existing evidence on visitors' behaviour and the tourism businesses, activity is mostly driven by the following factors:
- The ability and willingness of tourists to travel;
 - Economic performance (and so weather tourists have disposable income available for leisure trips);
 - Exchange rates;
 - The quality of the overall tourism service;
 - The effectiveness of destination marketing; and
 - The quality and value for money of the services offered by tourism businesses.
- 14.8.40. There exists no relationship between most of these factors and onshore wind farms. The assessment of tourism impacts considered whether visitor attractions and the motivations for visiting them would be affected by the Proposed Development.
- 14.8.41. In case any evidence was found, for a change in tourism activity to happen, the following conditions would need to be met:
- The construction and/or operation of the Proposed Development has some impact (s) on the area;
 - Visitors, or potential visitors are aware of such impact (s);
 - Visitors, or potential visitors, react by changing their behaviour. For example, by changing the length of stay, where they choose to visit or the activities that they undertake;
 - The quality of the overall tourism service;
 - The change in behaviour results in a change in their level of spending; and
 - These changes in visitor spending result in a change in performance of the tourism sector, for example a change in employment.

Visitor Attractions – Effects during Construction and Operation

- 14.8.42. This section considers whether the Proposed Development would impact visitor behaviour in a way that would reduce visitor numbers to local attractions and affect the local tourism economy.
- 14.8.43. VisitScotland identify the key regional attractions across wider region of Ayrshire and Arran. Among those beyond the 15km range, the closest is Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, located 22 km away from the Proposed Development. Other important regional attractions include Robert Burns Birthplace Museum (22km), Culzean Castle (29km) Burns Monument and Centre (30km), Dean Country Country Park (31km) and Dick Institute (32km). Due to the distance between the Proposed Development and the regional attractions outlined in the baseline, it is unlikely that the Proposed Development impact any motivations to visit these attractions. Therefore, the effect on tourism has been assessed as **negligible**.

¹⁹ Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (2020). State of the Sector 2020. Available at: <https://scvo.scot/policy/research/evidence-library/2020-state-of-the-sector-2020-scottish-voluntary-sector-statistics>.

²⁰ Glasgow Caledonian University/Moffat Centre (2020) Economic Impacts of Wind farms on Scottish Tourism.

²¹ BiGGAR Economics (2021). Wind Farms and Tourism Trends in Scotland: Evidence from 44 Winds Farms.

- 14.8.44. An additional 6 local attractions were identified within 15 km of the Proposed Development following a web search of VisitScotland.
- 14.8.45. New Cumnock Outdoor Swimming Pool is one of Scotland's few heated open-air swimming pools and is located 10km from the Proposed Development. As the motivation to take part in swimming, such as an interest in recreational activities and maintaining physical fitness, will not be impacted by the Proposed Development, its effect has been assessed as **negligible**.
- 14.8.46. Loch Doon Castle is a small, ruined castle situated on the banks of Loch Doon. Although re-erected in 1935, the castle was estimated to be built in the late 1200s by an earl of Carrick – either Robert the Bruce or his father, also called Robert. Motivations to visit the castle include an interest in medieval history and architecture. None of these features will be impacted by the Proposed Development. Therefore, its effect on these assets has been assessed as **negligible**.
- 14.8.47. Heritage Centre Cumnock is located 12km from the Proposed Development, and contains many different exhibits ranging across transport, farming, emergency services, family & home history, and steam engines. Visitors to the museum are motivated to visit through an interest in local heritage or in historical artifacts of the area. As it is not expected that these aspects will be affected by the Proposed Development, its effect on Dunvegan Castle has been assessed as **negligible**.
- 14.8.48. Dumfries House, located on a Palladian country estate 13km from the Proposed Development near Cumnock, features the architectural work of Robert Adam, furniture by Thomas Chippendale and prominent 18th-century Scottish cabinet makers. The house and its extensive grounds have preserved much of their original 18th-century landscape and design. Since the motivations to visit Drumfires House, namely an interest in historical architecture, fine furniture, and 18th-century landscape design, will not be impacted by the Proposed Development, its effect has been assessed as **negligible**.
- 14.8.49. The Baird Institute lies in the centre of the town of Cumnock, 13km from the Proposed Development and provides leisure facilities for local people including a museum, billiard room and reading rooms. The museum contains a wide range of resources which relate to the history of Cumnock and the Doon Valley area – archives, audio visual material, books, maps, museum collections, and photographs. tall. Since the motivations to visit the museum, namely an interest in the history of Cumnock and the Doon Valley area, will not be impacted by the Proposed Development, its effect has been assessed as **negligible**.
- 14.8.50. Blackstone Clydesdales Experiences offer a range of horse-riding experiences, carriage driving, walking tours, and digger experiences on Blackstone Farm, located 14km from the Proposed Development. The motivations to take those services include an interest in farming and outdoor activities which are unlikely to be affected by the presence of the Proposed Development. This indicates that there would be no change in the activity and thus, the impact on tourism has been assessed as **negligible**.

Accommodation Providers – Effects during Construction and Operation

- 14.8.51. A number of accommodation clusters were identified within 15km of the Proposed Development. Each cluster is considered in turn. The assessment considers whether the Proposed Development will have an impact on accommodation providers' offering and, through this channel, affect visitor behaviour and result in impacts on the tourism economy.
- 14.8.52. As set out in Table 14, there are 4 accommodation providers located around Dalmellington and Craigengillan. This includes one camping and caravan provider and three self-catering providers, all of which are located between 5-7km from the Proposed Development. The self-catering providers, Doon Valley Glamping Pods, Craigengillan Glamping Pods, and "Find Me Out" Holiday Cottage, promote their facilities based on the surrounding woodlands

and environment. Loch Doon Caravan and Camping Park emphasises its proximity to Loch Doon and its rural setting, which enhances the outdoor experience. Since the motivations for visiting these accommodations will not be affected by the Proposed Development, the impact has been assessed as **negligible**.

- 14.8.53. There were seven accommodation providers in Straiton and North Straiton. This includes six self-catering providers, all of which are located between 12-14km from the Proposed Development. Many of these providers, such as Blairquhan Cottages and Luxury Holiday Cottages at Cloncaird Castle, market themselves based on attractions like woodland walks, proximity to the River Girvan, and the expansive grounds of the castle. Since the Proposed Development will not impact these attractions, its effect on the accommodation providers is considered **negligible**.
- 14.8.54. There are five self-catering accommodation providers in Northwest Knowehead, all located 14-15 km from the Proposed Development. These include Heart of the Glen, Corlae Cottage, River Ken Cottage, Chalk Memorial Bothy, and Cumnock Knowes Country Retreat. They market themselves based on their proximity to mountain locations and stunning surrounding landscapes. Since the motivations for visiting these accommodations will not be affected by the Proposed Development, the impact is considered **negligible**.
- 14.8.55. There are six accommodation providers in New Cumnock, including two camping and caravan providers and four self-catering providers, one of which is the Lochside House Hotel, Lodges, and Spa. These accommodations are all located between 8-12km from the Proposed Development. The providers promote the Loch of Lowe and the Ayrshire countryside. Specifically, Glen Afton Caravan Park and Afton Mills Glamping market themselves based on their proximity to New Cumnock attractions while still offering access to woodland walks and tranquillity. Since the Proposed Development will not impact these motivations, its effect on the accommodation providers is considered **negligible**.
- 14.8.56. There are four accommodation providers in Cumnock, including one B&B/guest house, two hotels, and one self-catering provider, all located between 13-14 km from the Proposed Development. The Royal Hotel and Dumfries Arms Hotel market themselves based on their historical significance and long-standing service. Similarly, Dumfries House Lodge promotes its historical appeal. Laigh Tarbeg Farmhouse B&B emphasises its proximity to Cumnock and notable attractions such as the Burns House Museum and Library. Since the Proposed Development will not impact these attractions, its effect on the accommodation providers is considered **negligible**.

Recreational Trails

- 14.8.57. Within 15km of the Proposed Development, six recreational trails were identified. They have been assessed on the basis of whether there would be a reduction in visitors or recreational users in the area.
- 14.8.58. This assessment has been carried out in line with the guidance from NatureScot and will be updated once draft LVIA and Transport Chapters have been received. These results of this assessment are shown in Table 14.3.

Table 14.3 Impact of Recreational Trails

	Tourism	LVIA	Traffic and Transport
Ness Glen, near Loch Doon	X		
Loch Finlas Loop	X		
Craiglea Trail and Loch Doon Castle	X		
Lady Hunter Blair's walk, Straiton	X		
Monument and Bennan Hill, Straiton	X		
Cornish Hill and Loch Circuit, Stinchar bridge	X		

- 14.8.59. For those trails where no impacts have been identified, the following assessment applies:

- There would be no expected impact on access to this route as a result of the Proposed Development;
- It is not expected that the nature of the Proposed Development would result in intense levels of effect which would damage recreation on the route;
- Given that there would be on change to the Proposed Development over time, there would be no potential for any effects on the route to increase over time;
- The route forms part of a cluster of recreational trails in the area and therefore its scarcity value is relatively low; and
- Any visitors who prefer not to view manmade structures on recreational paths would have the opportunity to use other routes in the area with no visibility of the Proposed Development.

14.8.60. Consequently, the effect of the Proposed Development on those recreational trails has been assessed as **negligible**.

Core Paths

- 14.8.61. The baseline assessment identified 27 core paths within 15km of the Proposed Development. Compared to recreational trails, which form part of the tourism offering of the local area, core paths tend to be used as walking routes by residents. On this basis, core paths were considered to have low sensitivity with respects to the tourism economy.
- 14.8.62. This assessment has been carried out in line with the guidance from NatureScot and will be updated once draft LVIA and Transport Chapters have been received.

14.9. Cumulative Effects

- 14.9.1. The assessment of cumulative effects during construction and operation was based on developments that were either operational, under construction, consented or applications, including:
- Ten operational developments (Afton, Dersalloch, Hare Hill I, Hare Hill II, Sanquhar, South Kyle, Wether Hill, Whiteside Hill, Windy Rig, Windy Standard II);
 - Four under construction (Benbrack, North Kyle, Pencloe, and Enoch Hill);
 - Eight consented developments (Cornharrowl, Greenburn, Lorg, Overhill, Sandy Knowe, Sanquhar II, Shepherd's Rig, Windy Standard III); and
 - Six applications (Cloud Hill, Eucharhead, Knockcronal, Knockkippen, Sclenteuch, Windy Standard I Repowering).

Cumulative Effects during Construction

- 14.9.2. Given existing operational developments and those other developments which have already received approval in the proximity of the Proposed Development, the Proposed Development has the potential to generate beneficial economic cumulative impacts. Potential benefits will also be compounded by the future need to repower some of the existing onshore wind farm sites across East Ayrshire and Scotland.
- 14.9.3. Cumulative benefits at local level are likely to arise if projects in the pipeline were to further encourage the development of a local renewable energy supply chain. The availability of a pipeline of contracts will provide growth opportunities for those businesses already working in the renewable energy sector and encourage new businesses to specialise in wind farm-related activities. The existence of a series of projects contracting out the delivery of goods and services provides the certainty required for investment within supply chain businesses.

- 14.9.4. The development of a strong local supply chain for the Proposed Development and similar projects in East Ayrshire would help to increase the magnitude of the beneficial economic effects considered in this chapter.
- 14.9.5. Efforts to attract new entrants into the onshore wind market could also potentially help to address potential issues associated with the capacity of the local market to meet the demands of the onshore wind energy sector. This will be of relevance to the specialised contractors within the development, turbine and grid connection contracts. The employment supported by the balance of plant contracts is less likely to be affected by capacity issues due to lower levels of specialisation.
- 14.9.6. The positive economic effects arising during the construction phase are expected to offset any temporary disruption from noise, construction traffic and limited accommodation.
- 14.9.7. There are not expected to be any significant effects on tourism and recreation assets, and therefore it is not expected that there would be any significant cumulative effects on tourism and recreation.

Cumulative Effects during Operation

- 14.9.8. The operations of a series of onshore wind farms could also provide opportunities for the expansion of existing businesses in East Ayrshire or the entrance of new ones into the sector. This has the potential to further strengthen the supply chain catering to the operation and maintenance phase of the Proposed Development.
- 14.9.9. There will also be potential for cumulative benefits with regards to the community benefits associated with operational developments. The availability of larger levels of funding could unlock investment opportunities with higher returns than it would be possible to achieve with the funding from an individual development.
- 14.9.10. There are not expected to be any significant effects on tourism or recreation assets in the surrounding area. Overall, though there may be some cumulative effects due to the addition of the Proposed Development, it is not expected that these will be significant. This is because changes will take place in an environment that is, at least in part, characterised by wind farm presence and as set out in Chapter 6, the Proposed Development would not give rise to a perception of a 'wind farm landscape' in East Ayrshire except within the immediate area of the Site itself, where the wind turbines would be the prevailing characteristic. Consequently, cumulative effects on tourism and recreation will not be different from those arising from the operation of the Proposed Development on its own.

14.10. Mitigation, Enhancement and Residual Effects

Proposed Mitigation during Construction

- 14.10.1. No mitigation measures have been identified with regards to cumulative effects on socioeconomics, tourism and recreation during the construction period.

Proposed Enhancement during Construction

- 14.10.2. The Developer has submitted a Skills and Employment Plan that sets out the Developers approach to strategies and initiatives aimed at maximising local economic benefits through skill development and job creation.

Residual Effects during Construction

- 14.10.3. After accounting for cumulative effects associated with construction activity, the effect from the Proposed Development was assessed as:
- A **negligible (beneficial)** effect on the economy of East Ayrshire;
 - A **negligible (beneficial)** effect on the economy of Scotland;
 - A **negligible** effect on local tourism economy;

- A **negligible** effect on recreational walks and core paths;
- A **negligible (beneficial)** effect on accommodation providers; and
- A **negligible** effect on visitor attractions.

Proposed Mitigation during Operation

14.10.4. At this stage, no mitigation measures have been identified with regards to cumulative effects on socioeconomics, tourism and recreation during the operation and maintenance period.

Residual Effects during Operation

- 14.10.5. After accounting for cumulative effects associated with operation activity, the effect from the Proposed Development was assessed as:
- A **negligible (beneficial)** effect on the economy of East Ayrshire;
 - A **negligible (beneficial)** effect on the economy of Scotland;
 - A **negligible** effect on local tourism economy;
 - A **negligible** effect on recreational walks and core paths;
 - A **negligible (beneficial)** effect on accommodation providers; and
 - A **negligible** effect on visitor attractions.

14.11. Summary of Effects

Table 14.4 Summary Effects

Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measure	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial/adverse		Significance	Beneficial/adverse
Construction					
£9.5 million GVA and 138 years of employment in East Ayrshire	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
£29.6 million GVA and 467 years of employment in Scotland	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
Effect on local tourism economy	Negligible	Adverse	N/A	Negligible	Adverse
Effect on recreational walks and core paths	Negligible	Adverse	N/A	Negligible	Adverse
Effect on accommodation providers	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial

Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measure	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial/adverse		Significance	Beneficial/adverse
Effect on visitor attractions	Negligible	Adverse	N/A	Negligible	Adverse
Operation					
£0.7 million GVA and 6 years of employment in East Ayrshire	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
£1.6 million GVA and 18 years of employment in Scotland	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
£462,000 annual community benefit payments	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
Payment of non-domestic rates	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
Effect on local tourism economy	Negligible	Adverse	N/A	Negligible	Adverse
Effect on recreational walks and core paths	Negligible	Adverse	N/A	Negligible	Adverse
Effect on accommodation providers	Negligible	Beneficial	N/A	Negligible	Beneficial
Effect on visitor attractions	Negligible	Adverse	N/A	Negligible	Adverse