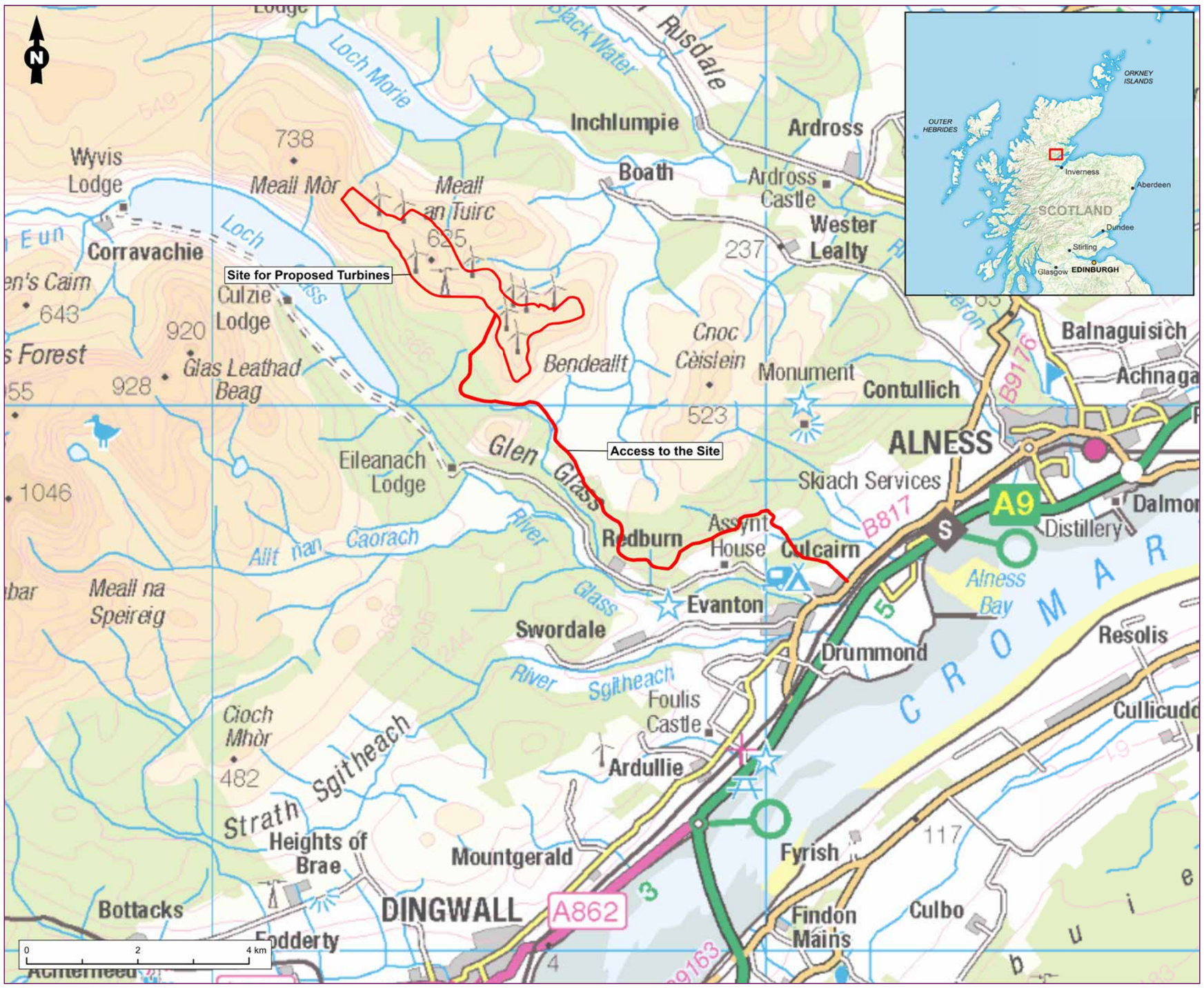
Welcome to our public exhibition event

Welcome to the public consultation for the proposed repowering of Novar 1 Wind Farm.



Novar 1 Wind Farm is an existing wind farm near Evanton in Easter Ross that has been operational since 1997. The wind farm currently has 34 turbines that are 60 metres to tip.

Due to the age of the existing turbines and advances in wind power technology, we are proposing to repower the wind farm with a maximum of ten new turbines of up to 180 metres height to tip.

Repowering explained

Repowering is the process of replacing older first-generation wind turbines before the end of their operational life with more powerful models that use the latest technology and are capable of producing significantly more electricity more efficiently. The existing 34 turbines have a maximum capacity of approximately 17 MW, while the ten new turbines would have a maximum capacity of approximately 60 MW.

Developer

We are an independent renewable generator, formed through the coming together of Renantis and Ventient Energy in January 2024. Nadara designs, builds, and manages power plants from renewable energy sources, with an installed capacity of more than 1.1 GW across the UK.

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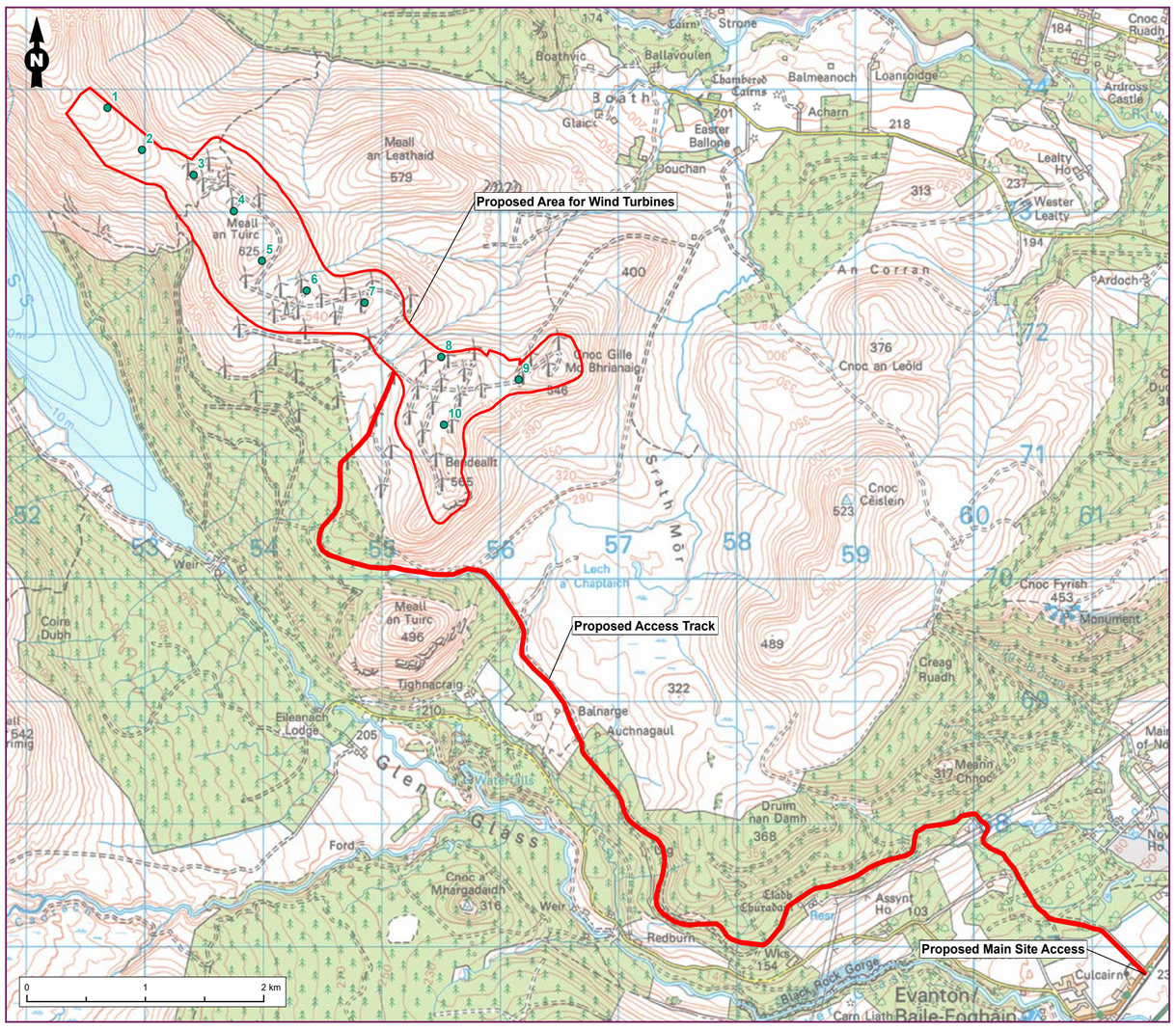
The Proposed Development

We plan to replace the existing turbines with fewer, larger turbines that are capable of producing more than double the electricity of the existing operational turbines.

The proposed repowered Novar 1 Wind Farm will have up to ten turbines of a height of up to 180 metres to the blade tip and will generate up to 60 MW. An initial layout of the proposed development has been developed, although the environmental and technical studies we carry out throughout the design process, along with feedback from the public and statutory consultees, will inform the final number and layout of turbines.

One of the key design principles for the proposed project is to use the existing wind farm infrastructure and access tracks as much as possible. Options for the potential reuse of the materials from the existing turbines are currently under consideration. We are working with wind turbine decommissioning experts Reblade and local company Gael Energy to investigate the possibilities.



Legend

Site boundary

Repowered turbine layout (scoping)

Construction and access

- The project will require one or more construction compounds, access tracks and watercourse crossings to enable construction.
- Access to the site will be from the B817 via the junction to the existing wind farm.
- Watercourse crossings will be kept to a minimum, but, where required, these will be designed in accordance with Scottish Government best practice and Scottish Environment Protection Agency guidelines.
- Crushed stone will be used to upgrade existing or construct new access tracks, hardstanding areas for cranes and foundations. The source of the stone and aggregate will be confirmed during the design process.
- Crushed stone from the hardstanding for the existing turbines will be decommissioned and reused for the new turbine hardstanding areas.

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Environmental Impact Assessment

Ramboll has been appointed to carry out a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the proposed repowering of the proposed repowered Novar 1 Wind Farm. The outcomes of the EIA will be reported in an EIA Report that will form part of the formal application for consent that will be submitted to Scottish Ministers.

The EIA process includes:

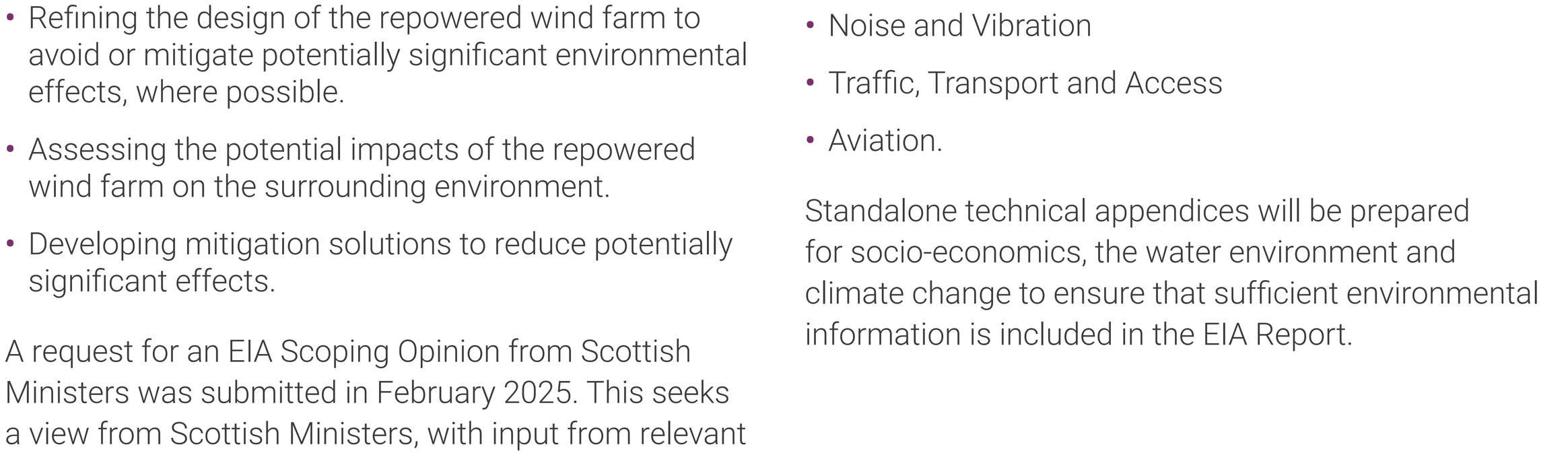
- Consultation with the local authority, local community councils, statutory and non-statutory organisations, and the public to identify specific concerns and issues.
- Determining the existing environmental conditions at and around the site by reviewing available data and conducting specialist field surveys.
- Refining the design of the repowered wind farm to avoid or mitigate potentially significant environmental effects, where possible.
- Assessing the potential impacts of the repowered wind farm on the surrounding environment.
- Developing mitigation solutions to reduce potentially significant effects.

A request for an EIA Scoping Opinion from Scottish Ministers was submitted in February 2025. This seeks a view from Scottish Ministers, with input from relevant authorities, on the environmental issues that should be considered in the EIA.

Detailed studies for the following disciplines are proposed to be undertaken within the EIA:

- Landscape and Visual Amenity
- Cultural Heritage
- Biodiversity (Ecology and Ornithology)
- Soils/Peat
- Noise and Vibration
- Traffic, Transport and Access
- Aviation.

Standalone technical appendices will be prepared for socio-economics, the water environment and climate change to ensure that sufficient environmental information is included in the EIA Report.



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Landscape and Visual Amenity

The EIA will include a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which will establish the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the surrounding landscape and visual amenity.

Desk-based studies and specialist field surveys will be carried out to establish the current landscape and visual context of the site and to identify key sensitive receptors.

The LVIA will consider potential impacts and likely significant effects in relation to:

- Landscape fabric and character.
- The special qualities and integrity of designated and classified landscapes.
- Visual amenity.

The LVIA will also consider the cumulative effects arising from the proposed development in conjunction with other existing and consented/in planning wind farm developments.

A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), a computer-generated model that identifies the likely extent of the visibility of the proposed development, has been prepared based on a preliminary layout, to inform the LVIA.

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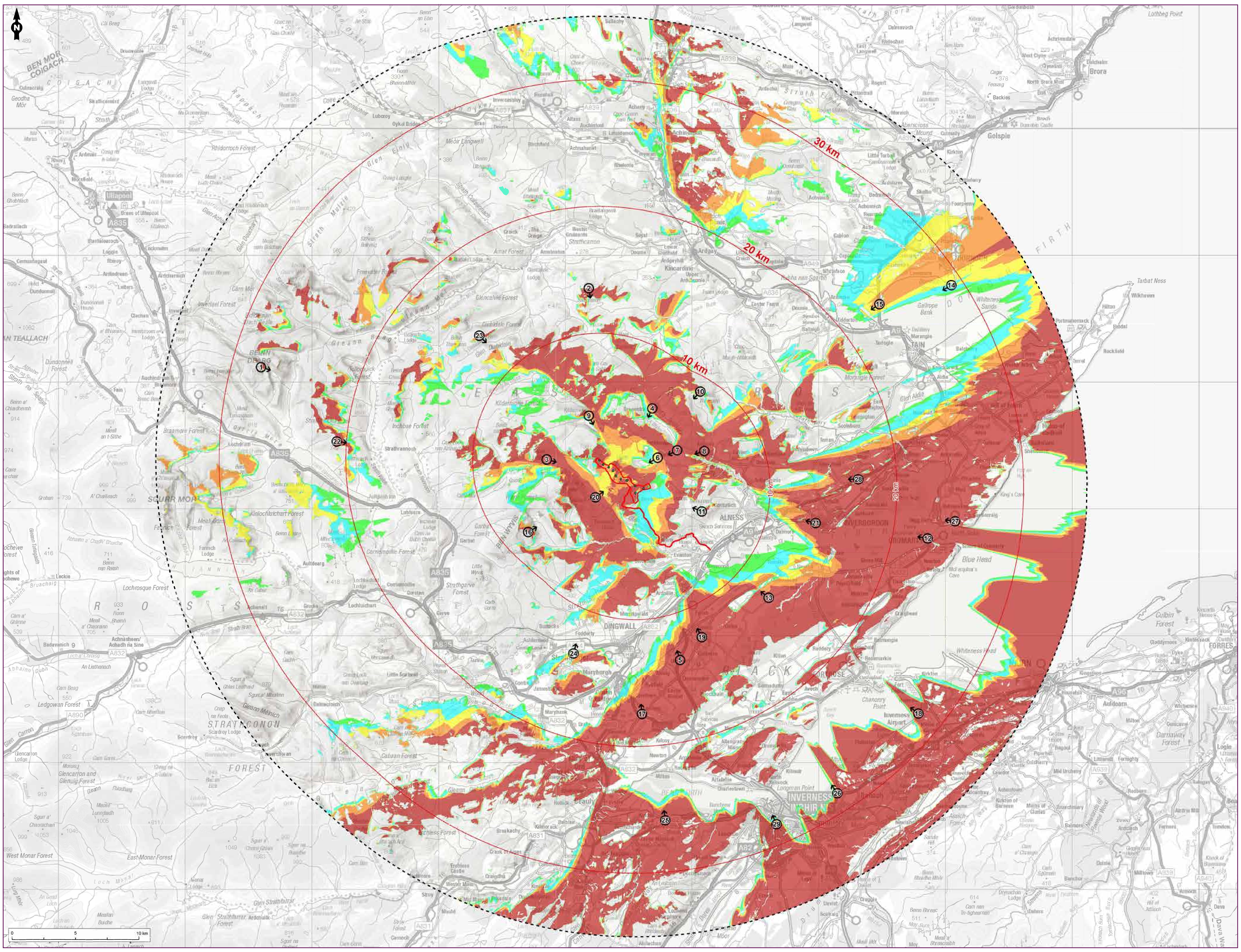
Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)



Legend

- Application boundary
- Study area (35 km from outer turbines)
- 10 km radius from outer turbines
- Repowered turbine layout (scoping)

Number of turbines visible at blade tip height (180 m)

- 1–2
- 3–4
- 5–6
- 7–8
- 9–10

Viewpoint

Disclaimer: The ZTV represents a worst-case scenario as it does not take into account the screening effect of vegetation, buildings and other surface features.

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Photomontages

The LVIA will be supported by photomontages and wirelines which provide a visual representation of the project from various agreed viewpoints. A selection of these viewpoints is provided in the following boards.

Viewpoint 5: A9 between Duncanston and Causeway (Existing view)

Viewpoint 5: A9 between Duncanston and Causeway (Photomontage)

Disclaimer: Visualisations do not fully conform to NatureScot and The Highland Council (THC) visualisation standards and are provided for exhibition purposes only. Visualisations included in the EIA Report will be prepared to NatureScot and THC visualisation standards.

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Photomontages

Viewpoint 8: Minor Road by Ardross Distillery (Existing view)

Viewpoint 8: Minor Road by Ardross Distillery (Photomontage)

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Photomontages

Viewpoint 11: Summit of Cnoc Fyrish (Existing view)

Viewpoint 11: Summit of Cnoc Fyrish (Photomontage)

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Photomontages

Viewpoint 21: A817 Invergordon (Existing view)

Viewpoint 21: A817 Invergordon (Photomontage)

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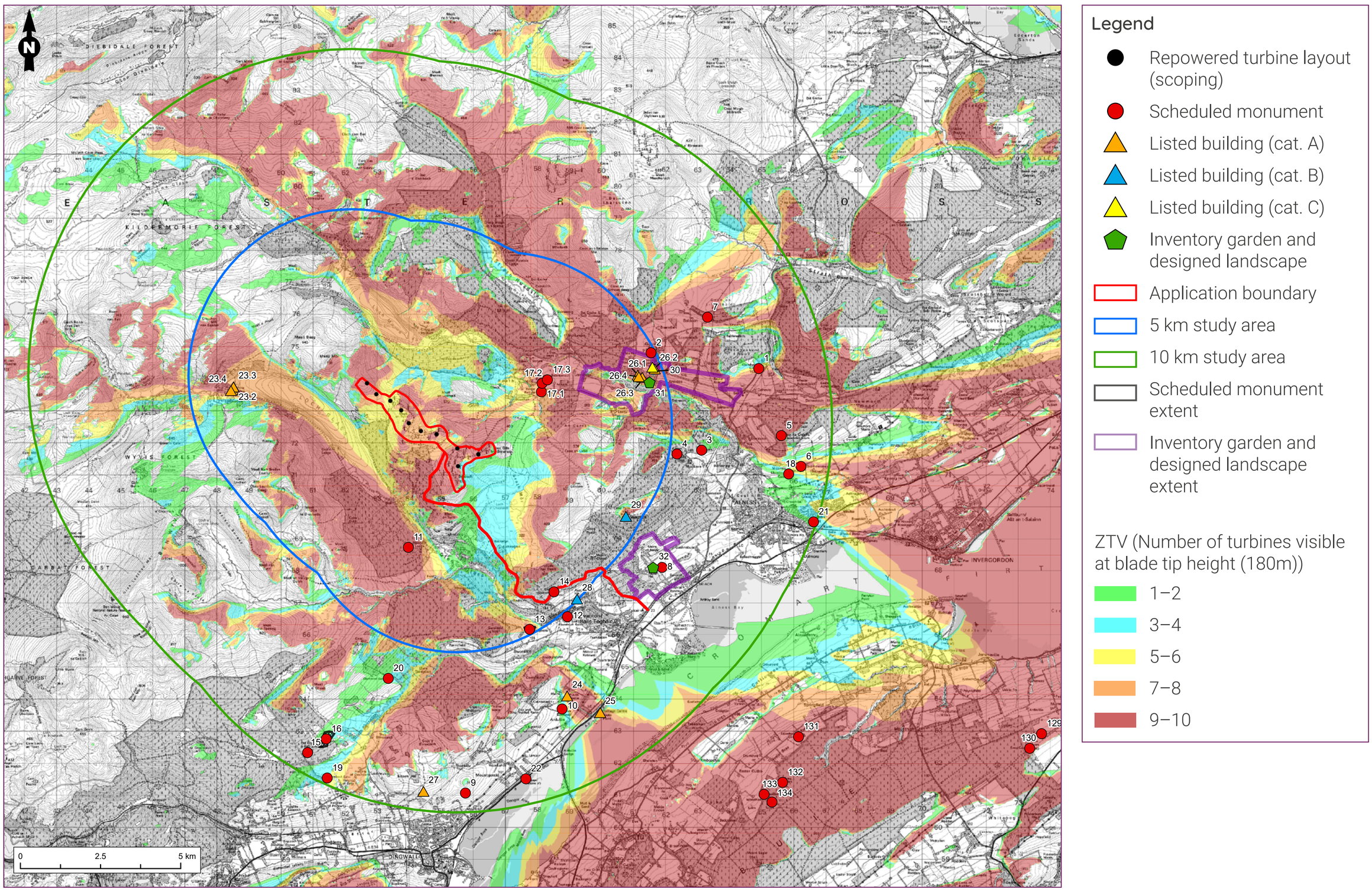
Cultural Heritage

The EIA will assess the effects of the proposed project on the historic environment, including archaeology and cultural heritage.



Desk-based assessment and specialist field surveys will be carried out to establish the cultural heritage baseline within the site and the wider landscape.

The assessment will consider the potential impacts and likely significant effects in relation to:

- Unknown remains within the site which could experience direct impacts as a result of construction activities.
- Identified heritage assets within the surrounding area which could experience impacts upon their setting, including the potential for cumulative impacts.

A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) will be used to help identify assets intervisible with the proposed development and/or where the proposed development would appear in key views to and from assets. Alongside the ZTV, wireframes and/or photomontages will be produced to support the cultural heritage assessment.

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Biodiversity (Ecology and Ornithology)

The EIA will assess the effects of the proposed development on biodiversity, including ecological and ornithological features.

Desk-based assessment and specialist field surveys will be carried out to inform the biodiversity baseline conditions within the site and surrounding area.

Field surveys conducted to date include:

- Habitat Classification Survey (UKHab)
- National Vegetation Classification (NVC) Survey
- Protected Species Survey
- Deployment of bat detectors at proposed turbine locations to determine bat activity levels across the Site
- Ornithological field surveys (Sept 2023 to August 2024).

The biodiversity assessment will consider the following:

- Habitat loss, fragmentation or alteration
- Disturbance of protected species
- Collision risk with turbine blades for bats and birds
- Displacement of bird species that use the existing wind farm.

The field surveys identified that the site, as part of the existing wind farm, is dominated by blanket bog and degraded bog habitat with notable areas of wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, mountain heath and willow scrub and upland flushes.

Suitable mitigation and/or restoration measures will be presented in a series of management plans including an Outline Habitat Management Plan (HMP) and/or Species Protection Plans (SPP). Cumulative effects of the Proposed Development with other wind farms will also be considered.

Biodiversity enhancement

Delivering habitat and biodiversity enhancement is an integral part of the proposed project. This will include opportunities for enhancement of peatland through restoration of degraded and eroding areas of peatland.

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Peat

The EIA will assess the effects of the proposed development on peatland resources at the site.

A Phase 1 peat survey was undertaken in May 2024 recording peat depths on a 100 metre grid across the site. This data, along with information on other constraints, is currently being used to inform the next stage in the design process which will further review the layout of the proposed turbines and allow development of wider infrastructure, including site access tracks.

Following the further development of the site design, a Phase 2 peat depth survey will be undertaken, which will supplement the Phase 1 survey data with higher resolution data for the site. This will allow further refinement of the design.

A key design principle for the proposed project is to avoid or minimise impacts on the highest value peat resources within the site, for example through using existing infrastructure and access tracks as much as possible, and where feasible locating individual infrastructure elements within areas of shallower peat and within areas that are considered to already be degraded/eroded. By utilising the existing wind farm track where possible, the amount of new track required for the proposed project will be kept to a minimum.

Traffic and Transport

In relation to traffic and transport the EIA will consider the construction phase of the proposed development, where the amount of traffic will be the greatest, and will assess the potential traffic-related environmental effects such as delays, impacts on pedestrian journeys, and accidents and safety.

Appropriate mitigation measures will be outlined where the effects are considered to be significant, with standard mitigation measures including:

- Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)
- Design of suitable access arrangements with full consideration given to the road safety of all road users
- Staff Sustainable Access Plan
- Abnormal Load Transport Management Plan
- Access Management Plan (as required).

The proposed project would be accessed from the B817 via the junction to the existing wind farm. The access junction would provide the access to the site for abnormal loads associated with the turbine equipment as well as access for construction materials and the ongoing site operation traffic.

A detailed site access review will be undertaken to detail the finalised access route from port of entry to the site access junction. Detailed swept path analysis will be undertaken along the access route to demonstrate that the turbine components can be delivered to the site and to identify any temporary road works which may be necessary.

Each turbine is likely to require between 11 and 13 abnormal loads to deliver the components to site. The components would be delivered on extendable trailers that would then be retracted to the size of a standard HGV for the return journey.

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The local community

We will work closely with local communities, businesses and residents to ensure the repowering of Novar 1 Wind Farm brings real benefits to the local area while helping to meet national climate change and renewable energy targets and goals.

Business, employment and investment

We want to hear from businesses in the local area and across the Highlands who could be involved in the project if it receives approval and proceeds to construction.

Opportunities available include those for:

- An engineering, procurement and construction ('EPC') contractor
- Construction material suppliers: concrete, aggregate and building materials
- Electrical contractors: supply and installation of plant, cabling, earthing, etc.
- Plant and equipment hire contractors; excavation earthworks, cranage, welfare units, etc.
- Labour hire companies: engineers, plant operatives and general labourers
- Local accommodation and catering services
- Transport: taxis and minibuses for local labourers.

If you are a local company and would like to register your interest, please email:

jenny@jmccomms.co.uk

or fill in a registration form on:

www.novar1repowering.co.uk

Community benefit

At our wind farms we work with the local community to help us shape a community benefit package that best meets local needs and wishes.

If this project receives consent, we will establish a community fund in partnership with local stakeholders. We look forward to hearing from local people throughout the consultation period about what they would like to see.

At several of our wind farms we also have co-operatives that enable people to buy a stake in their local wind farm. We are working closely with community ownership experts Energy4All to set up a new co-op structure to allow both communities and individuals to co-invest if the repowering of Novar 1 Wind Farm goes ahead.

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What next?

This public exhibition is one of the early steps in the consultation process. We welcome your feedback on our initial proposals to help us refine the details. We will hold another public exhibition later this year to share the revised plans with you.

As the installed capacity of the proposed repowered wind farm will be over 50 MW the application for consent will be submitted to Scottish Ministers. The Scottish Government will then undertake its own consultation process, when the public will be invited to make formal comments on the proposals.

How to contact us

Telephone: **07900 917143**

Email: **jenny@jmccomms.co.uk**

Post: **Novar 1 Wind Farm Repowering**
c/o JMC Communications
32A Union Road
Inverness IV2 3JY

Online feedback form:

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