



ARCUS

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TORRANCE WIND FARM EXTENSION II

TA 2.2 - SCOPING OPINION

FEBRUARY 2023



Our Ref: 20/01408/EIASCO
Your Ref:
Contact: Edward McLennaghan
Tel: 01236 632500
E-mail: Planningenquiry@northlan.gov.uk
Date: 16 December 2020



Arcus Consultancy Services

F.A.O

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Enterprise And Communities

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Dear Ms Gray,

EIA Scoping Request: 20/01408/EIASCO

Proposal: Request for a Scoping Opinion for a Proposed 10 Turbine Windfarm Extension Maximum 140m to Blade Tip height and Associated Infrastructure - (Land to the west of Planning Approvals 10/00973/FUL Erection of 3No. 125m Wind Turbines and 12/00284/FUL Erection of 2No. Wind Turbines 125m)

Address: Southrigg Farm, C1 - Torrance Farm To Southrigg Farm, Armadale, EH48 3AW

I refer to your Scoping request submitted on the 13th November 2020 seeking a scoping opinion on information to be included in the required Environmental Statement for the above proposed development.

As you are aware, this site effectively forms an extension to previously approved windfarm developments to the east which were subject to EIA. In this regard, there are also cumulative impacts to consider.

The Council considers that the proposed format for the Environmental Impact Assessment should broadly cover the below subject areas, reflecting the previous Environmental Statements already considered by the Council.

1. Summary
2. Introduction
3. Description of Proposed Development
4. Planning Policy
5. Landscape, Visual and Cumulative Assessment
6. Traffic and Transport Assessment
7. Ecology
8. Ornithology
9. Geology, Soils and Hydrogeology
10. Cultural Heritage
11. Noise
12. Shadow Flicker
13. Existing Infrastructure
14. Cumulative Impact of Proposed Development
15. Aviation
16. Electromagnetic Interference



17. Non-Technical Summary

A number of consultation responses have been received in respect to this scoping exercise and they may be viewed online via the Council website. Please note that this response only relates to the scope for the content of an EIA and does not offer any pre-application advice on the merits of the application. It is always recommended that pre-application advice is sought in addition to the EIA scoping request to ensure that any planning constraints might be identified prior to the submission of an application. Should any further responses be received they will be available on the e-planning website for review.

Matters of Note - Consultation Responses Received

Noise – NLC Protective Services

NLC Protective Services are generally in agreement with the suggested methodology outlined within the report. They note that there have been many instances of proposed (consented and refused) wind turbine development applications within the North Lanarkshire Council area in the last 10 years or so. During that time there have been a number of applications where it became obvious to the applicant and to Protective Services, as consultees to the Planning process, where due to the specific circumstances of the development site (i.e. mainly those sites with particularly low background noise levels) that the suggested turbine noise limits contained within ETSU-R-97 were excessive for the particular sites under consideration. This has led over the years to a number of developments having been consented with (necessarily) lower (and more appropriate) noise limits than those referred to in ETSU for particular development sites.

Protective Services note your intention to consult with them prior to the finalisation of your Noise Assessment and encourage this approach from the outset. In addition they note that the existing wind turbine developments within the surrounding area, and that the above report advises that the proposed noise impact assessment methodology would take these into account in determining cumulative turbine noise immission predictions as received the nearest residential properties to the proposed development.

I can confirm that Planning is also in agreement with the proposed pre-application engagement and would suggest that your noise consultants make early contact with my colleague Mark Robertson (RobertsonM@northlan.gov.uk) at an early stage.

NLC Landscape

NLC Landscape have provided comments and in summary they request that all survey and site information is accurate and up to date with the current developments and that information used for the previous development is not considered current as the presence of this development will have had an impact on the surrounding landscape and visual impact. It is advised that the impact of the current developments shall be included and taken into consideration in the preparation of the EIA.

NLC Landscape recommend that all existing or proposed developments to be included within the evaluation of the cumulative effects. As the proposed 10 new turbines are larger than the 5 existing turbines at Torrance Farm Wind Park (and the turbine located on Southrigg farm), with a proposed tip height of 140m combined with being located on higher ground the proposed blade tips will be up to 45m higher than the existing turbines.

Increasing the number of turbines from 5 to 15 with the increased span and height of the blades is expected to result in this development being visible across a larger area and having a greater visual impact within the study area. Therefore Landscape consider that additional viewpoints are required to be assessed taking account of developments that have occurred over the intervening period since the original Torrance Farm Wind Park assessment.

Given the comments above I would recommend that early contact is made with my colleague Russell Tod (TodR@northlan.gov.uk) at an early stage to discuss their comments and recommendations in relation to additional viewpoints.

Edinburgh Airport

Edinburgh Airport comment that the proposal has been examined from an aerodrome safeguarding perspective and conflicts with safeguarding criteria. The proposed turbines are located 25km WSW of the Aerodrome Reference Point for Edinburgh Airport. Turbines numbered 5 and 7 at their given location will be visible to the radar at the airport and will appear to Air Traffic Controllers as clutter on the radar screen, resulting in a detrimental effect on the operations of Air Traffic Control. There is also a significant risk of mis-identification with real aircraft radar returns. Edinburgh Airport would therefore **object** to any planning application in light of the above concerns.

I would advise that this matter will need to be addressed prior to the submission of your application.

NATS

The proposed development has been examined by their technical safeguarding teams and conflicts with their safeguarding criteria.

MOD

The MOD has concerns about this proposed development based on their assessment of the proposed turbine locations and on the basis that there will be 10 turbines at 140.00 metres in height from ground level to blade tip.

The proposed will occupy Tactical Training Area 20T (TTA 20T) in which military fixed wing aircraft can engage in operational low flying training down to 45.7m above terrain features. Therefore, in the interests of air safety, the MOD would request that the development be fitted with MOD accredited aviation safety lighting. Therefore, the MOD will request that turbines 1, 3, 6, 8 and 9 be fitted with 25 candela omni-directional red lighting or Infrared COMBI lighting with an optimised flash pattern of 60 flashes per minute of 200ms to 500ms duration at the highest practicable point. The MOD Safeguarding wishes to be consulted and notified about the progression of this proposal and any subsequent application(s) that may be submitted relating to it to verify that it will not adversely affect defence interests.

Site History

For your information and consideration, the applications located east and adjacent to the proposed application site that have already assessed by the Council are listed below with those identified as EIA noted. These may also be viewed online via the Council website.

10/00973/FUL: Erection of 3 125m Wind Turbines & Ancillary Infrastructure Including Foundations, External Transformers, Control Kiosks, New Access Tracks, Temporary Construction Compound and Underground Cabling at Torrance Farm Blairmuckhill Road, Harthill. Approved 28th February 2011 – **EIA Development.**

12/00284/FUL: Erection of 2No. Wind Turbines (74.5m to Hub and 125m to Tip) Including Ancillary Transformers, Crane Hardstandings, New and Upgraded Access Tracks, Two Substations, Control Buildings and Underground Cabling and 1 no. 75 m Meteorological Mast. Approved 31st July 2012 - **EIA Development.**

14/02012/FUL: Erection of Single Wind Turbine NGR 291875 665563 (125m to Blade Tip and 75m to Hub Height) and Associated Works. Approved at appeal 12th August 2015. - **EIA Development.**

17/01478/FUL: Erection of a Single Wind Turbine NS 92131, 65673 (128.5m to blade tip, 85m to hub and rotor diameter of 87m) and Ancillary Works. Approved 18th December 2017. - **EIA Development.**

19/00644/FUL: Single 4.2 MW wind turbine and ancillary works - Amendment to Planning Application 17/01478/FUL to Increase the Height of Wind Turbine from 128.5m to 149.44m (Blade Tip Height). Approved 31st July 2019.

EIA Format

The Environmental Impact Assessment should be a single document containing the Environmental Statement, Planning Statement and a non-technical summary (preferably located at the front of the EIA document). It is recognised that such a document will be of a size and contain chapters that have individual file sizes that exceed the limitations of the e-planning document management system. Where possible the documents should be split and uploaded via the planning portal, with documents unable to be reduced in size submitted on disk. It should be noted that no individual file size exceeding 15MB can be uploaded from disk given the limitations of the document management system and that such documents will still require to be reduced or split to meet this limitation.

In terms of the provision of hard copies and copies for public access it may be advisable to discuss these requirements closer to the application submission in order to see what is appropriate if restrictions are still in place due to Covid-19.

West Lothian Council

West Lothian Council have thus far not responded to their consultation and I will forward the details of their comments once received. You may wish to contact them directly for comments as the proposals are situated in relatively close proximity to the West Lothian Council area.

Planning Application and Submission

The Environmental Statement should be submitted to North Lanarkshire Council for consideration, along with the Planning Application. In addition the application should be accompanied with the required Planning fee dependent on site area equivalent to £401 per 0.1 of a hectare, an advert fee for local press advertisement of £135.06 and advertisement fees in terms of the requirement to advertise the application in terms of the EIA regulations including the Wishaw Press, West Lothian Courier and Edinburgh Gazette with the fee to be confirmed at the time of submission.

I trust that this information is of assistance and if you wish to discuss the matter further please do not hesitate to contact us via Planningenquiry@northlan.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

EMcL

ppLorna Bowden
Planning and Place Manager