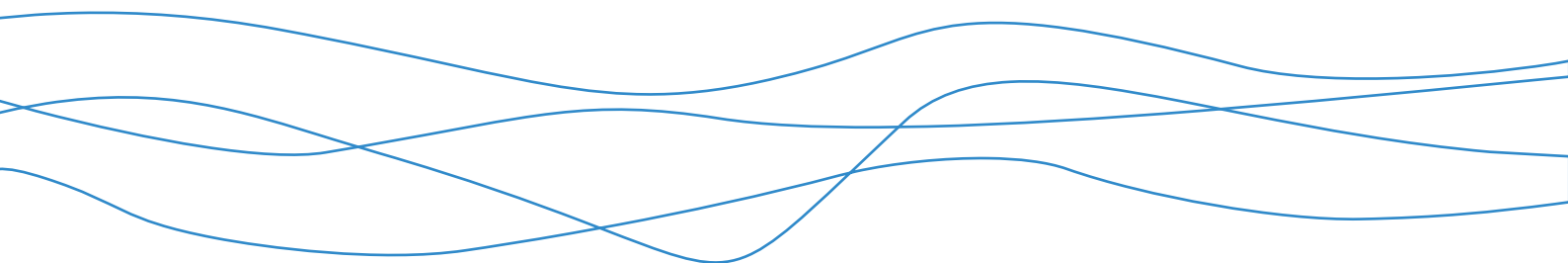




Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm, Onshore EIA Report

Volume 1, Chapter 4: Stakeholder Engagement
and Consultation

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Glossary

Defined Term	Definition
400 kV Cable Corridor	The 400 kV Cable Corridor will house the cabling required for the onward transmission from the Substation to the proposed SSEN-T substation, Hurlie Substation.
400 kV Cables	Cables that will connect the Substation to the grid connection point which is a new substation proposed by SSEN-T known as the Hurlie Substation.
Applicant (the)	Thistle Wind Partners Limited
Array Area	The Array Area is the area in which the Offshore Generation Assets will be located.
Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Limited	A Special-Purpose Vehicle (SPV) (legal entity) for the purpose of developing the Project.
Crown Estate Scotland (CES)	Public corporation accountable to Scottish Government, responsible for the management of land and property in Scotland owned by the monarch.
Effect	Term used to express the consequence of an impact i.e. the result of change or changes on specific environmental resources or receptors. The significance of an effect is determined by correlating the magnitude of the impact with the importance, or sensitivity of the receptor or resource in accordance with defined significance criteria.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Assessment of the potential likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the physical, biological, and human environment during construction, operations and maintenance and decommissioning.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report	Document prepared to comply with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 in order to provide information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the baseline environment; • project description for the Proposed Development; • a systematic assessment of the Proposed Development's likely significant environmental effects; • measures to avoid, prevent, reduce or offset likely significant adverse environmental effects; • a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the Applicant; and • a non-technical summary.
Hurlie Substation	This is the proposed Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN-T) substation into which the Project would ultimately connect to the National Grid.
Impact	A change caused by an action that occurs during a project's lifetime.
Landfall	The area in which the offshore export cables make landfall and is also the transitional area between the Offshore Transmission Assets and the Onshore Transmission Assets. Located in the intertidal area (see definition above) at Sinclair's Bay.

Defined Term	Definition
Matters Specified in Conditions (MSC)	This would be a second stage application, following on from the grant of Planning Permission in Principle (PPP). The PPP would be granted with a number of conditions which would refer to detailed aspects of the proposed development which require approval from Aberdeenshire Council prior to the commencement of development. This stage is where aspects such as the design of the substation, precise cable route and provision/securing of mitigation would be set out.
Mean High Water Springs (MHWS)	The average tidal height throughout the year of two successive high waters during those periods of 24 hours when the range of the tide is at its greatest.
Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS)	The average tidal height throughout the year of two successive low waters during those periods of 24 hours when the range of the tide is at its greatest.
Mitigation	Measures to avoid, prevent, reduce or control effects on the environment. See also definitions for Embedded Mitigation and Additional Mitigation.
National Grid	The national electricity transmission network.
Offshore Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report	Document prepared to report the findings of the EIA for the offshore elements of the Project.
Offshore Export Cables	Subsea cables used to transmit electricity generated offshore by the Wind Turbines from the OSPs to shore. The Transition Joint Bay (TJB) is the location where the Offshore Export Cables terminate, and the onshore cabling begins.
Offshore Generation Assets	The infrastructure of the Project required to generate electricity comprising of the Wind Turbines, Wind Turbine foundations and associated infrastructure e.g. IACs.
Offshore Transmission Assets	The infrastructure of the Project required to transmit the generated electricity comprising of the OSPs, Offshore Export Cables and associated infrastructure up to MHWS.
Offshore Substation Platform(s) (OSP(s))	OSP(s) comprise the support structure, topside and electrical components used for collecting and/or converting electricity generated by the Wind Turbines for transmission by the Offshore Export Cables.
Onshore Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report	Document prepared to report the findings of the EIA for the Proposed Development and produced in accordance with the EIA Regulations. An Onshore EIA will be submitted to support the Onshore Application for the Proposed Development.
Onshore Export Cable	The cables (220/275 kV) that transfer electricity from Landfall to the Substation.
Onshore Export Cable Corridor	The area landward of MLWS to the Substation within which the Onshore Export Cables will be installed and forms part of the PPP Application Boundary.
Onshore Transmission Assets	The transmission infrastructure associated with the Project above MLWS which are covered in this Onshore EIA Report.

Defined Term	Definition
Planning Permission in Principle (PPP)	An application for Planning Permission in Principle is a type of planning application that allows for a proposal to be assessed without the detailed design information being provided (for example the final layout, design or finish of any buildings). It is granted subject to a condition(s) that certain matters have to be approved by the planning authority before development can commence. Planning Permission in Principle does not allow for development to commence, but rather that the principle of that development is accepted by the planning authority.
Planning Permission in Principle (PPP) Application Boundary	The red line boundary representing the extent of the planning permission in principle application.
Project (the)	An overarching term for the Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm (Bowdun OWF) comprising the offshore and onshore infrastructure required to generate and transmit electricity from the Array Area to the onshore Grid Connection Point (GCP). The Project includes the Offshore Generation Assets, the Offshore Transmission Assets and the Onshore Transmission Assets.
Project Design Envelope (PDE)	A description of the range of possible elements that make up the design options for the Proposed Development under consideration when the exact engineering parameters are not yet known.
Proposed Development	Term used to define the Onshore Infrastructure associated with the Project landward of MLWS for which PPP is being sought. Further details of the parameters are included in the Onshore EIA Report Volume 1, Chapter 2: Project Description.
Rochdale Envelope (also known as Project Design Envelope)	Inter-changeable with PDE.
Scoping Opinion	A document produced by Aberdeenshire Council, supported with feedback and advice from consultees, which details what is expected to be included in the Onshore EIA Report and what can be scoped out of the EIA process.
ScotWind Leasing Round	A seabed leasing round run by CES to grant property rights for the seabed in Scottish waters for new commercial scale offshore wind project development. ScotWind Leasing must be sited within POA of the Sectoral Marine Plan (SMP).
Section 36 Consent	Scottish Ministers' consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 required for the generating assets of the Proposed Development.
Substation	The onshore Substation to be constructed as a component of the Proposed Development. The Substation would transform voltage from low to high by means of electrical transformers to ensure the electrical energy provided from the Offshore Generation Assets is at a voltage suitable for connection to the National Grid.
Substation Site	The total area proposed (42 hectares) to be required for the Substation Switchyard as well as areas for landscaping, biodiversity enhancement and drainage.
Thistle Wind Partners (TWP)	The Joint Venture (JV) of DEME Concessions, Qair Marine, and Aspiravi International that have partnered to develop the Proposed Development.

Defined Term	Definition
Transition Joint Bay (TJB)	Used to connect the Offshore Export Cables with the Onshore Export Cables. These are typically concrete lined and are located above MHWS.

Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
BOWFL	Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Limited
CCC	Climate Change Committee
CES	Crown Estate Scotland
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPCI	Engineering, Procurement, Construction and Installation
ESO	Energy System Operator
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GW	Gigawatt
HRA	Habitat Regulations Assessment
HND-FUE	Holistic Network Design Follow Up Exercise
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
ISEP	Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals
JV	Joint Venture
kV	Kilovolt
LSE	Likely Significant Effect
MD-LOT	Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team
MLWS	Mean Low Water Springs
MSC	Matters Specified in Conditions
MW	Megawatt
nm	Nautical Miles
NMP	National Marine Plan
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
NESO	National Energy System Operator
NnG	Neart na Gaoithe
OWF	Offshore Wind Farm
OWPS	Onshore Wind Policy Statement
PAC	Pre-Application Consultation
POA	Plan Option Area
PPP	Planning Permission in Principle
RIAA	Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment
SMP	Sectoral Marine Plan
SPV	Special Purpose Vehicle
SSEN-T	Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission

Acronym	Definition
TJB	Transition Joint Bays
UN	United Nations
TWP	Thistle Wind Partners Limited

4 Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This chapter of the Onshore Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report sets out the approach to the stakeholder engagement and consultation process undertaken by Thistle Wind Partners Limited (TWP), on behalf of the Applicant, during the pre-application stage for the onshore infrastructure of the Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm ('the Project'). The onshore infrastructure element of the Project, is the works landward of Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS), including the intertidal area, and is referred to as the 'Proposed Development'.

4.1.2 The consultation process allowed for the determination of the scope of this Onshore EIA Report through engagement with local and statutory stakeholders and to engage and obtain feedback from the local community.

4.2 Pre-Application Engagement with Local Planning Authority and Statutory Consultees

4.2.1 A Pre-Application Meeting with Aberdeenshire Council was hosted by TWP in March 2024. This aimed to introduce the Project (and Proposed Development) to the Council and provide them with key programme dates along with a high-level overview of the project description and planning approach.

4.2.2 Following the Pre-Application Meeting, a pre-scoping meeting with selected consultees was held on 6 June 2024 and advice from a number of topic specific stakeholders and consultees was given. The advice from the pre-scoping meeting has been the bases of subsequent assessments and of the Scoping Report and this Onshore EIA Report.

4.2.3 The Pre-Application Advice was received on 25 July 2024 from Aberdeenshire Council outlining feedback and information from a number of statutory and non-statutory consultees. The feedback was based on the assessment of the Proposed Development against relevant planning legislation, policy and guidance. Further information on specific pre-application consultation and feedback is presented within environmental topic chapters (see Volume 1, Chapters 6-16) where relevant.

4.3 Statutory Pre-Application Consultation Process

4.3.1 Statutory Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) requires to be carried out in line with the procedures set out in Sections 35A, 35B, 35C and 39 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) (UK Government, 1997) and Part 2, Regulations 4 to 7B of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (as amended) (Scottish Government, 2013).

4.3.2 The main steps in the PAC process include:

- Determining whether PAC is required;
- Submitting a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) to the planning authority;

- Publishing newspaper notices at least seven days before any public consultation events;
- Holding a minimum of two in-person public consultation events;
- Engaging with relevant community councils;
- Carrying out any additional consultation as required in response to the PoAN;
- Submitting the planning application no sooner than 12 weeks and no later than 18 months after the PoAN has been issued; and
- Including a PAC Report with the planning application submission.

4.3.3 Further detail on the PAC process is available in the PAC Report (TWP, 2025a) which accompanies the Planning Permission in Principle (PPP) Application for the Proposed Development.

4.3.4 A summary how the process has been progressed for the Proposed Development is included in the section below.

The Proposed Development PAC

4.3.5 Unless an exemption applies, all applications for Planning Permission or PPP relating to national or major developments must include PAC between developers and the community. The Proposed Development is classified as a national development under the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and therefore PAC has been undertaken.

4.3.6 A PoAN and location plan was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council on 16 July 2025. This included a general description of the proposed development, the proposed form of consultation, and dates and venues of proposed consultation events.

4.3.7 On 14 August 2025, Aberdeenshire Council provided a letter which acknowledged receipt of the PoAN. The letter did not request any additional notification or consultation.

4.3.8 The first round of public events was held on 21 and 22 August 2025 in Johnshaven Village Hall and Drumlithie Bowling Club respectively. TWP hosted the second round of public events on 2 and 3 October 2025 in Johnshaven and Drumlithie respectively. The information provided at these events were also replicated on an online virtual exhibition hosted on TWP's website.

4.3.9 It should be noted that day two of the second round of public events was closed early because of health and safety concerns due to adverse weather conditions; communications were issued via social media to alert people of the upcoming weather conditions and that the event may need to close early. Following the event, Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Service were contacted to explain the circumstances they confirmed that there would not be a requirement for any further public consultation events.

4.3.10 Notice of the public exhibitions were published at least seven days in advance of the first PAC event in The Press & Journal newspaper and in The Bellman – a free, digital news website for the Stonehaven community. The notice posted in the Press & Journal was also posted on their online notice board for seven days from 4 August 2025.

- 4.3.11 In addition, a leaflet drop was carried out on the 11 July 2025, providing members of the public local to the Proposed Development with the dates, times and locations of the public consultation events being held; posters publicising the events were also displayed on various local notice boards within the area in August 2025.
- 4.3.12 Five Community Councils were identified as being within the PPP Application Boundary and were provided with copies of the PoAN and following pre-application advice from Aberdeenshire Council, neighbouring Community Councils were also notified of the Proposed Development. The Community Councils notified are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Community Councils Notified of the Proposed Development

Community Councils within the PPP Application Boundary	Community Councils neighbouring the PPP Application Boundary
Benholm and Johnshaven Community Council	Royal Burgh of Inverbervie Community Council
Gourdon Community Council	Catterline, Kinnef and Dunnottar Community Council
Arbuthnott Community Council	Crathes, Drumoak & Durriss Community Council
Mearns Community Council	St Cyrus Community Council
Stonehaven and District Community Council	North Kincardine Community Council
	Feughside Community Council

- 4.3.13 There were a total of 150 attendees at the first round of events and feedback was gathered through feedback forms on the day and notes taken by TWP staff on individual discussions with attendees. An online feedback form was also made available through a Virtual Consultation room (<https://www.thistlewindpartners.scot/bowdun/virtual-room/>).
- 4.3.14 A summary of the key issues raised at these events is included in Table 4.2, along with how these issues have been addressed, taking into account stakeholder interests in terms of the design of the Proposed Development and associated mitigation. This information was displayed at the second round of events to document how feedback on these matters has informed the design and assessment process.
- 4.3.15 A PAC Report (TWP, 2025) has been submitted as a supporting document to the application for planning permission. This report documents the PAC process in full, detailing how TWP has consulted with the public and stakeholders, including copies of materials used and photographs of exhibitions as well as a summary of attendance and the feedback received.

Table 4.2: Summary of Key Issues Raised at First Round of PAC Events and How These Have Been Addressed

Issues Raised	TWP Response
<p>Traffic and Transport</p>	<p>A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) and Construction Logistic Plan (CLP) will be developed containing details of measures to control, monitor and enforce heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) movements during construction. This will also include details of travel routes and accesses to minimise the impacts of construction traffic on local residents. To minimise the amount of traffic on the local road network during construction, temporary haul roads would be installed along the onshore cable construction corridor to provide safe access for construction vehicles, thus reducing the requirement for vehicles to travel via public highways as much as possible. Temporary construction storage and laydown areas may also be used. Each public road that would have HGVs travelling on them during construction would either already be suitable for two-way HGV movements or be modified in advance of construction to enable this. Further traffic management plans that need to be approved by Aberdeenshire Council will specify exact requirements, for example there may be a ban on construction traffic through certain areas. A construction specific Travel Plan is also proposed to provide the mechanism to support and promote shared and sustainable travel for staff, contractors and visitors travelling to the work sites. The Travel Plan would seek to encourage workers to access the site via sustainable travel modes, improving travel choices, and managing single occupancy car use. The Travel Plan would also indicate the approved routes to site and the approved parking locations. We will undertake pre-condition surveys of roads prior to construction to assess and record existing condition and to inform reinstatement post construction. We propose collaboration with Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN-T); Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) in Fetteresso Forest, Transport Scotland (regarding Trunk Road Use and Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) movements) and Aberdeenshire Council regarding joint working, phasing, AIL movements and road improvements.</p>
<p>Cumulative Impacts from Multiple Developments</p>	<p>A robust cumulative impact assessment has been included within each of the topic specific chapters within the Onshore EIA Report. The projects assessed have been agreed with, Aberdeenshire Council, based on applications in the planning system and other committed development.</p>
<p>Operational Noise (Substation)</p>	<p>We are committed to including Embedded Mitigation within the final Substation design such as barriers and enclosures to meet noise limits required by Aberdeenshire Council (taking cumulative noise into account from other noise sources).</p>
<p>Disruption Resulting from Construction</p>	<p>The application includes an outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The final CEMP will include specific measures to limit noise, vibration and dust. For example, through the selection of quieter equipment, limiting working hours, the application of industry best practice techniques and appropriate mitigation to reduce and suppress dust, and the use of temporary mitigation where detailed design defines it as necessary. Strategic construction phasing, including forestry felling activities, will occur at the Substation to provide screening and limit loss of forestry. The cable installation along the cable route is completed sequentially. First, the topsoil and subsoil are stripped and stored, the haul routes constructed, and trenches dug. The cable ducting is then installed, and the trenches backfilled. The cables would then be pulled through</p>

Issues Raised	TWP Response
	<p>the ducts. The sequential nature of the work means that potential disturbance would be localised as the work progresses along the cable route. Although highly dependent on local conditions, a reasonable assumption for the progression rate of the cable installation is approximately 400 m every 4-6 weeks with HDD locations taking approximately 12 weeks.</p>
<p>Local Economic Development</p>	<p>TWP are committed to spending £600 million in Scotland for the Project and an ambition to increase spending to over £1 billion. The Project will create jobs during construction and operation and maintenance as well as in the wider supply chain and generate wider economic benefits, such as increased spending in the local economy and investment in the region. The Project is actively supporting local businesses in overcoming barriers to entering the market, we have been running supply chain events and engaging with local businesses through our award-winning Supply Chain Pathways Programme.</p>
<p>Visual Impacts</p>	<p>Following feedback in PAC 1 visualisations of the Substation, the offshore turbines were presented as part of the PAC 2 events. The height of the substation building has been limited to 15 m to minimise potential visual impacts. Forestry retention and re-planting will be implemented to provide further mitigation of visual impacts, as well as providing biodiversity enhancements. A sequential installation of the cable route would ensure potential visual disturbance is localised and thus minimised as the work progresses along the cable route. The visualisations indicate visibility of the Substation from representative viewpoints and have been prepared under a ‘worst-case scenario’ with a maximum 15 m height for any buildings within the Substation Search Area. This scenario illustrates the maximum visibility that might occur from the Proposed Development. Specific measures to mitigate visual effects from construction, operation and maintenance phases will be developed at the detailed design stage and agreed with the Council. A mixture of approaches would be utilised with the aim to integrate the final structures into the surrounding landscape. This could include screening for the substation elements, earthworks to help integrate the substation into the landscape and specific building finishes.</p>
<p>Landfall</p>	<p>The landfall site selection process identified prospective landfall sites along the eastern Aberdeenshire coast. The sites were identified from desktop geotechnical, environmental constraints mapping, optioneering and assessment exercises for the Project to determine ground suitability, maximum cliff heights, access for Transition Joint Bays and potential environmental and engineering constraints. The alternatives considered throughout the design process are presented and discussed within Volume 1, Chapter 5: Site Selection and Reasonable Alternatives Considered of the Onshore EIA Report. The landfall will be constructed using a trenchless technique. We are currently exploring suitable options for this work. The installation in this area will begin in the offshore cable corridor and the onshore construction will be from the agricultural field adjacent to the landfall avoiding the beach, here a Transition Joint Bay will be dug and then reinstated to ground level. Construction will be planned to avoid closures of the beach and coastal path.</p>
<p>Substation Lighting</p>	<p>The Substation lighting is to be sensitively designed to limit amenity impacts. This will involve inward facing lighting, timers and limited use. The Substation will be unmanned, and only emergency lighting will be present.</p>

Issues Raised	TWP Response
Ecology/Biodiversity	Baseline ecological surveys, collecting data on protected species (fauna and flora) ornithology habitats and watercourses undertaken; the findings are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity, Terrestrial Ecology and Ornithology of this Onshore EIA Report. All habitats subject to temporary disturbance during construction, will be reinstated following the completion of construction and mitigation proposals will include enhancements to existing habitats to increase local biodiversity.
Private Water Supplies (PWS)	PWS within 250 m of excavations required for the final design will be identified in consultation with Aberdeenshire Council and a detailed risk assessment undertaken seeking to avoid impacts on supplies in line with Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) guidance. Should a significant impact on a PWS be confirmed, an alternative source of water will be provided. The Contractor will be required to prepare a supply-specific monitoring plan and mitigation strategy in communication with affected landowners. At PPP stage properties with 1 km search area have been included in an initial screening.
Flood Risk	The Substation will be designed to avoid increasing flood risk. The EIA fully considers hydrology and flood risk for each phase of the onshore infrastructure i.e. construction, operation and decommissioning. Future changes resulting from climate changes have been factored into the flood risk assessment and an Outline Drainage Management Plan has been produced.
Potential WWII Aircraft Remains and Associated Contamination	The nearest reported crash site is a Royal Navy Air Service (RNAS) Swordfish Torpedo Bomber (Serial No. P4031) reported as flying into Hill of Trusta (outside the Cultural Heritage Study Area) during the night of the 14 September 1942. No WWII aircraft remains have been identified within the Cultural Heritage Study Area for the Proposed Development. If previously unknown WWII aircraft remains are identified these would be protected under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986. Should any such remains be identified additional consultation with the Ministry of Defence and Aberdeenshire Council would be undertaken, and a licence would be required from the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre before any disturbance of the remains could be undertaken. Where possible, any such remains would be avoided through design and/or micrositing of associated elements of the Proposed Development. If required a detailed remediation strategy for any associated contamination would also be submitted to and approved by Aberdeenshire Council and SEPA prior to works commencing.
Support for renewable energy and meeting net zero targets.	The Proposed Development which relates to the onshore infrastructure of the Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm is classified as a National Development in NPF4 and will contribute to achieving net zero emission targets. An assessment of the proposed development against national and local policy is contained in the Planning Statement which accompanies the PPP application.
Construction Impacts to Agricultural Landholdings	The Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will include measures that will manage access within agricultural land holdings and between fields, including the identification of alternative routes (subject to agreement from landowners), to enable the continued operation of likely affected agricultural land holdings and crofts during the construction of the Proposed Development.

Issues Raised	TWP Response
Community Benefits	TWP are committed to working with the local community, community groups and Community Councils in order to establish, support and deliver community benefits to the locality. These commitments are voluntary in nature and are not secured through the PPP application, nevertheless there is a commitment to provide these to level up the local area. During the PAC events, stakeholders were given then opportunity to suggest potential options and solutions which could provide community benefits. There was a range of potential solutions that were suggested and are actively being considered such as: training and educational support for schools within the local area (STEM events), improvement to local community assets/areas, Improvements to walking/cycle routes, and the creation of a community benefit fund. These are just a few of the options that will be considered as the project progresses into the later stages.
Offshore Impacts	Any potential offshore impacts will be addressed appropriately within the offshore EIAR which will accompany the application for the offshore elements of the Project.
Soil and Geology Impacts	Soil management measures will be incorporated into the detailed CEMP within a Soil Management Plan (SMP). which will be prepared in accordance with Defra Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites (PB13298), Institute of Quarrying (IQ) Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings and British Society of Soil Science (BSSS) Working with Soil Guidance Note on Benefiting from Soil Management in Development and Construction. The design of the cable route will also seek to reduce permanent loss of Prime Agricultural Land and fragmentation of agricultural land. The finalised cable route will also be routed with consideration of sensitivity soil habitats (such as Peatland/carbon sinks) to minimise potential negative impacts. The cables will also have temperature sensing to provide an indication of any potential overheating risk and thus limit the occurrence of extreme soil warming.
Woodland and Forestry	The location and geographic extent of the PPP application Boundary has been designed to avoid areas of forestry and woodland areas where reasonably practicable. Any areas of permanent loss will require compensatory planting in line with the Scottish Government’s Policy on control of Woodland. Appropriate re-planting will be proposed within a Felling and Planting Plan.
Carbon Impact of the Project	It is expected that additional mitigation measures would be implemented to reduce the associated GHG emissions as part of the separate consenting for the Offshore Infrastructure. It should be noted that at this early stage, estimates of GHG emissions have a high level of uncertainty, which will improve as the Project progresses. A Whole Life Carbon Assessment has been included within Volume 1, Chapter 15: Climate Change which presents the estimates of the Greenhouse Gas emissions across the full lifetime of the Proposed Development.
Property and Land	The PPP Application Boundary has been designed with appropriate buffer zones from sensitive receptors including residential receptors properties and settlements along with the avoidance of community land and assets where reasonably practicable.

Table 4.3 Summary of Key Issues Raised at Second Round of PAC Events and How These Have Been Addressed

Issues Raised	The Applicant Response
Impacts upon fishing in the marine environment.	This will be addressed within the EIAR which will accompany the application for the offshore elements of the Project, which considers impact on the marine environment including fisheries. The EIA for offshore assesses potential impacts on the marine environs and receptors and where necessary proposes mitigation to avoid, reduce or offset significant effects.
Electro Magnetic Fields (EMF)	The Proposed Development will not include overhead power lines and all onshore cables will be buried underground, as such exposure to EMF from these sources can reasonably be expected to be within standards for health protection. This matter was scoped out of the onshore EIA assessment on the basis that there was no likelihood of any significant effects occurring for the Proposed Development.
Landscape and Visual Impact	The route and design of the Proposed Development have been developed through an iterative process involving engineering, environmental and landscape specialists to minimise potential visual impacts and integrate the Proposed Development with the surrounding landscape. As part of the design, embedded landscape mitigation measures have been developed to help to reduce visual impacts. The landscape and visual assessment of the Proposed Development is presented in the EIAR.
Water Environment and Flood Risk	The substation will be designed to avoid increasing flood risk. The Water Quality and Flood Risk Chapter of the EIAR contains an assessment of hydrology and flood risk for each phase of the onshore infrastructure i.e. construction, operation and decommissioning. Future changes resulting from climate change have been factored into the flood risk assessment and an Outline Management Plan has been produced.
Traffic and Transport – access off the A90	The Project is committed to producing a Construction Traffic Management Plan to support the Proposed Development, this document will aim to ensure that negative impacts related to any increase in traffic associated with construction activities are avoided or minimised and appropriately managed. Safety is a key consideration and some accesses may be subject to a left only turn policy for increased safety.
Cumulative	<p>Extensive work has been undertaken in order to demonstrate, as far as possible at PPP stage, that issues arising in terms of cumulative impacts between large scale developments within the locality will be reduced.</p> <p>Specific coverage is included throughout the Onshore EIA Report where individual topic chapters have all considered cumulative impacts in their assessment. The list of cumulative sites assessed was agreed with Aberdeenshire Council in September 2025.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>The Proposed Development at MSC stage will develop measures to achieve biodiversity enhancement within the PPP Application Boundary.</p> <p>Areas subject to disturbance for construction will be “made good”, fully restored and appropriately enhanced where appropriate.</p>

Issues Raised	The Applicant Response
<p>Land Use/Land take including Forestry</p>	<p>The location and geographic extent of the PPP Application Boundary has been designed to reduce the permanent loss of Prime Agricultural Land (LCA Grades 1, 2 and 3.1). As the permanent easement for the underground 220/275 kV Onshore Export Cables would not restrict agricultural use this easement is not considered to have any permanent effects on future agricultural land use on the agricultural land holdings affected.</p> <p>Permanent removal of commercial forestry would result as a result of the substation site within Fetteresso Forest; where replanting cannot be proposed compensatory planting will be required to comply with the Scottish Government’s Policy on the Control of Woodland Removal. Details of compensatory planting requirements would form part of the MSC stage.</p>
<p>Trenchless techniques</p>	<p>As discussed in Volume 1, Chapter 2: The Proposed Development, trenchless techniques including HDD methods will be utilised to minimise the potential disturbance from the Proposed Development. HDD crossings will be used at the landfall site, watercourse crossings, major roads and railway lines, and at towns and villages such as Drumlithie.</p>
<p>Offshore Impacts</p>	<p>See the response to this issue in Table 4.2 above.</p>
<p>Soil and Geology Impacts</p>	<p>See the response to this issue in Table 4.2 above.</p>

4.4 Environmental Impact Assessment Consultation Process

EIA Scoping and Onshore EIA Report Drafting

- 4.4.1 EIA Scoping is the process of identifying which environmental aspects should be assessed in the EIA and reported in the Onshore EIA Report and allows the opportunity to agree and discuss the appropriate methods used within the EIA with the planning authority as well as the associated statutory and non-statutory stakeholders. Further information on Scoping is included in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology.
- 4.4.2 TWP submitted a Scoping Report on 5 September 2024 (Planning Reference: ENQ/2024/1337) to Aberdeenshire Council which outlined the proposed scope and methodology for the technical assessments to be undertaken for the EIA and presented the environmental factors that were scoped in or out of the assessment.
- 4.4.3 An EIA Scoping Opinion was issued by Aberdeenshire Council on the 24 October 2024 (Volume 2, Appendix 1.1). This Onshore EIA Report incorporates the advice and guidance set out by stakeholders and Aberdeenshire Council. The relevant feedback and information are detailed for each technical discipline chapter in Volume 1, Chapters 6-16.
- 4.4.4 Where relevant, further consultation with Aberdeenshire Council and/or specific stakeholders was carried out to confirm a number of matters relating to changes in scope, clarification of advice received and agreement on methodologies to be used in assessments; data requests were also made to support the establishment of environmental baselines and potential receptors. Full details of this consultation are available for each topic chapter in Volume 1, Chapters 6-16.

Published Onshore EIA Report and Feedback Requirements

- 4.4.5 Under the Town and Country Planning (EIA) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (Scottish Government, 2017) (hereafter referred to as the 'EIA Regulations'), TWP must provide Aberdeenshire Council with sufficient copies of the Onshore EIA Report along with any additional copies to be sent to Consultation Bodies. Furthermore, the Onshore EIA Report will be made available to the public online via a digital copy and a hard copy which will be displayed at Stonehaven Public Library for public inspection.
- 4.4.6 Following submission of the Onshore EIA Report, a notice will be published in the local newspaper (the Press and Journal), a National paper (the Edinburgh Gazette) and on the TWP's website. These notices will be in accordance with Regulation 21(2) of the EIA Regulations and will include, but not be limited to, information detailing the application and Proposed Development to which the Onshore EIA Report refers to, where the Onshore EIA Report is available to read and the details of arrangements for public participation in the decision-making process. Public representations are able to be made 30 days from date of notice to Aberdeenshire Council.

4.5 Additional Engagement

Early Non-Statutory Consultation

4.5.1 TWP hosted three non-statutory public information events on 28 - 30 October 2024. The events were held at Drumlithie Village Hall, Gourdon Public Hall, and Stonehaven Town Hall, respectively. The information provided at these events were also replicated on an online virtual exhibition.

4.5.2 The information displayed at the events provided an overview of the Project at the scoping stage and introduced various aspects of the development process to the public. In addition, the event provided an overview of the Proposed Development and presented the Scoping Boundary, areas of constraint and various elements including the Landfall Search Area and preferred Substation Search Area. The event also allowed the opportunity for TWP to inform the public of the various outreach events that have taken place as well as any future opportunities for local communities and businesses to get involved with the Project.

Community Engagement

4.5.3 Providing skills development and future career choices for young people in the renewables sector is part of TWP’s commitment to Scotland, and they have partnered with a number of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) organisations to engage with school children in the Project region and provide access to education on renewables and offshore wind technology. As a result, TWP have hosted a number of STEM events in the local area in the form of a ‘Gust to Grid’ Workshop, developed in partnership with Aberdeen Science Centre (Thistle Wind Partners, 2025b). The workshop discussed how turbines work, and in respect to the Project, where the turbines would be located, substation information and various environmental aspects aiming to inform children in late primary school or early secondary school years. This was delivered to over 300 children in the Aberdeen Centre with 400 children in community groups and secondary schools participating in the ‘Gust to Grid’ workshop. In total, 703 students took part in the 2024/2025 round of workshops of which over 400 live in the AB39 postcode. Additionally, over 150 students are expected to take part in 2025/2026.

4.5.4 Table 4.3 presents the STEM events that have been carried out to date.

Table 4.3: STEM Engagement Activities

Date	Event	Stakeholder Participation
2 May 2024	YESC Celebration Day, Aberdeen	Children from 20+ schools from Aberdeenshire took part in a TWP workshop.
22 May 2024	YESC Celebration Day, Edinburgh	Children from 20+ schools from Edinburgh took part in a TWP workshop
1 June 2024	TechFest Activity Weekend, Aberdeen	Approximately 2,000 local children from Aberdeenshire took part in a series of events and activities supplied by TWP. In addition, TWP sponsored this event.

Date	Event	Stakeholder Participation
22 September 2024	TechFest Aberdeen Science Festival	1,500 children from Aberdeenshire who took part in a series of activities and workshop put on by TWP.
8 November 2024	Aberdeen Science Centre Workshop, Dunnottar Primary School	Children from project region invited to Science Centre to undertake TWP workshop 'gust to grid' (300 children in attendance).
20 November 2024	Aberdeen Science Centre Workshop, Arduithie Primary School	Children from project region invited to Science Centre to undertake TWP workshop 'gust to grid' (300 children in attendance).
29 January 2025	Aberdeen Science Centre Workshop, Newrtonhill Primary School	Children from project region invited to Science Centre to undertake TWP workshop 'gust to grid' (300 children in attendance).
4 February 2025	Aberdeen Science Centre Workshop, Lairhillcock Primary School	Children from project region invited to Science Centre to undertake TWP workshop 'gust to grid' (300 children in attendance).
28 February 2025	STEM Careers Fair, Mearns	Developing the Young Workforce NE, Mearns Academy and STEM organisations in the area.
20 May 2025	Stemovators, Stonehaven Town Hall, Aberdeenshire	Met with 100 children from Aberdeenshire including schools from the Bowdun project region who participated in TWP workshop.
22 May 2025	Stemovators, Herriot Watt University, Edinburgh	Met with Minister of Business Richard Lochhead and saw over 200 children participate in TWP workshop
14 September 2025	Aberdeen Science Festival TechFest	Sponsorship of Science Festival
29 October 2025	Aberdeen Science Centre Workshop, Dunnottar Primary School	Children from project region invited to Science Centre to undertake TWP workshop 'gust to grid' (150 children in attendance).
4 November 2025	Techfest STEM Next Competition final	Participating in awarding children who won the Techfest STEM Next Competition, partially sponsored by TWP.
17 November 2025	Aberdeen Science Centre Workshop, Newrtonhill Primary School	Children from project region invited to Science Centre to undertake TWP workshop 'gust to grid' (150 children in attendance).

4.5.5 TWP hosted or attended a number of events for the local communities and several community councils. This aimed to introduce the Project to the local area, provide information on the proposed development of the onshore infrastructure associated with the Project and provide regular updates to the public regarding the progress of the Project. Local community and Community Council engagement activities are detailed in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Local Community and Community Council Engagement Activities

Date	Event	Stakeholder Participation
3 June 2023	TWP Stall at the Feein' Market, Stonehaven	Initial engagement with the community, spoke to members of the community and local organisations.
9 May 2024	Gourdon Community Council Meeting	Gourdon Community Council, local public and councillors.
1 June 2024	TWP Stall at the Feein' Market, Stonehaven	Local community/general public within the Stonehaven/Mearns/Southern Aberdeenshire areas with a potential view of the offshore infrastructure.
25 August 2024	TWP Stall at the Harbour Festival	Local community/general public within the Stonehaven/Mearns/Southern Aberdeenshire areas with a potential view of the offshore infrastructure.
18 September 2024	Benholm and Johnshaven Community Council Meeting	Benholm and Johnshaven Community Council and around 70 members of the local Mearns community.
28 October 2024	Drumlithie Public Information Engagement Event	Local community within the Drumlithie area with an interest in the Proposed Development. Invitations were sent to all local community councils (Inverbervie, Johnshaven & Benholm, Mearns, Gourdon, Arbuthnott and Stonehaven District), local councillors, Mairi Gougeon MSP and Andrew Bowie MP.
29 October 2024	Gourdon Public Information Engagement Event	Local community within the Drumlithie area with an interest in the Proposed Development. Invitations were sent to all local community councils (Inverbervie, Johnshaven & Benholm, Mearns, Gourdon, Arbuthnott and Stonehaven District), local councillors, Mairi Gougeon MSP and Andrew Bowie MP.
30 October 2024	Stonehaven Public Information Engagement Event	Local community within the Drumlithie area with an interest in the Proposed Development. Invitations were sent to all local community councils (Inverbervie, Johnshaven & Benholm, Mearns, Gourdon, Arbuthnott and Stonehaven District), local councillors, Mairi Gougeon MSP and Andrew Bowie MP.
15 January 2025	Arbuthnott Community Council Meeting	Arbuthnott Community Council, around 15 members of the public from Arbuthnott community and beyond, councillor George Carr and members from surrounding community councils.
5 February 2025	Meeting with the Coastal Pathway Group	Four team members from Coastal Pathways Group to visit coastal pathway project that TWP funded and meet with community.
31 May 2025	Gourdon Party in the Park	Gourdon Community Council, local community and councillors
7 June 2025	TWP Stall at the Feein' Market, Stonehaven	Stonehaven Community Council, councillors, MSP's, Andrew Bowie MP and local community.

Date	Event	Stakeholder Participation
21 August 2025	Pre-Application Consultation Event in Johnshaven	Local community of Johnshaven and surrounding region.
22 August 2025	Pre-Application Consultation Event in Drumlithie	Local community of Drumlithie and surrounding region.
31 August 2025	TWP Stall at the Harbour Festival, Stonehaven	Cancelled due to weather warning.

4.5.6 In 2024, TWP gave more than £14,000 to local organisations in funding. Following feedback from the community, in 2025 TWP a community donations fund was established, where organisations and community projects can apply for funding up to £500.

Political Engagement

4.5.7 The project team has sought to keep local Councillors and Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs) abreast of the project at all the key stages. For example, copies of the POAN were issued to MSPs and Councillors, in addition to invitations to PAC Events. In addition, a Roundtable Meeting to brief local politicians on the project and intention to submit the PPP was held on 10 October 2025.

4.5.8 In addition to the above engagement with the local Member of Parliament (MP) for Aberdeenshire South has been ongoing since 2024. This has comprised meetings to discuss the Project and to receive feedback on concerns raised by constituents in the local area. Further information is detailed in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: MP for Aberdeenshire South Engagement Activities

Date	Event/Meeting	Stakeholder Participation
28 August 2024	General briefing meeting with Aberdeenshire South MP (Andrew Bowie)	Andrew Bowie MP present at meeting.
17 January 2025	Meeting with Andrew Bowie MP and Mr Macphie (Local Resident) requested by Mr Macphie via Mr Bowie's office	Andrew Bowie MP, staff from Mr Bowie's office and Mr Macphie present at meeting.
2 October 2025	PAC Event Johnshaven attended by Aberdeenshire South MP (Andrew Bowies)	Andrew Bowie MP, staff from Mr Bowie's office.
10 October 2025	Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Roundtable	

Wider Supply Chain and Industry Engagement

4.5.9 The Applicant has worked closely with the Energy Transition Zone, Enterprise Agencies (Scottish Development International and Scottish Enterprise) and Clusters in Scotland to use future requirements, technical knowledge and contracting arrangements know-how to play a role in de-risking supply chain investments in key components, products and services such as: Wind Turbine manufacturing, inter-array and export cables, primary steel (main structure) manufacturing and assembly in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

- 4.5.10 The Applicant was recognised for its transformational work in creating opportunities for North East businesses in offshore wind through its Supply Chain Pathways Programme which received a Scottish Green Energy Supply Chain Award in September 2025.
- 4.5.11 The Applicant also has a programme of engagement with local businesses which have competencies which align with offshore wind requirements but not necessarily the track record. The categories identified with the greatest alignment between existing Scottish capabilities and the Applicant’s requirements are across Balance of Plant and Transport & Installation support. Through the Supply Chain Manager, the Applicant is working directly with businesses to help shape their investment plans and form a part of the visible pipeline of activity to de-risk their plans. More details can be found in Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism.
- 4.5.12 In addition to the above, wider supply chain and industry engagement the applicant has participated in a range of early engagement events with the supply chain companies and supply chain stakeholders are included in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Early, Wider Supply Chain & Stakeholder Engagement

Date	Event	Stakeholder Participation
October 2022	TWP Supply Chain Event, Aberdeen	Run with the Enterprise Agencies and Cluster. Over 80 businesses attended.
October 2023	Floating Offshore Wind, Aberdeen	Exhibition stand and 1-2-1s.
February 2024	ETZ Secondary Steel Masterclass, Aberdeen	Presentation to ~100 businesses and 1-2-1s.
October 2024	Floating Offshore Wind, Aberdeen	Exhibition stand and 1-2-1s.
February 2025	ETZ Offshore Wind Masterclass, Aberdeen	Presentation, advice and information to ~100 businesses and 1-2-1s.
September 2025	TWP Supply Chain Event, Aberdeen	Run with Energy Industries Council with attendees from ETZ, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Development International, Clean Energy Cluster and Business Gateway. 80 businesses attended. 30 businesses participated in 1-2-1s with supply chain, technical and procurement team as well as the applicant’s main contractor.

4.6 Summary

- 4.6.1 Consultation with stakeholders has been key in directing and informing the design of the Proposed Development, helping to identify potential impacts and concerns early in the process and propose potential mitigation where possible, building connections with local communities by being transparent and accountable.
- 4.6.2 Engagement with Aberdeenshire Council and the local community has been prioritised from the early stages of the lifecycle of the Proposed Development to improve the quality of the PPP application and to inform design development. A number of key stakeholders including NatureScot, SEPA, and Historic Environment have been consulted during the early stages of the Project (Pre-Scoping; National Development Application meetings; Scoping) through to the subsequent design stages and the submission of this Onshore EIA Report.
- 4.6.3 In addition, BOWFL are committed to engaging with the local supply chain at the appropriate stages of the Proposed Development's progression, creating the conditions for Scottish and UK companies to support delivery of the Project and other Scotwind developments.

References

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