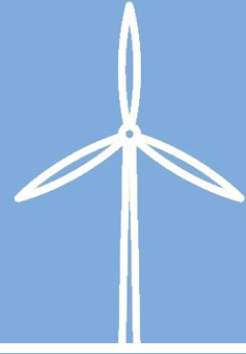


# EDF RENEWABLES



## Watten Wind Farm

Pre Application Consultation (PAC) Report

# 1 Document Control

DOCUMENT CONTROL					
Document Title		Pre Application Consultation (PAC) Report			
Rev.	Date [dd mmm yyyy]	Description	Prepared	Checked	Approved
01	09/05/2023	First draft of PAC Report	SD	RS	SD
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# Contents

1	Document Control .....	2
2	Executive Summary.....	4
	2.1 Purpose of this Report.....	4
3	Introduction & Background to Proposed Development .....	5
4	Development Consultation .....	6
	4.1 Statutory Consultation .....	6
	4.2 Consultees .....	6
5	Consultation Timelines .....	8
	5.1 May 2022.....	8
	5.2 June 2022 .....	8
	5.3 October 2022.....	8
	5.4 November 2022.....	8
	5.5 June 2023 .....	9
	5.6 July 2023.....	9
6	Community Consultation Activities.....	10
	6.1 Direct Stakeholder Engagement.....	10
	6.2 Website .....	10
	6.3 News Releases and Press Adverts .....	10
	6.4 Leaflets .....	11
	6.5 3D Visualisation Technology.....	11
	6.6 Public Exhibitions .....	12
	6.7 Online Exhibition/Virtual Village Hall .....	14
	6.8 Feedback Forms/Questionnaires.....	15
7	Consultation Feedback.....	16
	7.1 Feedback From First Exhibitions.....	16
	7.2 Feedback From Second Exhibitions .....	19
8	Developer Response to Public Consultation .....	22
	8.1 Turbine Layout and Size of Turbines .....	22
	8.2 Potential Noise Effects .....	22
	8.3 Use, Management & Distribution of Community Benefit Fund .....	22
9	PAC Report Appendices .....	24

## 2 Executive Summary

### 2.1 Purpose of this Report

This Report has been produced for the purpose of summarising the pre-application consultation activities undertaken by EDF Energy Renewables Ltd (EDF Renewables) for a proposed wind farm at Watten, Caithness. It provides information on how EDF Renewables has sought to engage with the various stakeholders and summarises the feedback received. The Report also sets out how the feedback has influenced the Proposed Development.

### 3 Introduction & Background to Proposed Development

EDF Energy Renewables Ltd (the ‘Applicant’) is submitting an application under section 36 of the Electricity Act (1989) (as amended) to construct and operate the proposed ‘Development’ comprising up to 7 turbines and battery storage facility with a combined generating capacity in excess of 50MW. The Applicant also seeks a direction from the Scottish Ministers pursuant to section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) that planning permission is deemed to be granted for the Development.

This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report describes the consultation programme undertaken for the Watten Wind Farm (the proposed Development).

EDF Renewables values constructive input to the Proposed Development design and recognises the positive contribution that local knowledge and concerns can have in developing a sustainable, successful development. This is facilitated by effective communications and consultation activities to give local stakeholders the opportunity to learn about the Proposed Development in the early stages of process. They can thereby share their views and concerns whilst the design process is ongoing and practicable alterations can be incorporated before the design is finalised where feasible.

This PAC Report provides details of the range of methods, materials, and activities undertaken during the consultation process to describe what has been carried out in advance of the planning application to ensure that meaningful community consultation has taken place. In doing so this PAC Report also explains the outcomes of the consultation programme and details where feedback has influenced the development design process.

## 4 Development Consultation

### 4.1 Statutory Consultation

Proposals for wind farms with a generation capacity greater than 50 megawatts (MW), such as the proposed Development, are subject to the consenting procedures set out in Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 ('the Electricity Act') and applications are made directly to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU).

The Town & Country Planning (Development Management procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 require 'Major' and 'National' planning applications to be accompanied by pre application consultation reports. Whilst this does not relate directly to Electricity Act applications, the Applicant has adopted its principles as good practice for this Section 36 application.

Planning Series Circular 3:2013 - Development Management Procedures (PCS 3:2013) also provides guidance for consultation. It emphasises the Scottish Government's wish to encourage improved trust and positive working relationships from the earliest stages in the planning process and to provide, where possible, an early opportunity for community views to be reflected in proposals. As part of this requirement it is stated that:

*"...both pre-application consultations with the community and pre-application discussions with the planning authority and statutory consultees are intended to add value at the start of the development management process. They should improve the quality of the proposal and allow prospective applicants the opportunity to amend their emerging proposals in light of community, statutory consultee and planning authority opinion."*

*PCS 3:2013, 2.2*

EDF Renewables was able to use the consultation programme to establish links with stakeholders and dialogue with local communities. Initial consultation for Watten Wind Farm ensured that local residents were able to provide feedback, views and comments, at an early stage. This has helped to shape the Development as proposed. Follow up exhibitions relating to the final design showed how the development design had changed and provide an opportunity to ask questions to the Applicant and EIA team.

### 4.2 Consultees

To ensure an inclusive approach to the consultation process, it was important to give the public and other stakeholders the opportunity to consider the proposals and discuss their thoughts and ideas with members of the project team through a variety of means.

The consultation process commenced prior to Scoping in May 2022. In accordance with the Scoping Guidelines provided by the Scottish Government's ECU, the Applicant undertook initial pre-Scoping meetings with The Highland Council (THC) on 17th May 2022 and the ECU on 5th May 2022 via MS Teams to provide a general introduction to the Proposed Development. Furthermore, a Design Workshop was held with THC via MS Teams on 12th September 2022.

The Scoping Report was submitted on 26th May 2022, after which statutory consultation responses were received. Non-statutory consultees were also engaged during the Scoping process.

Community consultations also began during the Scoping period with the offer of meetings; email and telephone communications; and two rounds of public exhibitions.

There were two rounds of public exhibitions in 2022. Scheduled to contribute to the design evolution process, the first round was held across the 21st and 22nd June 2022 over two days and across two venues: Spittal and Watten Village Halls. The second round was held across 8th and 9th November 2022, again over two days and across two venues: Spittal and Watten Village Halls. These exhibitions showcased the Proposed Development and provided a chance for the public to learn more about the scheme and provide feedback.

A third round of public exhibitions were held in June 2023 in advance of the application submission. The exhibitions were held across the 26th & 27th June, again over two days and across two venues: Spittal and Watten Village Halls.

All information presented at the June 2022 public exhibitions was available to download from the project website. All of the information presented at the November 2022 public exhibitions was also made available online in a virtual exhibition which went live on 10th November 2022 and was available until 25th November 2022 which gave those members of the public who were not able to attend the in person exhibitions further opportunity to learn about and provide feedback on the Proposed Development. Similarly, the information presented at the June 2023 public exhibitions was made available online in a virtual exhibition which was live for a period of two weeks from 28th June 2023.

All rounds of exhibitions – first round in June 2022; second round in November 2022; and third round in June 2023 were advertised in local newspapers, and leaflets were sent to all properties within a 12km radius of the centre of the proposed Development Site, numbering in excess of 1,800.

Overall, therefore, these consultation activities have sought to maintain dialogue on the Proposed Development with a wide range of local stakeholder groups. This included a number of Community Councils as noted below:

**Community Councils:**

- Watten Community Council
- Halkirk Community Council
- Latheron & Lybster Community Council
- Tannach & District Community Council
- Bower Community Council
- Sinclair Bay Community Council
- Berriedale & Dunbeath Community Council
- Castletown Community Council

## 5 Consultation Timelines

An ongoing programme of communications has been maintained with local stakeholders and residential communities in the vicinity of the proposed Watten Wind Farm.

Specific consultation activities have been undertaken as part of the following main programme:

### 5.1 May 2022

- Initial meeting with ECU.
- Initial meeting with THC.
- Introductory letters issued to residential properties within 2km of the proposed Development Site advising of initial public exhibitions.
- Letters issued (by email) to Community Councils & local Elected Members advising of initial public exhibitions.
- Press Release issued to the John O’Groat Journal, the Caithness Courier and the Press & Journal advising of proposals and dates of public exhibitions.
- Scoping Report submitted requesting Scoping Opinion from the Energy Consents Unit.
- EDF R project website launched - <https://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten/>

### 5.2 June 2022

- Flyer/leaflet issued to all residential and commercial properties within 12km of the Development Site (numbering in excess of 1,800) advising of initial exhibitions.
- Public Exhibition, Spittal Village Hall (21<sup>st</sup> June 2022)
- Public Exhibition, Watten Village Hall (22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022)
- Exhibition materials uploaded to project website.

### 5.3 October 2022

- Flyer issued to all residential and commercial properties within 12km of the Development Site (numbering in excess of 1800) advising of second round of exhibitions.
- Letters issued (by email) to Community Councils advising of second round of public exhibitions.
- Emails sent to those who asked to be kept up to date.
- Update to EDF R project website.
- Press Release issued to the John O’Groat Journal, the Caithness Courier and the Press & Journal advising of proposals and dates of public exhibitions.

### 5.4 November 2022

- Public Exhibition, Spittal Village Hall (8<sup>th</sup> November 2022)



- Public Exhibition, Watten Village Hall (9<sup>th</sup> November 2022)
- Project website updated.
- Virtual Exhibition live (from 10<sup>th</sup> November for 2 weeks)

Furthermore, a third round of public exhibitions were held to inform local stakeholders and residents of the final proposals in advance of the application submission. This involved the following:

## 5.5 June 2023

- Flyer/leaflet issued to all residential and commercial properties within 12km of the Proposed Development Site (numbering in excess of 1,800) advising of third round of exhibitions.
- Emails/letters sent to those who asked, throughout previous consultation events, to be kept up to date, advising of third round of exhibitions
- Update to EDF R project website.
- Press Release issued to the John O’Groat Journal, the Caithness Courier and the Press & Journal advising of dates of third round of public exhibitions.
- Public Exhibition, Spittal Village Hall (26<sup>th</sup> June 2023)
- Public Exhibition, Watten Village Hall (27<sup>th</sup> June 2023)
- Virtual Exhibition live (from 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 for 3 weeks)

In addition to the consultation that has already taken place, the following is proposed:

## 5.6 July 2023

- Flyer/leaflet will be issued to all residential and commercial properties within 12km of the Proposed Development Site (numbering in excess of 1,800) advising of the submission of the application, including details of how a representation can be made.
- Emails/letters sent to those who asked, throughout previous consultation events, to be kept up to date, advising of the submission of the application, including details of how a representation can be made.
- Emails to all Community Councils note in Section 4.2, advising of the submission of the application.
- Update to EDF R project website, including the upload of the document supporting the application.
- Press Release issued to the John O’Groat Journal, the Caithness Courier and the Press & Journal confirming the application submission.
- Formal notification, by means of advert, will be placed in Edinburgh Gazette and the Scotsman. Further adverts will be placed in the John O’Groat Journal, the Caithness Courier and the Press & Journal.

## 6 Community Consultation Activities

The following sections describe the various communications and consultation activities that have been carried out for the proposed Development.

### 6.1 Direct Stakeholder Engagement

Direct communications activities have been undertaken with specific local stakeholders, residents and groups.

Written contact (via letter and/or email) was made with the Community Councils detailed in Section 4.2 at the initial launch of the Proposed Development to offer individual briefings, and subsequently, to provide updates on the timing of public consultation events.

Invitation letters were sent to in excess of 1,800 local residential and commercial properties within 12 km of the proposed Development Site ahead of the June 2022, November 2022 and June 2023 public exhibitions. The letters provided direct contact details for anyone unable to attend the events but who had questions about the Proposed Development or required further details on the scheme.

Public exhibition materials (boards, and a questionnaire to gather feedback) were made available on the EDF R project website following the June 2022 public exhibition, and via virtual online exhibition following both the November 2022 and June 2023 events, which was live for a period of 2 weeks.

Example copies of correspondence noted above are provided in **Appendix 1** to this PAC Report.

Throughout the consultation, and particularly as a result of any issues raised during the public exhibitions, contact has been made in response to questions raised.

### 6.2 Website

EDF Renewables established a Watten Wind Farm project website page at [www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten](http://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten). The website provides details of the project, updates on project activities and downloads of project documentation.

A screenshot of the Watten Wind Farm project page is included as **Appendix 2** to this PAC Report.

### 6.3 News Releases and Press Adverts

Press information on the Proposed Development and the public exhibitions (held in June and November 2022, and in June 2023) have been issued to local newspapers and media, as noted below. Copies of the press releases, and adverts, are provided in **Appendix 3** to this PAC Report.

- Caithness Courier – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022
- John O’Groat Journal – 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022
- John O’Groat Journal – 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022
- Caithness Courier – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022
- John O’Groat Journal – 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022
- Caithness Courier – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022
- John O’Groat Journal – 16<sup>th</sup> June 2023
- Caithness Courier – 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023

## 6.4 Leaflets

Two project leaflets have been distributed during the consultation campaign to invite local residents and community council members to the exhibitions.

The initial leaflet, distributed ahead of the first round of public exhibitions in June 2022, advertised the exhibitions and introduced the Proposed Development. A second leaflet, circulated in October 2022 ahead of the second round of public exhibitions, advertised the in-person exhibitions as well as the virtual online event and provided a project update. Both leaflets included an overview of the scheme, contact details for written queries and full information on the exhibitions.

The leaflets were designed to ensure that any residents who could not attend the public exhibitions were given information on the scheme and had the opportunity to provide feedback on the Proposed Development, either directly to EDF Energy Renewables or in the case of the second round of exhibitions, via the virtual exhibition space.

Copies of the leaflet were mailed to in excess of 1,800 local addresses and included business addresses as well as individual households. Additional copies of the leaflet were provided via email to Community Councils ahead of both rounds of exhibitions.

A further leaflet was distributed to advise of the third round of public exhibitions in June 2023, at which the final plans for the Watten Wind Farm were displayed.

Copies of all three of the Watten Wind Farm project leaflets are provided in **Appendix 4** to this PAC Report.

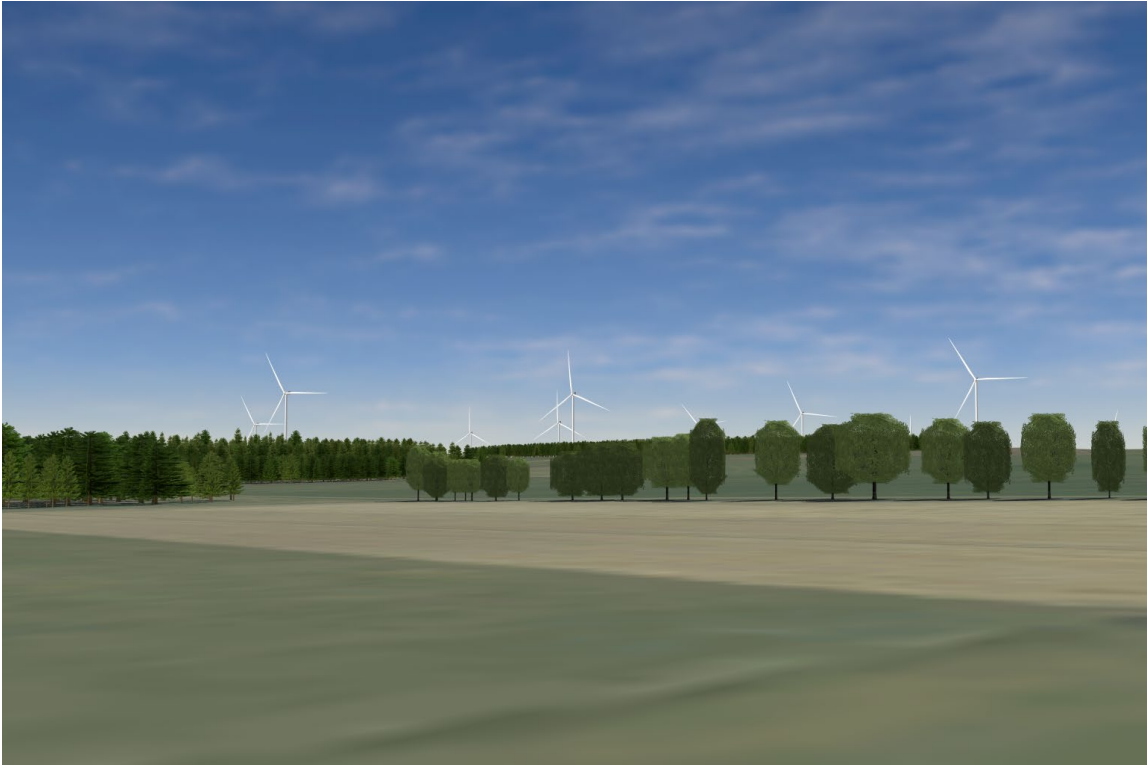
## 6.5 3D Visualisation Technology

Special 3D visualisation technology was commissioned to demonstrate the turbine layout on the Site. This was presented as part of the second round of public exhibitions in November 2022, and again as part of the third round in June 2023.

It combines detailed terrain, building and vegetation data, satellite imagery of the site, and local photography to model the turbine layout in a dynamic 3D re-creation of the site and surrounding area. As a useful design and communication tool, it enables the user to view the wind farm from anywhere in the local landscape. Other existing and planned wind farms in the area were also included so that cumulative impacts could be demonstrated and viewed.

The model enables views of the proposed layout to be replicated from nearby properties, postcodes and vantage points, and also has the flexibility to show visualisations from different heights.

Example of imagery from model is shown below.



## 6.6 Public Exhibitions

Two series of community exhibitions have been held to provide information on the Development and gather feedback from attendees. The first round of these exhibitions were held in June 2022, and a second round was held in November 2022, as follows:

- First Round:
  - 21st June 2022 – Spittal Village Hall, Spittal (2:00pm – 7:00pm)
  - 22nd June 2022 – Watten Hall, Watten (2:00pm – 7:00pm)
- Second Round:
  - 8th November 2022 – Spittal Village Hall, Spittal (2:00pm – 7:00pm)
  - 9th November 2022 – Watten Hall, Watten (2:00pm – 7:00pm)
- Third Round (to inform of the final plans prior to the submission of the application):
  - 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – Spittal Village Hall, Spittal (3:00pm – 7:00pm)
  - 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – Watten Hall, Watten (3:00pm – 7:00pm)

Events were held on different days and extended into the early evening, to give visitors a range of opportunities to attend at their convenience and to provide feedback.

Copies of the exhibition boards on display at all three exhibitions (including the virtual exhibition as part of the second and third rounds of consultation) can be found in **Appendix 5** of this PAC Report.

Example photographs below show the set-up of the exhibitions.

**First Round Public Exhibitions – June 2022 (Watten Village Hall)**



**Second Round Public Exhibitions – November 2022 (Spittal Village Hall)**



## 6.7 Online Exhibition/Virtual Village Hall

To complement both the second and third rounds of face to face public exhibitions, an online exhibition was created.

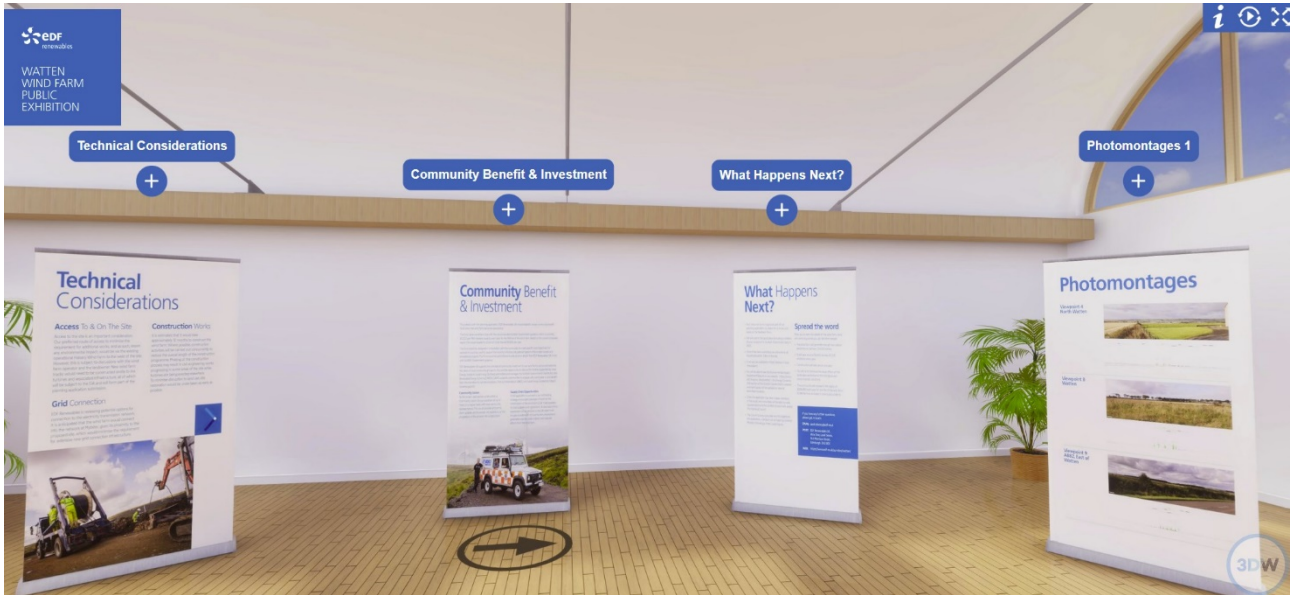
This included display boards, maps, plans, photomontages and in the case of the second round of exhibitions (in November 2022) feedback forms/questionnaires.

In addition, because the virtual exhibition was available online, accessibility was provided over an extended period including weekends and visitors to the event also had the option of downloading or printing copies of the display materials for viewing and inspection.

The virtual exhibitions were live from 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 (second round) and the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 (third round) for a period of 2 weeks. The virtual exhibition was promoted by the distribution of leaflets to local residents, and advertisements in the Caithness Courier and John O’Groat Journal.

Example screen shots from the online exhibitions are shown below





## 6.8 Feedback Forms/Questionnaires

Different questionnaires were used at the first and second rounds of exhibitions to assess opinions and feedback on the Proposed Development as the project evolved.

Copies of the questionnaires are included in **Appendix 6** to this PAC Report and a review of the feedback received is included in the next section of this PAC Report.

Questionnaires did not form part of the third round of exhibitions in June 2023.

## 7 Consultation Feedback

Questionnaires and feedback forms were made available for visitors to complete at both rounds of exhibitions, to encourage them to provide comments on the Proposed Development or seek more information. All feedback was considered as part of the design process and a revised design was presented at the second exhibition. It was made clear at the exhibitions that feedback was not a formal representation on the application and highlighted how and when such a representation could be made. The responses obtained from each of the two public exhibitions are summarised separately below.

### 7.1 Feedback From First Exhibitions

The first stage exhibitions were intended to introduce the proposed Development to local residents, to explain the development process and to provide some initial details on the design of the proposed Development on which comments and views were encouraged.

Details of attendance at the different venues at the events in June 2022, were as follows:

**Table 7.1. Summary of First Round Exhibitions**

Exhibition Venue	Number of Attendees	Completed Questionnaires	Invitations Issued
Spittal Village Hall, 21st June 2022	12	19	~1800
Watten Village Hall, 22nd June 2022	53		

Among the visitors to the exhibitions, the majority said they were attending as a result of the invitation letter they received in the post (68%).

In terms of the information provided at the exhibitions, the majority (58%) were of the view that the events were ‘useful and informative’. A further 37% did not provide an answer to this question.

To help gauge the views of visitors to the exhibition, the questionnaires sought answers to a number of specific questions that included opinions on general energy matters alongside specific questions on the Proposed Development.



**Table 7.2. Summary of First Exhibition Questionnaire Responses**

<b>The Exhibition</b>							
<i>Where did you find out about the exhibition?</i>	<i>Advert/ Paper</i> 16%	<i>Website/ Online</i> 0%	<i>Exhibition</i> 0%	<i>Newsletter</i> 68%	<i>Other</i> 5%	<i>No Response</i> 11%	
<i>Has the exhibition been useful?</i>	Yes 58%		No 5%		No Response 37%		
<i>If not, please explain why.</i>	No new information Positive that we could give feedback						
<b>About Yourself</b>							
<i>Do you live nearby</i>	Yes 89%		No 0%			No Response 11%	
<i>Are you a representative of any organisation or group?</i>	Yes 0%		No 100%			No Response 0%	
<i>How old are you?</i>	<i>Under 20</i> 0%	<i>20 – 29</i> 0%	<i>30 – 39</i> 16%	<i>40 – 49</i> 10.5%	<i>50 – 59</i> 21%	<i>60 +</i> 42%	<i>N/A</i> 10.5%
<b>The Project</b>							
<i>Are you concerned about the potential effects of climate change?</i>	Yes 85%		No 10%			No Response/Unsure 5%	
<i>Do you support the generation of renewable energy in Scotland?</i>	Yes 63%		No 21%			No Response/Unsure 16%	
<i>Do you support the development of onshore wind farms in Scotland?</i>	Yes 16%		No 74%			No Response/Unsure 10%	

<p>Are you supportive of the potential plans for the Watten wind farm?</p>	<p>Yes 10%</p>	<p>No 74%</p>	<p>Unsure 16%</p>
<p>Do you have any general feedback on the development of Watten wind farm and/or ideas that you would like us to consider as we progress with the design? (Summary)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep peat disruption</li> <li>• Very near to proposed World Heritage Site</li> <li>• Migrating birds</li> <li>• Ospreys and golden eagle nearby</li> <li>• Wildlife including deer</li> <li>• Why are we not developing offshore and wave rather than taking up land that is becoming harder and harder to get due to population size, required living space, food production?</li> <li>• Build the things offshore.</li> <li>• Cumulative effects on the communities around Watten</li> <li>• Caithness has more turbines than we need and living close to them we often see them either turned off due to lack of wind or switched off as power not needed.</li> <li>• Local individual residents do not benefit at all but have to endure noise &amp; flicker and watch our unique landscape being ruined.</li> <li>• Impact on property prices.</li> <li>• Health issues - noise pollution, flickering, mental health issues.</li> <li>• Community Benefit Fund - we are overflowing with funds that many people can't access.</li> <li>• 3rd Party independent management of any Community Benefit, take it out of the hand of a few local individuals.</li> <li>• How do we benefit individually from the benefit fund.</li> <li>• Turbine size of 200 metres is unacceptable, twice the size of most other turbines in the area.</li> <li>• Visual impact</li> <li>• Funds should be made available for personal households to update their property or get domestic renewables - or money off energy bills.</li> <li>• Individuals MUST be able to access funds - NOT JUST committees or groups.</li> <li>• Decommissioning</li> <li>• There seem to be no benefits to the local population.</li> <li>• Is there evidence that there will be a reduction in carbon after all the construction, transportation etc.</li> <li>• I think it is a good site for a windfarm. I would like to see environment enhancement go along with the development of the windfarm: woodland planting on the south side of the Shielton burn, and any ditch blocking possible.</li> </ul>		

**Table 7.3. Summary of Second Round Exhibitions**

Exhibition Venue	Number of Attendees	Completed Questionnaires	Invitations Issued
Spittal Village Hall, 8th November	18	18	~1800
Watten Village Hall, 9th November	65		

## 7.2 Feedback From Second Exhibitions

The following section lists the questions posed on the questionnaire made available as part of the second consultation events, in November 2022, and summarises the responses provided by the attendees that completed them.

**Table 7.4. Summary of Second Exhibition Questionnaire Responses**

The Exhibition						
Where did you find out about the exhibition?	Advert/ Paper 0%	Website/ Online 6%	Exhibition 0%	Newsletter 94%	Other 0%	No Response 0%
Where you already aware of the proposed Wind Farm	Yes 89%		No 11%		No Response 0%	
Has the exhibition been useful?	Yes 83%		No 11%		No Response 6%	
If not, please explain why.	Does not address some of the issues around the wider (worldwide) implications of turbine development (e.g. mining of raw materials). Basically a sales pitch, not addressing the impacts. Positive use of the 3D model.					
Did you attend the first round of exhibitions in June 2022?	Yes 67%		No 27%		No Response 6%	
About Yourself						
Do you live nearby	Yes 94%		No 0%		No Response 6%	
Are you a	Yes		No		No Response	

representative of any organisation or group?	11%		83%			6%	
If so, which one?	Watten Village Hall Committee Sinclair’s Bay Community Council						
How old are you?	Under 20 0%	20 – 29 0%	30 – 39 17%	40 – 49 11%	50 – 59 27%	60 + 39%	N/A 6%
<b>The Project</b>							
Are you concerned about the potential effects of climate change?	Yes 83%		No 11%			No Response/Unsure 6%	
Do you support the generation of renewable energy in Scotland?	Yes 89%		No 11%			No Response/Unsure 0%	
Do you support the development of onshore wind farms in Scotland?	Yes 17%		No 50%			No Response/Unsure 33%	
Are you supportive of the potential plans for the Watten wind farm?	Yes 38%		No 56%			Unsure 6%	
Do you have any general feedback on the development of Watten wind farm and/or ideas that you would like us to consider as we progress with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cumulative impacts</li> <li>• Lack of clarity over existing community benefit funds</li> <li>• Size of the turbines in comparison to those already in operation, they are too big and intrusive.</li> <li>• Visual impact</li> <li>• Health impacts</li> <li>• Noise</li> <li>• Not reducing electricity prices</li> <li>• Impacts on peatlands</li> <li>• Total of the fund will be almost £8m for the life of the project</li> <li>• Osprey</li> </ul>						

<p><i>the design? (Summary)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Impact on flora and fauna</i></li><li>• <i>Internet connectivity</i></li><li>• <i>Good site for a wind farm</i></li><li>• <i>Like the idea of peatland restoration and riparian planting as part of habitat enhancement</i></li><li>• <i>Aviation impacts</i></li><li>• <i>Community benefit should benefit the whole of Caithness</i></li><li>• <i>Interested in potential investment opportunity, and would welcome further discussions.</i></li><li>• <i>3D visual display was very useful.</i></li><li>• <i>Will the turbines be turned off like some of the existing ones.</i></li><li>• <i>Consider offering money to individual households, schools, community halls, golf clubs etc. for renewables e.g. solar panels.</i></li></ul>
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## 8 Developer Response to Public Consultation

The feedback received from consultation and an emerging understanding of the Site through the EIA process have been the principal criteria for informing the design layout of the proposed Development. Where sensitivities have been raised or identified by consultees, details of the layout have been adjusted to avoid impacts on these sensitivities where possible.

The following section sets out the key issues raised during the pre-application period. Where appropriate, comments have been made to address these issues or highlight where changes have been made to the application as a direct result of the feedback received.

### 8.1 Turbine Layout and Size of Turbines

The final layout of the Proposed Development has been the subject of a number of iterations and refinements to mitigate predicted adverse effects and address stakeholder concerns as far as reasonably practicable. An overview of the design process is outlined in Chapter 4: Site Selection and Design Evolution of the EIA Report.

The design that was presented at the public exhibitions in June 2022 proposed an 8 turbine development with tip heights of up to 220m. Following the exhibitions, environmental surveys and assessments continued on Site, and the responses from the public and statutory consultees have been fed into the continued evolution of the layout.

In particular, landscape effects, hydrology, complying with noise limits and developing a visually cohesive scheme within the context of local forestry, topography and other conditions have all been key elements of the overarching design strategy that has now produced an amended layout for the Proposed Development.

Taking all these factors into account, the Applicant reduced the proposed number of turbines from eight to seven and changes have been made to the location of all turbines when compared to the original proposed scheme to varying degrees. In making these changes the Applicant has developed a layout which takes into account a variety of environmental factors, including nearby residences, amongst others.

Overall the aim of the design revisions has been to create a balanced layout that strikes the best balance between environmental, technical and financial viability matters.

### 8.2 Potential Noise Effects

Avoiding noise impacts at nearby residential properties has been a key development consideration. In response to queries and concerns expressed over potential noise from the wind farm, detailed modelling exercises have been undertaken for the various layout iterations throughout the design process.

At all stages, industry-specific noise propagation models have been used to provide feedback on draft and final proposed layout to ensure that turbine noise levels comply with nationally recognised noise guidance.

### 8.3 Use, Management & Distribution of Community Benefit Fund

Several of the attendees to the public exhibitions expressed an interest in the community benefit fund for the proposed Development should it receive consent. In response to questions, EDF

Renewables has reiterated its commitment to establish a community benefit fund for the Development which would be set up in line with Scottish Government’s Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments.

It is intended that the proposed community benefit fund would be specifically designed to address local needs and the fund value would be in line with Scottish Government recommendations, currently £5,000 per MW, index linked over the lifetime of the Development (30 years).

Throughout the consultation period it has been explained to residents that more detailed decisions on how any community benefit fund for the proposed Development would be allocated or spent would be most effective during the period leading up to construction, if the proposed Development is granted consent.

EDF Renewables has therefore confirmed that it would remain in contact with local community councils and other interested parties during this period so that effective liaison and dialogue could be held at the appropriate time.

Part of this liaison would be an undertaking to more closely establish what specific local needs might best be addressed by a community benefit fund and what form of administration, management and governance arrangements would best serve local residents.

## 9 PAC Report Appendices

Appendix 1 – Example of Correspondence

Appendix 2 – Project Website

Appendix 3 – Press Releases & Adverts

Appendix 4 – Leaflets

Appendix 5 – Exhibition Boards

Appendix 6 – Questionnaires



## Appendix 1 – Example of Correspondence

**Watten Community Council**

EDF Renewables  
Level 7 Atria One  
144 Morrison Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 8EX

20<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Document Reference: ER-WWF-WCC-20220520

Dear Community Council,

**RE: WATTEN WIND FARM PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS**

We are writing to introduce ourselves as we embark on a consultation process for the potential development of a wind farm near Watten.

EDF Renewables UK is an established wind farm developer and operator, part of the French utility company EDF. We operate 10 onshore wind farms across Scotland, including the Corriemoillie Wind Farm in Ross-shire and Dorenell Wind Farm in Moray. We always strive to work closely with local communities in the areas in which our wind farms are located, and we hope to do the same here in Caithness.

Watten Wind Farm would consist of up to eight turbines, with tip heights of up to 220m, with an installed generating capacity of up to 52MW. To further complement the low-carbon electricity production from the wind farm, a battery storage facility would also be included. The site would be located approximately 3km to the southwest of Watten. A draft site layout and location plan are enclosed.

We should stress that we are at a very early stage in the development process. It is our intention to submit a scoping request next week to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit, before holding public exhibitions in the local area in June.

It is important to note that we will not be outlining finalised plans for the wind farm at this stage. These exhibitions will enable us to gather information from the local community about the proposed development, and to hear views from those who live nearby. There will be a second round of exhibitions later in the year, once the environmental and technical studies have been progressed further, at which time we will be able to provide more detailed information about how the wind farm would likely look.

The initial exhibitions will take place between 2pm and 7pm in the following locations:

- Spittal Village Hall on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022
- Watten Village Hall on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022

In addition to the exhibitions, we would welcome the opportunity to attend one of your Community Council meetings to discuss our proposals further. We look forward to hearing from you and hopefully meeting with you in due course.

Kind regards,

*Sarah Dooley*

**Sarah Dooley**  
**Principal Project Development Manager – Scotland**  
[sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk](mailto:sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk)  
Tel: 0131 377 0253

*Ross Ewing*

**Ross Ewing**  
**External Affairs Manager – Scotland**  
[ross.ewing@edf-re.uk](mailto:ross.ewing@edf-re.uk)

## Appendix 2 – Project Website

# Watten wind farm

PROJECT TYPE: ONSHORE WIND  
 COUNTRY: SCOTLAND  
 LOCATION: CAITHNESS

PROJECT STATUS:

PLANNED	CONSENTED	IN CONSTRUCTION	OPERATIONAL

Watten is a proposed wind farm which would include up to seven turbines situated to the west of Wick in Caithness, Highland.

Watten wind farm is a proposed project that would be situated 14km west of the town of Wick in Caithness, Highland. It would consist of up to seven turbines with maximum blade tip heights of 220 metres, with an estimated total installed capacity of up to 47.6MW.

The project will include access tracks, a substation, a battery storage facility, a temporary construction compound, a permanent meteorological mast, underground cabling and a grid connection which will link the wind farm to the national electricity grid.

The proposed site is located around the Wester Watten Moss Forest, which is approximately 3km south west of Watten village.

A scoping report - which will determine what should be included in the environmental impact assessment (EIA) that will support any future planning application - has been produced by EDF Renewables UK. In June 2022, EDF Renewables UK requested an opinion from the Scottish Government on its scoping report. The response was received on 2 September and can be found [here](#).

Watten wind farm planning consent will be submitted in July 2023.

**Public exhibitions**

In June 2022, we held public exhibitions in the local area, informing the community and local businesses about the wind farm. Since then, we have been carrying out various studies to determine the most appropriate size and layout for a wind farm in this location.

In November 2022, we shared the findings of the EIA, showing the newly revised layout of the proposed wind farm with accompanying photomontages to help those living in the local area assess the visual impact of the wind farm.

The public exhibitions took place over two days, and we engaged with a number of people from the local community.

We are proposing a scheme of seven turbines, each 220m tall. This 47.6MW wind farm would generate enough electricity to meet the average annual domestic needs of over 25,000 homes\* each year. Our project would also include a battery storage facility to address intermittency issues and help improve energy security.

Ahead of the planning consent being submitted we have held a final round of exhibitions in Watten and Spittal in June 2023 to show local residents the draft final designs and answer any questions.

A community benefit fund commensurate with the size of the project and in line with Scottish Government guidelines would be established to provide funding for community initiatives and projects in the local area. This will be worth £5,000 per MW under current Scottish Government guidance.

**Next steps**

Following the final round of public exhibitions a virtual exhibition has been set up and can be accessed here: [Watten Wind Farm virtual exhibition](#)

We expect to submit a planning application for the wind farm July 2023. At that time, it will be advertised to allow consultees, including community councils and members of the public, to give their views on the proposals.

Subject to planning consent, it is anticipated that the wind farm would be operational by 2026.

**Up to 7**  
TURBINES

**47.6 MW**  
CAPABLE OF POWERING UP TO  
25,000 HOMES

## Appendix 3 – Press Releases & Advert

**EMBARGO: 0100 hours Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **EDF Renewables UK unveils plans for wind farm near Watten**

EDF Renewables is unveiling plans for a new wind farm and battery storage facility near Watten, Caithness.

The proposed Watten wind farm would have up to eight turbines with a total generating capacity of up to 52 MW. The site would be located approximately 3km to the southwest of Watten, on land owned by local families.

EDF Renewables UK is an established wind farm developer in Scotland and already operates ten onshore wind farms across Scotland - including the Corriemoillie Wind Farm in Ross-shire.

Watten Wind Farm would consist of up to eight 6.6 MW turbines, with tip heights of up to 220m. To provide greater security in the supply of low-carbon electricity from the wind farm, a battery storage facility will also be included in the proposal.

Sarah Dooley, Principal Project Development Manager in Scotland for EDF Renewables UK, explained that there would be public exhibitions in Watten and Spittal Village Halls to seek views on the proposal at an early stage.

Sarah said: "We always strive to work closely with local communities in the areas in which our wind farms are located, and we hope to do the same here in Caithness.

"We will be holding two of these early-stage exhibitions local to the site in June, and will then follow up with a series of public exhibitions in the wider area later in the year once our environmental and technical assessments have been completed."

The company plans to submit a scoping request to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit this week, before holding the local public exhibitions and meeting with local residents in the week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> June.

The public exhibitions will enable EDF Renewables UK to gather information from the local community about the proposed development, and to hear views from those who live nearby the proposed wind farm. There will also be an opportunity to find out about the community benefit fund that would be established alongside the wind farm.

There will be a second round of exhibitions later in the year which will provide more detailed information about how the wind farm would look.

The initial public exhibitions will take place at:

Spittal Village Hall – Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022 – 2pm to 7pm  
Watten Village Hall – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022 – 2pm to 7pm

ENDS

## June 2022 Press Advert

### **Notice of Public Exhibition: Watten Wind Farm**

EDF Renewables Ltd would like to introduce their proposed 8 turbine wind farm, with battery storage, in Caithness, Scottish Highlands. EDF Renewables Ltd are committed to Scotland's ambitious renewable energy targets and will always aim to work with local stakeholders through public exhibitions and consultations.

More information about the proposal and key environmental topics being considered for the planning application will be available at the exhibition.

You are invited to attend these introductory public exhibitions which will take place on the following dates and locations:

Date: **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022**  
Time: 2pm – 7pm  
Venue: Spittal Village Hall

Date: **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022**  
Time: 2pm – 7pm  
Venue: Watten Village Hall

The public exhibition will be in the form of an informal drop-in session. The team will be on hand to answer any questions you may have. Anyone willing to make comments on the proposals may do so at the above event and/or via <https://www.edf-re.uk/watten> where further information on the proposed project can be found.

For more information relating to these events please contact Sarah Dooley, EDF Renewables Ltd via email: [Sarah.Dooley@edf-re.uk](mailto:Sarah.Dooley@edf-re.uk)

Any comments on the proposal made at these events are not representations to the consenting authority. If EDF Renewables Ltd submits a planning application there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the planning authority.

**EMBARGO: 0100 hours Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **EDF Renewables UK to hold a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of exhibitions for Watten wind farm plans**

EDF Renewables is to hold a second round of public exhibitions for a new wind farm and battery storage facility they hope to build near Watten, Caithness.

Technical and environmental studies have been taking place since the initial round of exhibitions in June this year, looking at potential impacts on the environment.

And as a result of the findings a number of changes have been made to the wind farm including fewer turbines. The wind farm will now have seven turbines with a total generating capacity of up to 47.6 MW and with a battery storage facility of 20MW.

The Watten wind farm site would be located approximately 3km to the southwest of Watten, on land owned by local families.

Watten Wind Farm would contain up to seven 6.6 MW turbines, with tip heights of up to 220m. A battery storage facility will also be included in the proposal to help provide greater security in energy supply.

Sarah Dooley, Principal Project Development Manager in Scotland for EDF Renewables UK, explained they were keen to hear the community's views on the amended wind farm and the visualisations which form part of the exhibition.

Sarah said: "We have a strong track record of working closely with communities around our wind farms and we are keen to continue our approach here in Caithness."

EDF Renewables UK is an established wind farm developer in Scotland and already operates ten onshore wind farms across Scotland - including the Corriemoillie Wind Farm in Ross-shire.

The public exhibitions will enable EDF Renewables UK to gather information from the local community about the final proposed layout, as well as to hear views from those who live near the proposed wind farm. There will also be an opportunity to find out about the community benefit fund that would be established alongside the wind farm.

The public exhibitions will take place at:

Spittal Village Hall – Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022 – 2pm to 7pm

Watten Village Hall – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 – 2pm to 7pm

ENDS



## October/November 2022 Press Advert

### Notice of Public Exhibition: **Watten Wind Farm**

EDF Renewables UK is holding a second round of public exhibitions for a new wind farm and battery storage facility proposed near Watten, Caithness.

EDF Renewables UK are committed to Scotland's ambitious renewable energy targets and always aim to work with local stakeholders through public exhibitions and consultations.

More information about the proposal and key environmental topics considered for the planning application will be available at the exhibition.

You are invited to attend these public exhibitions which will take place on the following dates and locations:

Date: **Tuesday 8th November 2022**

Time: 2pm – 7pm

Venue: Spittal Village Hall

Date: **Wednesday 9th November 2022**

Time: 2pm – 7pm

Venue: Watten Village Hall

The public exhibition will be in the form of an informal drop-in session. The team will be on hand to answer any questions you may have. Anyone willing to make comments on the proposals may do so at the above event and/or via <https://www.edf-re.uk/watten> where further information on the proposed project can be found.

To ensure all local stakeholders have the opportunity to provide feedback on the planned proposal EDF Renewables UK will also have a virtual exhibition for those who cannot attend the above dates. The link to the virtual exhibition can be accessed by heading to the website linked above.

For more information relating to these events please contact Sarah Dooley, EDF Renewables Ltd via email: [Sarah.Dooley@edf-re.uk](mailto:Sarah.Dooley@edf-re.uk)

Any comments on the proposal made at these events are not representations to the consenting authority. If EDF Renewables UK submits a planning application there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the planning authority.

## **NEWS RELEASE - June 2023**

### **Planning application to be submitted for wind farm near Watten**

#### **Local exhibitions will allow residents to view final designs**

EDF Renewables UK is finalising its application for a wind farm and battery storage system near Watten, with a round of public exhibitions taking place in the coming weeks to give residents the chance to view the final designs.

The proposed seven turbine Watten wind farm would have a total generating capacity of up to 47.6 MW along with a battery storage facility of 20MW. Lying approximately 3km to the southwest of Watten it would generate enough electricity to power around 25,000\* homes.

EDF Renewables UK is one of the leading developers of onshore wind in the UK and operates 10 onshore wind farms across Scotland, including Corriemoillie wind farm in Ross-shire.

Watten wind farm would consist of seven turbines, with tip heights of up to 220m. A battery storage system has also been included in the proposal.

Following extensive consultation with local residents and stakeholders, EDF Renewables UK has amended the design for the project. This has included:

- Reducing the number of turbines from eight to seven
- Relocating some turbines to avoid areas of deep peat
- Committing to building “floating” tracks in areas of peat deeper than 70cm, rather than the standard 100cm, in order to better protect the peat
- Minimising the number of trees being cleared using keyholing, where individual trees are removed, rather than the more traditional clear felling approach
- Improving recreational access, with specific proposals to be agreed with the local community, but could include a looped path network, bird hide and information panels

Two local public exhibitions will provide the opportunity for people to view the final designs and speak to the project team. The exhibitions will take place Monday 26 June at Spittal Village Hall, Spittal, KW1 5XR and on Tuesday 27 June at Watten Village Hall, Watten, KW1 5YJ. Both events will take place from 3pm to 7pm.

Sarah Dooley, Principal Project Development Manager in Scotland for EDF Renewables UK said: “Throughout the process of developing this wind farm we have met with local people on a number of occasions to listen to their thoughts and concerns and readily answer their questions.

“We held a second round of public exhibitions last year to speak to local people in person and gather their feedback on the proposed designs. We are about to submit our planning application, which will then be advertised to allow local people the opportunity to comment on our plans. We wanted to make sure they had the full information on the application before they responded.

“If consented, this project will be a key milestone in accelerating a net zero future and tackling climate change.”

Once submitted and registered the application will be advertised locally in local newspapers and available to view locally for those who wish to make representations.

Anyone unable to attend the in-person exhibitions can view the exhibition information on the Watten wind farm webpage [www.edf-re.co.uk/our-sites/watten](http://www.edf-re.co.uk/our-sites/watten) after the events.

Ends

## June 2023 Press Advert



### **Watten Wind Farm Public Exhibitions**

EDF Renewables UK is finalising its planning application for Watten wind farm, which will be submitted to the Energy Consents Unit at the Scottish Government in July 2023.

Further information about the proposed wind farm can be viewed at two local exhibitions, hosted by EDF Renewables UK, on

**Monday 26 June 2023 (3pm – 7pm) at  
Spittal Village Hall, Spittal, KWI 5XR**

and on **Tuesday 27 June 2023 (3pm – 7pm)  
at Watten Village Hall, Watten, KW1 5YJ.**

Please note this is not part of the formal planning consultation process. The planning application will be open to comments from members of the public, as well as statutory consultees in due course. Details of how and where to submit these comments will be available on the project website [www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten](http://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten) and within adverts in *The Caithness Courier*, *John O’Groat Journal* and Press and Journal once the application has been submitted.

If you have any questions, contact  
**[wattenwindfarm@edf-re.uk](mailto:wattenwindfarm@edf-re.uk)**.

## Appendix 4 – Leaflets

June 2022 Leaflet



# Watten Wind Farm Public Exhibition



**Up to 8 Turbines**  
with tip heights of up to  
220m

**50 MW**  
A generating capacity  
of more than 50MW

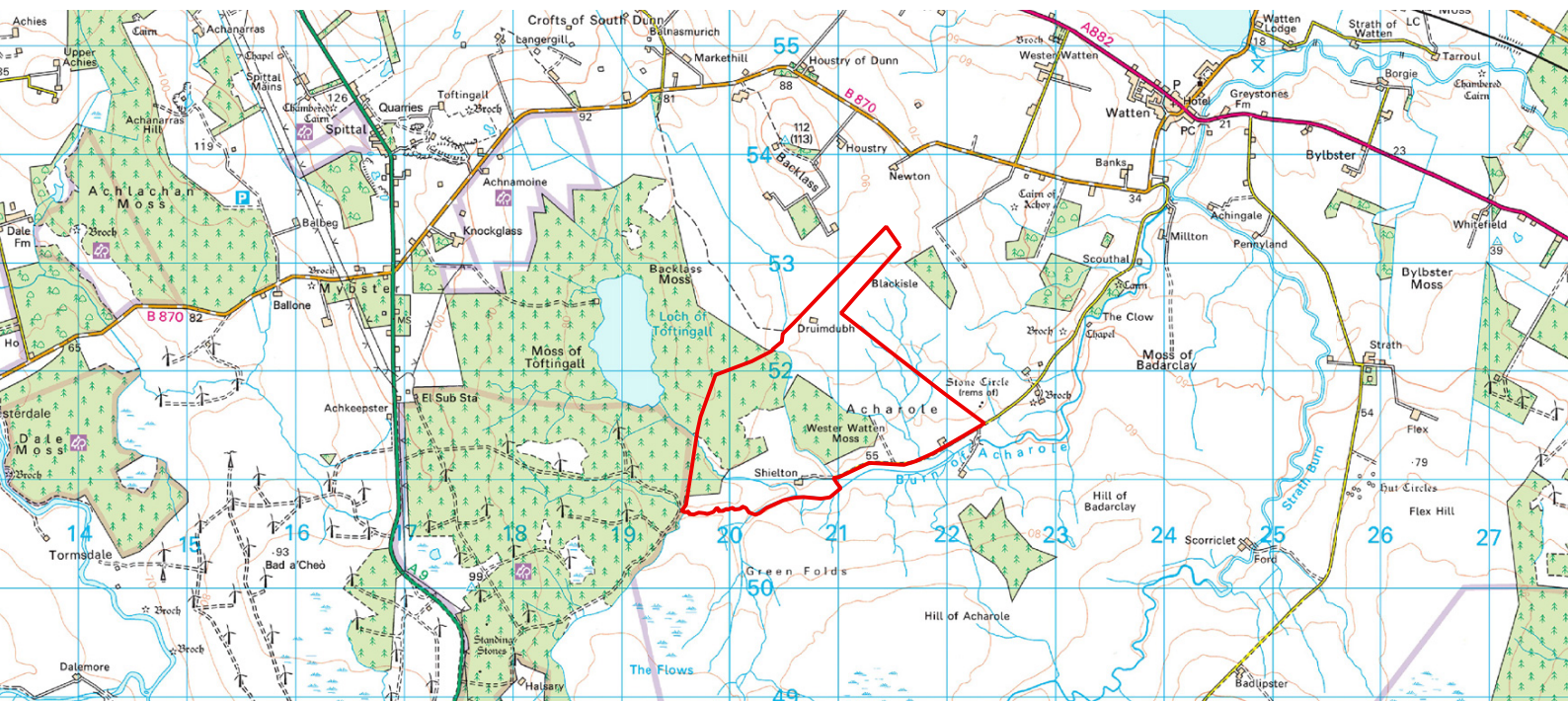
Corriemoillie Wind Farm

## Dear Resident,

We are writing to introduce ourselves as we embark on a consultation process for the potential development of a wind farm in your area.

EDF Renewables UK is an established wind farm developer and operator, part of the French utility company EDF. We operate 10 onshore wind farms across Scotland, including the Corriemoillie Wind Farm in Ross-shire. We always strive to work closely with local communities in the areas in which our wind farms are located, and we hope to do the same here in Caithness.

Watten Wind Farm would consist of up to eight turbines, with tip heights of up to 220m, with an installed generating capacity of up to 52MW. To further complement the low-carbon electricity production from the wind farm, a battery storage facility would also be included as part of the proposal. The site would be located approximately 3km to the southwest of Watten.



**We are inviting you to attend one of our upcoming public exhibitions, as detailed below:**

Date: **Monday 20th June 2022**  
Time: 2pm – 7pm  
Venue: Spittal Village Hall, Spittal, KW1 5XR

Date: **Tuesday 21st June 2022**  
Time: 2pm – 7pm  
Venue: Watten Village Hall, Watten, KW1 5YJ

As a resident of the local area, we want to ensure you are aware of our proposals, and give you an opportunity at this early stage of the process to provide feedback and ask questions. Our project team will be on hand to answer any questions you may have and your perspective, local knowledge and opinion is very much welcomed and will be used to inform our proposals.

Over the course of the coming months, a variety of specialists will carry out detailed studies to inform the design of the proposed wind farm.

Further exhibitions will be held later in the year to provide detail on the findings of the surveys, and to give the local community opportunities to provide feedback as the proposals evolve.

The exhibition materials will also be made available on the project website from 22nd June 2022, details below. If you would prefer not to attend in person, but have questions for the project team, please contact us using the details below.



## Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact EDF R using the details below:

Sarah Dooley, Principal Project Development Manager – Scotland.

Email: **[sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk](mailto:sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk)**

Ross Ewing, External Affairs Manager – Scotland. Email: **[ross.ewing@edf-re.uk](mailto:ross.ewing@edf-re.uk)**

**Post:** EDF Renewables, Atria One, 144 Morrison Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8EX

**Web:** [www.edf-re.uk/watten](http://www.edf-re.uk/watten)

## October 2022 Leaflet





# Watten Wind Farm

## Public Exhibition



**Up to 7 Turbines**  
with tip heights of up to  
220m

**47.6 MW**  
A generating capacity  
of more than 47MW

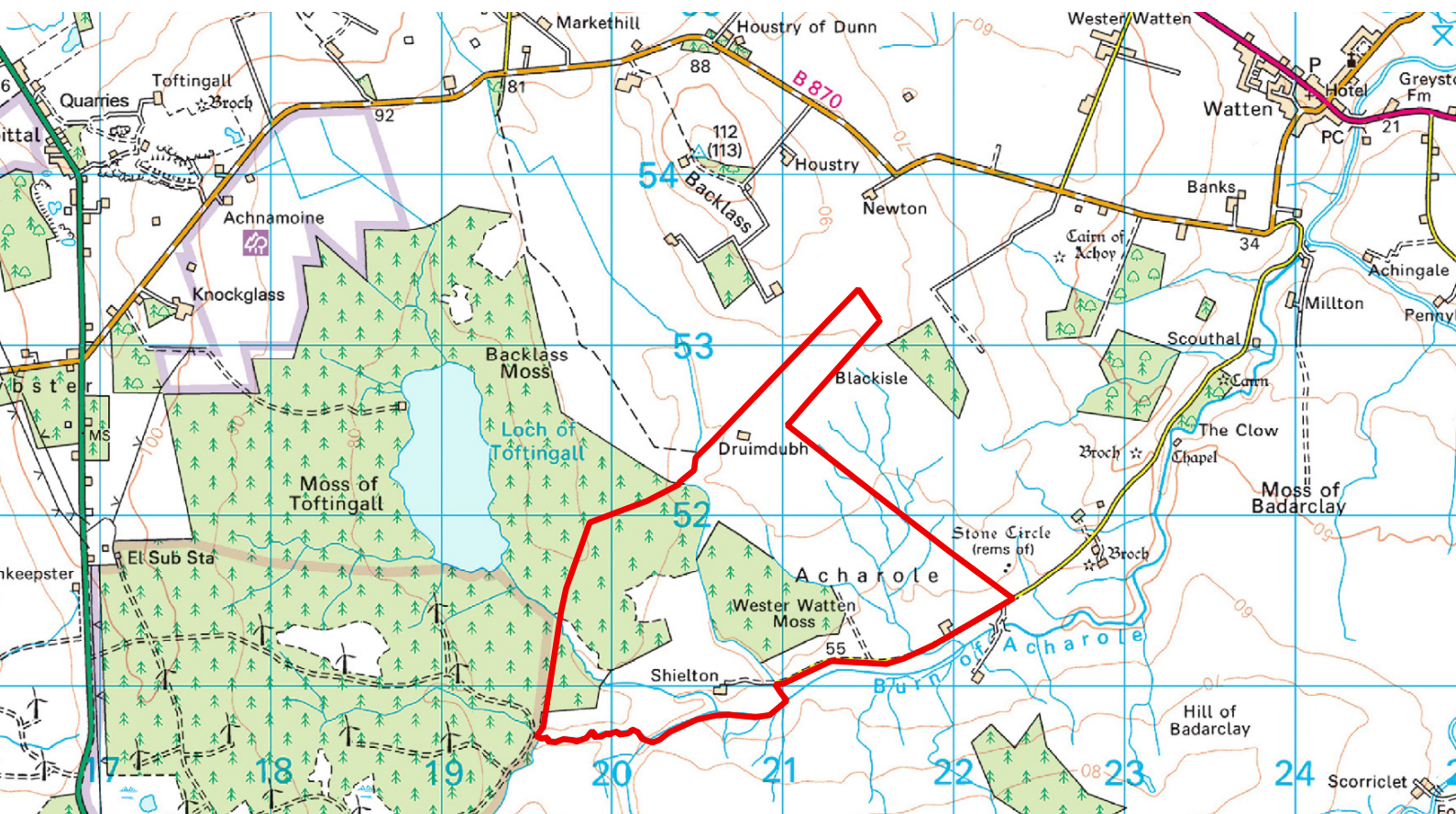
Image: Dorenell Wind Farm

## Dear local resident,

In June this year we held exhibitions in the local area to let the local community know we were proposing a wind farm 2km west of Watten.

Since then we have been carrying out various studies to determine the most appropriate size and layout for a wind farm in this location. We are now ready to outline a more detailed plan to you and other local residents.

We hope you will come along to one of our exhibitions and give us your views on our proposals.



# Date and time of events

Date: **Tuesday 8th  
November 2022**

Time: 2pm – 7pm

Venue: Spittal Village Hall,  
Spittal,  
KW1 5XR

Date: **Wednesday 9th  
November 2022**

Time: 2pm – 7pm

Venue: Watten Village Hall,  
Watten,  
KW1 5YJ

## What happens next

At the exhibition we will explain the findings of the various studies carried out as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and show the newly revised layout of the proposed wind farm with accompanying photomontages to help you assess visual impact. Copies of the materials on the display boards will be uploaded to the website after the exhibitions.

If you would prefer to speak to somebody personally, please get in touch.

We expect to submit a planning application for the wind farm early next year. At that time, it will be advertised to allow consultees, including community councils and members of the public, to give their views on the proposals.

## Find out more about the proposed Watten wind farm

We have revised our initial plans, changing the number and layout in response to feedback received at the first round of public exhibitions. We are proposing a scheme of 7 turbines, each 220m tall. This 47.6MW wind farm would generate enough electricity to meet the average annual domestic needs of over 25,000 homes\* each year. Our project would also include a battery storage facility to address intermittency issues and help improve energy security.

### Who we are:

EDF Renewables is an established wind farm developer and operator. We are part of the French utility company EDF and have 10 wind farms across Scotland including Corriemoillie in Ross-shire and Dorenell in Moray. We are proud of our track record in working closely with the local communities in the areas where we currently have wind farms and we would plan to do the same here in Caithness.



## Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact EDF R using the details below:

Sarah Dooley, Project Manager at [sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk](mailto:sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk)

or Rory Carmichael at [rory.carmichael@edf-re.uk](mailto:rory.carmichael@edf-re.uk)

**Post:** EDF Renewables, Atria One, 144 Morrison Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8EX

**Web:** [www.edf-re.uk/watten](http://www.edf-re.uk/watten)

\* Load factors based on the five year rolling averages on unchanged configuration basis using Table 6.5 of 'Digest of UK Energy Statistics' - latest figures as per July 2021 release. Based upon the average domestic electricity consumption per home (temperature corrected) per the Energy Consumption in the UK (published July 2021, Table C9 of ECUK: Consumption data tables).

June 2023 Leaflet



# Watten Wind Farm Public Exhibition



**Up to 7 Turbines**  
with tip heights of up to  
220m

**47.6 MW**  
A generating capacity of  
more than 47MW

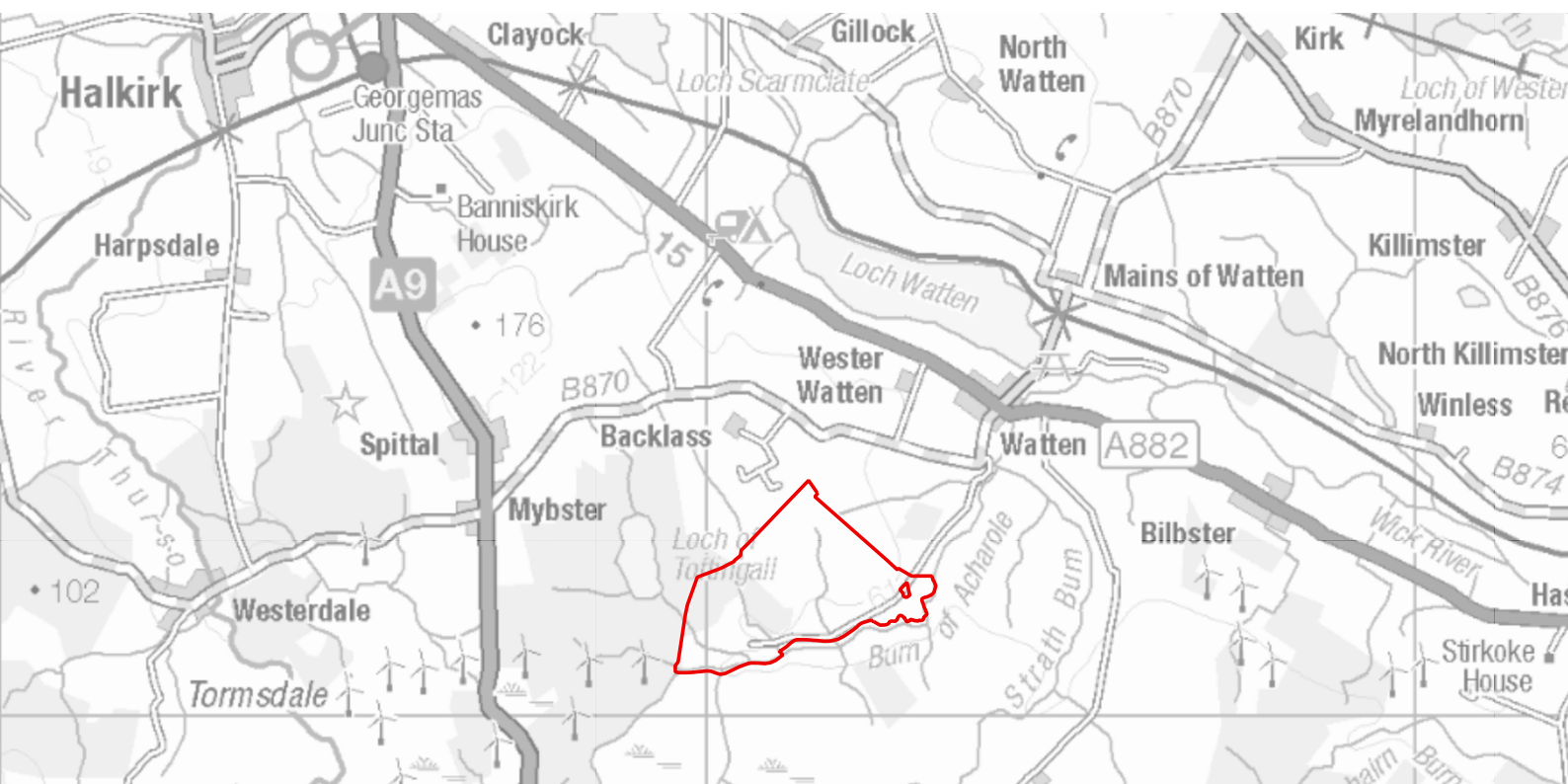
Image: Dorenell Wind Farm

## Dear local resident,

In June and November 2022, we held exhibitions in your area to let the local community know we were proposing a wind farm and battery storage system approximately 3km south west of Watten.

Since then we have been carrying out extensive consultation and various studies to finalise the proposals and prepare the planning application. We have now finalised our planning application which we intend to submit to the Energy Consents Unit at the Scottish Government in July.

We invite you to come along to one of our exhibitions to find out more.



# Date and time of events

Date: **Monday 26th June '23**

Time: 3pm – 7pm

Venue: Spittal Village Hall,  
Spittal,  
KW1 5XR

Date: **Tuesday 27th June '23**

Time: 3pm – 7pm

Venue: Watten Village Hall,  
Watten,  
KW1 5YJ

## What happens next

At the exhibitions we will explain the findings of the various studies carried out as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and show the layout of the proposed wind farm with accompanying photomontages to help you assess visual impact. Copies of the materials on the display boards will be uploaded to the website after the exhibitions.

Please note these exhibitions are not part of the planning consultation process. The planning application will be open to comments from members of the public, as well as statutory consultees once it has been validated by the Scottish Government following submission.

Anyone unable to attend the in-person exhibitions can view the information on the Watten wind farm webpage at [www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten](http://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten) after the events.

Details of how and where to submit these comments will be available at the exhibition, on the project website and within adverts in The Caithness Courier, John O'Groat Journal and Press and Journal.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please get in touch.

## Contact Us

Email: [wattenwindfarm@edf-re.uk](mailto:wattenwindfarm@edf-re.uk)

Post: FAO Ruth Shewan, EDF Renewables UK, Atria One, 144 Morrison Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EX.

Website: [www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten/](http://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten/)

## Find out more about the proposed Watten wind farm

Since we first outlined the proposals, we have made some changes to the design as a direct result of feedback from the consultation events:

- The number of turbines has been reduced from eight to seven and some have been relocated to avoid deep peat.
- We have committed to minimising the loss of trees by keyholing, where individual trees are removed rather than the more traditional approach of clear felling on the site.
- We will liaise with the local community to improve recreational access.

The final wind farm design we are proposing is for seven turbines of up 220m. This 47.6 MW wind farm would generate sufficient electricity for the average domestic needs of over 25,000 homes\* each year. Our proposal also includes a battery storage system.

### Who we are:

EDF Renewables UK is an established wind farm developer and operator. We are part of the French utility company EDF and have 10 wind farms across Scotland including Corriemoillie in Ross-shire and Dorenell in Moray. We are proud of our track record in working closely with the local communities in the areas where we currently have wind farms and we would plan to do the same here in Caithness.

\* Load factors based on the five year rolling average on uncharged configuration basis using Table 6.5 of "Digest of UK Energy Statistics" – latest figures as per July 2021 release.

## Appendix 5 – Exhibition Boards

## June 2022 Exhibition Boards



WATTEN  
WIND FARM  
PUBLIC  
EXHIBITION

# Welcome

Welcome to the Watten Wind Farm community exhibition.

We are in the early stages of the scoping process for a potential new wind farm, called Watten, approximately 3km south west of the village of Watten, and approximately 14km west of Wick.

After you have viewed the information displays, we invite you to complete a short questionnaire before you leave and we welcome any questions or feedback you may have.

Accelerating a **net zero** future where **clean energy** powers our lives.





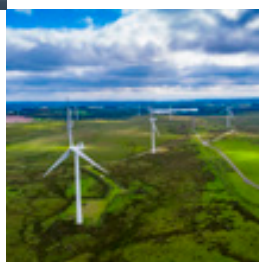
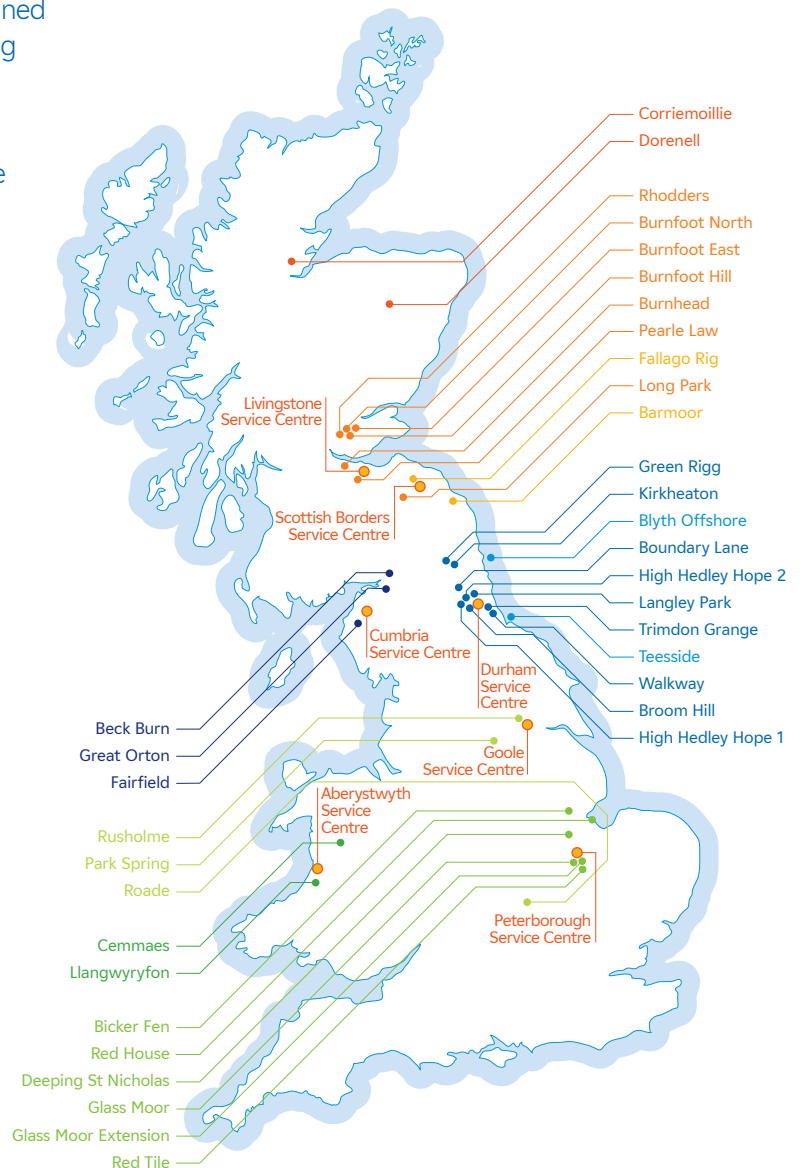
# EDF Renewables UK

EDF Renewables is one of the UK's leading renewable energy companies, developing, building, operating and maintaining innovative wind power, solar, hydrogen and battery storage projects.

Our rapidly-expanding portfolio spans the UK and includes:

- **37 onshore windfarms** across the UK, with 10 operational sites in Scotland including the nearby Corriemoillie Wind Farm in Ross-shire.
- two of the **UK's largest offshore wind developments** at Neart na Goaithe (NNG) off the east coast of Scotland and Codling Wind Park in the Irish Sea
- our first **large scale solar** farm at Sutton Bridge in Lincolnshire
- plans for a major **solar farm and battery storage** project at Longfield in Essex
- a 22 turbine wind farm development at Garn Fach in mid-Wales
- our Pivot Power infrastructure projects designed to support the needs of the rapidly expanding electric vehicle market and the expansion of essential battery storage facilities

With these ground-breaking projects across the UK and Ireland, our expert team is determined to help Scotland, England, Ireland, and Wales to achieve their ambitious low carbon targets. Our projects are already making an important contribution to the UK's and Ireland's green economy but we want to do even more.



# Watten Wind Farm

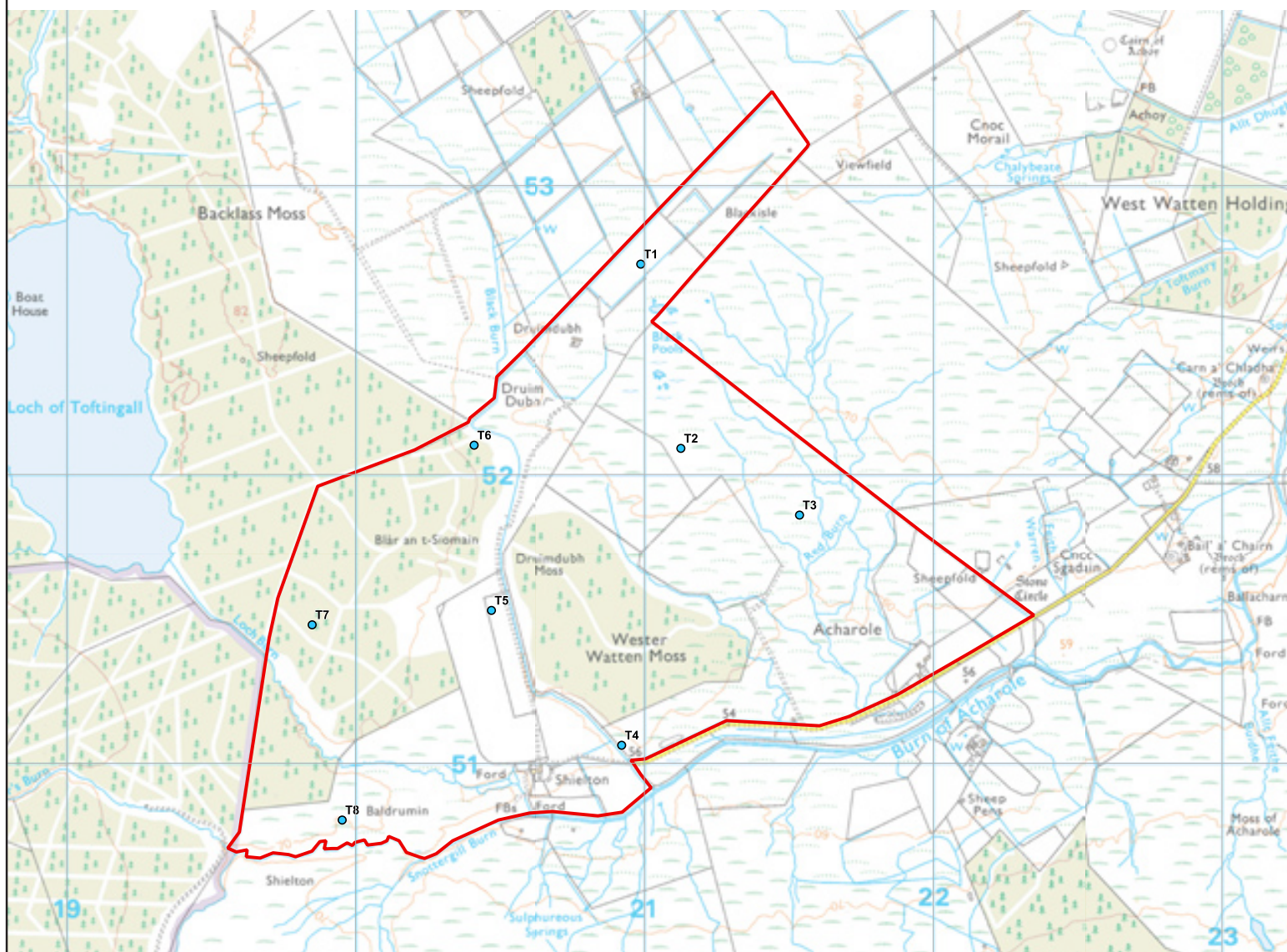
EDF Renewables UK is in the early stages of developing a proposal for a wind farm approximately 3km south west of Watten village. The wind farm, which would consist of up to 8 turbines with maximum blade tip heights of 220m, would be complemented by a battery storage facility. We wish to ensure that the project is developed with input from local residents and stakeholders in order to ensure that it is suitably designed and we want to identify opportunities to make a positive contribution to the local area.

EDF Renewables UK have embarked on the pre-planning phase of work at Watten by commissioning a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment Report. Specialists will carry out detailed studies over the coming months to inform the overall shape of the potential wind farm.

The exact number and size of turbines have not yet been finalised. A detailed design process will be undertaken alongside the Environmental Impact Assessment studies that are currently being carried out.

Our introductory exhibitions offer the opportunity for you, the local residents, to share your views on the development and highlight what sensitivities and opportunities you feel should be taken into account in the forthcoming design process.

Once a final design layout has been developed, EDF Renewables UK will host further public exhibitions, at which point we will be able to show more detailed illustrations of the Proposed Development. In the meantime, an initial draft layout is shown below.



# Environmental Considerations & Environmental Impact Assessment

A scoping process, to determine the content of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in support of any future planning application, has been launched by EDF Renewables UK.

## What is EIA?

EIA is the process of systematically compiling, evaluating and presenting all the likely significant environmental effects, both beneficial and adverse, of a Proposed Development, to assist the determining authority in considering the application. It enables the significance of these effects, and the scope for reducing adverse, or enhancing beneficial, effects to be clearly understood. The information compiled during the EIA is presented within an EIA Report to accompany any application for consent.

## Landscape & Visual Effects

Predicted changes on both the physical landscape of the Site and landscape character within the 45km study area will be identified in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. However, it is anticipated that potential significant direct and indirect effects will be limited to a more focused area within circa 15km of the Site.

## Cultural Heritage

The consideration of impacts upon cultural heritage features will be an important design consideration for the wind farm. The assessment will draw upon desktop research, evaluation of visualisations of layout options and field studies to identify impacts and inform design decisions. This will allow for the verification of all known heritage assets, confirming their interpretation, location and likely sensitivity to change, and the potential effects on those assets to inform consideration of any potential mitigation measures.

## Noise

An assessment of the potential for the wind farm to introduce noise impacts will be undertaken as part of the EIA. It is anticipated that noise impacts upon residential premises will be avoided through suitable wind farm design and turbine choice. If consented, the wind farm would have strict noise limits placed upon it by planning condition which the operational scheme would be obliged to operate within.

## Ecology and Ornithology

Effects upon Ecology and Ornithology will be assessed in the EIA. Studies relating to sensitive species and habitats have been underway for some time, and will conclude over the course of the coming months. The results of which will be used to inform the proposed design.

The EIA will also include assessments relating to hydrology and soils, forestry, traffic and transport, aviation, telecommunications, shadow flicker and socio-economics.



# Technical Considerations

## Access To & On The Site

Access to the Site is an important consideration. A number of options are being considered based on a technical assessment of the local road network. Our preferred route of access to minimise the requirement for additional works, and as such, lessen any environmental impact, would be via the existing operational Halsary Wind Farm to the west of the site. However, this is subject to discussions with the wind farm operator and the landowner. New wind farm tracks would need to be constructed onsite to link turbines and associated infrastructure, all of which will be subject to the EIA and will form part of the planning application submission.

## Grid Connection

EDF Renewables UK is reviewing potential options for connection to the electricity transmission network. It is anticipated that the wind farm would connect into the network at Mybster, given its proximity to the proposed site, which would minimise the requirement for extensive new grid connection infrastructure.

## Construction Works

It is estimated that it would take approximately 12 months to construct the Proposed Development. Where possible, construction activities will be carried out concurrently to reduce the overall length of the construction programme. Phasing of the construction process may result in civil engineering works progressing in some areas of the Site while turbines are being erected elsewhere. To minimise disruption to land use, site restoration would be undertaken as early as possible.



# Benefits of Watten Wind Farm

## (Community Involvement & Support)

EDF Renewables UK would establish a local community benefit fund when the wind farm becomes operational.

The fund value would be in line with the recommended Scottish Government guidance, which is currently £5,000 per MW installed capacity each year for the lifetime of the wind farm.

The fund would be designed to meet specific local objectives and would be administered.



### **Community Ownership**

EDF Renewables UK supports the principle of community investment in our wind farms and would welcome the views of local community groups on this.

### **Community Liaison**

As part of our public consultation, we will be liaising with various stakeholders including local residents and Community Councils. We will be hosting further exhibitions before any planning application is submitted.

### **Supply Chain Opportunities**

If the application is successful, our contracting strategy encourages packages of work on the construction of the wind farm to be made available to local suppliers and contractors.

### **Environmental Benefits**

Watten Wind Farm has the potential to make a lasting and valuable contribution to Caithness, generating clean, green energy; empowering local communities and supporting Scotland's net zero carbon targets.

### **Local Economic Benefits**

Clean energy has the potential to fully power our lives: from keeping the lights on, to providing new forms of transport. At EDF Renewables UK we want to make it accessible and affordable for everyone and we want to do it by building a business that attracts and retains the best talent, including operational technicians living and working in close proximity to our sites. Should this development proceed, we fully expect Watten Wind Farm wind farm to play a vital role in our mission for a greener and cleaner Scotland, whilst generating tangible local economic benefits.

# What Happens Next?

As the proposed Watten Wind Farm is expected to have a generating capacity of over 50MW, any application would be made to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU) under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989.

The information shown at this exhibition reflects the early stage that we are at in the development process. The survey work for most EIA topics is ongoing and the wind farm design will evolve as our understanding of the environmental characteristics of the site develops. Additional consultation will be held later this year once our proposals have been developed further.

Thank you for taking the time to read about our proposed Watten Wind Farm during your visit. We are pleased to respond to any questions and would be grateful to receive your feedback.

## Next steps include:

- Please complete a feedback form
- EDF Renewables UK will listen to and consider all feedback given, collating a consultation summary which will be submitted alongside the planning application (Section 36 Application to the Scottish Government).
- The design of the wind farm will be developed over the course of the coming months., informed by the various studies that are currently being undertaken.
- EDF Renewables UK will host some further public exhibitions later in the year, once the design has been developed, at which we will be able to show more detailed illustrations of the proposed development.
- It is anticipated that EDF Renewables UK will submit a Section 36 application to the Scottish Government toward the end of 2022.
- Initial discussions have been held with Highland Council, who will be a key consultee for the Section 36 application. The Council will evaluate the application and the planning committee will have the opportunity to decide whether to object to it or not. If the Council objects to the application, it would be determined by Scottish Ministers following a Public Local Inquiry.

If you have any further questions, please get in touch:

**EMAIL:** [sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk](mailto:sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk)

**POST:** EDF Renewables UK,  
Atria One, Level Seven,  
144 Morrison Street,  
Edinburgh, EH3 8EX

## November 2022 Exhibition Boards



## WATTEN WIND FARM PUBLIC EXHIBITION

# Welcome

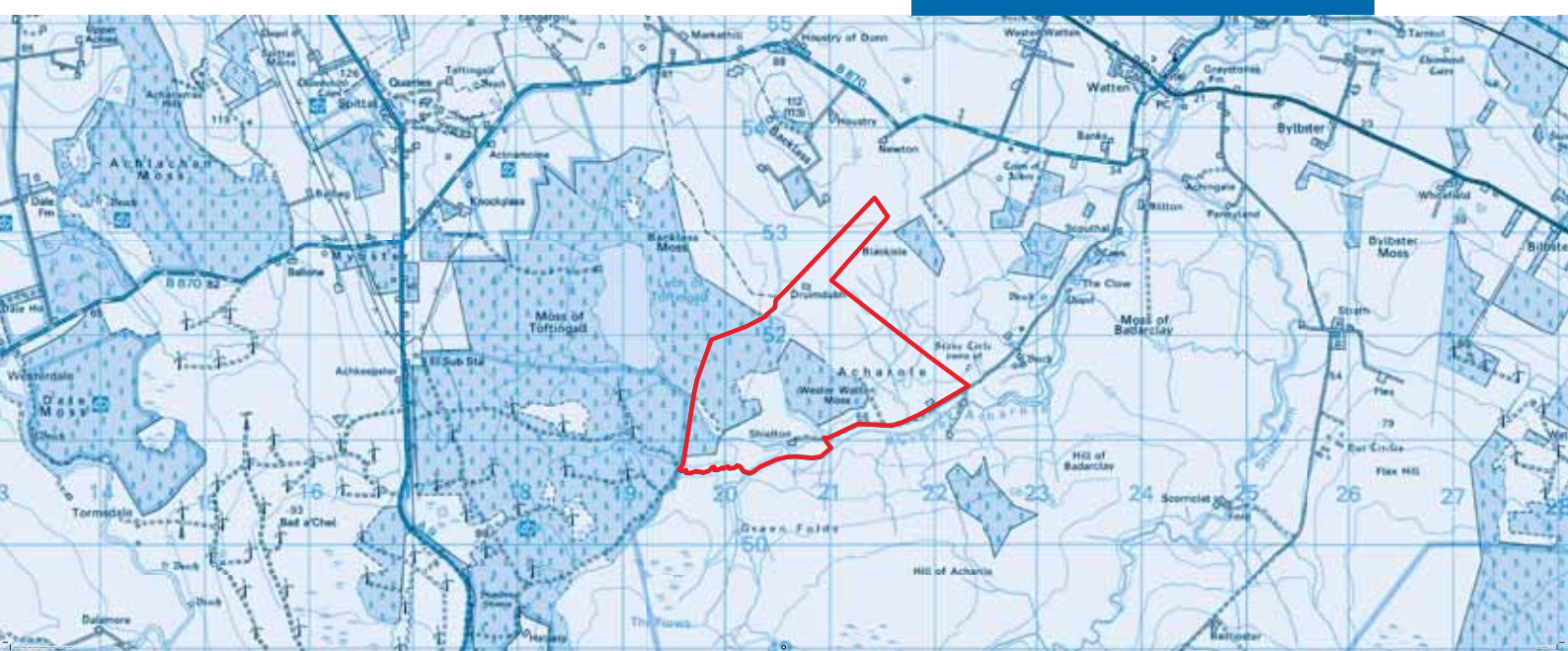
Welcome to the Watten Wind Farm community exhibition.

This event will provide the latest information about the further design work and environmental investigations carried out since the last event in June 2022.

We have drawings and visualisations available to view today, and we would be happy to explain the work that has taken place and next steps. All of the information on the panels will also be made available on the project website after the exhibitions.

After you have viewed the information displays, we invite you to complete a short questionnaire before you leave, and we welcome any questions or feedback you may have.

Accelerating a  
**net zero** future  
where **clean**  
**energy** powers  
our lives.





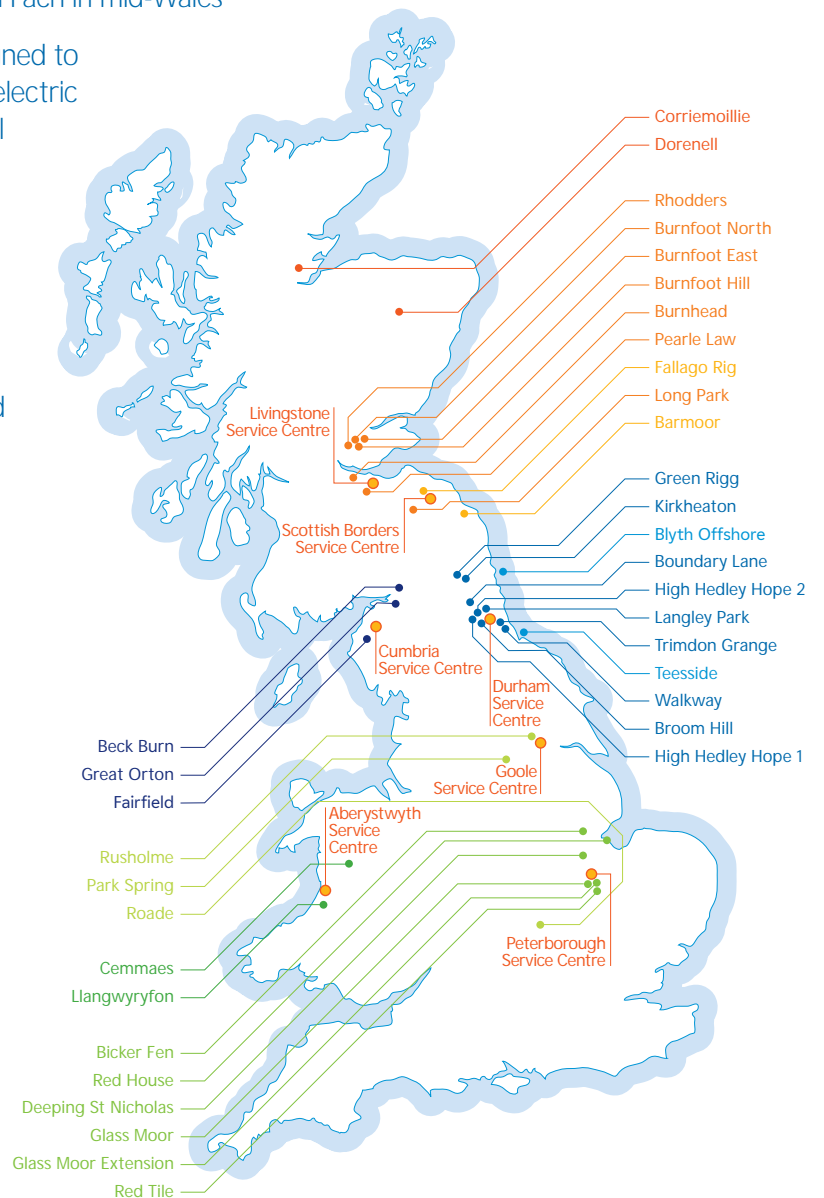
# EDF Renewables UK

EDF Renewables is one of the UK's leading renewable energy companies, developing, building, operating and maintaining innovative wind power, solar, hydrogen and battery storage projects.

Our rapidly expanding portfolio spans the UK and includes:

- **37 onshore windfarms** including the nearby Corriemoillie Wind Farm in Ross-shire
- two of the **UK's largest offshore wind developments** at Neart na Goaithe (NNG) off the east coast of Scotland and Codling Wind Park in the Irish Sea
- our first **large scale solar** farm at Sutton Bridge in Lincolnshire
- plans for a major **solar farm and battery storage** project at Longfield in Essex
- a 22 turbine wind farm development at Garn Fach in mid-Wales
- our Pivot Power infrastructure projects designed to support the needs of the rapidly expanding electric vehicle market and the expansion of essential battery storage facilities

With these ground-breaking projects across the UK and Ireland, our expert team is determined to help Scotland to achieve their ambitious low carbon targets. Our projects are already making an important contribution to the green economy but the latest onshore wind targets mean we need to do more.



# Response to Initial Layout

In May 2022 we presented information on our initial layout that consisted of 8 turbines with maximum blade tip heights of 220m, complemented by a battery storage facility. We wish to ensure that the project is developed with input from local residents and stakeholders in order to ensure that it is suitably designed, and we want to identify opportunities to make a positive contribution to the local area.

Over the two days of exhibition approximately 70 people attended and 25 questionnaires were

completed. Since the exhibitions, environmental surveys and assessments have continued on site, and responses from the public and statutory consultees have fed into the continued evolution of the layout for the wind farm.

In particular, potential effects on landscape, ecology, ornithology, hydrogeology and noise receptors have all been key elements of the overarching design strategy that has now produced a final layout proposal.



# Updated Layout

After reviewing feedback to our initial proposal, and taking into account key environmental and technical considerations, we have now developed an updated layout proposal for submission.

This new proposal comprises:

- 7 turbines
- Turbine tip heights of up to 220m
- A generating capacity of 47.6MW
- Approximately 20MW of battery storage

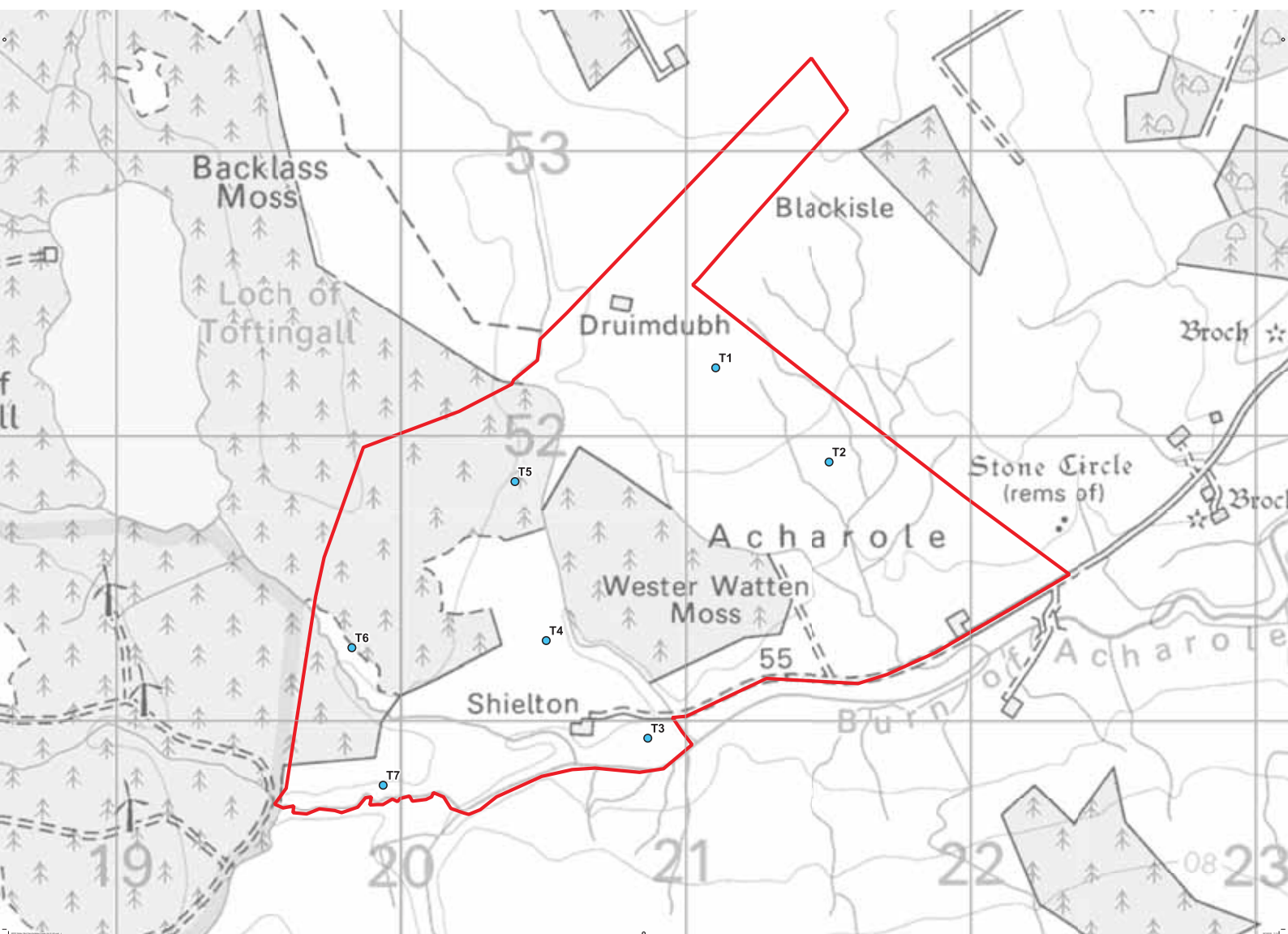
The proposed wind farm would produce enough low carbon electricity to meet the average annual

domestic needs of over 25,000 homes each year\* and save around 50,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually\*\*

In making these changes to the layout we have developed a design which considers a variety of environmental factors, including nearby residences, amongst others. Maintaining the tip height at 220m has enabled the reduction in the number of turbines, removing the previously proposed most northerly turbine. This facilitates a layout with a balanced array of turbines with respect to views from key viewpoints.

\* Load factors based on the five year rolling averages on unchanged configuration basis using Table 6.5d of Digest of UK Energy Statistics - latest figures as per July 2021 release

\*\* Based on conversion figure provided by BEIS and the Digest of UK Energy Statistics



# Environmental Considerations & Environmental Impact Assessment

A scoping response, to determine the content of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in support of any future planning application, was received in September 2022.

The EIA records the baseline environmental conditions for a development site and how those existing characteristics will be affected by the construction, operation and decommissioning of the wind farm. The EIA considers the potential environmental effects on a full range of issues and technical matters, including:

## Landscape & Visual Effects

A thorough Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be included as part of the EIA. The aim of the LVIA is to identify, predict and evaluate potential effects arising from the addition of the proposed wind farm on the following:

- physical elements of the landscape;
- landscape character;
- special qualities of protected and designated landscapes;
- views from sensitive locations, for example residential properties, settlements, hill tops, and routes; and
- cumulative effects that may arise from other wind farm developments.

The LVIA will be accompanied by visualisations (photomontages) that show what the final proposal would look like in the landscape from surrounding viewpoints. A selection of these are available to view on subsequent boards.

## Ecology

Extensive protected species surveys have been undertaken across the site to confirm the presence of species identified during the desk study. There are signs of otter and water vole on site as well as features

offering potential for roosting bats and hibernating reptiles. A detailed habitat survey was completed in order to highlight sensitive habitats. Through careful site design, good practice and mitigation, it is expected that significant negative effects on ecological features can be avoided or mitigated.

## Ornithology

Ornithology surveys have been undertaken to identify what bird species use the site throughout the year and to record their flight patterns and breeding behaviour. The design process for the current layout carefully considered ornithological sensitivities by avoiding nest locations of key species. Furthermore, by taking into consideration the flight behaviour of key species, the risk of disturbance, displacement and collision has been kept to a minimum.



# Environmental Considerations & Environmental Impact Assessment

## Soils and Hydrogeology

The soils present on site are primarily organic peatland soils. Impacts on peatlands have been avoided or minimised during the design development process by relocating several turbines out of areas of deeper peat. Furthermore, a Peat Management Plan will be written in accordance with industry guidance.

Good practice guidance and mitigation measures will be implemented as part of a Construction and Environmental Management Plan or similar during the construction phase and site-specific mitigation measures and monitoring requirements will also be implemented.

## Cultural Heritage

Desk based studies, a review of historic mapping, aerial photos and a walkover survey have identified non-designated heritage assets and further features of potential cultural significance within the site. Known heritage assets within the site will be protected with visible barriers to minimise the risk of accidental disturbance during construction.

Key heritage assets in the surrounding area have also been visited to assess potential impacts on their settings and detailed assessment will be presented in the EIA report, supported with photomontages and wireline visualisations.

## Noise

Reducing any noise effects on nearby residential properties has been a key development consideration. Throughout the design process, detailed modelling exercises have been undertaken for the various layout iterations to ensure that significant noise impacts on residential premises will be avoided through suitable wind farm design. If consented, the wind farm would have strict noise limits placed upon it by planning condition which the operational scheme would be obliged to operate within.

## Other

The EIA will also include assessments relating to forestry, traffic and transport, aviation, telecommunications, shadow flicker and socio-economics.

## Habitat Management & Enhancement

We are currently exploring opportunities for habitat management and biodiversity improvements. Options include:

- developing areas of peat restoration near the site;
- riparian planting adjacent to watercourses;
- developing areas of drier bracken for raptors; and/or
- developing area of marshy grassland for waders;



# Technical Considerations

## Access To & On The Site

Access to the site is an important consideration. Our preferred route of access to minimise the requirement for additional works, and as such, lessen any environmental impact, would be via the existing operational Halsary Wind Farm to the west of the site. However, this is subject to discussions with the wind farm operator and the landowner. New wind farm tracks would need to be constructed onsite to link turbines and associated infrastructure, all of which will be subject to the EIA and will form part of the planning application submission.

## Grid Connection

EDF Renewables is reviewing potential options for connection to the electricity transmission network. It is anticipated that the wind farm would connect into the network at Mybster, given its proximity to the proposed site, which would minimise the requirement for extensive new grid connection infrastructure.

## Construction Works

It is estimated that it would take approximately 12 months to construct the wind farm. Where possible, construction activities will be carried out concurrently to reduce the overall length of the construction programme. Phasing of the construction process may result in civil engineering works progressing in some areas of the site while turbines are being erected elsewhere. To minimise disruption to land use, site restoration would be undertaken as early as possible.



# Community Benefit & Investment

If successful with the planning application, EDF Renewables UK would establish a local community benefit fund when the wind farm becomes operational.

The fund value would be in line with the recommended Scottish Government guidance, which is currently £5,000 per MW installed capacity each year for the lifetime of the wind farm. Based on the current proposed layout, this would equate to a fund of more than £235,000 per year.

The fund would be designed in consultation with the community to meet specific local objectives. For example it could be used to support fuel poverty initiatives, educational opportunities and/or access and recreational projects. The fund would be administered locally at arms' length from EDF Renewables UK in line with Scottish Government guidance.

EDF Renewables UK supports the principle of community investment in our wind farms and would welcome the views of local community groups on this, and the opportunity to discuss this further, supported by Local Energy Scotland. Local Energy Scotland administers and manages the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES). CARES supports communities to engage with, participate in, and benefit from the transition to net zero emissions. Find out more about CARES, and Local Energy Scotland at <https://localenergy.scot/>.

## Community Liaison

As the project approaches construction, a Community Liaison Group would be set up to meet on a regular basis with local community representatives. This would provide a forum to share updates and to answer any questions on the progression of the scheme into construction.

## Supply Chain Opportunities

If the application is successful, our contracting strategy encourages packages of work on the construction of the wind farm to be made available to local suppliers and contractors. A socio-economics assessment will be included in the EIA report and include consideration of local tourism, employment generation and the wider indirect and induced effects from the wind farm.



# What Happens Next?

- Your views will be an important part of our planning application, so please let us know your views on the feedback form.
- We will submit the application (including a collation of your views) to the Scottish Government early in 2023.
- Once it has been submitted, we will write to all households within 10km of the site.
- It will also be published in Public Notices in local newspapers.
- You will be able to see the Environmental Impact Assessment Report on our website - <https://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten/> - the Energy Consents Unit section of the Scottish Government's website and hard copies will be available to view at advertised locations.
- Once the application has been made, members of the public and consultees will be able to make representations to the Scottish Government and/or The Highland Council.
- The Council is a key consultee and if it objects to the application, a decision will be taken by Scottish Ministers following a Public Local Enquiry.

## Spread the word

Now you've seen the details of the wind farm, here are some key points you can tell other people:

- The wind farm will generate enough low carbon electricity to fuel over 25,000 homes.
- It will save around 50,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions every year.
- Construction will take about one year.
- Our aim is to minimise the visual effect on the landscape, and enhance the ecological and environmental conditions.
- The community will receive in the region of £235,000 each year for the life of the wind farm to decide how to invest in community projects.

If you have any further questions, please get in touch:

**EMAIL:** [sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk](mailto:sarah.dooley@edf-re.uk)

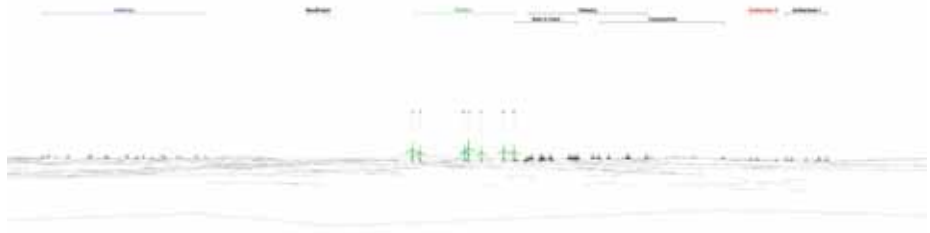
**POST:** EDF Renewables UK,  
Atria One, Level Seven,  
144 Morrison Street,  
Edinburgh, EH3 8EX

**WEB:** <https://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten/>

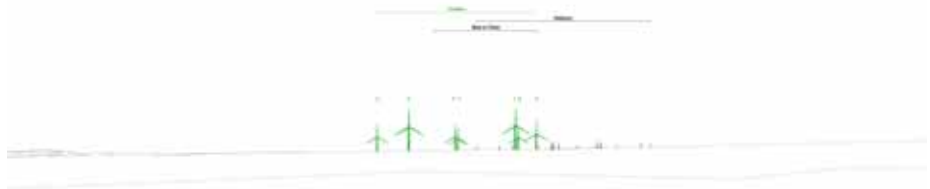


# Photomontages

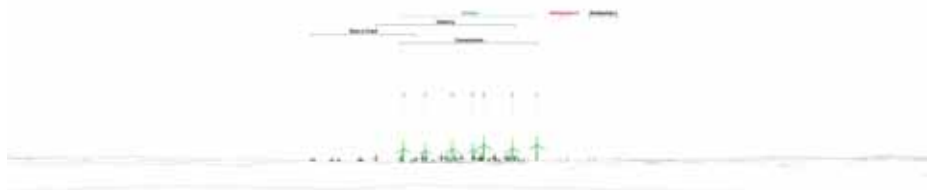
**Viewpoint 4  
North Watten**



**Viewpoint 8  
Watten**

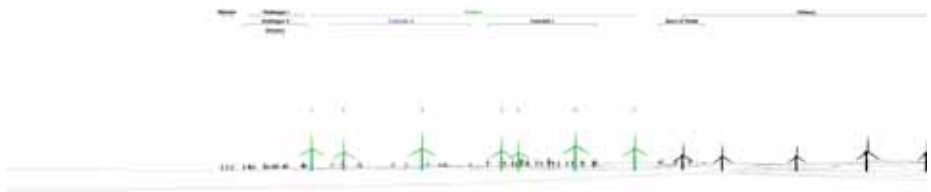


**Viewpoint 9  
A882, East of  
Watten**



# Photomontages

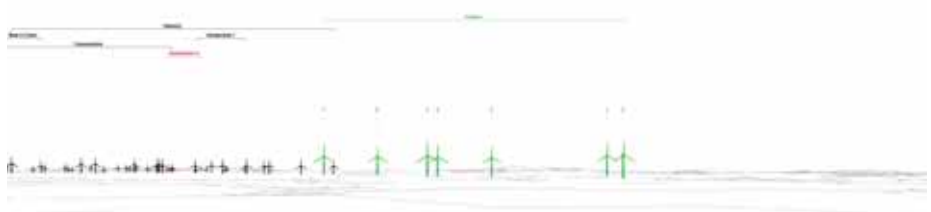
**Viewpoint 10  
Spittal**



**Viewpoint 12  
Westerdale**



**Viewpoint 13  
Minor Road North  
of Grey Cairns of  
Camster**



## June 2023 Exhibition Boards



## WATTEN WIND FARM PUBLIC EXHIBITION

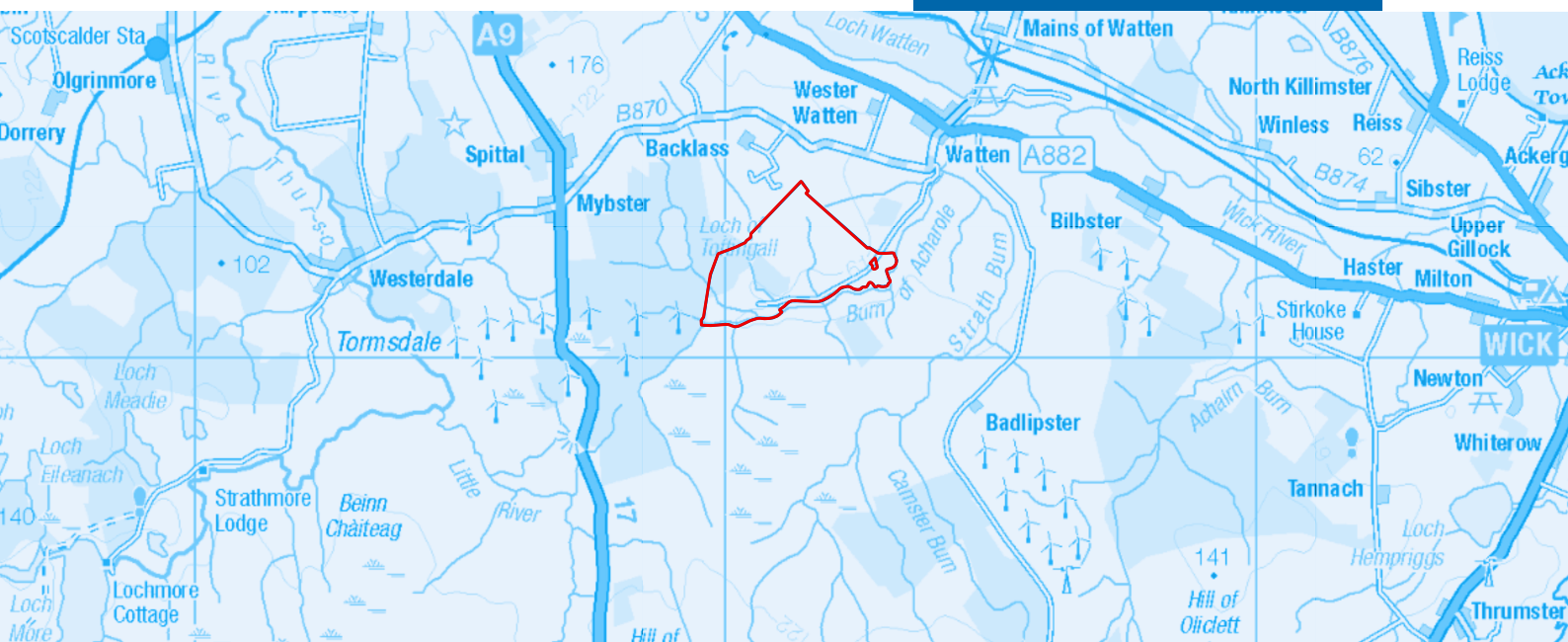
# Welcome

Welcome to the Watten wind farm community exhibition.

This event will provide the latest information about the final design and environmental investigations associated with the application for consent for the proposed Watten wind farm.

We have drawings and visualisations available to view today, and we would be happy to explain the work that has taken place and the next steps. All of the information on the panels will also be made available on the project website after the exhibitions.

Accelerating a  
**net zero** future  
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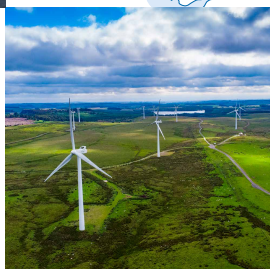
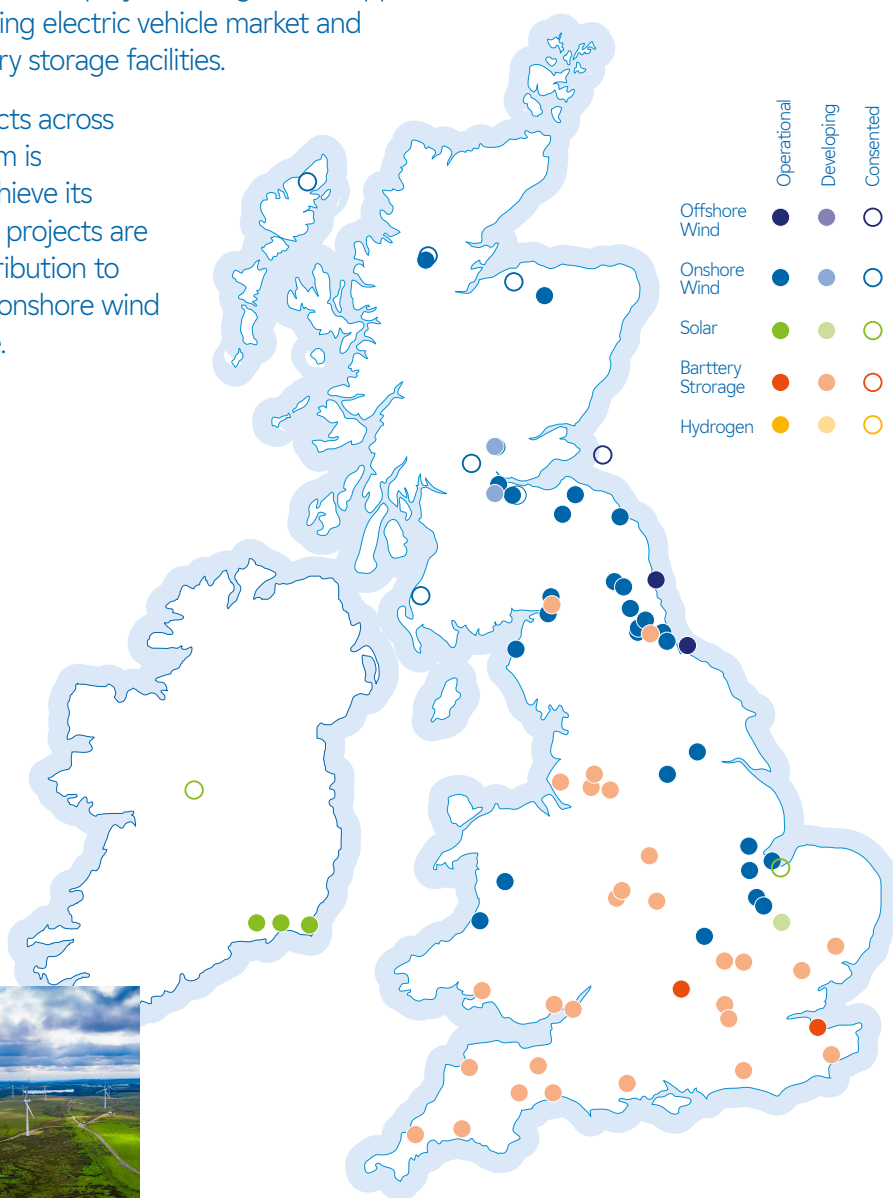
# EDF Renewables UK

EDF Renewables is one of the UK's leading renewable energy companies, developing, building, operating and maintaining innovative wind power, solar, hydrogen and battery storage projects.

Our rapidly expanding portfolio spans the UK and Ireland and includes:

- **36 onshore windfarms** including the nearby Corriemoillie Wind Farm in Ross-shire
- Two of the **UK's largest offshore wind developments** at Nart na Goithe (NNG) off the east coast of Scotland and Codling Wind Park in the Irish Sea.
- Our first **large scale solar** farm at Sutton Bridge in Lincolnshire.
- Plans for a major **solar farm and battery storage** project at Longfield in Essex.
- Private wire and battery infrastructure projects designed to support the needs of the rapidly expanding electric vehicle market and the expansion of essential battery storage facilities.

With these ground-breaking projects across the UK and Ireland, our expert team is determined to help Scotland to achieve its ambitious low carbon targets. Our projects are already making an important contribution to the green economy but the latest onshore wind targets mean we need to do more.

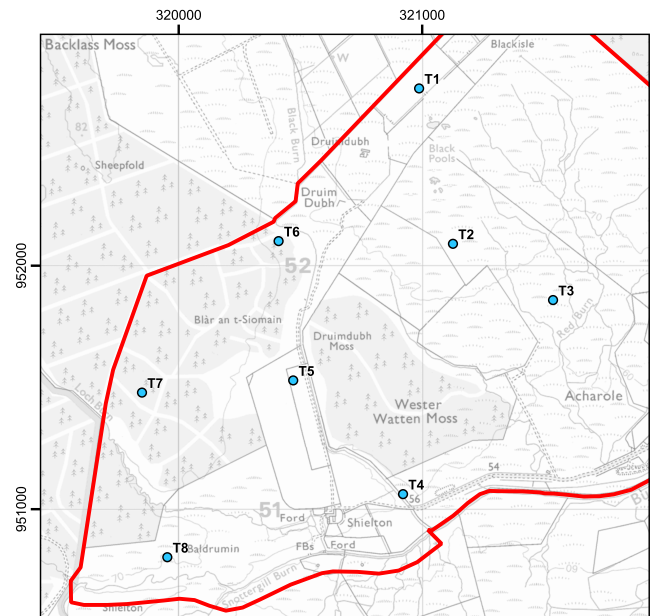


# Design Evolution

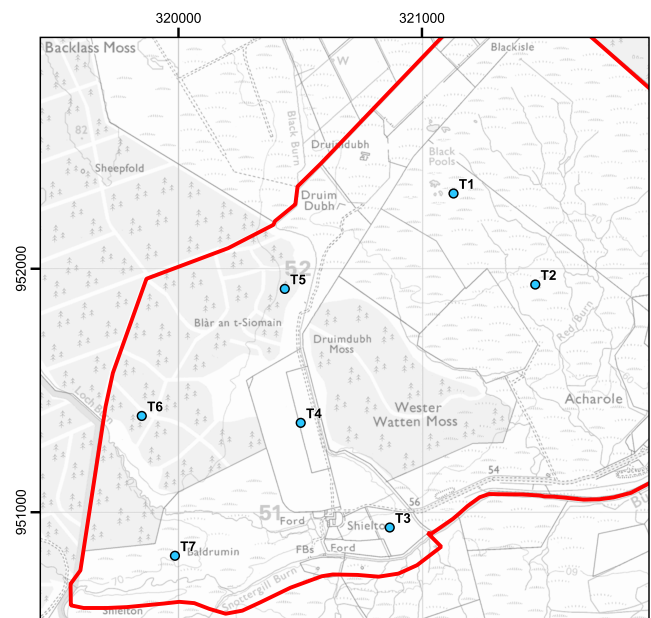
In November 2022, we presented information on an updated layout consisting of seven turbines with maximum blade tip heights of 220m, complemented by a battery energy storage system. Since then we have completed environmental surveys and responses from the public and statutory consultees have fed into the final design for the application.

This information has resulted in a number of changes including:

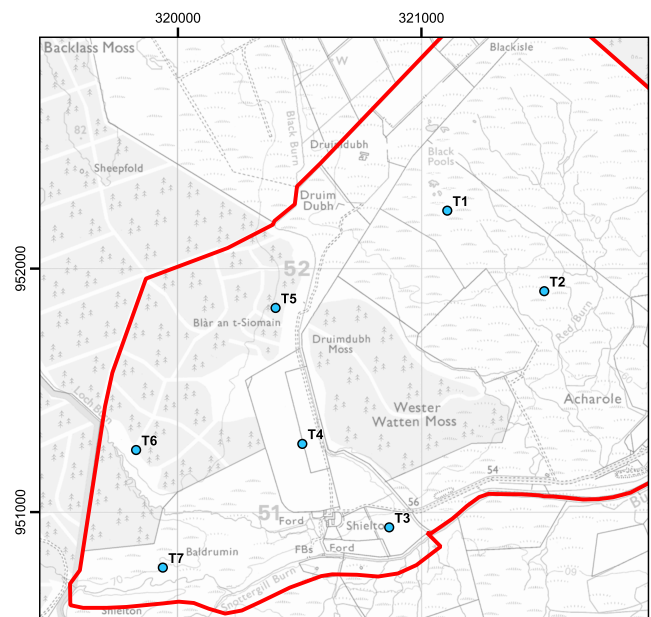
- reducing the number of turbines from eight to seven prior to the November 2022 exhibitions;
- relocating some turbines to avoid areas of deep peat prior to the November 2022 exhibitions;
- committing to building “floating” tracks in areas of peat deeper than 70cm, rather than the standard 100cm, in order to better protect the peat;
- minimising the number of trees being cleared using keyholing, where individual trees are removed, rather than the more tradition clear felling approach; and
- improving recreational access, with specific proposals to be agreed with the local community, but could include a looped path network, bird hide and information panels.



**Design 1: 8 turbines**



**Design 2: 7 turbines**



**Design 3: 7 turbines (design freeze)**

# Design

Potential effects on landscape, ecology, ornithology, hydrogeology and noise receptors have all been key elements of the overarching design strategy. After reviewing feedback and taking into account key environmental and technical considerations, we have developed a final layout for the application.

This proposed wind farm comprises:

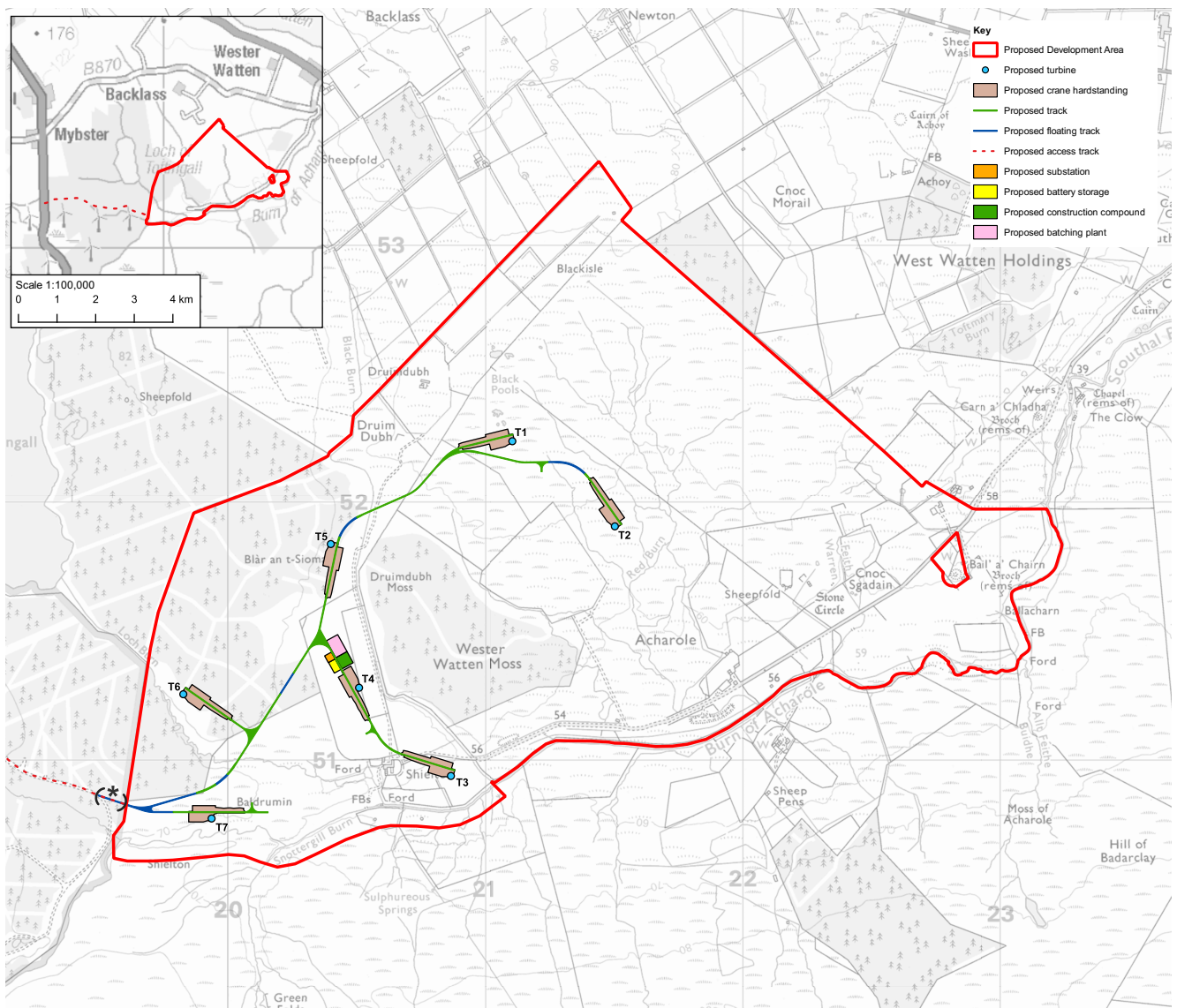
- Seven turbines
- Turbine tip heights of up to 220m
- A generating capacity of 47.6MW
- Approximately 20MW of battery energy storage

We have also developed the internal access track arrangements and identified locations for the temporary construction compound, control building and the battery energy storage system.

The proposed wind farm would produce enough low carbon electricity to meet the average annual domestic needs of over 27,600 homes each year\* and save around 47,100 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually\*\*

\* Load factors based on the five year rolling averages on unchanged configuration basis using Table 6.5 of 'Digest of UK Energy Statistics' - latest figures as per July 2022 release.

\*\* Based upon BEIS's "all fossil fuels" emissions statistic of 450 tonnes of carbon dioxide per GWh of electricity supplied in the Digest of UK Energy Statistics (published July 2022, p96).



# Environmental Considerations

## Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

The EIA involved extensive surveys of the baseline environmental conditions of the site and surrounding area and consideration of how those existing characteristics will be affected by the construction, operation and decommissioning of the wind farm. This will help to inform the decision by consultees and the Scottish Government in their consideration of the application.

As part of the EIA, extensive consultation has been undertaken to obtain feedback on the proposals from consultees including NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Historic Environment Scotland, The Highland Council and local community councils.

The assessments presented in the EIA Report include:

- ecology;
- ornithology;
- landscape and visual assessment;
- hydrology and soils;
- cultural heritage;
- traffic and transport;

- noise;
- socio economics; and
- aviation and other issues, including telecommunications and shadow flicker

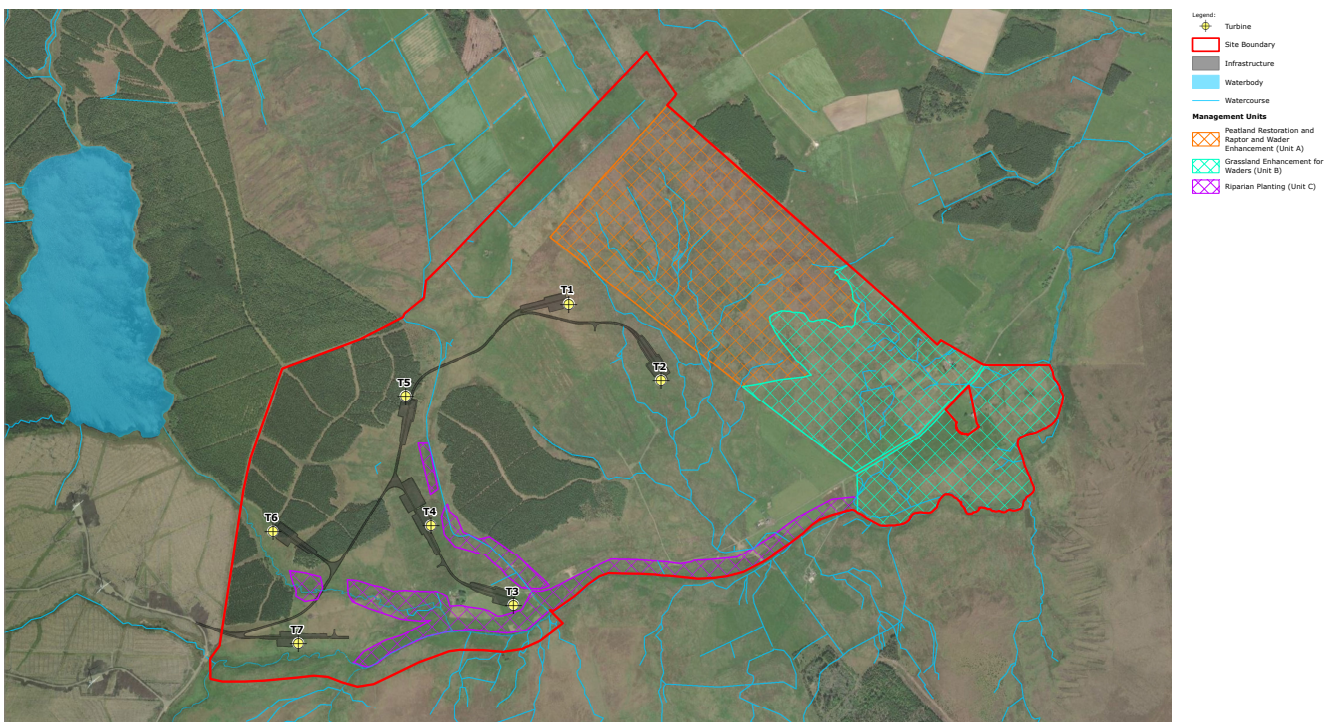
Through the design of the wind farm and the implementation of appropriate good practice during construction and operation, and mitigation where required, the effects on environmental, recreational, and residential sensitivities have been avoided and/or reduced as far as possible.

The application for consent is also supported by a Planning and Renewable Energy Statement to assess the policy compliance of the proposals.

## Biodiversity Management and Enhancement

We have developed outline proposals for habitat management and biodiversity improvements including:

- Peatland restoration;
- Raptor enhancement;
- Wader enhancement; and
- Riparian planting.





# Technical Considerations

## Access

Access to the site is an important consideration. To minimise the requirement for additional works, and as such, lessen any environmental impact, our proposed route of access would be via the existing operational Halsary Wind Farm to the west of the site. New wind farm tracks will need to be constructed onsite to link turbines and associated infrastructure.

## Grid Connection

EDF Renewables UK is reviewing potential options for connection to the electricity transmission network. It is anticipated the wind farm would connect into the network at Mybster, given its proximity to the site, minimising the requirement for extensive new grid infrastructure.

## Construction Works

It is estimated it would take around 12 months to construct the wind farm. Where possible, construction activities will be carried out concurrently to reduce the overall length of the construction programme. Phasing of the construction process may result in civil engineering works progressing in some areas of the site while turbines are being erected elsewhere. To minimise disruption to land use, site restoration would be undertaken as early as possible.



# Community Involvement & Support

## Community Benefit & Investment

If successful with the planning application, EDF Renewables UK would establish a local community benefit fund when the wind farm becomes operational.

The fund value would be in line with the recommended Scottish Government guidance, which is currently £5,000 per MW installed capacity each year for the lifetime of the wind farm. Based on the current proposed layout, this would equate to a fund of more than £235,000 per year.

The fund would be designed in consultation with the community to meet specific local objectives. For example it could be used to support fuel poverty initiatives, educational opportunities and/or access and recreational projects. The fund would be administered locally at arms' length from EDF Renewables UK in line with Scottish Government guidance.

EDF Renewables UK supports the principle of community investment in our wind farms and would welcome the views of local community groups on this, and the opportunity to discuss this further,

supported by Local Energy Scotland. Local Energy Scotland administers and manages the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES). CARES supports communities to engage with, participate in, and benefit from the transition to net zero emissions. Find out more about CARES, and Local Energy Scotland at <https://localenergy.scot/>.

## Community Liaison

As the project approaches construction, a Community Liaison Group would be set up to meet on a regular basis with local community representatives. This would provide a forum to share updates and to answer any questions on the progression of the scheme into construction.

## Supply Chain Opportunities

If the application is successful, our contracting strategy encourages packages of work on the construction of the wind farm to be made available to local suppliers and contractors. A socio-economics assessment will be included in the EIA Report and include consideration of local tourism, employment generation and the wider indirect and induced effects from the wind farm.



# What Happens Next?

- Once the application has been accepted by the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU), it will be advertised in Public Notices in local newspapers. The EIA Report will be made available for public viewing at advertised locations and electronic versions of the report will be available to download from the project website and The Highland Council and ECU planning portals.
- There will be a 28 day consultation period during which representations to the Scottish Government and/or the local planning authority to help inform their determination of the application.
- The Highland Council will be a key consultee for the Section 36 application. The council will evaluate the application and the planning committee will decide whether to object to it or not. If the council objects to the application, it would be determined by Scottish Ministers following a Public Local Inquiry.

## Spread the word

Now you've seen the details of the wind farm, here are some key points you can tell other people:

- The wind farm will generate enough low carbon electricity to fuel over 27,600\* homes.
- It will save around 47,100\*\* tonnes of CO2 emissions every year.
- Construction will take about one year.
- Our aim is to enhance the ecological and environmental conditions.
- The community will receive in the region of £235,000 each year for the operational life of the wind farm to decide how to invest in community projects.

\* Load factors based on the five year rolling averages on unchanged configuration basis using Table 6.5 of 'Digest of UK Energy Statistics' - latest figures as per July 2022 release.

\*\* Based upon BEIS's "all fossil fuels" emissions statistic of 450 tonnes of carbon dioxide per GWh of electricity supplied in the Digest of UK Energy Statistics (published July 2022).



If you have any further questions, please get in touch:

**EMAIL:** [wattenwindfarm@edf-re.uk](mailto:wattenwindfarm@edf-re.uk)

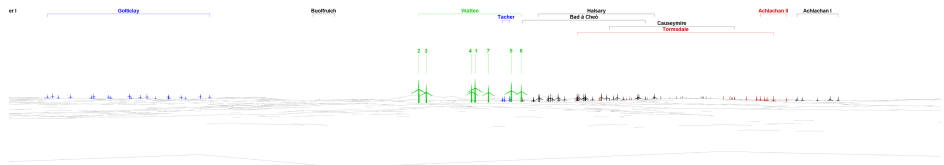
**POST:** FAO Ruth Shewan,  
EDF Renewables UK,  
Atria One, Level Seven,  
144 Morrison Street,  
Edinburgh, EH3 8EX

**WEB:** <https://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/watten/>

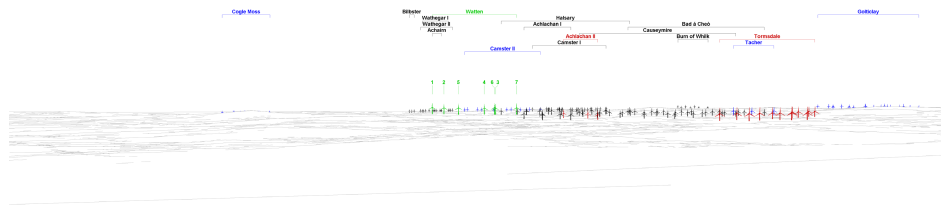


# Photomontages

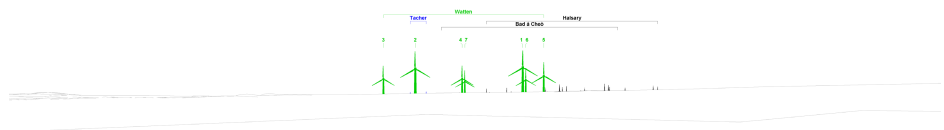
## Viewpoint 4 North Watten



## Viewpoint 6 Ben Dorrey

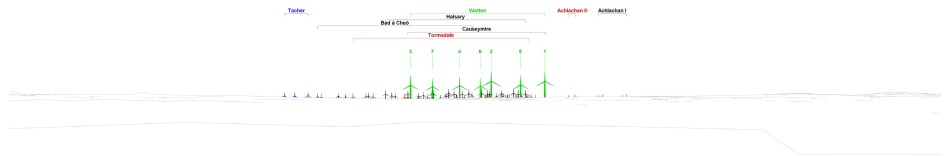


## Viewpoint 8 Watten

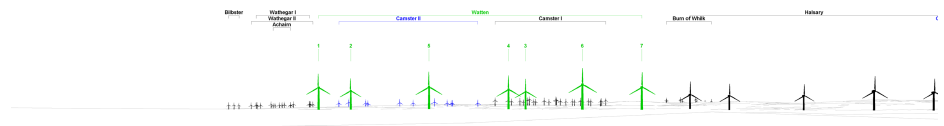


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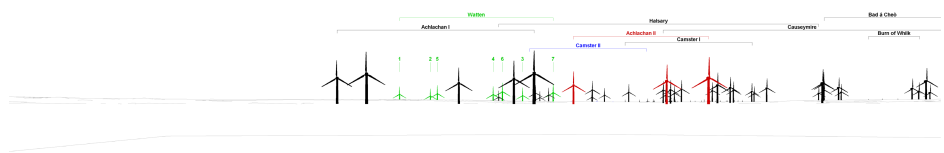
Viewpoint 9  
A882 East of  
Watten



Viewpoint 10  
Spittal

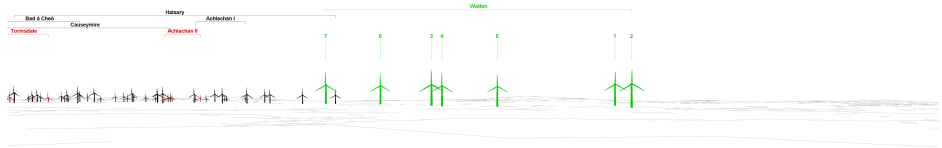


Viewpoint 12  
Westerdale

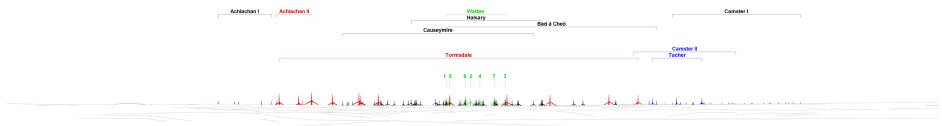


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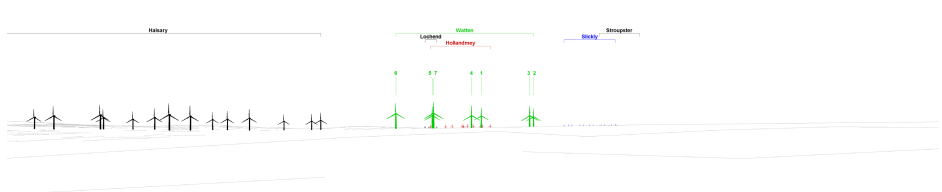
Viewpoint 13  
Minor road North  
of Grey Cairns of  
Camster



Viewpoint 14  
Loch More  
Cottage



Viewpoint 16  
A9 North of  
Rangag



## Appendix 6 – Questionnaires

## June 2022 Exhibition Questionnaire



## Have Your Say: Watten Wind Farm Scoping Consultation

EDF Renewables UK would like to hear your views on the potential new Watten Wind Farm, to the south west of the village of Watten in Caithness.

There is no obligation to answer all or any of these questions. Any feedback is appreciated.

1. The exhibition	<i>Please tick</i>	
Where did you find out about the exhibition?	Letter <input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/>
	Website <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Has the exhibition been useful?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If not please explain why?		

2. About yourself	<i>Please tick</i>	
Do you live nearby?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If you're a resident please provide your postcode:		
Are you here as a representative of any organisation or group?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If so, which organisation?		
How old are you?	Under 20 <input type="checkbox"/>	40-49 <input type="checkbox"/>
	20-29 <input type="checkbox"/>	50-59 <input type="checkbox"/>
	30-39 <input type="checkbox"/>	60+ <input type="checkbox"/>

3. The project	Yes	No	Unsure
Are you concerned about the potential effects of climate change?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you support the generation of renewable energy in Scotland?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you support the development of onshore wind farms in Scotland?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you supportive of the potential plans for the Watten wind farm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Do you have any general feedback on the development of Watten wind farm and/or ideas that you would like us to consider as we progress with the design?

If you would like to receive further announcements or information on the Watten wind farm, please provide your preferred contact details below:

E-mail address.....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....

(Your name and address is optional but is requested to support your comments)

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this survey. Your personal details are not placed on the public record and will be held securely by EDF Renewables UK in accordance with the GDPR 2016/679 data protection provisions. Information provided here will be used solely in connection with the consultation process and any subsequent planning application.

## November 2022 Exhibition Questionnaire

## Have Your Say: Watten Wind Farm Scoping Consultation

EDF Renewables UK would like to hear your views on the potential new Watten Wind Farm, to the south west of the village of Watten in Caithness.

There is no obligation to answer all or any of these questions. Any feedback is appreciated.

<b>1. The exhibition</b>	<i>Please tick</i>	
Where did you find out about the exhibition?	Advert <input type="checkbox"/>	Website <input type="checkbox"/>
	Letter <input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/>
		Online article <input type="checkbox"/>
		Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Were you already aware of the potential new wind farm?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has the exhibition been useful?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If not please explain why?		
<b>2. About yourself</b>	<i>Please tick</i>	
Do you live nearby?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If you're a resident please provide your postcode:		
Are you here as a representative of any organisation or group?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If so, which organisation?		
How old are you?	Under 20 <input type="checkbox"/>	40-49 <input type="checkbox"/>
	20-29 <input type="checkbox"/>	50-59 <input type="checkbox"/>
	30-39 <input type="checkbox"/>	60+ <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>3. The project</b>	Yes	No	Unsure
Are you concerned about the potential effects of climate change?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you support the generation of renewable energy in Scotland?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you support the development of onshore wind farms in Scotland?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you supportive of the potential plans for the Watten wind farm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4. Do you have any general feedback on the development of Watten wind farm and/or ideas that you would like us to consider as we progress with preparing the EIA Report and planning application?**

If you would like to receive further announcements or information on the Watten wind farm, please provide your preferred contact details below:

E mail address.....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....

(Your name and address is optional but is requested to support your comments)

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this survey. Your personal details are not placed on the public record and will be held securely by EDF Renewables UK in accordance with the GDPR 2016/679 data protection provisions. Information provided here will be used solely in connection with the consultation process and any subsequent planning application.