



Viking Wind Farm Construction Compounds - Main Compound

Design and Access Statement

June 2019



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Viking Energy Wind Farm LLP (“the Applicant”) is developing proposals to seek planning permission under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended for three temporary construction compounds on Mainland Shetland, known as the Main Compound, West Compound and North Compound. This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared on behalf of the applicant, by Ramboll UK Limited (Ramboll), to accompany the application for the Main Compound.
- 1.1.2 The construction of temporary construction compounds is included as part of the existing consent, however the Applicant has identified a requirement to increase the size of the compounds in order to facilitate the expeditious construction of the proposed wind farm. As such the Applicant is proposing to bring forward applications for permission to construct three larger temporary construction compounds.
- 1.1.3 Three separate planning applications and accompanying EIAs have been prepared for each of the aforementioned construction compounds.
- 1.1.4 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013¹ requires applications for ‘major’ developments to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.
- 1.1.5 The purpose of the Design and Access Statement is to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied. In line with the Scottish Government guidance² the statement does not extend to the consideration of internal aspects of individual buildings.

¹ Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, Regulation 13

² Scottish Planning Series Circular 3/2013: Development Management Procedures (URL: <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20180205155453/http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/12/9882/downloads>)

2. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

2.1.1 As the proposed development is linked to the wider Viking Wind Farm, the policies considered are in line with those considered for the wind farm.

2.1.2 The Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)³ requires planning authorities to define a spatial framework identifying those areas that are likely to be most appropriate for onshore wind farms. The spatial frameworks must be based on the following criteria:

- Group 1: Areas where wind farms will not be acceptable:
 - National Parks and National Scenic Areas.
- Group 2: Areas of significant protection:
 - Recognising the need for significant protection, in these areas wind farms may be appropriate in some circumstances. Further consideration will be required to demonstrate that any significant effects on the qualities of these areas can be substantially overcome by siting, design or other mitigation.
 - Group 2 areas include World Heritage Sites; Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites; Sites of Special Scientific Interest; National Nature Reserves; Sites identified in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes; Sites identified in the Inventory of Historic Battlefields; areas of wild land as shown on the 2014 SNH map of wild land areas; carbon rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat; and an area not exceeding 2km around cities, towns and villages identified on the local development plan.
- Group 3: Areas with potential for wind farm development:
 - Beyond groups 1 and 2, wind farms are likely to be acceptable, subject to detailed consideration against identified policy criteria.

2.1.3 At a local level, the key policy provided within the following documents:

- The Shetland Local Development Plan, Adopted September 2014⁴;
- Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance⁵, Adopted February 2018; and

2.1.4 Whilst there are a number of policies within the LDP relevant to the proposed development, it is the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance that is of most relevance to the design process. The spatial framework for wind energy development, provided in the Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance, shows that the site is located within a Group 3 area (areas where wind farms are likely to be acceptable). The Sandwater Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is the only 'Areas of Significant Protection', illustrated in Figure 1.3 of the EIA Report.

³ The Scottish Government (2014) Scottish Planning Policy, The Scottish Government, Edinburgh, June 2014 - URL: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/06/5823/6>

⁴ Shetland Islands Council, Adopted September 2014, The Shetland Local Development Plan 2014

⁵ Shetland Islands Council, Adopted February 2018, Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance

3. SITE SELECTION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

3.1 Approach to Site Selection

- 3.1.1 Site selection factors taken into account during identification of sites by the applicant include a range of criteria, such as landscape and cultural heritage designations, site topography, ecological sensitivities, ornithological interests, noise and water features.

3.2 Design Strategy and Design Evolution

Overview of Approach

- 3.2.1 The purpose of a construction compounds is to facilitate the construction phase of the consented Viking Wind Farm. In selecting the locations of the proposed compounds, the following has been considered: suitability of the location to efficiently facilitate and support construction works on wind farm site, while minimising potential environmental impacts. Changes made as a consequence of the design process are considered 'embedded' mitigation.
- 3.2.2 The proposed design of the construction compounds is larger than those consented for Viking Wind Farm, this is because the Applicant has identified a requirement to increase the size of the compounds in order to facilitate the expeditious construction of the proposed wind farm.

Design

- 3.2.3 Consideration has been given to achieving a cut and fill balance as far as practicable on the site in order to minimise the import of stone and to ensure that all material excavated will be stored appropriately to allow its use in site reinstatement.
- 3.2.4 The proposed size of the construction compounds is detailed in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1: Proposed Construction Compound Indicative Maximum Dimensions			
Construction Compound	Floor space (m)	Footprint (ha)	Maximum height (m)
Main Construction Compound	250 x 250	6.25	7
West Construction Compound	200 x 200	4	7
North Construction Compound	200 x 200	4	7

Ornithological Considerations

- 3.2.5 In relation to the Viking Wind Farm area, baseline bird studies have taken place every year from 2003 to 2018. In addition, birds surveys covering the vicinity of the proposed development site were undertaken in 2019 using the same survey methods, however these surveys are limited to a single visit in late May, within the main part of breeding season.
- 3.2.6 No significant residual effects are predicted. Further information on ornithological effects can be found in EIA Report Chapter 5 (Ornithology).

Landscape and Visual Considerations

- 3.2.7 A LVIA was carried out for the proposed development which indicated that temporary significant effects, including some significant cumulative effects would be experienced from locations within the valley, but these would be located in close proximity to the proposed development and would be short to medium-term in duration and reversible. On this basis, the overall effect on the landscape and visual resource of the area is not considered significant.

- 3.2.8 Further information on landscape and visual amenity effects can be found in EIA Report Chapter 4 (Landscape and Visual Amenity).

Noise

- 3.2.9 The assessment of construction and operational noise on the nearest residential receptors has been undertaken following the guidance contained within BS5228. The noise models consider three scenarios which replicate the construction of the compound, typical activities that will occur during the daytime and the operation of lighting rigs and generators during the night-time. The predicted noise levels indicate that the threshold levels will not be exceeded. Accordingly, the assessment concludes that noise impacts are Not Significant.
- 3.2.10 It is assumed that any noise generated during decommissioning activities would be similar to that generated during the construction of the access track and compound, therefore, noise impacts during decommissioning will also be Not Significant.
- 3.2.11 Further information on noise effects can be found in EIA Report Chapter 6 (Noise).

Other Environmental Considerations

Terrestrial Habitats

- 3.2.12 As a design principle, ecologically sensitive areas have been avoided as far as practicable, and loss of habitat has been minimised by careful design. This was informed by detailed surveys, specifically Phase 1 Habitat survey and NVC survey. Further information on ecological effects can be found in EIA Report Chapter 7 (Ecology).

Watercourses

- 3.2.13 The minimisation of watercourse crossings and avoidance where possible of works in close proximity to watercourses was a key objective of the site layout. Accordingly, all known watercourses as shown on 1:25,000 OS mapping were identified (and confirmed where possible during site survey). Further details on the assessment on potential effects on watercourses can be found in EIA Report Chapter 8 (Hydrology).

Cultural Heritage

- 3.2.14 The proposed development avoids direct effects on all known archaeology and cultural heritage assets. Further details can be found in EIA Report Chapter 10 (Cultural Heritage and Archaeology).

Technical Considerations

Ground Conditions

- 3.2.15 The suitability of ground conditions was considered during development of the site layout, with areas of peat and steep gradients identified. Peat depth was determined through peat probing.
- 3.2.16 The initial phase of peat probing was completed at the consented construction compound locations, along access tracks and turbine locations for the now consented s36C Consented Viking Wind Farm. The second phase of peat probing carried out aimed to supplement the original data and provide a greater resolution of detail at the proposed construction compound locations.
- 3.2.17 Further details contained in EIA Report Technical Appendix (TA) 2.3 (Peat Slide Risk Assessment).

4. CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

- 4.1.1 A conference call took place on 12th April 2019 to discuss the likely significant environmental effects. Statutory consultees: Shetland Islands Council, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) were invited to comment on the scope of the EIA. Those that could not attend the call provided comment separate to the call.
- 4.1.2 As the construction compounds individually are considered a ‘major’ class of development; as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 and circular 3:2013 - Development Management Procedures, public consultation is required and has been undertaken by the Applicant. A Pre-Application Consultation Report (PACR) has been prepared by Ramboll on behalf of the applicant. Public information events were held on Wednesday 12 June 2019 as follows:
- Whiteness & Weisdale Hall from 10am-2pm; and
 - Voe Hall from 3.30pm-8pm.

5. ACCESS

- 5.1.1 A summary of vehicular access to each proposed construction compound is provided below, with further details are provided in Chapter 2 (Development Description) and Technical Appendix 2.2: Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan of the EIA Report.
- 5.1.2 In accordance with section 6(1)(g) of the Land Reform Act 2003, general public access rights to any of the compounds are removed throughout the construction working area for health and safety reasons.

Main Compound

- 5.1.3 The construction and operations access to the site would be from the A970 south of the site.

West Compound

- 5.1.4 The construction and operations access to the site would be from the A970 south of the site.

North Compound

- 5.1.5 The construction and operations access to the site would be from the A971 west of the site.

6. SUMMARY

- 6.1.1 This document provides an overview of the design process undertaken by the applicant while preparing the applications for the proposed construction compounds. This document summarises the relevant local development plan policy considerations, the design approach, consultation activities and the final design solution.

