



Nisthill Wind Farm

Supplementary Environmental Information – Non-Technical Summary

Client: Nisthill Wind Farm Limited
Project/Proposal No: 3586
Version: 2.0
Date: 2023-04-11





Document Information

Project Name:	Nisthill Wind Farm
Document Title:	Supplementary Environmental Information – Non-Technical Summary
Client Name:	Nisthill Wind Farm Limited
Document Status:	Final
Author:	Various authors
Reviewed:	J Hazzard, E Bathgate
Approved:	J Hazzard
Date:	2023-04-11
Version:	2.0
Project/Proposal Number:	3586
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Nisthill Wind Farm Limited (hereafter referred to as “the Applicant”) is proposing a renewable energy development, Nisthill Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as the “Proposed Development”) on a site 5 km east of Birsay immediately west of the Loch of Swannay, Orkney. A planning application was submitted to Orkney Islands Council (OIC) on 26th August 2022 for the Proposed Development, described as:

“Erect four wind turbines (maximum height of 180 metres, maximum generation capacity 26.4 MW total), a substation and maintenance building, create an access, and associated infrastructure including access tracks, underground cabling, crane hardstandings and borrow pit | Hundland Hill (Land Near), Birsay, Orkney”.

The planning application (reference 22/320/TPMAJ) was supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. The planning application was validated by OIC on 21st September 2022.

The site location and site boundary, and the proposed site layout, are shown in **Figure 1.1** and **Figure 1.2**.

1.2 Purpose of the Supplementary Environmental Information Report

OIC, as the planning authority, has received and reviewed consultation responses from various consultees and its own Council departments, to the planning application. OIC provided a summary of the responses received, with a request for additional information to respond to or address the comments made, in a letter dated 8th February 2023.

This SEI Report has been produced to provide additional information to OIC as per the request dated 8th February 2023.

There has been no change to the Proposed Development description, design or layout, with the exception of a proposed increased micro-siting limit of 100 m for turbine T4 and its hardstanding and access track, and much of the information reported in the submitted EIA Report is unchanged. This NTS summarises the additional environmental information provided, but does not repeat the content of the submitted EIA Report (and the NTS that was submitted as part of the planning application) where that content is unchanged.

1.3 Availability of the SEI

Electronic copies of the SEI Report, including all figures, appendices and accompanying documents are available to view on the project website www.nisthillwindfarm.co.uk.

Electronic copies of the SEI Report can also be accessed at <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/>

A physical copy of the SEI Report is available for viewing at Birsay Community Hall.

Hard copies of the NTS are available free of charge from the Applicant (info@nisthillwindfarm.co.uk). The cost of a hard copy of the SEI Report is £250. In addition, for anyone who has difficulty accessing the information online, a USB copy can be made available on request by emailing info@nisthillwindfarm.co.uk. The price of the hard copy reflects the cost of producing all of the graphics and visualisations at the recommended size. As such, a DVD/USB version is recommended.



1.4 Representation to the SEI

Any representation to the application should be made by email, directly to OIC at:

planning@orkney.gov.uk

2. Additional Environmental Information

The following additional information is provided in the SEI Report, in response to consultation responses received:

- Further, detailed assessment of potential effects on groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems (GWDTE);
- Confirmation that micrositing T4 and associated infrastructure approximately 80 to 100 m north is considered feasible, and that this would allow the habitat in this area, identified by the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) survey as M27, to be avoided;
- Clarification and additional information on proposed surface water drainage and measures to control groundwater migration;
- Clarification and reiteration of information provided in the submitted EIA Report on local storage of peat, flood risk, and sustainable drainage;
- Clarification and justification of the scope and methodology undertaken for assessment of cultural heritage effects, including determination of appropriate study area and agreement of the study area during the scoping stage;
- Clarification of the assessment of impacts on the integrity of the settings of Scheduled Monuments, taking account of the recently adopted National Planning Framework 4;
- Additional photomontages to support the assessment of effects on the Stones of Stenness and Maeshowe (monuments within the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site);
- Information on a Community Engagement Programme proposed by the Applicant to increase public awareness of the Scheduled Monuments within and near the Proposed Development site boundary;
- Confirmation that a commercial arrangement between the applicant and the operator of the existing small turbine within the Proposed Development site boundary is currently ongoing and as such no wind shadow assessment is considered to be necessary, with the operator of the existing turbine expected to formally remove their objection once this agreement has been reached;
- Details of additional ornithology survey work undertaken during the 2022 breeding season, which had not been available at the time of writing the submitted EIA Report, including updated assessment of effects on relevant ornithological receptors and clarification of potential effects on the Orkney Mainland Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and North Orkney SPA;
- Clarification of the future baseline in respect of socio-economics;
- Clarification and further justification for not including the West of Orkney Offshore Wind Farm in the cumulative assessment; and
- Reiteration of information provided in the submitted EIA Report relating to the St Magnus Way.

The additional information provided, including additional analyses of potential environmental effects where relevant, confirms **no change to the assessed significance of environmental effects** as presented in the submitted EIA Report. A summary of residual effects was provided in Chapter 17 of the submitted EIA Report and this is unchanged.

Although no changes have been identified to the assessed significance of effects, additional mitigation measures are proposed, comprising:



- further precautionary mitigation measures to minimise potential for adverse effects on groundwater in a discrete area of potential GWDTE in the north-west of the site;
- increasing the micrositing allowance for T4 and associated infrastructure to 100 m to allow the M27 community in this area to be avoided; and
- a proposed Community Engagement Programme to increase public awareness of the Scheduled Monuments within and near the Proposed Development site boundary.

All other mitigation measures and environmental commitments remain as previously presented, as summarised in Chapter 16 of the submitted EIA Report.



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