



Nisthill Wind Farm

Supplementary Environmental Information (Updated December 2023) – Non-Technical Summary

Client:	Nisthill Wind Farm Limited
Project/Proposal No:	3586
Version:	3.0
Date:	2023-12-15





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:	2023-12-15
Version:	3.0
Project/Proposal Number:	3586
ITPEnergised Office:	4th Floor, Centrum House, 108-114 Dundas Street, Edinburgh, EH3 5DQ



Contents

Document Information	2
Contents	3
1. Introduction	4
1.1 Background	4
1.2 Purpose of the Supplementary Environmental Information Report	4
1.3 Availability of the SEI	4
1.4 Representation to the SEI	5
2. Additional Environmental Information	5

Figures

Figure 1.1 – Site Location Plan

Figure 1.2 – Site Layout Plan



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 Updated Supplementary Environmental Information Report

OIC, as the planning authority, 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.

A supporting Supplementary Environmental Information Report (SEI Report) was submitted by the Applicant and validated by OIC on 17th April 2023 under Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 Regulation 26 – Supplementary information and evidence relating to EIA reports.

The SEI Report was reviewed by OIC, and on 25th July 2023 they requested additional information to ensure the planning application is in accordance Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. There has also been additional engagement with NatureScot regarding ornithological mitigation and enhancement commitments. An updated SEI Report has therefore been produced, providing revised and additional information in response to the request from OIC, and the additional engagement with NatureScot. Content from the April 2023 SEI Report which has not required any amendment or update is also included, so the Updated SEI Report supersedes the April 2023 version. This document provides a non-technical summary (NTS) of the Updated SEI Report.

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 Updated 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 Updated SEI

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

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



Hard copies of the Updated NTS are available free of charge from the Applicant (info@nisthillwindfarm.co.uk). The cost of a hard copy of the Updated 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 Updated 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 Updated SEI Report (some of which is unchanged from the previous version of the SEI Report), in response to consultation responses received:

- Further, detailed assessment of potential effects on groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems (GWDTE);
- Confirmation that microsites 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. Confirmation that the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) had provided an updated consultation response to the planning application to OIC on 4th May, which removed their outstanding objection to the application subject to a set of planning conditions;
- 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;
- 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, including further analysis on the potential loss of feeding habitats and provision of updated mitigation commitments in respect of habitat management areas;
- 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
- A sequential cumulative assessment on the cultural element of the St Magnus Way pilgrimage route.

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 microsite allowance for T4 and associated infrastructure to 100 m to allow the M27 community in this area to be avoided;
- a proposed Community Engagement Programme to increase public awareness of the Scheduled Monuments within and near the Proposed Development site boundary; and
- additional areas of habitat restoration/enhancement and management, to mitigate indirect losses of hen harrier and short-eared owl foraging and nesting habitat.

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



KEY
Site Boundary

0 1 2 km

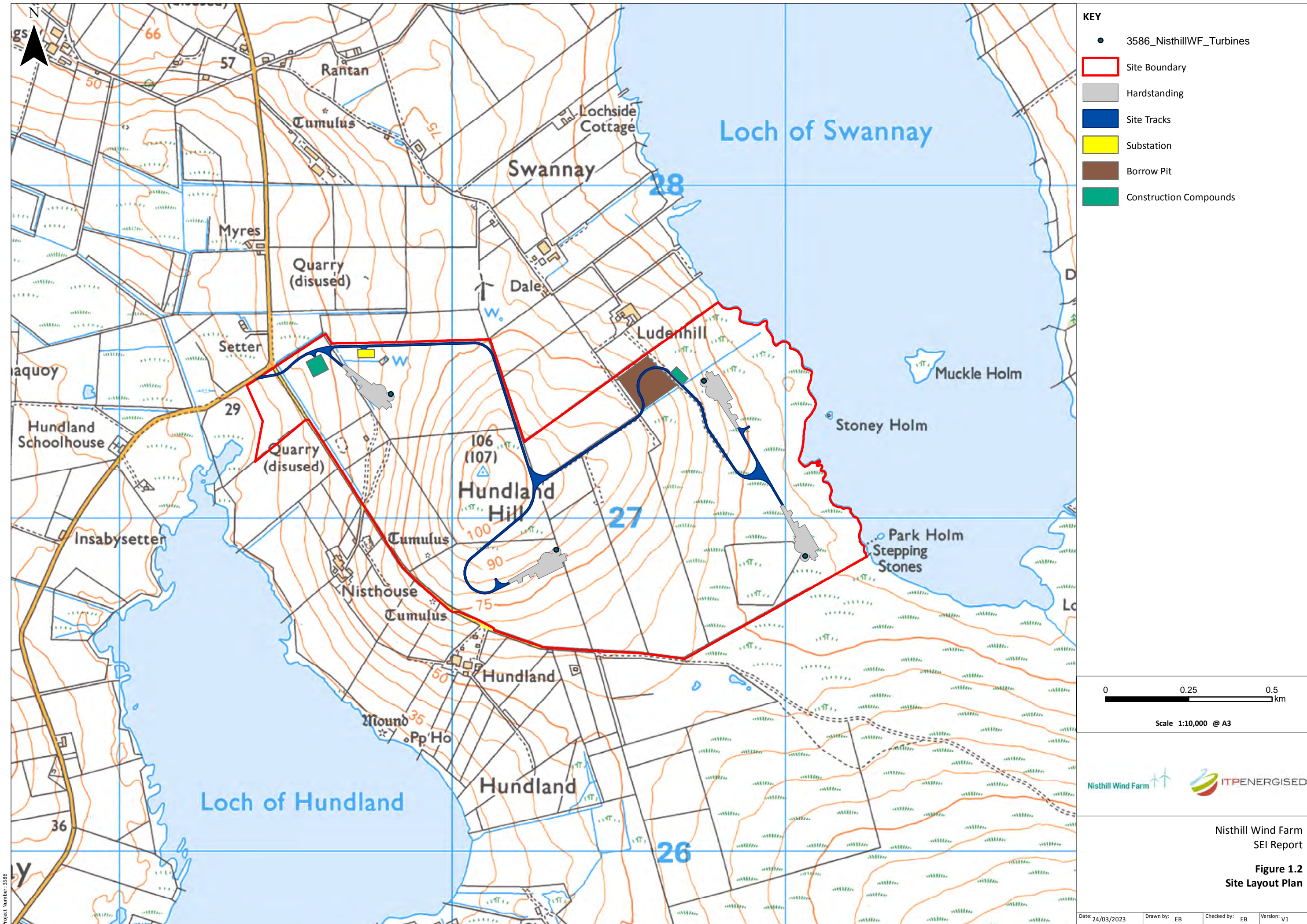
Scale 1:50,000 @ A3



Nisthill Wind Farm
SEI Report

Figure 1.1
Site Location Plan

Date: 24/03/2023 Drawn by: EB Checked by: EB Version: v1



Project Number: 3586



ITPEnergised is a leading international consultancy delivering expert energy, environmental, engineering, technical advisory and asset management services; facilitating the transition to net zero.

Visit the ITPEnerGised group offices in:

Bristol, London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Buenos Aires, Madrid, Delhi, Beijing, Canberra, Auckland

Sectors:

Onshore Renewables & Storage | Offshore Wind & Marine Renewables | Oil & Gas Transition
Property & Urban Regeneration | Corporate, Industrial & Manufacturing

