

# ACHANY EXTENSION WIND FARM

Pre-Application Consultation Report  
JULY 2021



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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

SSE Generation Ltd, 'the Applicant', is proposing to construct an extension to the operational onshore Achany Wind Farm to maximise the renewable electricity generation potential at the site. The proposed Achany Extension Wind Farm is located on the adjoining land to the north-west of the operational Achany Wind Farm. The location of the proposed wind farm is approximately 4.5 kilometres (km) north of the village of Rosehall and 11km west-north-west of Lairg, as shown by the 'Site Boundary' on Figure 1.1: Location Plan. (Volume 3 of submitted EIA Report)

The proposals for which consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 is sought by the Applicant, are referred to as 'the Proposed Development' and are described in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 of Volume 2 of the submitted EIA Report. The application for Section 36 consent has been prepared by SSE Renewables Developments (UK) Limited (SSE Renewables), 'the Developer', on behalf of the Applicant. Deemed planning permission under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1997, as amended, is also sought. The Applicant holds the necessary generation licence required to operate the Proposed Development.

The Proposed Development comprises up to 20 Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) and would be an extension to the 19 WTGs of the operational Achany Wind Farm. The installed generation capacity of the existing operational Achany Wind Farm is 38 megawatts (MW) and the total installed capacity of the Proposed Development alone, is anticipated to be in excess of 80MW. Therefore, the combined capacity of Achany Wind Farm and the Proposed Development is anticipated to be in excess of 118MW. The maximum tip height of the proposed WTGs is 149.9 metres (m) and the site layout is shown on Figure 3.1: The Proposed Development. (Volume 3 of submitted EIA Report)

The Proposed Development has been subject to an iterative design process, giving due consideration to the operational asset and environmental constraints specific to the site and surrounding areas. Further detail on the iterative design process is provided in Chapter 2: Site Selection and Design Evolution. (Volume 2 of submitted EIA Report)

The Proposed Development would contribute to legislated climate change targets<sup>1</sup> and government policy objectives in helping Scotland to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2045 at the latest.

## CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES


Consultation and engagement with stakeholders started early in the development process, with advice and input from key consultees being sought at the early stages of the project, as SSE Renewables recognises that this engagement and feedback from key stakeholders helps greatly to inform decisions about the Proposed Development.

At this early stage a project website was developed to allow the community and public to gain information and keep updated with the project's process. The project website address can be found at: <https://www.sserenewables.com/achanyextension/>. An extract from the website is illustrated in Figure 1 – Extract from Project Website.

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<sup>1</sup> The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019

Figure 1- Extract from Project Website



Home Who we are Communities News and views

Our Sites Offshore wi

### Onshore wind

- Great Britain
- Ireland
- Northern Ireland
- In Development
  - Strathy South
  - Achany Extension
  - Gordonbush Extension
  - Bhlaraidh Extension
  - Doraville
  - Sheskin South
  - Tangy Repower
  - Viking
  - Cloiche
  - Yellow River
  - Drumnahough
  - Lenalea
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- Onshore Wind Operations

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## ACHANY EXTENSION (FORMERLY GLENCASSLEY)

In November 2020, SSE Renewables submitted a refreshed scoping report to Scottish Ministers for the former Glencassley wind farm. The project has been renamed Achany Extension wind farm due to the the proximity with the operational Achany wind farm and reuse of existing infrastructure.


The Achany Extension site is located in the Highlands of Scotland, 7km north of Rosehall, 12km west of Lairg and to the north west of SSE's operational Achany Wind Farm.

In 2012 SSE submitted an application for a 26-turbine wind farm. This application was subsequently refused by the Scottish Government in 2015 due to impacts on the National Scenic Area and 'Wild Land' despite the support of The Highland Council.

With the renewed appetite for onshore wind in Scotland and in the context of the 'Climate Emergency', SSE is reviewing previous schemes and has concluded that this site continues to offer excellent potential for a wind farm. The site layout is now being optimised with a view to addressing previous concerns.

In August 2019 a Scoping Report was submitted to the Scottish Government.

The November 2020 Scoping refresh can be found on the Energy Consent Unit's website [here](#), using application reference number ECU00001930



### Important documents

### Contact info

If you have any queries or wish to speak with the project team, please contact:

Jade O'Hara, Stakeholder Engagement Manager

Email: [jade.ohara@sse.com](mailto:jade.ohara@sse.com)

Phone: 07436 482792

Community fund information related to Achany wind farm can be found [here](#).

As a responsible developer, SSE Renewables is committed to engaging with local communities on development proposals, both prior to and following the submission of an application. As the Proposed Development is being made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act, although there is no statutory obligation to complete pre-application consultation, in terms of engaging with the local community the relevant principles of the consultation process required for 'major' planning applications as set out in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 and Circular 3:2013 - Development Management Procedures, have been applied. This ensures that the local community and all those with an interest in the proposals have an opportunity to provide comment and feedback.

The Developer also carried out a thorough pre-application scoping consultation exercise, specifically on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and consultation on this took place with the local community via the relevant local community councils.

## EIA SCOPING PROCESS

The purpose of EIA pre-application consultation is to:

- Ensure that statutory consultees and other bodies with a particular interest in the environment are informed of the proposal and provided with an opportunity to comment at an early stage in the EIA process;
- Obtain baseline information regarding existing environmental site conditions;
- Establish key environmental issues and identify potential effects to be considered during the EIA;
- Identify those issues which are likely to require more detailed study and those which could be justifiably excluded from further assessment; and
- Provide a means of confirming the most appropriate methods of assessment.

Meetings and calls were used to inform consultees of the Proposed Development, to discuss key issues in respect of the potential for environmental effects and to discuss timescales for the submission of the application.

An EIA Scoping Report was submitted to Energy Consents Unit on the 15th of August 2019 and the formal Scoping Opinion was received on 22 October 2019. Scoping responses were received from the following consultees:

- The Highland Council (THC);
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA);
- Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH);
- Historic Environment Scotland (HES);
- British Telecom;
- Civil Aviation Authority (Airspace);
- Defence Infrastructure Organisation;
- Fisheries Management Scotland;
- Friends of the Earth Scotland;
- Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd;
- Inverness Chamber of Commerce;
- Ironside Farrah (as Scottish Government's advisors on peat);
- John Muir Trust;
- Joint Radio Company;
- Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fisheries Board;
- Marine Scotland;

- Mountaineering Scotland;
- National Air Traffic Services (NATS) Safeguarding;
- OFCOM;
- RSPB Scotland;
- Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) (Highlands & Islands);
- Scottish Forestry;
- Scottish Water;
- Scottish Wildland Group;
- Scottish Wildlife Trust;
- Scotways;
- The Crown Estate Scotland;
- Transport Scotland;
- Visit Scotland; and
- WWF Scotland.

The Scoping Report was also issued to the following community councils and local organisations:

Creich;  
 Ardgay & District;  
 Lairg; and  
 Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (KoSDT).

The Developer's project liaison manager also contacted the MSP and local Councillors to offer copies of the Scoping Report. No responses were received from Creich, Ardgay & District, Lairg Community Councils, or KoSDT at this stage.

As no application for consent for the Proposed Development was made within 12 months of the 2019 Scoping Opinion, an updated Scoping Refresh letter was submitted, requesting a refreshed scoping opinion was issued to Scottish Ministers on 19 November 2020.

On 24 November 2020, the ECU confirmed that the 2020 Scoping Refresh letter had been issued to all consultees that were consulted during the 2019 Scoping process. All consultees were requested to provide a response by 16 December 2020. The ECU also confirmed that they did not intend to provide another formal scoping opinion in relation to the 2020 Scoping Refresh, but the Developer should include any further scoping comments from consultees in the EIA Report.

The following consultees provided an updated scoping response in relation to the 2020 Scoping Refresh letter:

- British Telecom (BT);
- Crown Estate (CE);
- Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO);
- Historic Environment Scotland (HES);
- Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd (HIAL);
- Joint Radio Company (JRC);
- Mountaineering Scotland (MS);
- NATS Safeguarding (NATS);

- NatureScot<sup>2</sup>;
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB);
- Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA);
- Scottish Forestry (SF);
- Scotways (SW);
- Transport Scotland (TS); and
- The Highland Council (THC).

The Refreshed Scoping letter was also issued to the following community councils and local organisations:

Creich;  
 Ardgay and District;  
 Lairg;  
 Rogart; and  
 KoSDT.

The Developer's project liaison manager also contacted the MSP and local Councillors to offer copies of the scoping refresh to the MSP and local Councillors.

At this more detailed stage in the design process, as the access route options were being considered in more detail, opinion from Rogart Community Council was also sought in relation to their proximity to the anticipated delivery route. No responses were received at this point in time from Creich, Ardgay & District, Lairg or Rogart Community Councils; or Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust.

## COMMUNITY PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

The purpose of Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) as set out in Circular 3/2013 (Development Management Procedures) between prospective applicants and communities is to:

*'Ensure communities can be better informed about major and national development proposals and to have an opportunity to contribute their views before a formal planning application is submitted to the planning authority. This helps to improve the quality of planning applications; mitigate negative impacts where possible; address misunderstandings; and to air and to address where practicable, any community issues. Any adjustments made as a result of PAC should improve the proposals and assist the efficient consideration of applications once submitted.'*

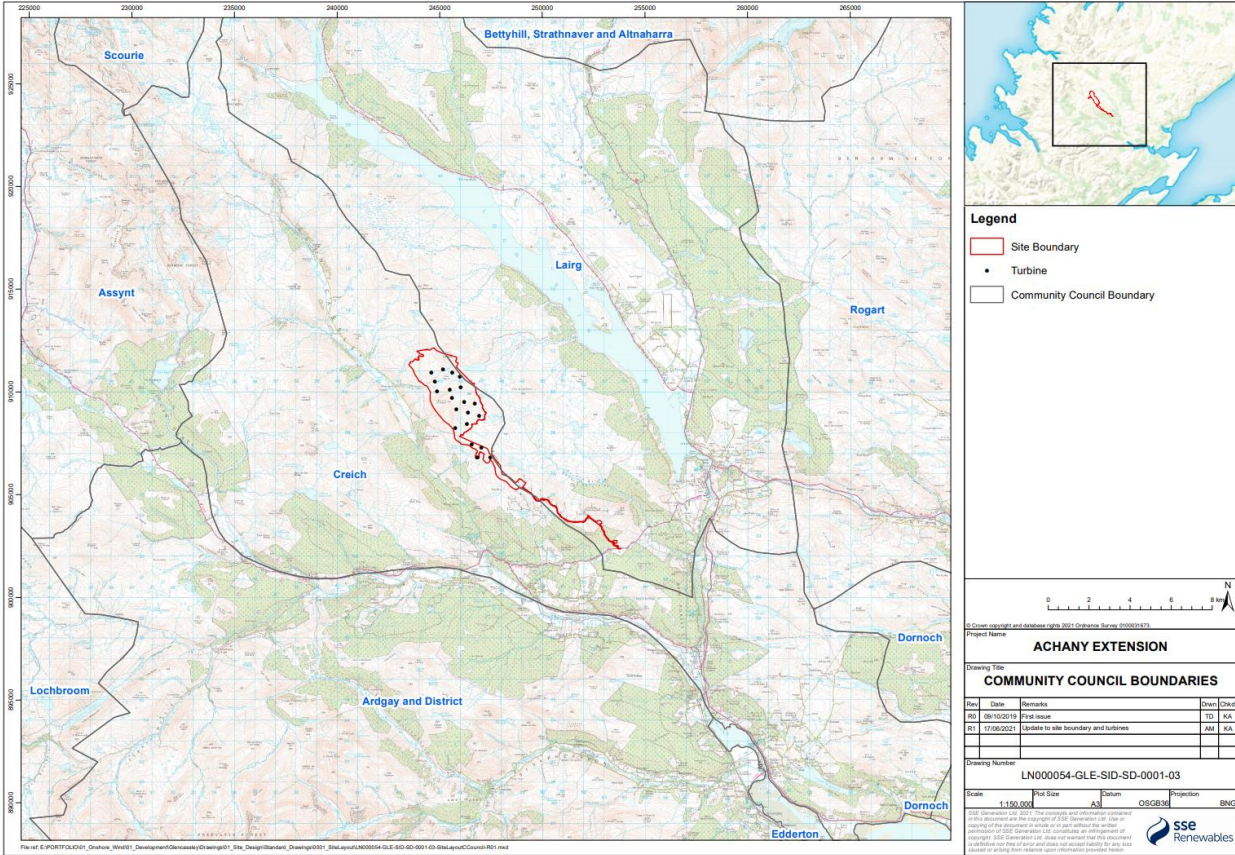
Early and open negotiations between applicants, planning authorities and other parties, such as statutory consultees, in advance of the formal application for national and major developments is promoted in Circular 3 (2013) Development Management Procedures but is also recognised as a beneficial process to stakeholders throughout the development of the project. At paragraph 2.22 (page 12) of the Regulations it confirms that further advice on planning community engagement activity can be found in "*Planning Advice Note 3/2010: Community Engagement*".

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<sup>2</sup> Previously Scottish Natural Heritage

The applicant is also required to consult every community council any part of whose area is within or adjoins the land on which the proposed development is situated. This may include community councils in a neighbouring planning authority. The community councils that were identified as having an interest in the Proposed Development are Creich Community Council, within whose boundary the site lies, Ardgay and District Community Council, Lairg Community Council and in relation to the transport route, Rogart Community Council. The boundaries of these community councils are shown in Figure 2 below in relation to the proposed application site.

Figure 2: Community Council Boundaries relative to application site



In undertaking the community engagement on the project from the beginning, cognisance of the advice in PAN 3/2010 has been taken account of by liaising with relevant stakeholders as to the most useful type and frequency of consultation for the community. It is recognised that within communities over the project area as a whole, different methods and timings of engagement will vary to suit the needs of that community. Further guidance on the practical elements of consultation and engagement with communities is taken from “Successful Planning equals Effective Engagement & Delivery”<sup>3</sup>

As such, pre-application meetings and telephone calls were offered to key stakeholders, including Scottish Government (Energy Consents Unit), The Highland Council (THC), Creich Community Council, Ardgay & District Community Council and Lairg Community Council to understand the most appropriate levels and method of communication for each community.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pas.org.uk/speed/>



Consultation with the community councils commenced in 2019 and was ongoing through a series of email correspondence and telephone conversations, but in March 2020 the impacts from the Coronavirus-19 Pandemic interrupted this ongoing consultation temporarily as the country was required by the UK Government to formally lockdown, restricting movement and activities. Following Scottish Government's introduction of legislation in the form of the "*Coronavirus Scotland Act 2020*" and following receipt of emergency guidance on the pre-application consultation for public events in April 2020, consultation practices required to be adapted accordingly. At this time, communities understandably focused on how to help their residents through the 'lockdown' and SSE played a part in this whereby existing community benefit funds were re-directed to communities, to help cope under such unexpected and difficult circumstances and provide essential services to safeguard and support their residents. Further details are contained in the report published in April 2021 "*Delivering Investment, Supporting Jobs – Understanding the socio-economic value for SSE Renewables' projects in Sutherland*"<sup>4</sup>

Following more recent relaxation of the Coronavirus restrictions meetings with community councils resumed and these included:

- Creich Community Council: Presentation (via Zoom call) to the Community Council regarding the Proposed Development on 19 January 2021; and
- Ardgay and District Community Council: Presentation (via Zoom call) to the Community Council regarding the Proposed Development on 08 March 2021.

A representative from the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust and the local Councillor attended the presentation presented to Creich Community Council on 19 January 2021.

Lairg Community Council and Rogart Community Council were also contacted by the Applicant. Lairg Community Council confirmed that they did not require an update on the Proposed Development, as they had received a copy of the presentation from a neighbouring Community Council. However, Lairg Community Council did request a separate meeting with the Applicant to discuss Community Benefit, which was held on 8th June 2021 by the SSE community team, who currently work closely with the communities in relation to the existing Community Benefit Funds and have published the comprehensive report "*Delivering Investment, Supporting Jobs – Understanding the Socio-economic value for SSE Renewables' projects in Sutherland.*" as illustrated in Figure 3. This report details the investment and socio economic value that has been delivered through existing SSE projects and community funds in the Caithness and Sutherland area, realising a Total Lifetime Economic contribution of £131 million in the Highlands area alone.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sserenewables.com/news-and-views/2021/04/wind-powered-economy-four-highland-wind-farms-expected-to-generate-485m-for-the-uk-1/>

Figure 3- Extracts from “Delivering Investment, Supporting Jobs – Understanding the Socio-economic value for SSE Renewables’ projects in Sutherland.”

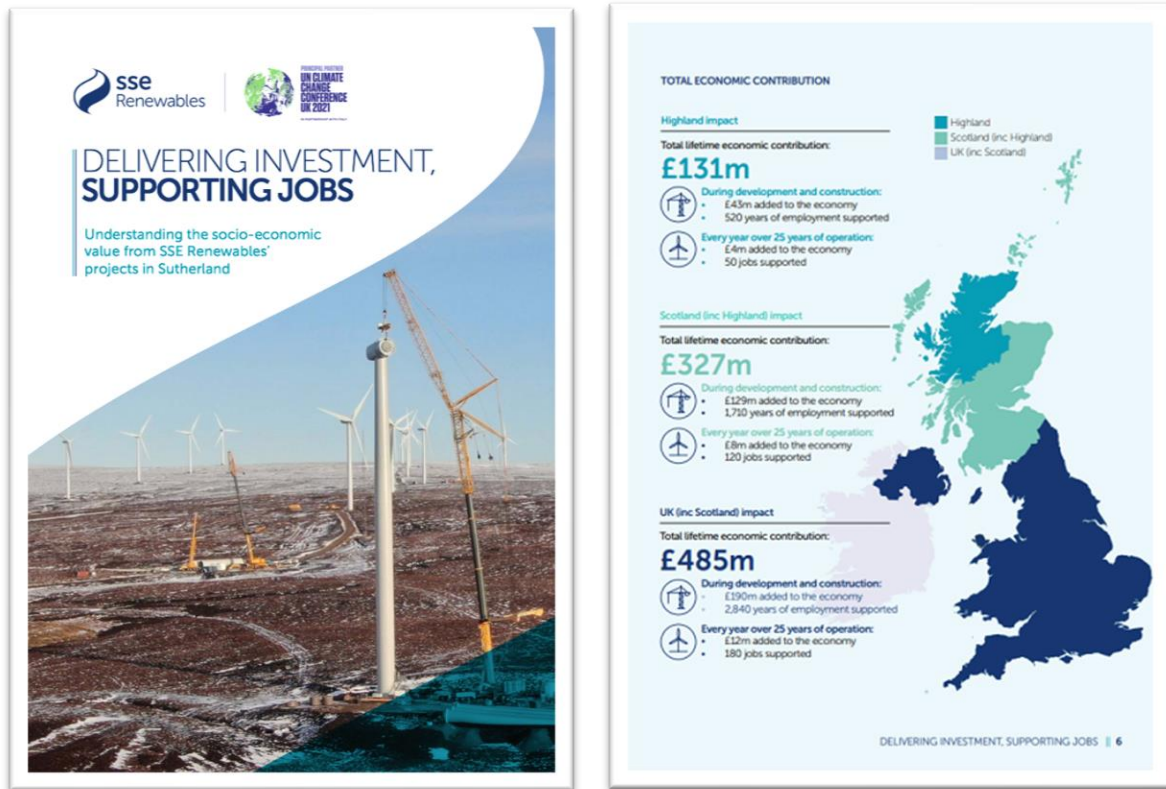


Figure 4 summarises a timeline of the consultation carried out over the project’s development. A copy of the consultation register outlining the consultation in greater detail is contained within **Appendix A**.

Figure 4 – Consultation Timeline Summary

Date	Summary of consultation carried out
August 2019	Scoping Report submitted for Glencassley Wind Farm and distributed to community councils; ward Councillor’s; elected representatives; and other key stakeholders
October 2019	Follow up with Creich, Ardgay & District, and Lairg community councils post local election process and invitations issued to community councils in relation to public exhibitions. Other key stakeholders also invited to exhibitions such as Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust and Ward Councillor’s.
November 2019	Public Exhibitions advertised in local press - Northern Times
	Postcards sent out to local residents and businesses within a 15km radius of the site entrance to advertise the public exhibitions.
	Public Exhibitions Posters distributed in local community
	Public Exhibition at Rosehall Village Hall 27 November - 3pm to 7.30pm Public Exhibition at Lairg Community Centre 28 November - 10am to 3.30pm
January 2020	Contacted Lairg, Creich and Ardgay & District Community councils for introductions following local elections.
March 2020	Offered to attend meetings and provide project update to Lairg, Creich and Ardgay & District Community councils

April 2020	Contact made with Creich, Ardgay & District and Lairg Community councils in relation to comms during COVID-19 emergency period.
May 2020	Follow up contact made with Creich, Ardgay & District and Lairg, to offer project update via COVID safe method - video call.
August 2020	Project website refreshed.
November 2020	Refreshed Scoping Report submitted for Achany Extension Wind Farm to Scottish Ministers, (formally changing project from Glencassley to Achany Extension)
	Project Updates provided to Stakeholders - Ward councillors, interested Highland Councillors, MSPs. And other key consultees 24 /25 November
	Scoping refresh consultation issued by ECU to all consultees previously consulted for Glencassley Wind Farm scoping
	Other key consultees sent email update
	Project website and content refreshed: FAQs, news and social media
December 2020	Scoping refresh consultee responses received and reviewed.
January 2021	Further Scoping consultee responses received, and comments reviewed
	Press release in relation to Community benefit activities – circulated to stakeholders
	Contact made with Creich, Ardgay & District, Lairg and Rogart Community Councils to offer attendance at next meetings.
	Presentation provided to Creich Community Council (Zoom Call) regarding project progress – 26 Jan
	Contact made with Ward Councillors to offer and arrange update meetings
February 2021	Online meeting held with several members of John Muir Trust to provide project update and answer queries (Zoom call – 25 Feb)
March 2021	Presentation provided to the Ardgay & District Community Council Meeting – 8 March (Zoom call)
May 2021	Newspaper adverts published in local press, post cards sent out to local households / businesses and posters placed locally to advertise the Virtual Exhibition

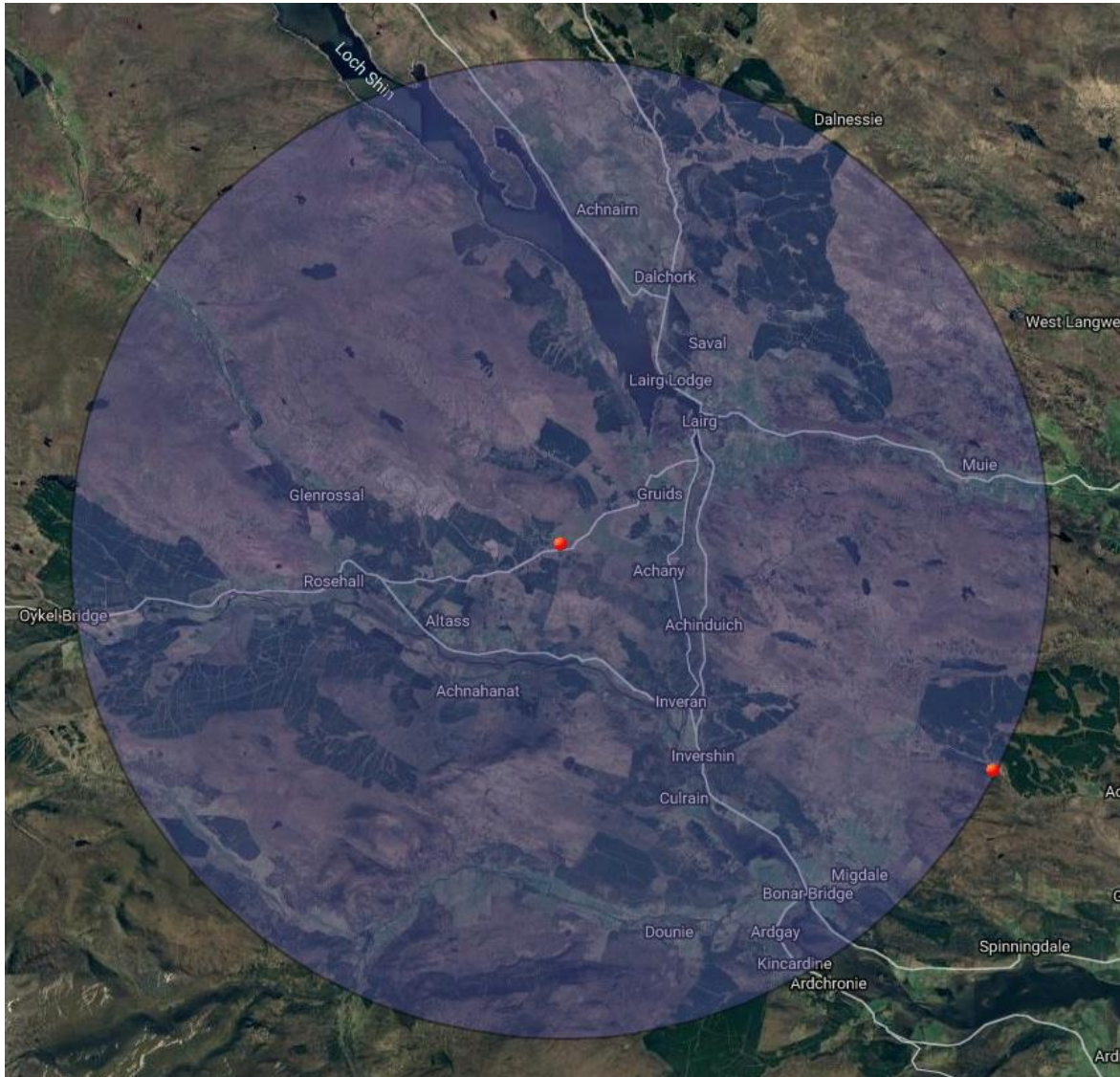
## PUBLIC EXHIBITION EVENTS

Under the current development management regulations, an applicant is only required to hold one event for members of the public where they can make comments on the proposals. However, in accordance with good engagement practice, two sets of public exhibitions were held between the early scoping stage and the intended submission of the Section 36 application as it is recognised that public engagement is a key element of the consenting process.

The first set of public exhibition events were held within the local area in November 2019 to allow members of the local communities to obtain information and provide comments on the Proposed Development. The events were advertised in the local area and in local newspapers at least 7 days in advance and the Developer made contact with the community councils and local councillors and a local

MSP directly, to inform them of the events. Information about the exhibition was also advertised on the project webpage and a post card advertising the exhibition was sent to 1,576 local properties within a 15km radius from the site entrance as shown in Figure 5 below to ensure the most populated areas received the postcards advertising the exhibitions.

Figure 5- 15km radius for postcard distribution



The details of the first public exhibitions were:

- 27 November 2019 (3pm to 7pm) – Rosehall Village Hall; and
- 28 November 2019 (10am to 4pm) – Lairg Village Hall.

The first set of public exhibitions presented the early-stage proposals to construct and operate a wind farm on Glencassley and Glenrossal Estates, near Lairg, Sutherland, as illustrated in “Figure 6– the proposed development area”, with a view to addressing previous concerns raised in relation to the National Scenic Area and on Wild Land. The exhibition set out the background including the previous 2012 application, the turbine options under consideration and reasons for revisiting the project in the

context of increased demands and targets for renewable energy generation and requirement for reduction of carbon emissions due to the climate emergency declarations by Scottish Government and The Highland Council.

Exhibition details also set out the project elements which would be considered, such as the EIA process, environmental assessment work, further details about SSE Renewables, existing renewable energy generation capacity, future sustainability goals and need for further investment. The exhibition also provided some detail on the ‘hydro heritage’ which exists in the community and some examples of community investment and community projects carried out since the operational Achany Wind Farm was constructed in 2010. The exhibition boards presented and other relevant materials and documents relating to this first exhibition are shown in **Appendix B – First Public Exhibition Materials**.

Contact details were also provided in order that communities would be encouraged to make contact with the project team at any time to provide project updates or to answer any queries as and when required. Feedback Forms were also provided for attendees. The attendance and feedback is outlined in the ‘*Exhibition Attendance*’ section of this report.

Figure 6 – Exhibition 1 - The Proposed Development Area



Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, in accordance with legislation and government guidance, the second set of exhibitions were held as virtual online exhibitions between 24th and 30th May 2021 to allow members of the community and the general public, to obtain updated information on the evolution of the proposed development, to provide feedback on the finalised design and to ask questions in advance of the planned submission of the application.

The second phase of online events were advertised in the same comprehensive manner as the first set of exhibitions, with posters being placed in and around the local area including Lairg, Bonar Bridge, Rosehall and also in Rogart. Information about the exhibitions was also advertised on the project webpage and a post card advertising the exhibition was sent to residential and business properties within a 15km radius from the site entrance to ensure the most populated areas received the postcards advertising the exhibitions.

Adverts detailing the second exhibitions were published online, in The Press & Journal Newspaper on 17th May and in The Northern Times Newspaper on 14th May and 21st May. The Developer also made contact with the community councils, local councillors and a local MSP to inform them of the events.

Live chat sessions were set up to allow attendees to ask the Developer questions in real time about the Proposed Development. The Virtual Online Exhibition included two live chat sessions with the Applicant at the following times:

- 25 May 2021 (5pm to 7pm); and
- 27 May 2021 (2pm to 4pm).

The exhibition materials provided an update on the site design and project timeline since the first exhibitions in November 2019, showing the site design which has been shaped through engagement with local communities and other key stakeholders leading to a 20 turbine layout with tip heights up to 149.9m carefully selected to ensure no visible aviation lighting was required, and mitigate landscape and visual impacts, particularly on the National Scenic Area and wild land areas. Information also included the proposed transport route, findings from the environmental survey works, viewpoint locations and a selection of Visualisations and Wirelines to illustrate how the Proposed Development would appear from different locations (VP1 – A836 above the Crask Inn; VP6 – Rosehall; VP7 – High Road; VP9 Achnairn Caravan and Camping Site Entrance and VP10 – Ben More Assynt).

Other materials included detail about the project team and SSE Renewables including the existing projects, renewable energy generation capacity, future sustainability goals, need for further investment, and examples of how our communities are supported across the Kyle of Sutherland. The exhibition boards presented and other relevant materials and documents relating to this virtual exhibition are shown in **Appendix C – Second Public Exhibition Materials**.

Feedback forms were also provided to ensure that comments and queries could be considered, addressed and followed up if required. As above details of the attendance and feedback are contained the '*Exhibition Attendance*' section of this report.

## EXHIBITION ATTENDANCE

Members of the local community visited the first public exhibitions held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019 in Rosehall Village Hall from 3pm –7.30pm and on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019 in Lairg Community Centre from 10am-3.30pm. Both sessions were attended by members of the project team who welcomed the visitors and once allowing them to view the exhibition display offered to provide any further information, or discuss any concerns they had in the relation to the proposals. Whilst most attendees were happy to provide their feedback verbally, they were invited to provide written comments on the feedback forms provided. A total of 22 feedback forms were received, 18 from the Rosehall exhibition and 4 from the Lairg exhibition. This generally reflected the level of attendance at both events, with the event in Rosehall being the more popular and better attended. In line with good practice guidelines the events are held in different locations within the project area and at different times of the day to allow flexibility for the community to attend. A summary of the feedback received is outlined in the following section of this report.

Postcards advertising the exhibitions were issued to approximately 1500 properties within a 15km radius of the site entrance and also provided the project website address for those unable to attend the exhibitions to allow them to obtain information on the proposals. Contact details for the project team were available on the website for anyone wishing further information on the proposals. In addition to the postcards, adverts were placed in local newspapers and posters put up at public locations within the community advertising the events to the public. The local community councils and politicians were also sent emails advising them of the events and inviting them to attend.

In accordance with the Coronavirus legislation and restrictions in force at the time the second public exhibitions were held virtually from 24<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> May 2021 with live chat sessions available on 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> May. Again, postcards were sent to a 15km radius advertising the event, but due to the Royal Mail postcode dataset which is updated on a quarterly basis, a slightly reduced number of properties received them (1,422).

As with the first postcard this one also included the project website address, but also included contact details, including the telephone number of a project representative who could be contacted in the event that people did not have online access or did not wish to use this format, but wished to receive further information on the project which could be either communicated verbally, or sent to them in paper copy if they wished. As with the first exhibitions these second virtual exhibitions were advertised in the local newspaper, by placing posters at public locations within the communities and by email to the community councils and local politicians.

In total of 179 individual website hits and 67 different site users were recorded from the online exhibitions which is a significant increase in the number visitors when compared to the number of visitors that normally attend face to face exhibitions held within the community. In terms of the feedback only 5 online forms were completed, and only 2 engagements took place during the live chat sessions with the project team. A summary of the views provided is provided in the Public Exhibition Feedback section of this report.

With 179 website hits and 67 different site users, it is evident that the virtual exhibitions have been accessible to many people, with a significant number attending the virtual exhibition and some on more than one occasion.

Feedback received either to the live chat sessions or via the online feedback form was minimal. The low level of feedback could suggest that the majority of attendees were either satisfied with the information presented, or merely had no particular comments to make.

It is recognised that despite a broad range of methods used to ensure communications were wide reaching and informed the community about the public exhibition events, the overall attendance at first set of events was very low, however, the second set of events did receive a good number of website hits. Feedback received from both sets of events was consistently low and therefore may not be overly representative of the views of the wider community, however, this could also indicate that visitors were satisfied with the information provided, or had no further comments.

Although there has been very little feedback from community councils in relation to the site design, they have been keen to understand what further benefits may be realised by the community as a result of the project being developed. Elements of specific project community benefit are not normally discussed during the development stage, but following the community council request, a specific meeting was held in June with representatives from the community investment team. Discussions are ongoing.

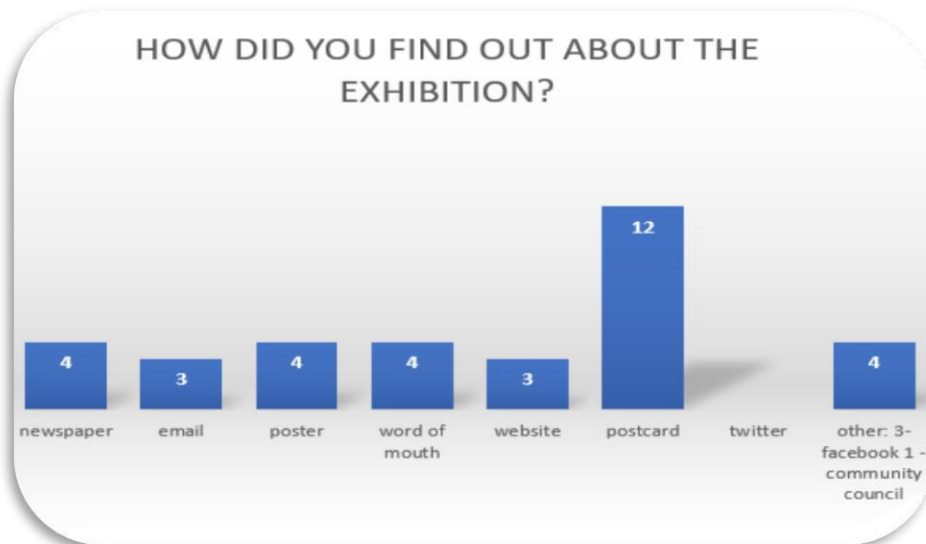
As highlighted in previous sections of this report SSE Renewables is fully committed to supporting the communities in which we live and work and work to ensure that we contribute positively to society by being an active contributor to the communities that we are part of. In relation to our Sutherland projects, particularly Achany Wind Farm, the community investment team have worked very closely with communities over the last 10 years to support and provide a valuable resource to communities to ensure they can access funding to benefit them. Examples of the type of benefits realised, are outlined in the previously mentioned report *Delivering Investment, Supporting Jobs – Understanding the Socio-economic value for SSE Renewables' projects in Sutherland.*"

Further details for communities are provided on our communities' page of the SSE Renewables website: <https://www.sserenewables.com/communities/> and communities are directed here during our engagement with them on projects. This is an illustration of the type of benefits that can be realised by the community as evidenced by the other constructed and operational wind farms with Sutherland and the wider area.



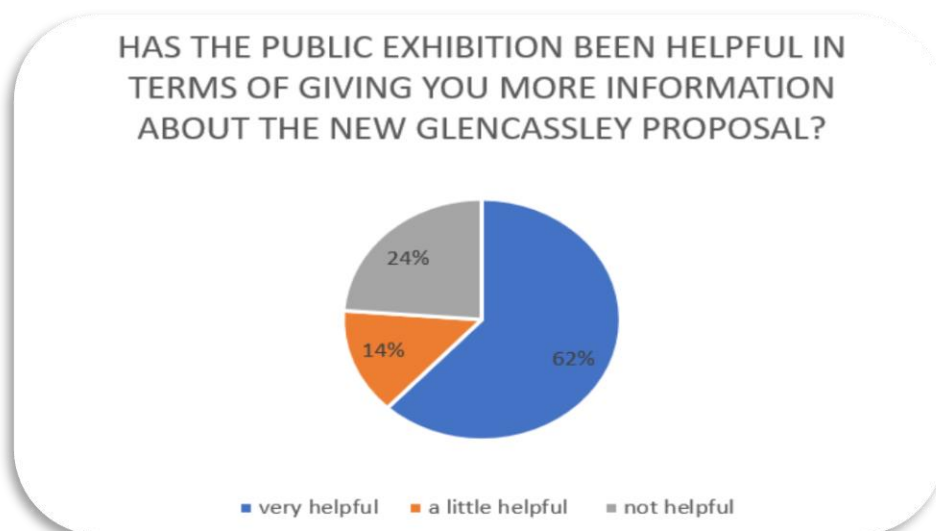
## PUBLIC EXHIBITION FEEDBACK

Following the first public exhibition there were 22 feedback forms returned to the project team from visitors, 18 from the Rosehall event and 4 from the Lairg event. Copies of the Feedback Form detailing the questions asked are contained in **Appendix D**.



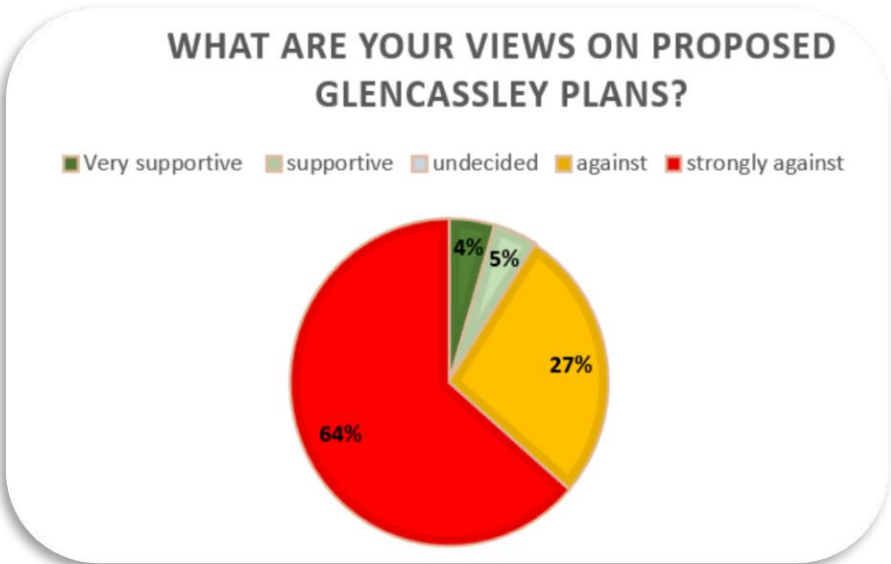
It is clear from the above graphic that the most common way of the community being made aware of the public exhibition was through receiving a postcard through their letterbox, although other forms of communication including word of mouth, online, local posters and newspaper adverts remain other popular ways of communicating with the local community.

In accordance with good practice guidance the Developer has employed various means of communication with the local community and wider public to advertise the public exhibition and maximise the potential for engagement with the community and feedback to help inform the development of the project at this early stage in the process.



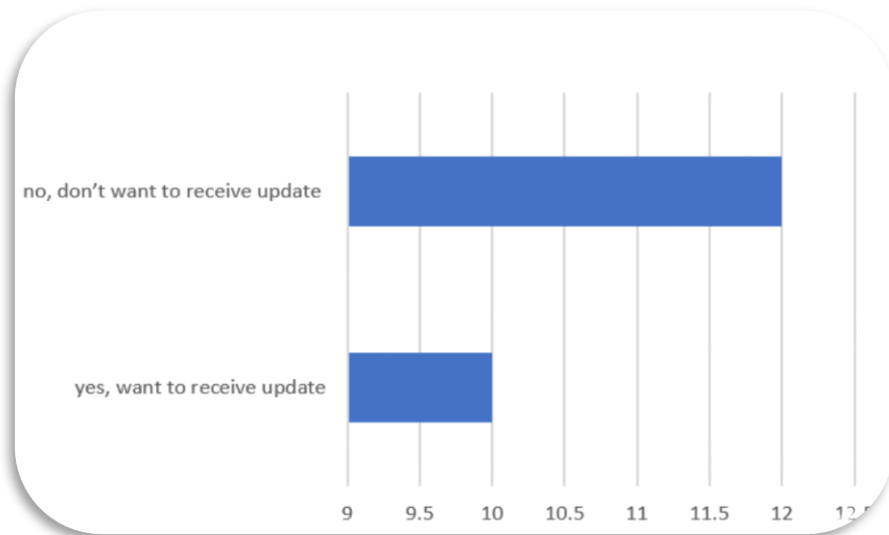
It is evident from the graphic above that almost 2 thirds of attendees who completed a feedback form thought the exhibition was helpful in providing them information on the early stage proposals, although almost a quarter found the information provided was not helpful. In considering some of the individual comments made, some respondents felt that insufficient detail was provided on the proposal and this may have accounted for a number who thought the exhibition was not helpful in giving them the information they had hoped to receive at this stage.

It was communicated to attendees that as the proposal was at such an early stage the site details were still being developed and the purpose of this early engagement with the community was to seek their views that would help inform the future development of our proposal. In accordance with good practice, it is helpful to design consultation to suit the purpose for which it is intended. In this case it was to both inform and seek feedback, rather than just inform the community about the proposal.



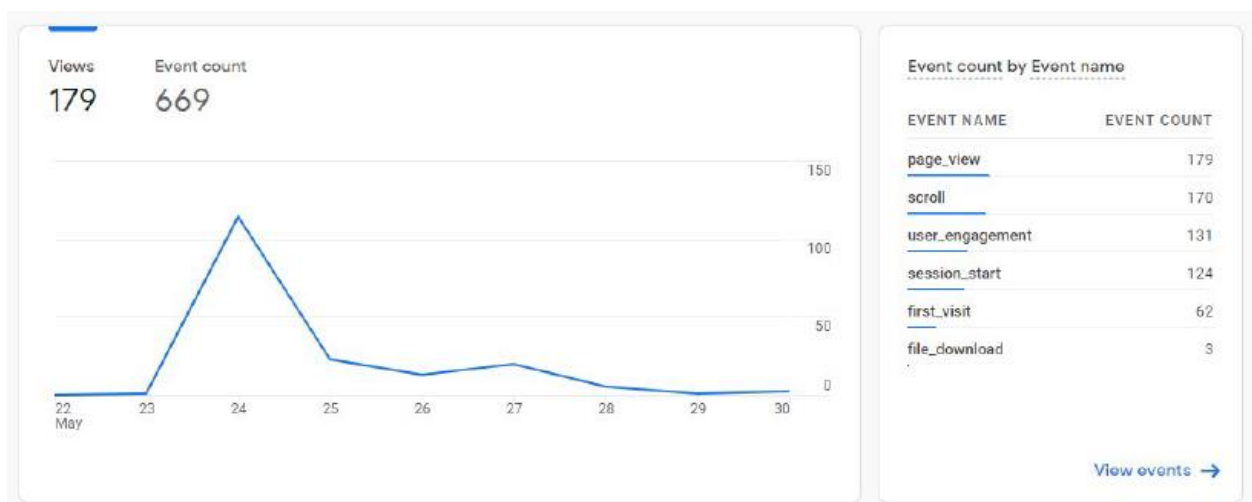
From the respondents who completed written feedback 91% were either against or strongly against the proposal, however this requires to be considered in the context that only 22 written responses were received so this equates to only 20 respondents from the overall attendance at the events and the wider community who were advised of the event.

It is noted that the community councils as representative bodies have not communicated any significant level of objection raised within the communities to the project at this early stage in its development. It is further recognised from the individual comments made on the forms that some members of the community are not supportive of this form of onshore wind renewable development in principle, whilst others were generally supportive of wind farms but thought that there were sufficient existing wind farms in the area and did not consider they should have to host any more.



From the results as to whether respondents wished to receive further updates on the project, almost half wished to receive these and just over half did not. This could be reflective of the statistics above in that many were unsupportive of the project in principle and unconcerned how it would be developed as likely to continue to object to it in whatever form. Others however were keen to remain updated on its development and this reflects those who have specific concerns as highlighted by some of the comments, such as impacts on communities and roads from construction and wished to be kept informed on proposals to monitor whether their concerns were addressed.

As highlighted in the statistics below the second public exhibition, which was a virtual exhibition, attracted 179 visitors from 24th to 30th May. The project team received 5 feedback forms via the exhibition site with 4 disagreeing with the proposal, whilst one was unsure. It is clear this is a larger number of visitors than would normally attend public exhibitions in a hall, but it requires to be considered that the duration of the exhibition was much longer and provided much more flexibility to attendees, provided they had the means to view it online.



From the other statistics gained from the virtual exhibition, it was noted that the majority of referrals to the site came by typing the URL directly, with the rest coming from the SSE Renewables site. Whilst the user location data isn't considered very reliable – for example, many users were reported as being in the location of their company HQ or ISP's location, despite definite local engagement in the Highland region being evident. Approximately 86% of users were on desktop/laptop devices, with the rest using phones or tablets. Desktop users appeared to be much more engaged, typically spending twice as long within the virtual exhibition.

During the live chat sessions on 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> May, each of which were for 2 hours at different times in the day, only 2 people engaged with the project team during these sessions. One person engaged on numerous topics including: transportation issues such as turbine delivery and vehicle movements and concern for damage to roads and destruction of trees; lack of ecological information presented at the exhibition compared to that on SSE and benefits; constraint payments for wind farms; the carbon foot print of the wind farm; will SSE continue with the proposal if there is the local opposition; will SSE get consent and then look to increase the height of the turbines like other developers; how do we know that the wind farm will provide power to our homes locally; why do we not get cheaper electricity when we have all these wind farms, we actually pay more for our electricity; and finally why did SSE publish the report into the benefits of their wind farms in Sutherland. All of the above points were answered by the project team and the respondent rated the live chat sessions (both of which they attended) as "Good". The other respondent to the live chat session on 27<sup>th</sup> May asked why SSE were extending the wind farm now. A response was provided by the project team, but no rating or further engagement was received from this respondent.

Whilst the number of visitors is encouraging, without a greater volume of evidence in the form of verbal communication via the live chat sessions or written feedback via the online forms it is difficult to judge what the wider communities' views are regarding the now fully developed proposals. The second public exhibition sought to inform the community of the Proposed Development, to be submitted to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit as a Section 36 application, rather than seek further feedback to inform the proposals. It was also to advise of the application process and of the community's further opportunity to submit their views on the proposals to the decision makers. In consideration a total of 4 respondents who were against the project in relation to the overall number of visitors to the exhibition is a very low number and perhaps illustrates the lack of significant objection or concern communicated through the ongoing engagement with the community councils.

Whilst every effort has been made by the Developer to provide appropriate pre-application consultation during the COVID-19 restrictions, it is acknowledged that there has been less face-to-face consultation activity ahead of the Section 36 submission than the project team would normally carry out. However, the virtual exhibition has demonstrated that it has a useful place in the consultation process in getting information to a larger audience, although may not encourage feedback in the way face to face exhibitions and engagement does. Going forward, it would be good practice to consider using both methods to maximise the number of people informed but also encourage feedback to assist in the development process.

## SUMMARY CONCLUSION

The consultation on the Proposed Development over the development phase of the project took different forms and used various methods in order to reach as far an audience as possible and ensure those that wished to receive information regarding the project, received that information in a format that was accessible and useful to them. The consultation at an early phase was tailored to seek engagement in the form of getting feedback on the project as it was developed and designed, whether that feedback was negative or positive. Key to this process of engagement was a two-way feedback process, in that those engaging with us and offering an opinion, were responded to and justification provided as to how the project was being developed and the matters they had raised were being addressed.

In terms of the feedback received in the early phase, no specific concerns or objections were raised by the community council's either at EIA scoping, or at first public exhibitions or during meetings and correspondence with them.

From the first public exhibition while most that provided feedback were of a negative stance towards the project, they thought the information provided was useful. The written feedback only provides a proportion of the feedback and other verbal discussion, and exchange of information took place with those attending the exhibition sessions. From discussions at the first exhibitions and the feedback received, it is clear there is a small proportion of the wider community who do not favour wind farms as a form of development, or others that accept them, but consider that the community has hosted their share of this form of development. There were others who sought to find out relevant information to better understand the impact that the Proposed Development may have on them and their community, and this was particularly evident from one of the live chat participants at the second virtual public exhibition who asked numerous questions which were all answered and who ultimately rated the session as good as they obviously felt they received the information they required.

The community councils have continued to present a neutral stance to the Proposed Development but have advised that they are interested in the wider benefits such development may realise.

The Developer has, through consultation and engagement with the community and other stakeholders, ensured that the evolution of the extension to Achany Wind Farm has been designed to minimise environmental impact. Furthermore, through ongoing consultation with communities, we have communicated our commitment to working with communities both during the construction phase and operational phases of projects to minimise disruption to host communities and maximise social and economic benefits for them. This is demonstrated by our recent construction of the Gordonbush Extension Wind Farm in Sutherland, which through engagement with the local community, reduced construction impacts as far as practicable and through recent media exposure, demonstrated the benefits that can be realised by communities, as outlined in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Extracts from Northern Times newspaper published Friday 28th May 2021 reporting on the benefits generated by SSE Renewables in the Sutherland area (taken from the Report "Delivering Investment, Supporting Jobs – Understanding the Socio-economic value for SSE Renewables' projects in Sutherland.")

14 Northern Times www.northern-times.co.uk Friday, May 28 to Thursday, June 3, 2021



## SSE Renewables is generating benefits for people and their communities

**ADVERTISING FEATURE**

The purpose of SSE Renewables is not changed - providing people with the clean energy they need - but a fast-changing world makes that purpose even more crucial.

This is the view of SSE Renewables managing director Jon Smith (pictured) as a time when the company, which already has a green energy portfolio of around 4GW - is redoubling its efforts to meet ambitious carbon neutral emissions targets as a key part of the UK and Scottish response to the climate emergency.

The Highlands, where SSE Renewables has already invested £22 million into more than 1000 projects through its community benefit funds, will be vital to the achievement of these aims. In turn, SSE Renewables takes the view that it is a part of the Highland community - specialist skills that they have used to secure contracts elsewhere.

RJ McLeod has also been able to grow its own expertise in the area and secure renewables contracts further afield and at times renewable energy has accounted for the majority of its turnover in comparison with around 20 per cent in 2009.

Local companies such as Gou Groupworks in Halkis and CS Drilling in Thurso have used their experience as subcontractors to develop that expertise in the area. When it was introduced

work with RJ McLeod and SSE Renewables are available through the OpenBusiness portal. Created by SSE in 2012 and now operated by Inverness Chamber of Commerce on behalf of Highlands and Islands Enterprise, this allows companies new to the supply chain to bid for smaller contracts.

Other opportunities for local companies to

consider bond a Highland contractor, RJ McLeod has a strong relationship with its supply chain and contractors within Sutherland, Caithness and the wider Highland Region, ensuring the maximum possible benefit to the Highland economy.

When it was introduced

to the onshore wind market, through SSE Renewables work in Sutherland, RJ McLeod has brought with it many local contractors who have gone on to benefit from wider opportunities in the onshore wind market.

Local companies such as Gou Groupworks in Halkis and CS Drilling in Thurso have used their experience as subcontractors to develop that expertise in the area. When it was introduced


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When it was introduced

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## Community cash to invest in the future for the far north

AS part of its commitment to being a responsible developer, SSE Renewables provides community benefit funds for each of its wind farms.

Since 2009 it has contributed £271 million directly to communities through 51 funds across the UK and Ireland.

In Sutherland there are five funds which have already contributed £2.3 million to 591 projects since 2010 and an estimated £2.1 million is set to be invested over the wind farm's lifetime.

However, with studies finding that each £1 of community funding generates £6.16 in wider value, the real value to the community could be in excess of £140 million.

SSE Renewables funding supports a wide range of initiatives, from heritage and tourism to care projects

such as Yths, which supports 105 young carers and their families. Skills development is another key focus of investment. In addition to funding STEM training at 20 local schools and hosting 80 evening classes, individuals have been helped into new careers thanks to a £325,000 apprenticeship programme fund.

This not only helps young people access opportunities with local employers, but also provides coaching and access to qualifications.

This allowed 15 young people to begin a new career in 2019/20 alone. Among them was Rachel Murray, who embarked on an apprenticeship with a dressage horse breeder in Laing and went on to help the business develop a new social media strategy enabling horses to be sold across Europe.

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14 Northern Times www.northern-times.co.uk Friday, May 28 to Thursday, June 3, 2021



## Golspie firm's double gain from funds link

GOLSPIE's Waverley Engineering sees benefits from SSE Renewables' investment in Sutherland.

The construction contractor, plant supplier and commercial repair company is a well-established partner of SSE Renewables, performing a variety of roles from landscaping and road repair to new clearance and drainage on the company's far north wind farms.

However, it has also gained from SSE Renewables' commitment to community investment, working on projects which are only made possible because of funding from the energy giant, such as the £29,000 Golspie Community Council project to upgrade the Big Burn walk and

make it more accessible. Director David Gordon said: "You get a big boost from the wind farms, but we are able to keep people on until the next boom comes in because there is that stream of work from community investment. Community councils have become pretty good at finding funding, so if they get support from wind farm money, they can find match funding from elsewhere, and can soon have a fairly substantial pot."

Waverley Engineering has also benefited directly from SSE Renewables' community support by accessing funding which enabled them to take on an apprentice.

"I doubt we would have had his had it not been for that funding," David acknowledged.

"It was only possible through SSE again and it really helped because we are pretty small and having an apprentice can be a huge cost for us. That's another benefit of the long term relationship."

Waverley Engineering has also gained from establishing a long-term relationship with RJ McLeod through its work on SSE Renewables' sites.

This has led to working together on other wind farm projects outside Sutherland, helping the Golspie firm's growth.

Friday, May 28 to Thursday, June 3, 2021 www.northern-times.co.uk Northern Times 15



## Support helped centre step up in the coronavirus crisis

WHEN the coronavirus pandemic disrupted lives, businesses and vital services last year, SSE Renewables' flexible grant funding approach allowed it to make £1 million immediately available across the country to communities and organisations best placed to help those most in need.

In Sutherland, where SSE Renewables was able to immediately release £92,000 to support the community response to the crisis, the Bradbury Centre in Bonar Bridge was one of the local organisations which could offer an enhanced service thanks to SSE's support.

Centre manager Loraine

Asks acknowledged these services had only been possible thanks to the speedy release of SSE support funding.

However, this is just one of a number of ways SSE has been able to support the day care centre.

"The Bradbury Centre has been very fortunate in receiving grants from SSE which has enabled us to provide our clients and the community with much needed help and support over the last few years," Loraine said.

"Funding from SSE for the extension enabled us to get other funders on board. The extension meant that we could provide our much needed service to more people also allowing us to deliver a wider range of activities with more space to move around."

"Over the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, SSE was the first port of call when we desperately needed funds to provide our outreach service to clients who could no longer attend the centre. SSE funds have enabled us to provide free meals, a delivery service to groceries prescriptions etc. to the individuals in three communities as well as our clients. The fund also paid for our sanitising system to make sure our members and centre is safe."

"It's reassuring that this funding source is available for us."

**Highland impact**

Total lifetime economic contribution:

**£131m**

- £45m added to the economy
- 120 years of employment supported
- 120 jobs supported

**Scotland (inc Highland) impact**

Total lifetime economic contribution:

**£327m**

- £125m added to the economy
- 1,740 years of employment supported
- 120 jobs supported

**Every year over 25 years of operation:**

- £4m added to the economy
- 20 jobs supported

**Every year over 25 years of operation:**

- £8m added to the economy
- 120 jobs supported

SSE community funding enabled Bonar Bridge's Bradbury Centre to provide virus support.

Through our recent consultation, which has sought more to inform the community, we have confirmed the next stage of development in terms of the submission of the Section 36 application to the Energy Consents Unit. We have outlined this process and how communities can engage with this statutory consenting process and continue to have their representations considered. We are also committed to ongoing engagement with communities throughout this process to address any concerns raised and provide any further information or advice they may request.

Consultation and engagement with communities is an ongoing and evolving process and SSE Renewables recognise the importance of working with communities from project inception, through development and beyond into the operational phases of projects to ensure communities, particularly within remoter rural areas are not adversely impacted but are supported and enhanced through renewables development. It is considered that the pre-application consultation and ongoing engagement on the Achany Extension Wind Farm project has demonstrated this approach through the compilation of this report.

## APPENDIX A – CONSULTATION REGISTER

Date of consultation	Consultee Organisation	Recipient	Applicant Representative	Email/telephone call/meeting	Summary of consultation	Response
02/09/2019	Lairg Community Council		Murray West	Email	Introduction & Scoping Report	
02/09/2019	Creich Community Council		Murray West	Email	Introduction & Scoping Report	18/09/2019
02/09/2019	Ardgay & District Community Council		Murray West	Email	Introduction & Scoping Report	
02/09/2019	Kyle of Sutherland Trust	Dave Watson	Murray West	Email	Introduction & Scoping Report	
23/09/2019	Creich Community Council	Mary Goulder	Murray West	Email	Declined offer from SSE to attend a CC meeting until the new year	
25/10/2019	Lairg Community Council	Andrew Mackay	Murray West	Email	Public Exhibition Invitation	
25/10/2019	Creich Community Council	Mary Goulder	Murray West	Email	Public Exhibition Invitation	
25/10/2019	Ardgay & District Community Council		Murray West	Email	Public Exhibition Invitation	
25/10/2019	Kyle of Sutherland Trust	Dave Watson	Murray West	Email	Public Exhibition Invitation	
	Councillors		Murray West	Email	Public Exhibition Invitation	
15/01/2020	Creich Community Council & Lairg Community Council	Mary Goulder	Murray West	Email	CC contact details confirmation following elections	19/01/2020
03/03/2020	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Murray West	Email	Project update meeting offer Informal meeting offer whilst project team are in the area	
07/04/2020	Ardgay & District Community Council	Betty Wright	Murray West	Email	Community Engagement during Coronavirus Pandemic	07/04/2021
07/04/2020	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Murray West	Email	Community Engagement during Coronavirus Pandemic	
23/07/2020	Ardgay & District Community Council	Betty Wright	Murray West	Email	Meeting Offer	
20/11/2020	Councillor	Margaret Davidson	Chris Bell, Alan Greenwood & Andy Sloan	Meeting	Highland project Updates	
24/11/2020	Lairg Community Council	Andrew Mackay	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Lairg Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Lairg Community Council	Jamie Dick	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	



Date of consultation	Consultee Organisation	Recipient	Applicant Representative	Email/telephone call/meeting	Summary of consultation	Response
24/11/2020	Ardgay & District Community Council	Betty Wright	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Ardgay & District Community Council	John Denniston	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Ardgay & District Community Council	Silvia Muras Sanmartin	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Creich Community Council	Pete Campbell	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	17/01/2021
24/11/2020	Creich Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	17/01/2021
24/11/2020	Creich Community Council	Ricky Veters	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Creich Community Council	Archibald Munro	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Kyle of Sutherland Trust	Dave Watson	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Rogart Community Council	Francis Roach	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Rogart Community Council	Amy McHardy	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Rogart Community Council	Karen Mackay	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Councillor	Kirsteen Currie	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Councillor	Linda Munro	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Councillor	Hugh Morrison	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Councillor	Richard Gale	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Councillor	Deirdre Mackay	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Councillor	Jim McGillivray	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Councillor	Raymond Bremner	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Councillor	Karl Rosie	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
24/11/2020	Kyle of Sutherland Trust	Dave Watson	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping letter	
25/11/2020	Highland Council's Ward Manager	Phil Tomalin	Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	
01/12/2020	Rogart Community Council		Maria Bellisimo	Email	Scoping Letter	

Date of consultation	Consultee Organisation	Recipient	Applicant Representative	Email/telephone call/meeting	Summary of consultation	Response
16/12/2020	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up to scoping and offer to arrange meeting for project update	
16/12/2020	Lairg Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up to scoping and offer to arrange meeting for project update	18/12/2020
16/12/2020	Creich Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up to scoping and offer to arrange meeting for project update	18/12/2020
21/12/2020	Creich Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Meeting arrangements	21/12/2020
11/01/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up to scoping and offer to arrange meeting for project update	11/01/2021
11/01/2021	Rogart Community Council		Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up to scoping and offer to arrange meeting for project update	
11/01/2021	Councillor	Richard Gale	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up from scoping email	
11/01/2021	Councillor	Deirdre Mackay	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up from scoping email	
11/01/2021	Councillor	Jim McGillivray	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up from scoping email	
11/01/2021	Councillor	Raymond Bremner	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up from scoping email	
11/01/2021	Councillor	Karl Rosie	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up from scoping email	
18/01/2021	Creich Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Meeting arrangements	
19/01/2021	Creich Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellissimo, Chris Bell, Karen Anderson & Gillian Wilson	Meeting	SSE representatives attended virtual CC Meeting and presented project update	
19/01/2021	Councillor	Kirsteen Currie	Maria Bellissimo	Meeting	Attended Creich Community Council CC meeting	
09/02/2021	Councillor	Linda Munro	Maria Bellissimo	Phone	Follow up from scoping email	
01/03/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Confirming CC meeting	02/03/2021
04/03/2021	Lairg Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Response - Declined SSE offer to attend CC meeting until SSE prepared to discuss community benefit offer	
08/03/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Maria Bellissimo, Chris Bell, Karen Anderson & Gillian Wilson	Meeting	SSE representatives attended virtual CC Meeting and presented project update	

Date of consultation	Consultee Organisation	Recipient	Applicant Representative	Email/telephone call/meeting	Summary of consultation	Response
22/03/2021	Creich Community Council	Peter Campbell	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Offer of meeting about community benefit	
22/03/2021	Lairg Community Council	Andrew Mackay	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Offer of meeting about community benefit	
23/04/2021	Lairg Community Council	Andrew Mackay	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Lairg Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Lairg Community Council	Jamie Dick	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Betty Wright	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	John Denniston	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Silvia Muras Sanmartin	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Creich Community Council	Peter Campbell	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Creich Community Council	Mary Goulder	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Creich Community Council	Ricky Vettes	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Creich Community Council	Archibald Munro	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Kyle of Sutherland Trust	Dave Watson	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Rogart Community Council	Francis Roach	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Rogart Community Council	Amy McHardy	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Rogart Community Council	Karen Mackay	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Councillor	Kirsteen Currie	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Councillor	Linda Munro	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Councillor	Hugh Morrison	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Councillor	Richard Gale	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Councillor	Deirdre Mackay	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Councillor	Jim McGillivray	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
23/04/2021	Councillor	Raymond Bremner	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	

Date of consultation	Consultee Organisation	Recipient	Applicant Representative	Email/telephone call/meeting	Summary of consultation	Response
23/04/2021	Councillor	Karl Rosie	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Sutherland Socio-economic report	
12/05/2021	Councillor	Kirsteen Currie	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
12/05/2021	Councillor	Linda Munro	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
12/05/2021	Councillor	Hugh Morrison	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
13/05/2021	Councillor	Richard Gale	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
13/05/2021	Councillor	Deirdre Mackay	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
13/05/2021	Councillor	Raymond Bremner	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
13/05/2021	Councillor	Karl Rosie	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
13/05/2021	Rogart Community Council	Francis Roach	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
13/05/2021	Rogart Community Council	Amy McHardy	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
13/05/2021	Rogart Community Council	Karen Mackay	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition	
14/05/2021	Councillor	Jim McGillivray	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Notification of Exhibition Exchange about further information 14/05-21/05/2021 (Maria) & 10-11/06/2021 (Jade)	
14/05/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Betty Wright	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up regarding arranging a meeting to discuss community benefit fund	
14/05/2021	Lairg Community Council	Andrew Mackay	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up regarding arranging a meeting to discuss community benefit fund	
14/05/2021	Creich Community Council	Pete Campbell	Maria Bellissimo	Email	Follow up regarding arranging a meeting to discuss community benefit fund	
08/06/2021	Creich Community Council	Pete Campbell	Morven Smith, Fiona Morrison, Chris Bell & Jade O'Hara	Meeting	Community Benefit discussion	
08/06/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Betty Wright	Morven Smith, Fiona Morrison, Chris Bell & Jade O'Hara	Meeting	Community Benefit discussion	
08/06/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Morven Smith, Fiona Morrison, Chris Bell & Jade O'Hara	Meeting	Community Benefit discussion	

Date of consultation	Consultee Organisation	Recipient	Applicant Representative	Email/telephone call/meeting	Summary of consultation	Response
09/06/2021	Lairg Community Council	Andrew Mackay	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address Iain Thomson new Chair	09/06/2021
09/06/2021	Lairg Community Council	Mary Goulder	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address	
09/06/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Betty Wright	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address	09/06/2021
09/06/2021	Ardgay & District Community Council	Marion Turner	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address	
09/06/2021	Creich Community Council	Pete Campbell	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address	11/06/2021
09/06/2021	Creich Community Council	Mary Goulder	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address	
09/06/2021	Rogart Community Council	Francis Roach	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address Followed up on 15/06/2021	
09/06/2021	Rogart Community Council	Amy McHardy	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address Followed up on 15/06/2021	
09/06/2021	Rogart Community Council	Karen Mackay	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address Followed up on 15/06/2021	
11/06/2021	Kyle of Sutherland Trust	Dave Watson	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address Follow up - 15/06/2021	15/06/2021

Date of consultation	Consultee Organisation	Recipient	Applicant Representative	Email/telephone call/meeting	Summary of consultation	Response
14/06/2021	Lairg Community District Community Initiative	Kaye Harrison	Jade O'Hara	Email	Offered copies of EIA submission and requested preferred format and postal address Follow up - 16/06/2021	17/06/2021
15/06/2021	All		Morven Smith	Email	Notes from Community Benefit discussion 08/06/2021	Pete Campbell 22/06/2021

## APPENDIX B – FIRST PUBLIC EXHIBITION MATERIALS

## 2019 PUBLIC EXHIBITION POSTER

Posters were placed in and around the local communities including various locations including Rosehall, Lairg and Bonar Bridge.



 **sse**  
Renewables

# Glencassley Wind Farm

**Public exhibition event**

SSE Renewables invites you along to view the proposals for Glencassley wind farm and have an opportunity to discuss the scheme with members of our project team.

We are holding two sessions at the end of November in Rosehall and Lairg and hope to see you there.

 **Rosehall Village Hall**  
Wednesday 27 November - 15:00 to 19:30

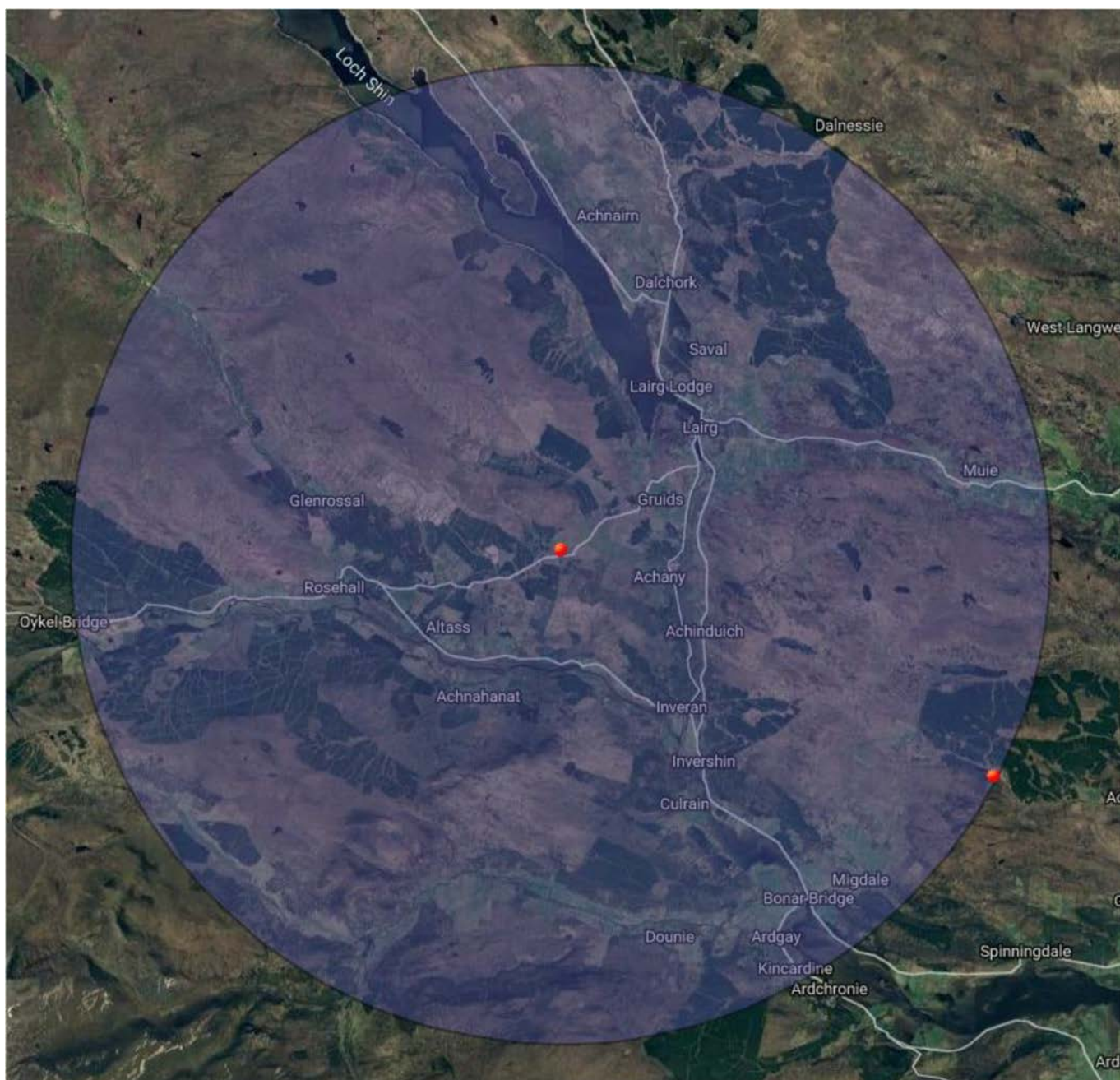
 **Lairg Community Centre**  
Thursday 28 November - 10:00 to 15:30

For more information, please visit: [sse.com/whatwedo/ourprojectsandassets/renewables/glencassley](https://sse.com/whatwedo/ourprojectsandassets/renewables/glencassley)



## 2019 PUBLIC EXHIBITION - MAILSHOT POSTCARD DISTRIBUTION AREA

Postcards were sent out to properties within 15km from the site entrance to ensure as many residential areas received the exhibition details.



## 2019 PUBLIC EXHIBITION - MAILSHOT POSTCARD



### Glencassley Wind Farm

**Public exhibition event**  
SSE Renewables invites you along to view the proposals for Glencassley wind farm and have an opportunity to discuss the scheme with members of our project team.

We are holding two sessions at the end of November in Rosehall and Lairg and hope to see you there.



**Rosehall Village Hall**  
Wednesday 27 November - 15:00 to 19:30

**Lairg Community Centre**  
Thursday 28 November - 10:00 to 15:30




**\* ADDRESS \***

For more information, please visit: [sse.com/glencassley](https://sse.com/glencassley)

## 2019 EXHIBITION - NEWSPAPER ADVERTS


Adverts detailing the scoping exhibitions were placed in the Northern Times between 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2019





# Glencassley Wind Farm

## Public exhibition event

SSE Renewables invites you along to view the proposals for Glencassley wind farm and have an opportunity to discuss the scheme with members of our project team.



 **Rosehall Village Hall**  
Wednesday 27 November - 15:00 to 19:30

 **Lairg Community Centre**  
Thursday 28 November - 10:00 to 15:30



**Glencassley Wind Farm proposal**

# **Public Exhibition**



# **Welcome**

# Glencassley Wind Farm proposal

## The Project

The site offers excellent potential for a wind farm development due to its wind resource and proximity to the neighbouring wind developments at Achany and Rosehall.

The project team are in the process of reviewing the previous design to optimise the layout for the wind turbines which are currently available, whilst taking into consideration the concerns previously raised about the prominence and proximity of turbines in views from the nearby Assynt Coigach National Scenic Area (NSA) and to core areas of wild land.

It is anticipated that turbines of between 150m and 200m tip height and an installed capacity in excess of 50 MW could be achieved in the proposed development. This would be subject to further technical and environmental review throughout the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

## The Proposed Development Area



## Glencassley Wind Farm proposal

### Environmental Assessments

A team of independent consultants will be employed to carry out technical assessments and to advise on the environmental issues associated with the Proposed Development. These experts will work with us during the design process, carry out environmental impact assessments and will prepare the documentation (chapters, technical appendices, maps and visualisations etc) for the EIA Report.

Each subject which requires being assessed under EIA regulations will be presented as a separate chapter in the main body of the EIA Report, or included as a technical appendix.

### The core environmental study areas are:

- Ecology, Biodiversity and Nature Conservation
- Landscape
- Ornithology
- Hydrology, Geology and Hydrogeology
- Cultural Heritage
- Traffic, Access and Transport
- Noise and Vibration
- Aviation
- Carbon Assessment
- Socio Economics



### Grid

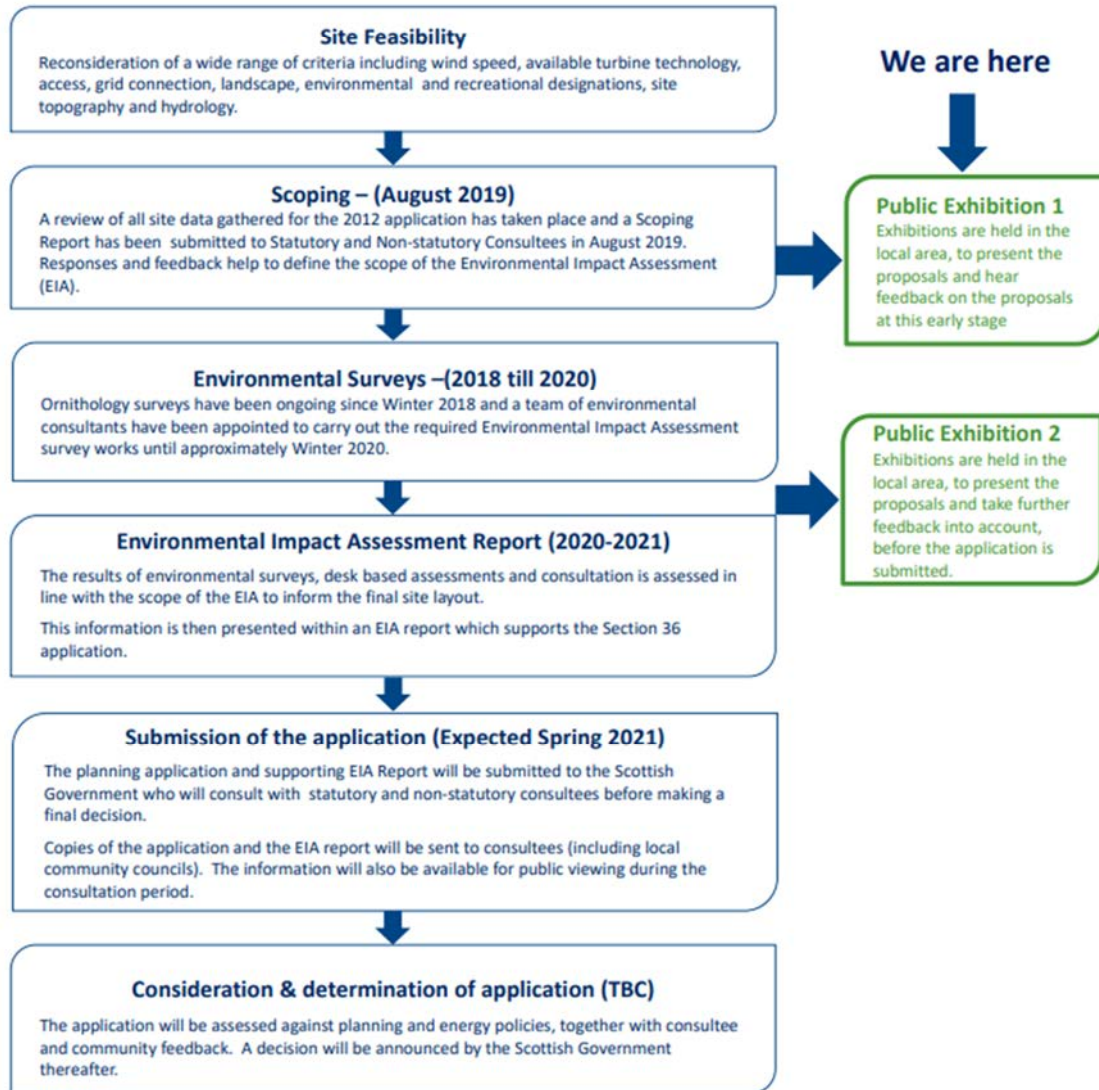
Turbines would be connected via underground cables to the on site substation, potentially at Achany, which would convert the electricity generated into an appropriate voltage for onward transmission into the National Grid at Shin Power Station.

The site connection to the National Grid falls under a separate application process.



# Glencassley Wind Farm proposal

## The Development Process and Indicative Timeframes





# Glencassley Wind Farm proposal

## SSE Renewables - Who we are



Headquartered in Perth, SSE employs around 20,000 people across the UK and our aim is to provide the energy people need in a reliable and sustainable way. SSE delivers energy to customers through a diverse range of renewable energy generation comprising around 3,309MW of renewable capacity with 2,731MW of this in GB:



In November 2018, SSE brought together the development, operation and ownership of its renewable energy assets in the UK and Ireland under a single entity to be known as SSE Renewables.



## Our 2030 Goals

SSE's approach to sustainability is centred around our four 2030 goals. These are aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which provides a shared blueprint for global co-operation to tackle some of humanity's biggest challenges by 2030, such as poverty, biodiversity loss, inequality and climate change.



### Cut our carbon intensity by 50%

Reduce the carbon intensity of electricity generated by 50% by 2030, compared to 2018 levels, to around 150gCO<sub>2</sub>/kWh.



### Help accommodate 10m electric vehicles

Build electricity network flexibility and infrastructure that helps accommodate 10 million electric vehicles in GB by 2030.



### Treble renewable energy output

Develop and build by 2030 more renewable energy to contribute renewable output of 30TWh a year.



### Champion Fair Tax and a real Living Wage

Be the leading company in the UK and Ireland championing Fair Tax and a real Living Wage.

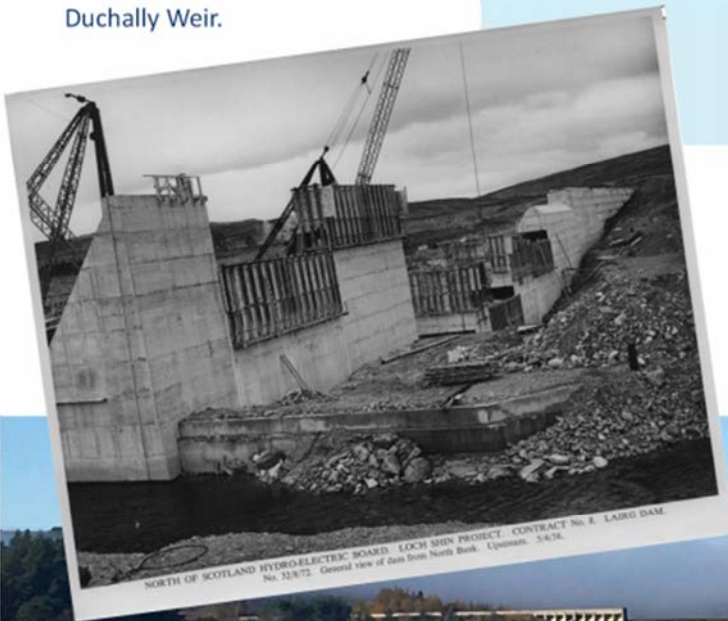


# Glencassley Wind Farm proposal

## Our Hydro Heritage

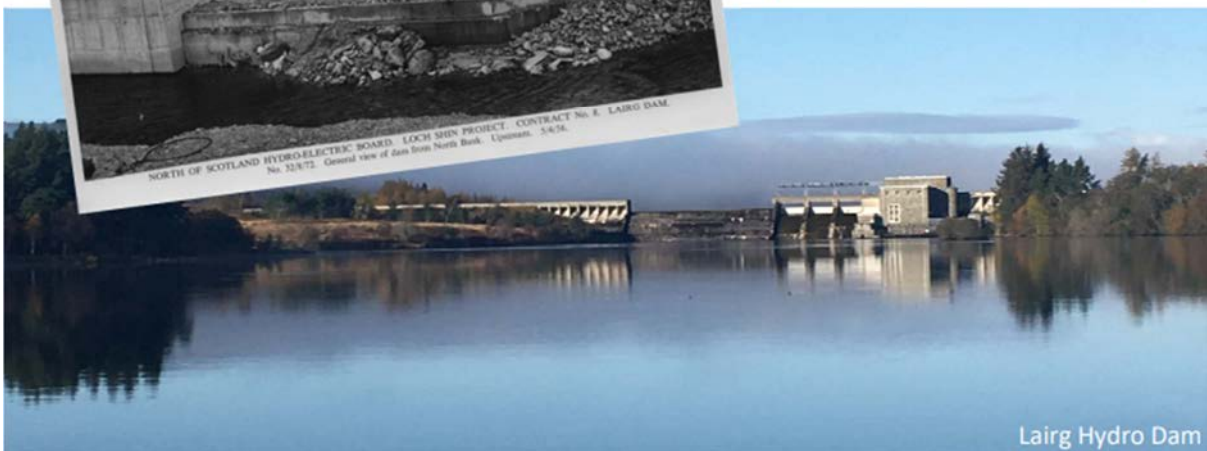
December 2018 marked 70 years since the switch-on of the first hydro power stations developed by the North of Scotland Hydro Electric Board - a monumental moment in the company's hydro history.

Close to Glencassley is Shin hydro electric scheme, (just over 32 MW of total installed capacity). The hydro scheme utilises water collected from the River Cassley by two aqueducts and diverted into a head-pond at Duchally where it drives two small turbines in the power station within Duchally Weir.



	Gross head** (metres)	Installed capacity (megawatts)	Average annual output (million units)
Cassley	113	10	26
Laing	10	3.5	12
Shin	81	18.6	125

\* The 'Head' is the difference in height between the water supply feeding the power station and the turbines.



Laing Hydro Dam

# Glencassley Wind Farm proposal

## Our Hydro Heritage

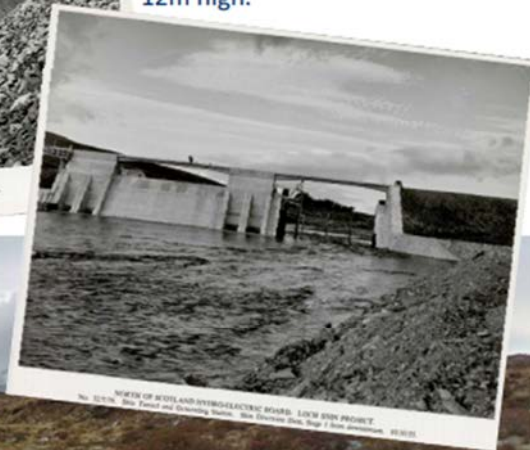


Duchally weir feeding Cassley Power Station



NORTH OF SCOTLAND HYDRO-ELECTRIC BOARD. LOCH SHIN PROJECT.  
No. 357/100. Shin Tunnel and Generating Station. Tailrace illustration at Ch. 3 + 00. 16/7/56.

From Duchally Weir, the water flows through a tunnel to the 10 MW Cassley Power Station on the western shore of Loch Shin. The water level in Loch Shin, the main storage reservoir, was raised by about 11m by the construction of the Lairg Dam. This concrete embankment is 427m long and 12m high.



NORTH OF SCOTLAND HYDRO-ELECTRIC BOARD. LOCH SHIN PROJECT.  
No. 357/100. Shin Tunnel and Generating Station. See Loch Shin, Stage 3, Item description. 16/7/56.



Hydro aqueducts below Ben More Assynt

# Glencassley Wind Farm proposal

## Working with communities

Since Glencassley's neighbouring Achany Wind Farm was constructed, many local and Highland wide community initiatives have been brought to life as a result of the community fund which has awarded or committed to spend £809,543.20 since March 2010. Between 2010 and 2035 we expect to invest **£2.5million** in local projects.

**£6.6m**

invested in 2018/19

increase of 

**30%** from 17/18

**413** Projects Funded

decrease of 

**11%** from 17/18

Average award of

**£16,080**

increase of 

**43%** from 17/18



### Kyle of Sutherland Hub

£29,148 awarded to the multi use family and community hub. The centre is used by the Creich, Ardgay and Lairg areas and aims to address issues of geographic disadvantage and social isolation. There is also a bespoke space for after school and holiday clubs, a soft play area and café.

### Falls of Shin Visitor Centre

£55,037 was granted to the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust, to help with the re-build of the Falls of Shin visitor centre.

**Kyle of Sutherland Apprenticeship Scheme**



The Achany Community Investment Fund offers an apprenticeship scheme as part of its efforts to ensure wide ranging and long lasting impact.

An apprenticeship scheme grant helps with costs involved in business support, travel accommodation and training of an apprentice

The scheme has supported more than 19 people, with 7 of these currently active



For more information on the Achany community fund please contact:

**FIONA MORRISON**  
Community Investment Manager  
Tel: 01463 728376  
Email: [fiona.morrison@sse.com](mailto:fiona.morrison@sse.com)



**BRADBURY centre**



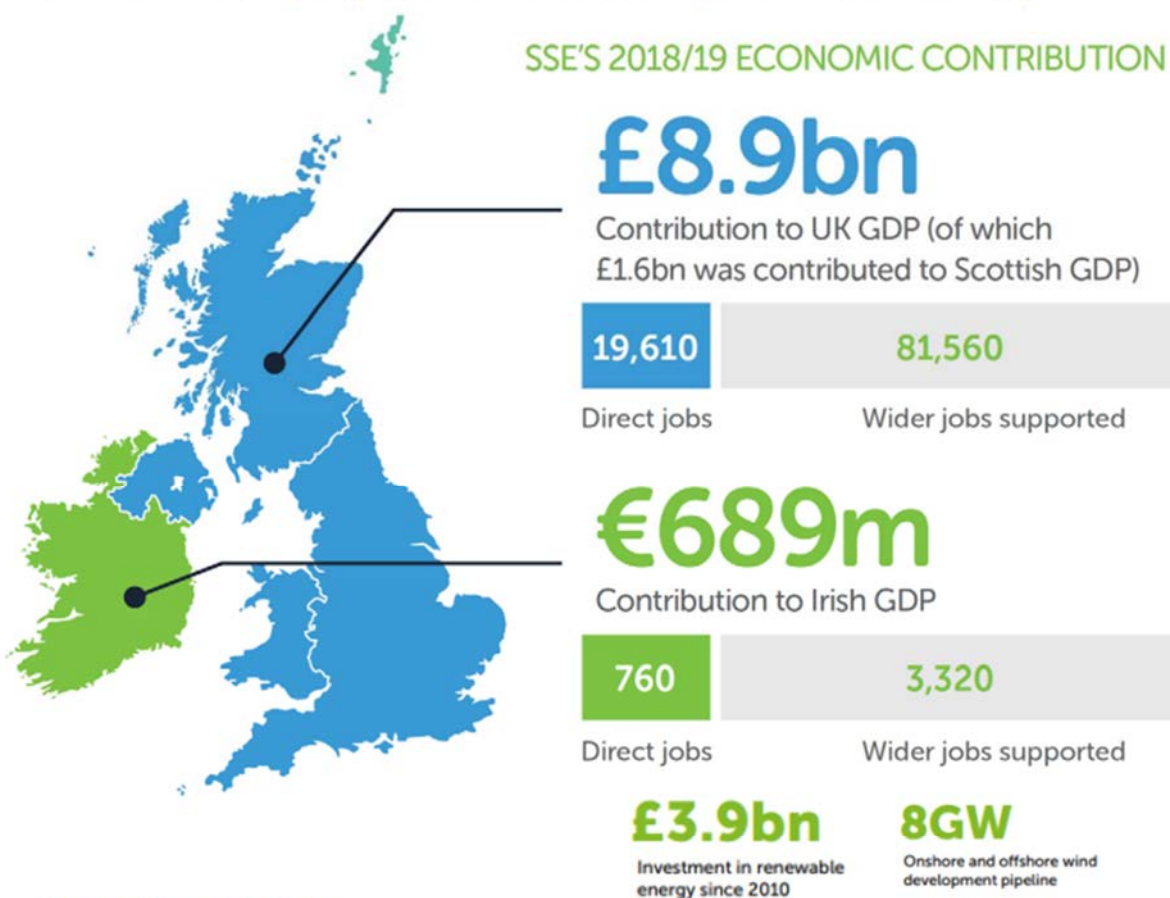
**Bradbury Centre**  
£9296 was awarded to Creich Croick & Kincardine District Day Care Association to enable the purchase of new furniture to accommodate an increase in client numbers.

# Glencassley Wind Farm proposal

## Why do we need renewable energy?

SSE is committed to investing in low carbon infrastructure and the next five years are critical if the UK is to take climate action and help to deliver challenging targets.

Renewables are a key part of SSE's existing hydro heritage and future growth plans. It has a wind development pipeline of over 8GW, including an onshore wind pipeline of over 1GW of potential new-build projects and an offshore wind development pipeline of over 7GW. SSE believes this pipeline of new assets will play a critical role in helping the UK and Ireland achieve their decarbonisation goals, and contribute to the ultimate goal of zero carbon electricity.



## Sharing Economic Value

Contributing to GDP and jobs Investment in low-carbon infrastructure contributes to the value SSE creates for the UK and Irish economies. SSE remains one of the few companies to publish its contribution to GDP alongside its financial results, understanding that the wider economic contribution it makes goes beyond profits. Since 2011/12, SSE has contributed a total of £75.2bn and €6.8bn (in 2018/19 prices) to UK and Irish GDP respectively. Of this contribution to UK GDP, £8.6bn was in Scotland.



## Glencassley Wind Farm proposal

### What happens next?

Once the assessments are completed the EIA Report will be prepared, however, this is anticipated to take around a further year.

During this time, we would be happy to stay in touch and provide project updates, or attend local meetings to answer questions. Please let us know if this would be of interest to you. We have feedback forms available and we would welcome any comments.

**For further information, please contact our Project Liaison Manager:**



[murray.west@sse.com](mailto:murray.west@sse.com)



[sse.com/glencassley](http://sse.com/glencassley)



07741 355 461



SSE – Murray West  
1 Waterloo Street  
Glasgow  
G2 6AY



[@SSER\\_Highlands](https://twitter.com/SSER_Highlands)



## APPENDIX C – SECOND PUBLIC EXHIBITION MATERIALS

## 2021 EXHIBITION NEWS RELEASE

A news release was published in The Press & Journal Newspaper on 17<sup>th</sup> May and in The Northern Times Newspaper on 14<sup>th</sup> May and 21<sup>st</sup> May highlighting the 2021 exhibition.

### ACHANY EXTENSION WIND FARM VIRTUAL EXHIBITION TO GO LIVE

19 May 2021



A virtual exhibition detailing proposals by SSE Renewables for their Achany Extension Wind Farm site in Sutherland is to be held this month.

The online event will provide a COVID-19 safe space where members of the public can review information about plans to upgrade the site with 20 turbines extending clean energy output at the existing development close to Rosehall and Lairg.

The original wind farm first entered construction in 2009 and was commissioned in October 2010. Operations there have so far contributed more than £1 million to community funds.

Latest information on the extension project will be available during the virtual exhibition taking place from Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May to Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

The event will also provide a chance for guests to take part in live chat sessions with members of the project team who will be available to answer question on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May between 5pm and 7pm, and Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May from 2pm until 4pm.

In the interest of public safety, the event is taking place online.

# 2021 EXHIBITION - NEWSPAPER ADVERTS

Adverts detailing the second exhibitions were placed in published in The Press & Journal Newspaper on 17<sup>th</sup> May and in The Northern Times Newspaper on 14<sup>th</sup> May and 21<sup>st</sup> May.

## general notices

### VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

ACHANY EXTENSION WIND FARM

SSE Renewables invites you to view the plans for the proposed Achany Extension Wind Farm. Our proposal shows how we can power the green recovery, support the local economy and help us all achieve a net-zero carbon future.

We are hosting a virtual exhibition from 24th-30th May with an opportunity to speak with the project team via live chat sessions.

**Live chat sessions:**

- Tuesday 25th May 5-7pm
- Thursday 27th May 2-4pm

Access the Virtual Exhibition via [openplans.uk/achany](http://openplans.uk/achany)



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## whatson



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Web: [www.seaviewjohnogroats.co.uk](http://www.seaviewjohnogroats.co.uk)

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CARAVAN & CAMPING	KENWOOD UNDER COUNTER FRIDGE, brand new, unused, c/w paperwork, unwanted gift. £80 for quick sale. Tel: 07721 692753 (Dornoch)		
CARAVAN AWNING Dorema, grey/blue 1083cm, lightweight poles + pole tensure, vgc. £200. Tel: 01847 692436 (Thurso)	ENTERTAINMENTS		
CARAVAN FRONT COVER Protec, grey, 2.3m, vgc. £50. Tel: 01847 692436 (Thurso)	BOXES OF DVDS 4, £10. Tel: 01955 651231 (Ulster)		
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- Engineer (various disciplines)

The package includes relocation assistance (where appropriate), an attractive company pension scheme, generous annual leave entitlement and a company bonus scheme.

We are committed to creating a workplace that is diverse and inclusive. We value the unique differences that each of our colleagues bring to work every day and are committed to creating an environment where everyone feels respected, included and able to perform at their best. We are open to discuss flexible working.

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## 2021 PUBLIC EXHIBITION - MAILSHOT POSTCARD

Postcards were sent out to properties within 15km area from the proposed site entrance on 14<sup>th</sup> May (see map on page 6)



**VIRTUAL EXHIBITION**  
ACHANY EXTENSION WIND FARM

SSE Renewables invites you to view the plans for the proposed Achany Extension Wind Farm. Our proposal shows how we can power the green recovery, support the local economy and help us all achieve a net-zero carbon future.

We are hosting a virtual exhibition from 24th-30th May with an opportunity to speak with the project team via live chat sessions.

**Live chat sessions:**

- Tuesday 25th May 5-7pm
- Thursday 27th May 2-4pm

Access the Virtual Exhibition via [openplans.uk/achany](https://openplans.uk/achany)

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**VIRTUAL EXHIBITION**  
PROPOSED ACHANY EXTENSION WIND FARM

At this stage in our consultation process, we would usually host exhibitions at local venues, allowing you to discover more about Achany Extension Wind Farm and discuss the Proposed Development with our project team. Unfortunately we are unable to do this at present due to the risks and impact of Covid-19.

This online event will include information boards, like those you would expect to see at a village hall exhibition, including comprehensive details about the wind farm proposal and the timeline moving forward.

**Contact details**  
If you cannot access the online exhibition, or would prefer to talk over the phone or through email, please get in touch via:

 Email: [jade.ohara@sse.com](mailto:jade.ohara@sse.com)  
Phone: 07436 482792

For further details visit [www.sserenewables.com/achanyextension](https://www.sserenewables.com/achanyextension)

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## 2021 PUBLIC EXHIBITION – POSTER

Posters were placed in and around the local communities including various locations across Rosehall, Lairg, Bonar Bridge and Rogart.



Kyle of Sutherland Community Centre



Bonar Bridge Butcher



Bonar Bridge Pharmacy



Lairg –Petrol Station



Pittentrail – Local Shop



Rosehall Tearoom

## 2021 PUBLIC EXHIBITION – SOCIAL MEDIA

**SSE Renewables** @sSERenewables · 19 May

From Monday, we're hosting a virtual exhibition detailing our proposals for the Achany Extension Wind Farm site in [#Sutherland](#). Find out more 📌

Achany Extension Wind Farm virtual exhibition to g...  
A virtual exhibition detailing proposals by SSE Renewables for their Achany Extension Wind ...  
[sSERenewables.com](https://www.sserenewables.com)

🗨️ 🔄 ❤️ 1 📌



PRINCIPAL PARTNER  
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UK 2021  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

## DELIVERING INVESTMENT, **SUPPORTING JOBS**

Understanding the socio-economic  
value from SSE Renewables'  
projects in Sutherland



<https://www.sserenewables.com/media/uvwh40ma/understanding-the-socio-economic-value-from-sse-renewables-projects-in-sutherland-april-2021.pdf>

# WELCOME TO THIS VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

Thank you for visiting our virtual public exhibition, which provides an update on the proposed Achany Extension Wind Farm. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 risk and impacts, we are hosting the exhibition and public consultation on this online platform to guarantee the safety of the community and all stakeholders. We hope that you find the exhibition useful and look forward to sharing our plans with you.

We value your views, and we would like this exhibition to be an opportunity for you to provide your feedback about the proposed Achany Extension Wind Farm project, whether you are supportive of the proposal or have concerns that we can respond to before submitting a Section 36 Application.

Members of the project team will be available to discuss any matters regarding the proposed Achany Extension Wind Farm proposal during **live chat sessions on Tuesday 25th May from 5-7pm and Thursday 27th May from 2-4pm**. You can also get in touch with us or request further information through the "Contact Us" link or by clicking on the "Live Chat" button during operating hours.



If you have any other queries after attending this event, please do not hesitate to contact our Stakeholder Engagement Manager Jade O'Hara either via email: [jade.ohara@sse.com](mailto:jade.ohara@sse.com) or call on 07436 482792

# WHO WE ARE

SSE Renewables is a leading developer and operator of renewable energy across the UK and Ireland, with an operational portfolio of around 4GW of onshore wind, offshore wind and hydro. Our strategy is to drive the transition to a net zero future and deliver value for society through the world class development, construction and operation of renewable energy assets.

SSE Renewables owns nearly 2GW of operational onshore wind capacity with more than 1GW currently in development. SSE Renewables has the largest offshore wind development pipeline in the UK and Ireland at over 6GW and has an onshore wind pipeline across both markets in excess of 1GW.



## OUR 2030 GOALS

We have set four fundamental goals for 2030 which put sustainability at the heart of SSE's business strategy. These goals aren't just important to SSE, they matter to everyone – that's why they are directly linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



# SSE IN SUTHERLAND

For over 10 years, SSE Renewables has been an active supporter of communities across Sutherland through the investment of over £640 million in building and operating four onshore wind farms in the region.

Our recently published report 'Delivering Investment, Supporting Jobs' shows the socio-economic value from SSE Renewables' projects in Sutherland through their development, construction and operation with analysis from BIGGAR Economics.

The county is rich in natural resources and vital in helping us to deliver the progress towards net zero that will make our country more sustainable. This map shows our current assets across the North Highlands including hydro and projects that are in development.



## Achany Wind Farm

Our recently published report 'Delivering Investment, Supporting Jobs' shows the socio-economic value from SSE Renewables' projects in Sutherland through their development, construction and operation with analysis from BIGGAR Economics.

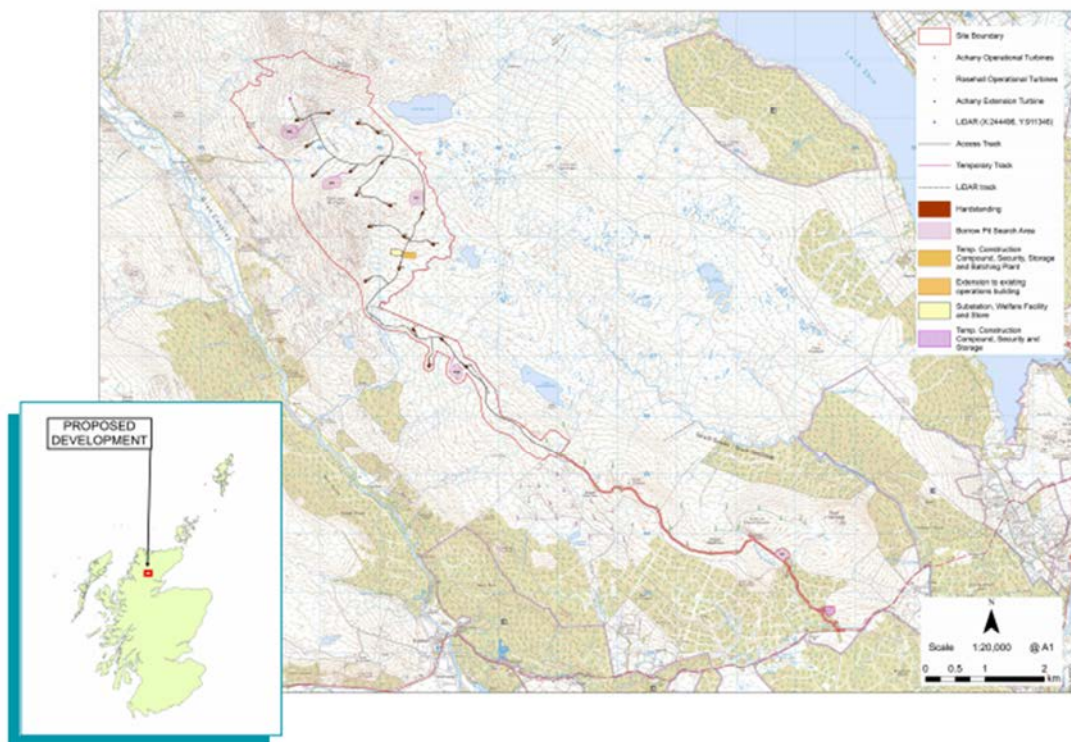


# ACHANY EXTENSION

The proposed Achany Extension Wind Farm is located in the adjoining land to the north west of the operational Achany Wind Farm, approximately 4.5km north of Rosehall and 10.7km north west of Lairg.

The project has been shaped through engagement with local communities and other key stakeholders from 2012 to present. Up to 20 turbines are proposed (reduced from 26 in 2012) at 149.9m tip height, meaning there is no need for visible aviation lights.

The project also benefits from an existing 65MW grid connection to the distribution network and a transmission connection offer is under evaluation to potentially increase this to 105MW.



## KEY FACTS

**20**

turbines generating an installed capacity of around 65-105 MW (depending on grid connection selected)

**95,151**

homes could be powered by the Achany Extension

**149.9m**

carefully considered maximum tip height



**sse**  
Renewables

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world of energy

# PROJECT TIMELINE

- Scoping (July 2019)
- ▼
- Public Exhibition (November 2019)
- ▼
- Environmental Surveys (2018 till 2020)
- ▼
- Scoping Refresh (November 2020)
- ▼
- Further Engagement with Key Stakeholders (January-March 2021)
- ▼
- **Virtual public exhibition (May 2021) - We are here**
- ▼
- Submission of the Section 36 Application (expected end of June 2021)
- ▼
- Earliest Construction (2024)
- ▼
- Earliest Operational Phase (2025)



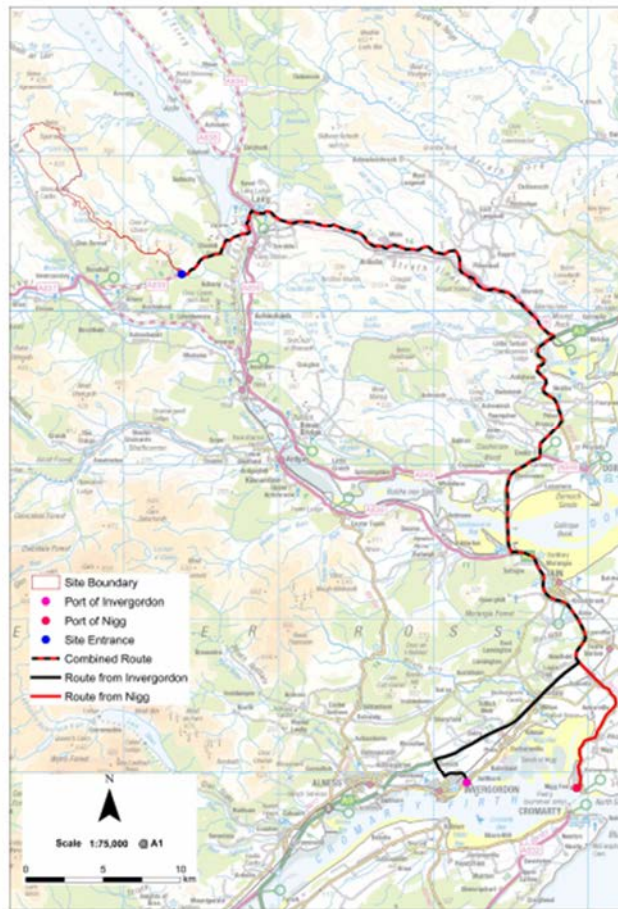


# TRANSPORT ROUTES

A key consideration in shaping this proposal has been to ensure our transport routes are as efficient and safe as possible.

Turbine components would be transported from either Nigg or Invergordon and access the site via the A9 to Loch Fleet then the A839 passing through Lairg before entering the existing Achany Wind Farm site entrance.

To minimise new track construction, the existing wind farm tracks have been incorporated into the design allowing access to the extension site through the existing site. Other existing site infrastructure will be also be reused where possible (e.g. borrow pit and operations building).

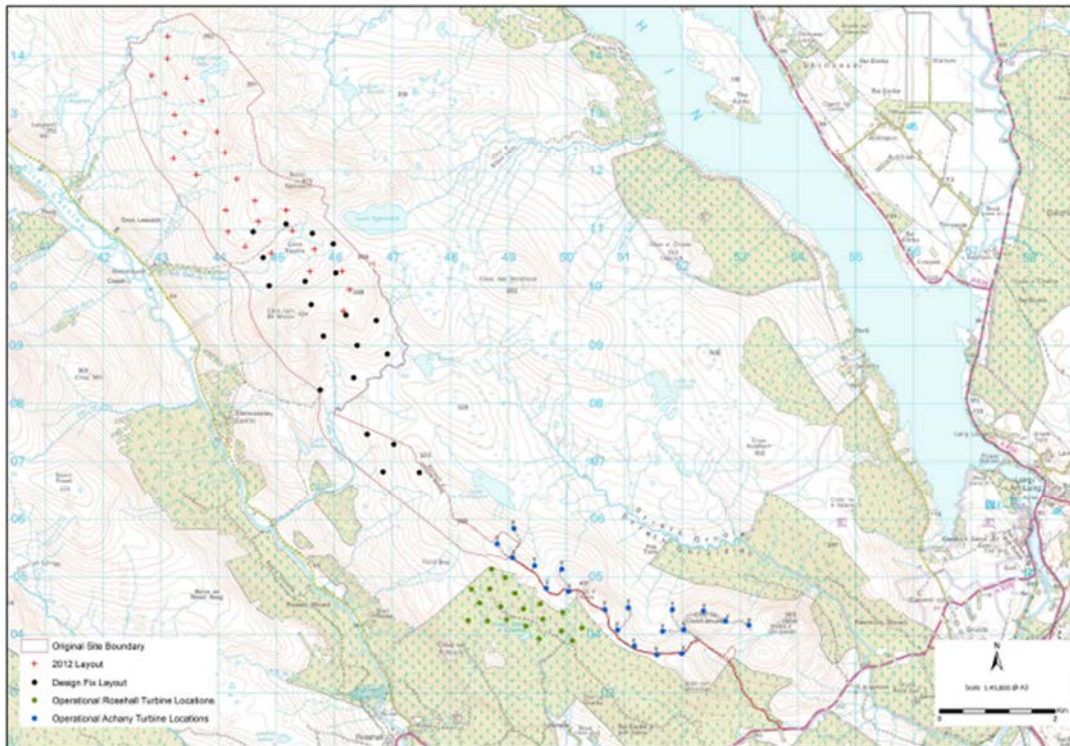


# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

In the context of the Climate Emergency and increased renewable energy generation targets, the proposed design has been developed through stakeholder engagement and an iterative and detailed design process.

Extensive environmental survey and assessment work has been undertaken to develop a robust design which addresses findings from the previous decision, whilst ensuring capture of the excellent and established wind resource and maximising reuse of the existing Achany Wind Farm infrastructure.

Particular attention has been paid to minimising impacts on sensitive habitats, avoiding deeper areas of peat, ornithological sensitivities, and minimising landscape and visual effects as much as possible.



## Ecology

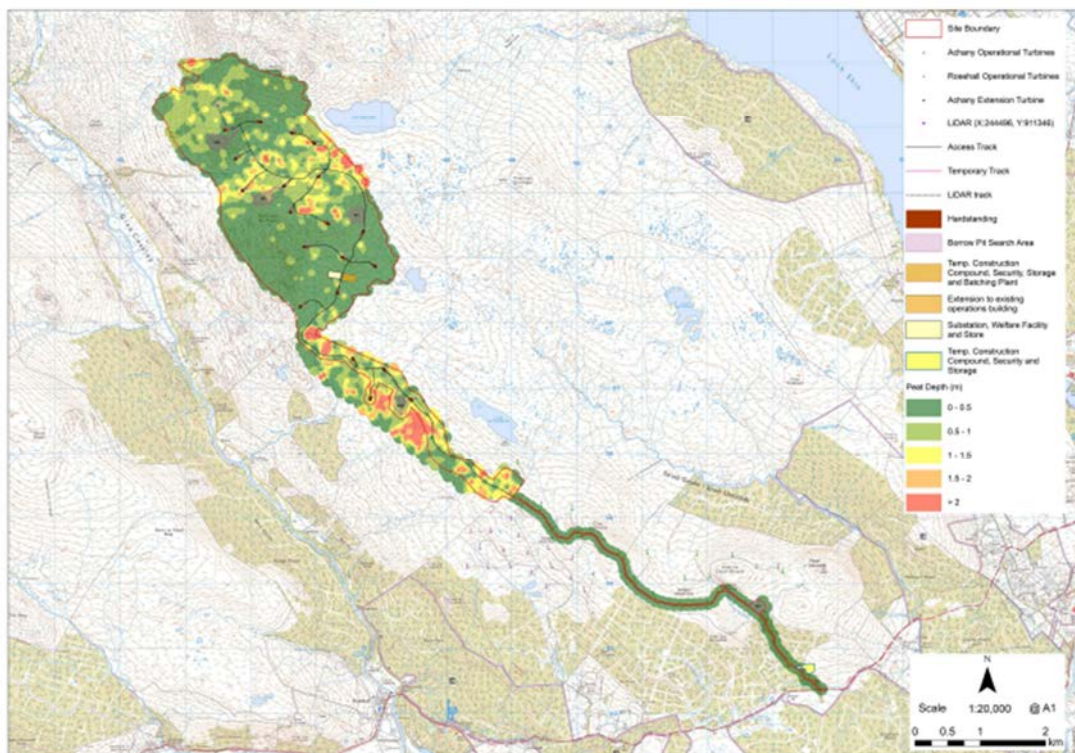
There are no statutory designated nature conservation sites for ecological features within the site boundary. The nearby River Oykel SAC and Grudie Peatlands SSSI have been carefully considered throughout the design along with habitats and protected species such as Bats, Otter and Water Vole. Following the implementation of Habitat Management, proposed mitigation and application of best practice measures throughout each phase of the development, no significant effects are anticipated.

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

## Geology and Hydrology

The hydrological and hydrogeological environment, including water quality, ground water dependent terrestrial ecosystems and private water supplies, have been carefully considered throughout the site design process. Following the application of best practice and proposed mitigation measures throughout the development, no significant impacts are anticipated.

A detailed peat probing exercise and a peat slide risk assessment has also been undertaken to ensure the design avoids areas of deeper peat, where possible. The data gathered has also been used for assessments of carbon balance, peat stability and to inform calculations for peat excavation and reuse volumes.



## Ornithology

Two years of breeding bird surveys and vantage point flight surveys have been completed and the results have informed the design in terms of layout and location of the turbines. These surveys have also informed the design on potential impacts on the bird populations, collision risk, displacement and disturbance for breeding birds during both the construction and operational phases of the wind farm extension.

# SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

## The Kyle of Sutherland

Since 2010, the SSE Renewables Achany Community Fund has awarded over £1 million in grants for various initiatives across the Kyle of Sutherland area.

SSE Renewables is proud to play our part in the communities in the Kyle of Sutherland area as a developer, constructor and operator of important assets across the region.

Through the years, the Achany Community Fund has supported initiatives aimed at improving skills and training opportunities, social care, and sustainable tourism.

The graphic below shows some of the added value we have delivered across Sutherland as a result of our projects:

**£6.9m**

donated to support 591 projects across Sutherland since 2010

**£23.1m**

to be invested in Sutherland communities over the wind farms' lifetime

**265,000**

visitors attracted to Sutherland each year from investment in The Falls of Shin Centre

**15**

Apprenticeships provided in 2019/20



**£25,000** awarded to the Kyle of Sutherland Hub from the existing Achany community fund.

A multi-use family and community hub built to address issues of geographic disadvantage, social isolation and lack of resources for young people in the Creich, Ardgay and Lairg areas.



**£52,000** was made immediately available to support the community coronavirus response in Sutherland.

When the COVID-19 epidemic struck, SSE Renewables introduced a more flexible approach to awarding grants that helped local organisations to step up their service provision and look after the most vulnerable in your communities.

For more information about the Achany Community Benefit fund, contact Fiona Morrison via email: [Fiona.Morrison@sse.com](mailto:Fiona.Morrison@sse.com) or phone: 01738 340098

# MEET THE TEAM



**Karen Anderson**  
Consent Manager

I am the Consent Manager for the proposed development project and have worked for SSE since 2009. I have worked for SSE Renewables since 2011 in the development team, mainly working on Onshore Wind projects.



**Jordan Ridley**  
Project Manager

I work as a Project Manager in the development of onshore wind for SSE. Having started in the renewables industry in 2012, I have been involved in a number of onshore wind and substation development works across Scotland and Northern England.



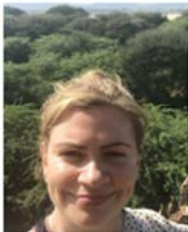
**Gillian Wilson**  
Development Project Manager

I have worked as a Project Manager in the Development phase for 12 years, largely in onshore wind development. I was the Project Manager in the development phase for the Gordonbush Extension Wind Farm project.



**Chris Bell**  
Head of Project Liaison

I lead a team of Stakeholder Engagement Managers who provide communication support to all of our renewable projects in Scotland. I have been with SSE for 12 years working in a variety of roles within Corporate Affairs.



**Aimi Munro**  
Consents Advisor

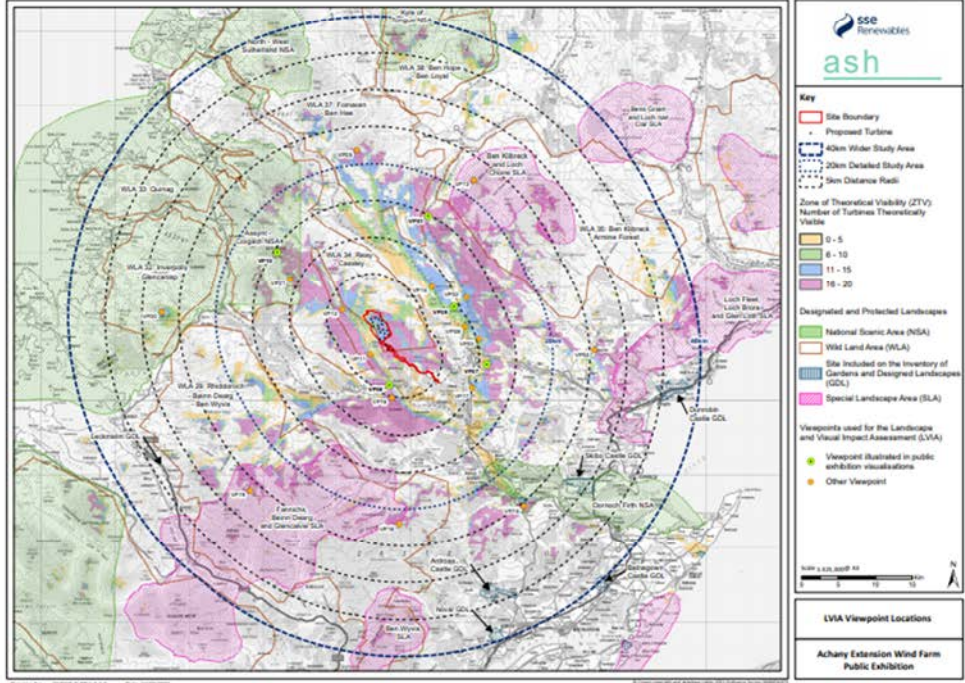
I have worked for SSE since 2005 and joined SSE Renewables in 2019. I am a Consents Advisor, helping to deliver planning consents and licenses for Onshore Wind Farm projects.



**Jade O'Hara**  
Stakeholder Engagement Manager

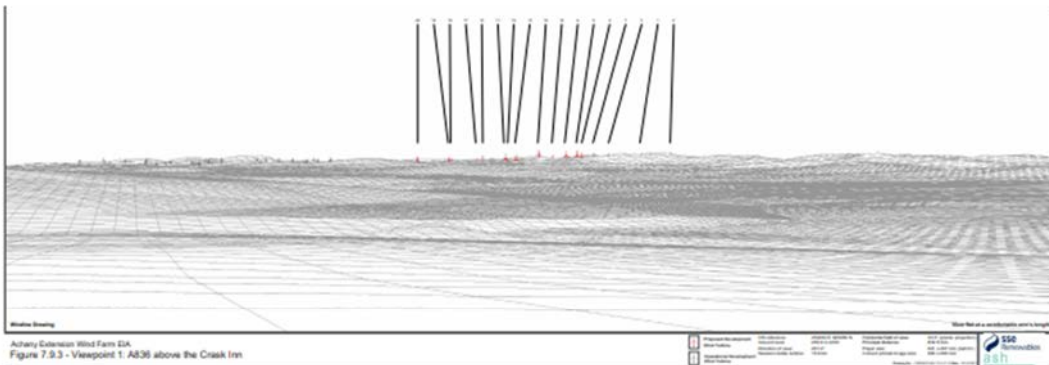
I am Stakeholder Engagement Manager for the Achary Extension wind farm and act as first point of contact for members of the community who would like to discuss the development. I'm here to assist with any enquiries members of the community may have about the project and also support other Renewables projects across the Highlands.

# VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS



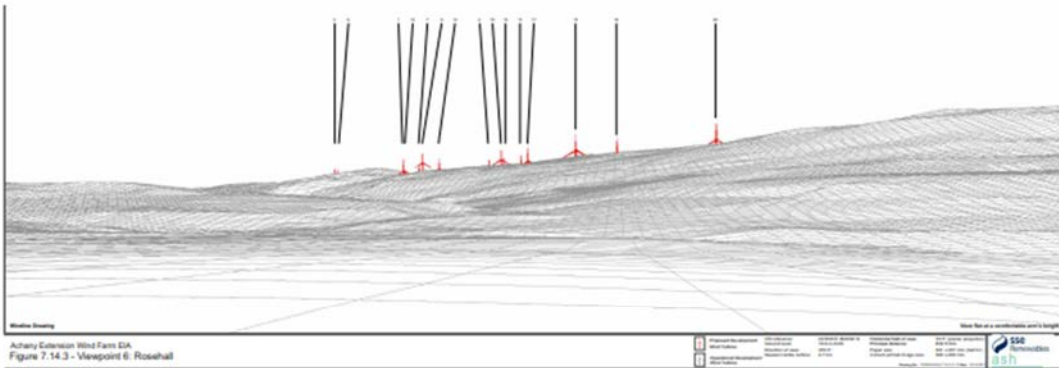
# VIEWPOINT 1

A836 above the Crask Inn



# VIEWPOINT 6

## Rosehall







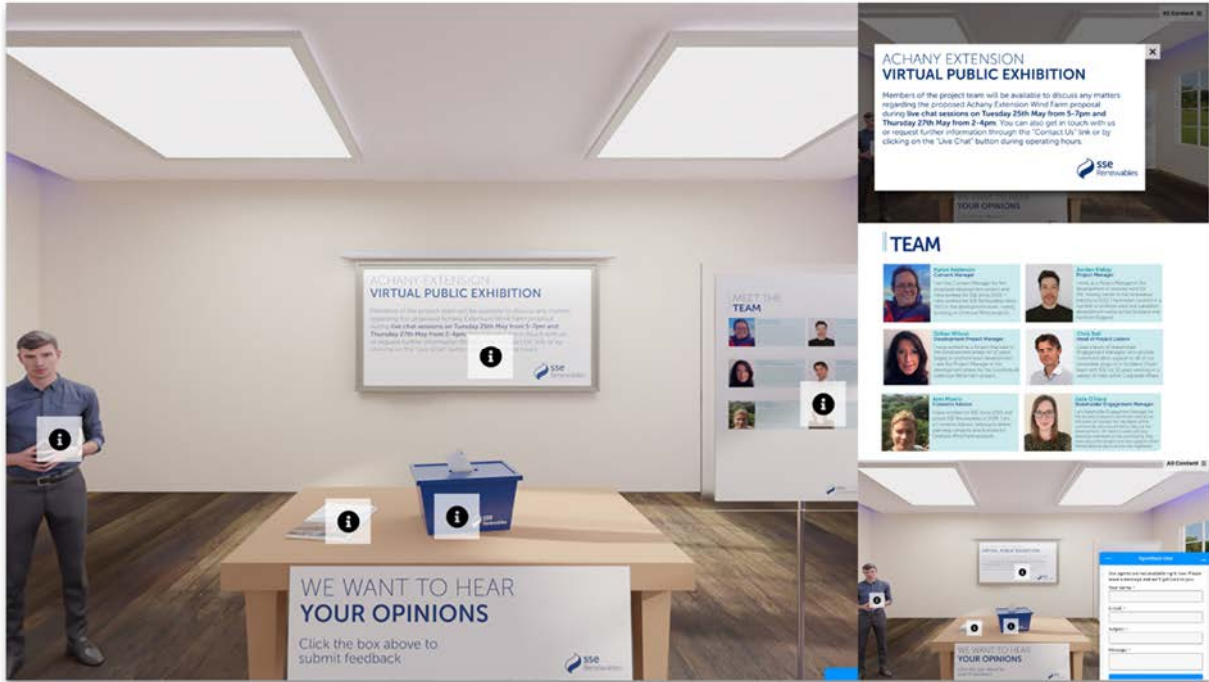


## 2021 VIRTUAL EXHIBITION (HELD ONLINE OVER 6 DAYS FROM 24- 30 MAY)

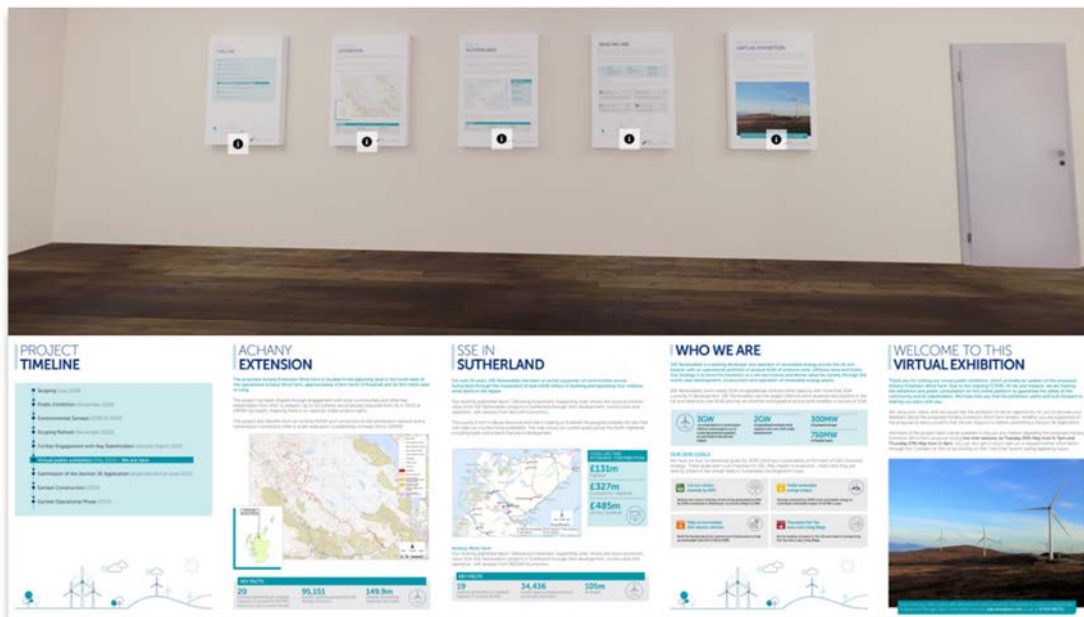
In recognition of Scottish Government guidance on Covid-19 restrictions, we delivered a virtual exhibition which included project documents, viewpoint visuals, site and survey information and an update on the evolution of the project.

### Entrance

Welcome; team details; brochure; feedback form; and chat function for live chat sessions.



### Project introduction and maps



# EIA, Communities and Transport

**SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES**  
The Role of Sutherland

Since 2012, the SSE Renewable Energy Community Fund has awarded over £3 million in grants for various initiatives across the Kyle of Sutherland area.

SSE has worked in partnership with the community in the Kyle of Sutherland and as a Developer, contractor and operator of important assets across the region.

Over the years, the Active Community Fund has supported initiatives aimed at improving skills and training opportunities, local care and support services.

The people of the Kyle of Sutherland have seen their lives improved as a result of our projects.

£6.9m	£23.1m	265,000	15
Invested in the Kyle of Sutherland	Spent on the Kyle of Sutherland	People supported	Projects funded

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)**  
Savings and efficiencies

The project has a range of environmental benefits, including energy savings, reduced water consumption, reduced air emissions and improved air quality. The team has also carried out a range of other measures to improve the design and construction of the project and to reduce its environmental footprint.

A detailed environmental impact assessment (EIA) has been carried out to assess the likely impacts of the project and to identify ways to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse effects. The EIA also includes a range of measures to improve the project's energy efficiency and to reduce its carbon footprint.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)**  
Energy

In the context of the Climate Emergency and the need to reduce energy generation capacity, the project design has been developed through innovative equipment and an advanced design process.

Advanced design and construction has been undertaken to ensure that the project is able to deliver the maximum energy output and to reduce its environmental footprint. This includes the use of advanced design and construction techniques to reduce the project's energy consumption and to improve its energy efficiency.

Advanced design has also been used to reduce the project's carbon footprint and to improve its energy efficiency. This includes the use of advanced design and construction techniques to reduce the project's energy consumption and to improve its energy efficiency.

**TRANSPORT ROUTES**

It has been considered in detail how the project has been designed to ensure that transport routes are as efficient as possible.

Transport routes will be designed to ensure that the project is accessible to the community and to the public. This includes the use of advanced design and construction techniques to ensure that the project is accessible to the community and to the public.

The project has been designed to ensure that transport routes are as efficient as possible. This includes the use of advanced design and construction techniques to ensure that the project is accessible to the community and to the public.

# Viewpoints

**VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS**

**VIEWPOINT 1**  
SSE above the Cradle Inn

**VIEWPOINT 6**  
Rural

**VIEWPOINT 7**  
High Road

**VIEWPOINT 9**  
Alderson houses and Lurgan site entrance

**VIEWPOINT 10**  
New House House

The display shows five different viewpoints, each with a landscape image and an architectural rendering of the project. The viewpoints are: Viewpoint 1 (SSE above the Cradle Inn), Viewpoint 6 (Rural), Viewpoint 7 (High Road), Viewpoint 9 (Alderson houses and Lurgan site entrance), and Viewpoint 10 (New House House).

## Video Screen



## Video Film



## APPENDIX D – FEEDBACK FORMS



## Glencassley Wind Farm Proposals Your Comments

We thank you for taking the time to come to this public exhibition and hope it has been informative. To help us record your views and to improve the effectiveness of our consultation with local communities and other consultees, could you please take a minute to complete our short questionnaire.

**1. How did you find out about this exhibition?**

Newspaper  Email  Poster  Word of Mouth  Website  Postcard  Twitter

*Other? Please provide detail:*

**2. Has this public exhibition been helpful in terms of giving you more information about the new Glencassley proposal?**

Very helpful  A little helpful  Not helpful

*Comments:*

**3. What are your views on the proposed Glencassley plans?**

Very supportive  Supportive  Undecided  Against  Strongly against

*Comments:*

**4. Which Glencassley public exhibition did you attend?**

Rosehall  Lairg



5. If you have any further comments on or would like to request more information regarding any aspect of the proposal please write below (and ensure you leave your contact details):

6. If you would like to receive project updates please 'opt in' by checking this box and provide your contact details below:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

Telephone:

We would like to keep you informed as the Glencassley project progresses. We will always treat your data with respect, keep it safe and secure and never sell it to third parties or use it for purposes other than providing information about the project. You can stop receiving these emails at any time by simply replying to any of our emails with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.

Any comments submitted to SSE at this time are not representations to the planning authority. In the event SSE submits formal applications for planning permission there would be an opportunity to submit representations to the appropriate planning authorities at that time. Any information given on this questionnaire can be used and published anonymously as part of our consultation reporting. By completing this questionnaire, you consent to us using this information for these purposes. By providing contact details you consent to us contacting you in relation to the Glencassley proposal. Your details will not be used for marketing purposes. **Privacy Notice** – SSE's privacy notice can be found online at: [www.sse.com/privacy-notice](http://www.sse.com/privacy-notice)

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**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.**

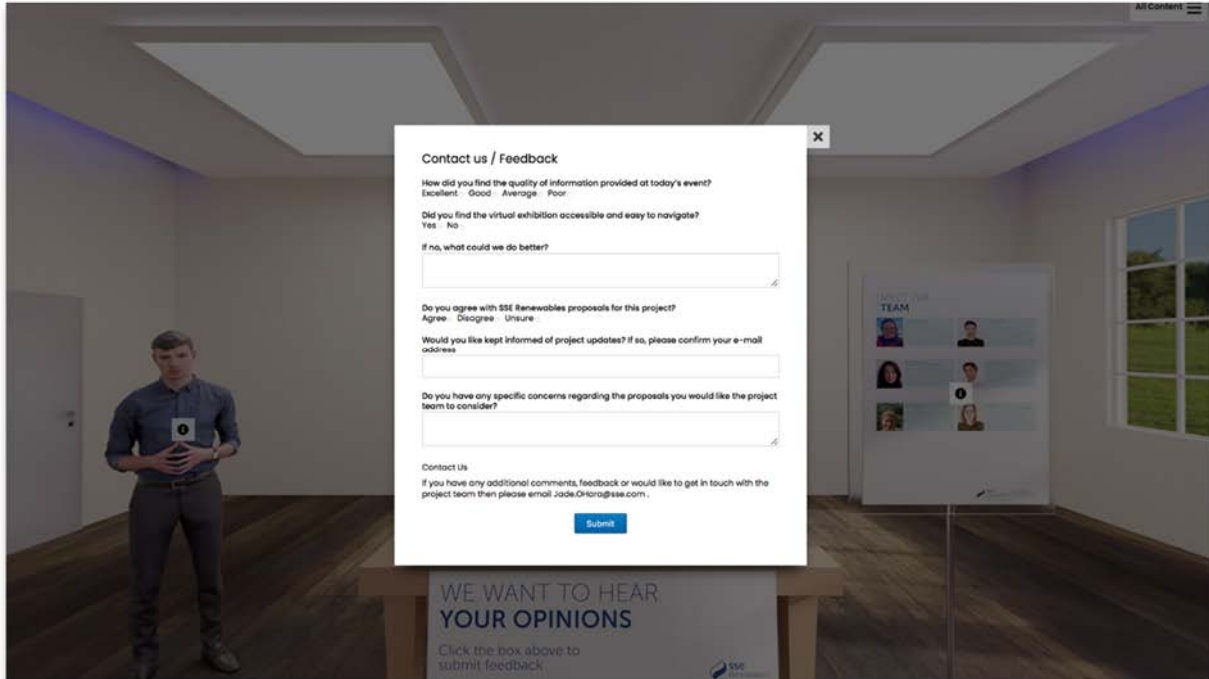
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**PLEASE HAND YOUR COMPLETED FORM IN AT THE EXHIBITION OR ALTERNATIVELY SEND TO:**  
Murray West, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1 Waterloo Street, Glasgow, G2 6AY or [Murray.West@sse.com](mailto:Murray.West@sse.com)

The closing date for the submission of comments is **Friday 6 December**



## 2021 EXHIBITION – FEEDBACK FORM (ONLINE)



<b>Questions on Feedback Form</b>	
How did you find the quality of information provided at today's event?	
Did you find the virtual exhibition accessible and easy to navigate?	
If no, what could we do better?	
Do you agree with SSE Renewables proposals for this project?	
Would you like kept informed of project updates? If so, please confirm your e-mail address	
Do you have any specific concerns regarding the proposals you would like the project team to consider?	