

Strathy South Wind Farm

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# Public Exhibition

# Welcome

# Strathy South Wind Farm

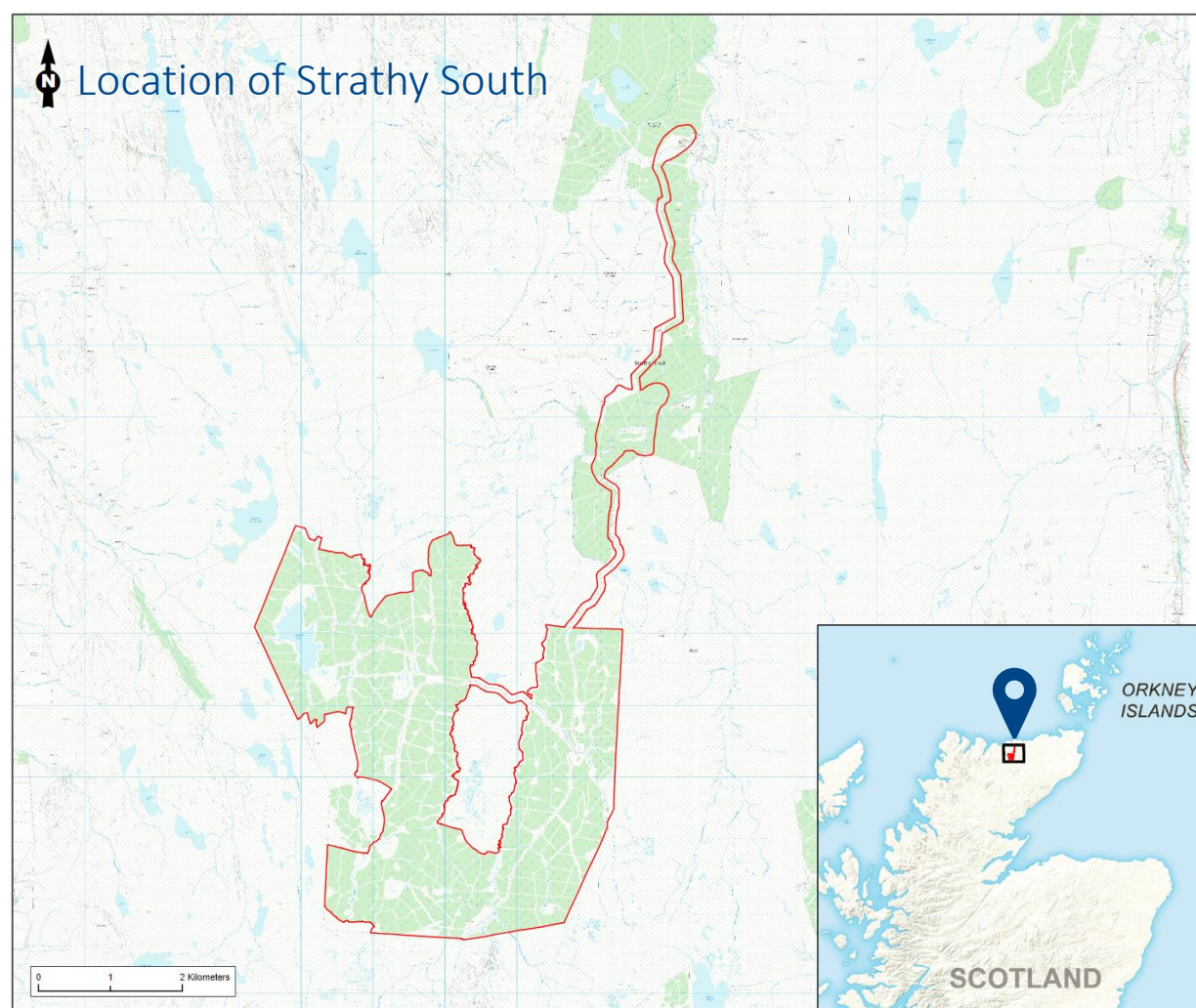
## Overview

### SSE - responsible developer

Headquartered in Perth, SSE employs around 21,000 people across the UK and Ireland and are committed to supporting the communities in which we live and work.

Our purpose is to responsibly provide the energy and services needed now and in the future. We are involved in producing, distributing and supplying electricity and gas.

We deliver energy to customers through a diverse range of energy generation including around 4,563MW of renewable generation capacity of which 3,828MW is in GB.



### Our renewable energy mix consists of:



Hydro:  
1,150MW

Onshore  
wind:  
2144MW

Offshore  
wind:  
932MW

Pumped  
storage:  
300MW

Biomass:  
37MW

### Public exhibition

This exhibition presents proposals to vary the current consent granted to Strathy South Wind Farm in 2018 and to ensure local communities have the opportunity to engage with SSE and ask any questions you may have about the project.



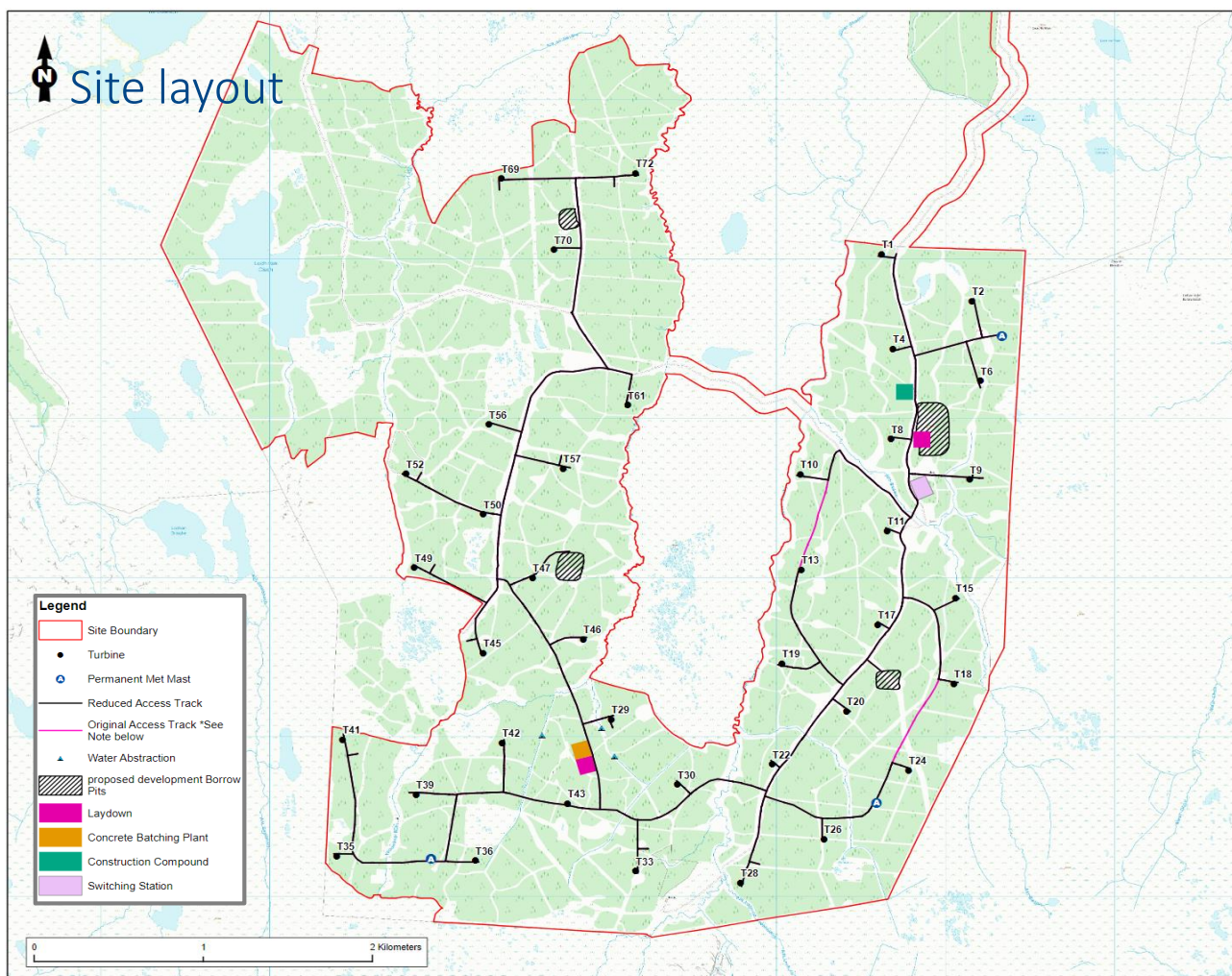
# Strathy South Wind Farm

## The Project

Strathy South Wind Farm currently has consent for 39 turbines with 133 MW installed capacity and 135 metres to blade tip.

The first application for Strathy South Wind Farm was submitted in 2007 and consisted of 77 turbines. An addendum for a reduced number of turbines (47) was submitted in 2013 before the current layout consisting of 39 turbines was granted in 2018 following a Public Local Inquiry (PLI).

The current proposal is to increase the tip height up to 200 metres whilst retaining the consented 39 turbine layout comprising the following key components:



- Turbine foundations and hard standings
- Access and site tracks
- Stream crossings
- Cabling
- Control building and switching station
- Welfare building
- Lay down areas
- Borrow pits

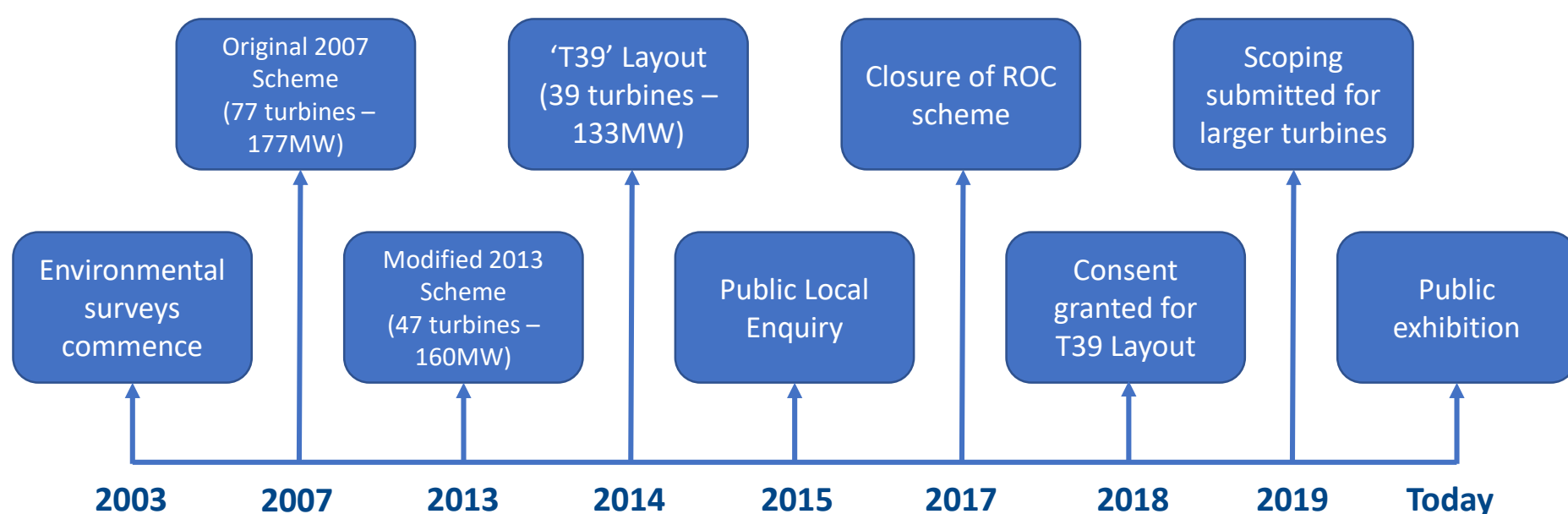
Scoping Report: A Scoping Report was submitted the Energy Consents Unit of the Scottish Government and their Scoping Opinion was received July 2019.

A larger version of this site layout is available at this exhibition

# Strathy South Wind Farm

## Development timeline

The initial Strathy South Wind Farm application was submitted in 2007, an addendum for a reduced number of turbines was submitted in 2013, and consent was granted in 2018 following on from the 2015 Public Local Inquiry (PLI).



## Why propose further changes?

Between the initial submission of the 39 turbine Layout and granting of consent, the turbine and electricity market has changed significantly with subsidies for onshore wind terminating in 2017 for new projects. As such the Strathy South wind farm will be solely reliant on revenue from electricity generated and sold to the wholesale energy market, therefore optimisation of the site from a generation perspective is essential for economic viability.

Turbine manufacturers have identified the need for turbines with longer blades to achieve the levels of generation required to allow wind farms to operate in a financially viable way. This additional blade length translates to an increased tip-height, in this case up to 200m.

# Strathy South Wind Farm

## Changes from the consented project

The application for a Section 36 variation retains the consented 39 turbine layout with the following changes proposed:

- Turbines increased from 135 m to up to 200 m tip height.
- Rotor diameter increased from 104 m to up to 162m.
- Turbine base area increased by up to 0.13 ha per turbine (worst case scenario).
- Removal of 1.2 km of on-site track.

	Consented T39 Layout	Proposed Development	Summary of Variations
<b>No. of Turbines</b>	39	39	No Change
<b>Tip Height</b>	135 metres	200 metres	Up to 65 metres increase
<b>Access Track Length</b>	32.0 km	30.8 km	Deletion of 1.2 km of track
<b>Turbine Foundations and Hardstanding</b>	Temporary infrastructure land take (per turbine): 0.098 hectares (ha).  Permanent land take (per turbine): 0.122 (ha).	Temporary infrastructure land take (per turbine): 0.1 hectares (ha).  Permanent land take (per turbine): 0.25 (ha).	Additional 0.13 ha land take (combination of temporary and permanent) per turbine. Note this is based on 'worst case' estimates currently.
<b>Lighting</b>	Infra-red lighting would be fitted to turbines and omni-directional red lighting would be fitted to turbines at the cardinal points.	Aviation lighting requirements for turbines up to 200 m to be agreed with consultees.	Precise requirements for aviation lighting will be subject to the outcome of consultation.

# Strathy South Wind Farm

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## Construction

We are in the process of commissioning a study which will assess potential borrow pits, aggregate volumes and peat management which will provide a basis on which to develop further plans.

Whilst the exact turbine model for the Strathy South Wind Farm has not been selected the following dimensions are known:

- Turbine tip height will not exceed 200 metres;
- Minimum ground clearance will increase from current approved distance and therefore reduce ornithological impact.
- Construction activities will be set out in the EIA Report and will consider the relevant conditions from the consented development.



### Proposed construction info:

#### Grid connection

Grid connection options are currently being explored to provide the most efficient solution whilst minimising environmental impact.

It is currently proposed to undertake onsite batching of concrete for turbine foundations to reduce vehicle deliveries.

Currently assessing volume of aggregate that can be sourced onsite to facilitate construction

The delivery route for the proposed development is the same as for the consented Strathy South Wind Farm. Due to the increased blade length, an updated assessment of the delivery route will be carried out as part of the EIA.

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## Environmental

The 2018 consent confirmed the Strathy South Wind Farm would have no adverse impact on integrity of Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA.

To support the proposed development an additional two years of breeding season survey data has been collected, with surveys concluding in September 2019.

Collision Risk Modelling will be re-run for the revised turbines, but preliminary results indicate no significant difference to outcomes for any SPA qualifying (or other) species.

### Habitat Management Plan (HMP) Aims

Through the use of appropriate conifer plantation harvesting techniques and subsequent land management, facilitate the restoration of formerly afforested areas to priority habitats (1,133ha).

To maintain and improve peatland habitats within moorland land units adjacent to the wind farm, that are under the management control of SSE (235ha).

To enable a suite of habitat restoration and conservation management works out with the Strathy South site boundary but within the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / SPA (1,300ha).



## SSE's contribution to society

Since 2008, we have increased our renewable generation capacity significantly, with onshore wind capacity increasing three-fold to 2,144MW as of winter 2018. Of the total committed spend in onshore wind, an estimated 66% was, or is expected to be, spent in the UK or Ireland. This growth in our onshore wind portfolio is delivering the following:



We are one of the biggest UK companies to become a living wage employer, supporting the principle of a fair wage which covers the cost of living.

105,250  
Jobs supported in the UK and Ireland

Around 13.4m tonnes of CO2 emissions have been avoided through clean low carbon energy generation, between 2008 and 2018



We are the first FTSE 100 company to be accredited with the Fair Tax Mark, achieved in 2018 for the fifth consecutive year.

Economic contribution:

UK: £8.9bn

Ire: €689m

## Local Opportunities



Our approach is to ensure that as many local businesses and people as possible benefit from the opportunities our new wind developments bring with them. Throughout different project phases, we will look to utilise the services and skills of local businesses which ensure that our projects have a lasting positive effect in the local area.

If our proposal is granted planning permission, and prior to construction beginning, we may hold a 'meet the buyer' event where we invite local businesses and suppliers to meet our construction team and the appointed Principal Contractor, to offer their services.

In addition to direct employment, our experience shows that other local businesses such as accommodation providers, shops and suppliers benefit directly particularly during the construction phase of our projects.

Once operational there may be opportunities for local businesses to undertake maintenance work across the site which could include the provision of plant or materials, fencing and drainage work, road repairs and maintenance.



## Community

SSE is committed to supporting the communities in which we live and work. We understand we must contribute positively to this society by being an active contributor to the communities that we are part of. SSE manages 32 community funds, which have supported over 2,500 community projects with grants of £22.1m since 2008.

Key awards to Community projects supported by the Strathy North fund include:

- Contribution to new build hall at Armadale
- Refurbishment Bettyhill Hall's kitchen
- Extension and upgrading of Portskerra Slip
- New computers for the nursery at Melvich Primary
- Transport to Thurso College for young people



# £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**

Following withdrawal of subsidies for onshore wind our current community benefit policy is currently under review. We still expect to have a favourable community benefit offering but this is being considered alongside community ownership. We will update communities as this progresses.

## Next steps

We are currently analysing the consultation responses to the Scoping Report ahead of submission of the Section 36c application to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU), which we aim to submit in January 2020.

We will work closely with consultees and the ECU to ensure that the application adequately addresses concerns raised as part of the scoping process.

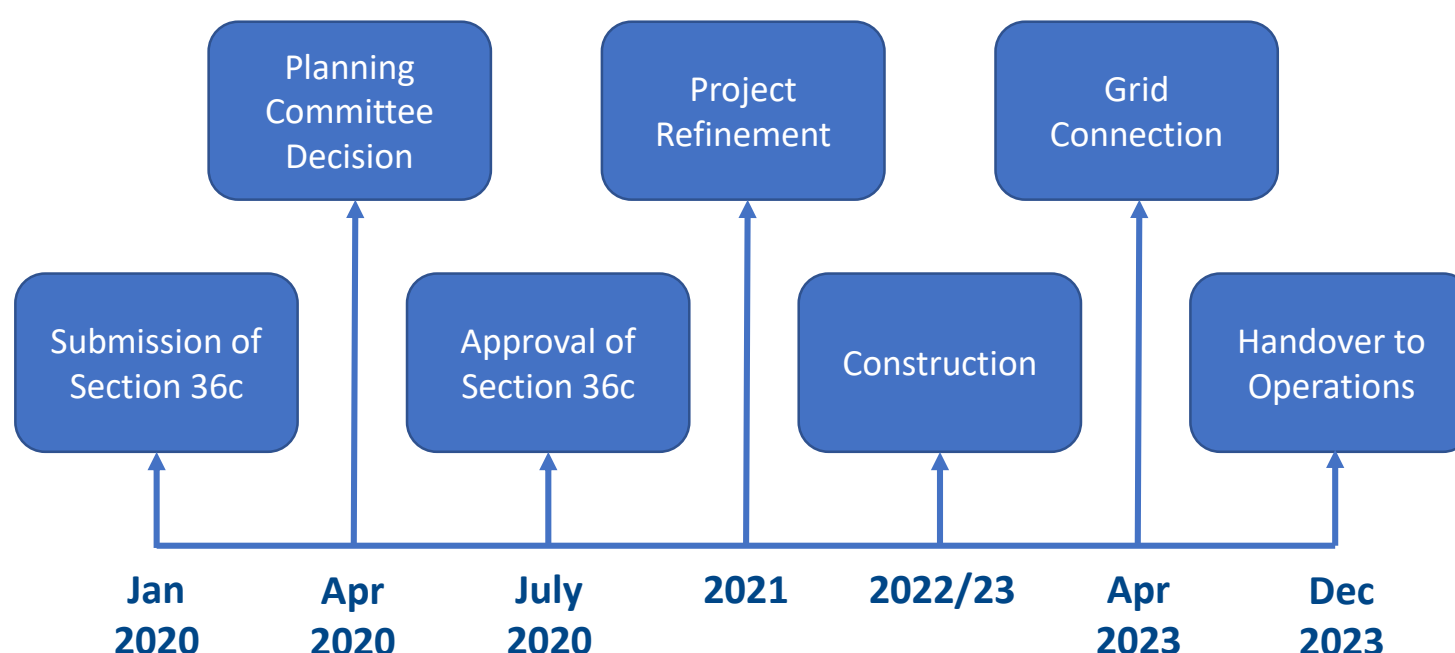
As we continue through the process we will:

- Continue to engage with communities on project progress
- Maintain and update our project website
- Hold further public events as required

Key dates in the programme are outlined as follows:



Key dates:



## Project contact

For further information, please contact our Project Liaison Manager:



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