

## **Lessons Learnt from Gordonbush Wind Farm**

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### **1. Introduction**

Gordonbush Wind Farm, developed by Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE), is located on Gordonbush Estate, approximately 9.5km to the north west of Brora in the Highlands of Scotland. Construction at the wind farm began in June 2010, and was completed in June 2012 when the wind farm became fully operational. The wind farm comprises 35 turbines, each at 110metres to tip height, and has a generating capacity of 70MW.

The construction and on-going operation of Gordonbush Wind Farm has provided an opportunity to learn from and build upon the lessons learnt during this experience and apply them during the design, development and, if consented, construction and operational phases of the proposed Gordonbush Extension.

Where relevant, this knowledge has been drawn upon to inform the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for Gordonbush Extension Wind Farm.

This review focuses on the knowledge gained through working closely with local residents and the community during construction. Lessons learnt from reinstatement are now adopted as best practice and have been incorporated into the draft CEMP (see Appendix 4.1).

### **2. Working with Local Residents and the Community during Construction**

During construction of Gordonbush Wind Farm, SSE established a community liaison group which provided the local community with information about key construction activities and a mechanism by which concerns from the local community could be shared and discussed. This has been considered a success by SSE, the community and The Highland Council and such a group would be re-established during the construction of Gordonbush Extension, if consent is granted.

#### *Traffic Management*

Prior to construction of Gordonbush Wind Farm, concern was expressed by members of the local community regarding the routeing of turbines through Strath Brora, and in particular the towns of Golspie and Brora. This was managed through significant engagement with Golspie and Brora Community Councils, prior to deliveries starting, to address local concerns and reduce any impacts.

Concerns were raised locally regarding the timing of deliveries and SSE worked closely with the contractor, haulage company and the police with the aim of avoiding passing through Golspie before 9am, in order to avoid the school run. Revised timings were agreed and positively received by the community.

This approach to engagement with the local community would be replicated during the construction of Gordonbush Extension.

#### *Dust Suppression*

During construction of Gordonbush Wind Farm some concerns were raised by local residents in close proximity to the construction access track to the wind farm with regard to the generation of dust as a result of construction traffic (on drier days). This was addressed during the construction of

Gordonbush through the tarmacking of a short section of access track to minimise dust. This matter would be further considered during the construction of Gordonbush Extension (if consented) through the implementation of dust suppression measures. This is referred to in the draft CEMP (Appendix 4.1 of this ES).

#### *Location of Temporary Construction Compound*

During the construction period for Gordonbush Wind Farm, some concerns were raised by local residents in close proximity to the construction access track to the wind farm with regard to noise disturbance from the temporary construction compound. This matter would be addressed during the construction of Gordonbush Extension (if consented) through the relocation of the construction compound further away from local residents, as shown on Figure 4.2: Site Layout.

### **3. Conclusion**

Experience and knowledge gained during the construction and operation of Gordonbush Wind Farm has enabled an opportunity to draw upon these lessons learnt where relevant, and apply them to the development of Gordonbush Extension Wind Farm in order to minimise potential disruption to the local community.