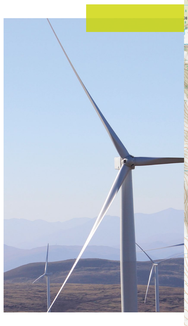
Aberarder Wind Farm

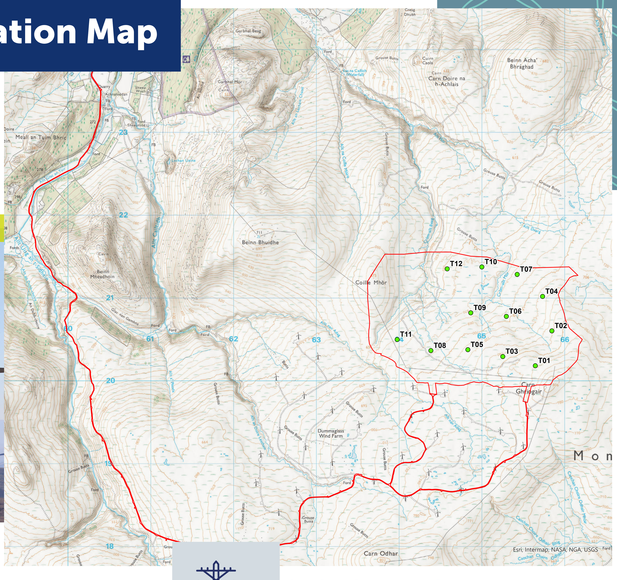
The Aberarder Wind Farm project is located in Strathnairn near Inverness, on a natural plateau at an average of 700m above sea level. It will sit directly adjacent to the operational 94MW Dunmaglass Wind Farm, which is jointly owned by SSE Renewables and Greencoat UK Wind.

Development of Aberarder started in 2013 by RES who shared updates with the local community during the design stage. In April 2017, the Highland Council granted planning consent. SSE Renewables acquired the project from RES in October 2022.

In September 2023 the project was successful in the UK's fifth Contract For Difference (CFD) Allocation round, securing a 15-year contract for low carbon power generation.

Location Map





12 Turbines

49.9 Grid Capacity

130m tip height

117m Rotor Diameter

Power up to 50,000 homes

sse Renewables

Timeline

Offsite Works
March 2024 – October 2024

Main Aberarder Windfarm Site Civil Works
June 2024 to December 2025

Construction Winter Shutdown
Mid-December 2024 to March 2025

Aberarder Windfarm Substation Construction Works
March 2025 to June 2026

Wind Turbine Delivery & Installation Works
May 2026 to October 2026

Grid Connection
August 2026

Construction Complete
November 2026

Handover to Operations
December 2026

Offsite Road Improvements

Pre Construction
Offsite Road Improvements

During the construction of Dunmaglass Wind Farm, the B851 road required a significant amount of work to improve the road to ensure the safe delivery of components to site. With an investment of over £9.75 million we were able to widen bends and roads for the turbine deliveries, twin tracking of the carriage way and footpath, passing places, on-site roads and bridges and strengthening works.

Theses road improvements mean that less work is now required to be carried out by The Highland Council and has left the roads in a much better condition than they were before we built Dunmaglass Wind Farm.

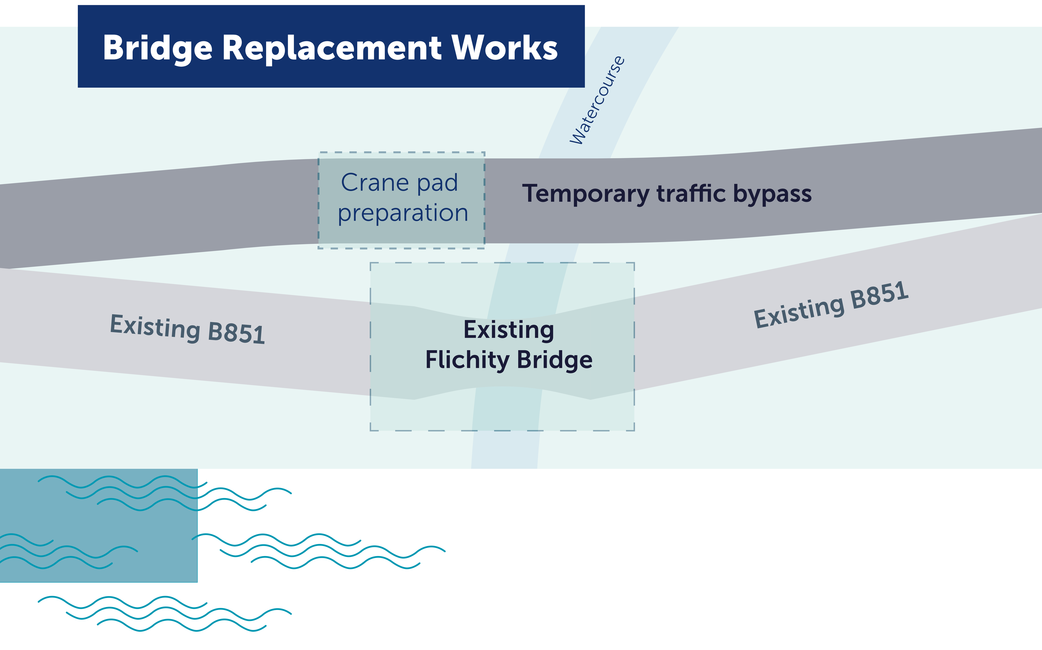
With much of the B851 road already improved, the main focus for Aberarder Wind Farm is the replacement of the Flichity Bridge, which after a long service has come to the end of its operational lifespan and now needs to be replaced. This replacement is necessary to ensure the safety of road users and would be required if the wind farm was not being built.

The replacement has been agreed in partnership with The Highland Council Roads Department. SSE Renewables are investing £2.5 million in the new Flichity Bridge, this will allow safe passage for the turbine deliveries, leaving a lasting legacy for the local community.

Flichity Bridge Replacement (B851)- April to October 2024

The works at Flichity Bridge consists of:

- Flichity Bridge replacement, including construction of temporary traffic by-pass, demolition of existing stone-built structure, construction of new bridge structure and all associated works.
- A temporary construction compound will be established adjacent to the B851 approx. 150m to the west of the bridge location. Bulk fill stone materials will be imported locally from Daviot along the B851.
- Temporary traffic by-pass constructed adjacent to existing structure by mid-June 2024, all traffic moved across to by-pass under contra-flow controlled by temporary traffic lights.
- Partial new bridge structure and west bound lane construction complete by mid-August 2024 when traffic will be moved across to the west bound lane of new bridge structure, again under contra-flow controlled by temporary traffic lights.



Temporary Road Closures

We have been working with our contractor and The Highland Council Roads Department to reduce the number of road closures as much as possible.

- In July, a 2-day road closure of the B851 at Flichity Bridge, including the temporary traffic by-pass will be required to facilitate the safe installation of concrete box-culvert units.
- Additional two days of road closures of the B851 at Flichity Bridge, will be required, one day in late July and another day in early September to facilitate the safe installation of sheet piling and further concrete box-culvert units
- A traffic diversion will be from Inverarnie in the East to Brinmore in the West, via Balnafoich and Dunlichity.
- The remaining bridge structure will be completed along with East bound lane construction and all associated works by mid-Oct 2024, the bridge will be adopted by The Highland Council upon completion of the works.

Temporary Diversion

Onsite Works

The main wind farm site at Aberarder will be accessed by construction traffic in June 2024 after construction of temporary traffic by-pass at Flichity Bridge is completed. Construction traffic access will be from the A9 at Daviot, Westbound along B851 to existing Dunmaglass Wind Farm access road at Dunmaglass Mains.

The appointed contractor will establish a temporary construction compound on Dunmaglass Estate approx. 3km to the B851, public access will not be permitted due to heavy plant movements and construction works. The compound will be utilised for the duration of the works on site at Aberarder.

Quantities of material required for import are currently under review, following the results of recent geotechnical investigation works at the site to determine suitability for use in construction. As with Dunmaglass Wind Farm, where possible, we hope to quarry materials on site, reducing the number of vehicle movements on the public road and the carbon impact of the project. Should the stone on site not be of the quality required then bulk fill stone materials and ready-mix concrete will be imported locally along the B851.

Main site civil works will include the construction of access roads, including sustainable drainage systems, electricity substation compound, wind turbine crane hard-standings and foundation bases.

Due to harsh weather conditions expected on the main site over the winter, given its elevation of approx. 700m above sea level. All works on the main site will be suspended during the winter shutdown period.

The appointed Electrical Contractor will mobilise to site at Aberarder Substation location in March 2025.

Substation build will start with civils / building works followed by mechanical and electrical installation, prior to testing and commissioning to facilitate connection of the wind farm to the electricity networks on infrastructure located on Dunmaglass Estate.

Cables transport the electricity from the different turbine arrays back to the wind farm substation. They are laid in trenches lined with dust and then covered. Coloured tapes are placed in trenches to identify cable presence in case the area is excavated in the future. Once cable work in the different turbine arrays completes, verge reinstatement/landscaping takes place along with installation of permanent drainage.

Wind turbine generator (WTG) delivery route works will be carried out early spring 2026, consisting of replacing items of street furniture such as signs, with moveable pieces to allow delivery of the turbine components, such as tower sections, top or nacelle unit, and blades.

Turbine Deliveries

Moving Abnormal Loads

We know that one of a construction projects biggest impacts is the transportation moving to and from the site. Specifically, the delivery of the large turbine components, known as abnormal loads.

An abnormal load is a load that cannot be broken down into smaller loads for transport. In order to move an abnormal load within Scotland, abnormal loads must be escorted by Police Scotland under The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986.

Months of careful planning and discussions with Police Scotland, Transport Scotland and The Highland Council take place to ensure convoys are planned to avoid peak travel periods and cause minimal disruption. Police Scotland will escort all turbine delivers, they will determine the delivery days and times.

Abnormal loads are not permitted to travel during peak hours, this is to minimise the disruption to road users and to keep the road network flowing during key periods such as rush hour and school drop off and pick up. These are Monday-Friday between 6.30am-9.30am and 3.30pm-6.30pm.

Due to the nature of the road network across the Highlands, movements during the hours of darkness overnight or in the early morning are also not. This is for the safety of road users, the delivery drivers and the escort teams.

Bespoke trailers are used which include remote-controlled turning axles at the rear to allow them to successfully traverse tight bends. We have 12 turbines travelling to Aberarder Wind Farm, each turbine will be broken down into 9 components, totalling 108 abnormal loads. Traveling in convoy, in groups of 3, from the Port of Inverness, A9 to Daviot and Westbound along the B851. Police Scotland will escort 36 convoys to the site access road at Dunmaglass Mains. A detailed delivery schedule will be drawn up ahead of deliveries, expected to start in June 2026.

Our commitment

We recognise that we have significant interaction with the environment through the activities we undertake whilst developing, building and operating our onshore wind farms. We have a responsibility to design and build our projects in a way which protects the natural environment in which we operate.

That is why we are committed to developing our projects in a way that protects and enhances the nature environment. Our Biodiversity Net Gain approach to development aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was pre-development. It focuses on the change in the biodiversity value of a sites, comparing the pre and post construction biodiversity values to ensure a positive impact overall.

SSE Renewables have targeted the Biodiversity Net Gain ambition of no biodiversity net loss on onshore sites consented from 2023 and a biodiversity net gain on sites consented from 2025 onwards. Although Aberarder was consented before 2023 SSE Renewables are committed to providing a measurable benefit to nature conservation and this is typified in the development of our ten-point plan for biodiversity.

To find out more visit:
sserenewables.com/sustainability/biodiversity-net-gain/

Peatland Restoration

Through our construction and operation of onshore wind farms, SSE Renewables is looking to restore significant areas of degraded peat lands on our sites.

Blanket bog habitat in the UK is facing a considerable number of threats principally due to afforestation, drainage, burning and overgrazing.

Peat is the largest terrestrial carbon store in the UK and approximately 4.5 billion tonnes of carbon are stored in Scotland's peatlands. Blanket bog habitats need to be in good health to function as a net sink carbon store instead of as a source of atmospheric carbon which is what happens if the peat is degraded.

As well as the biological benefits, healthy blanket bog provides food and shelter to a diverse range of wildlife and provides a pleasing environment for members of the public to enjoy.

SSE Renewables have been working locally on peatland restoration in area, at Dunmaglass Wind Farm, since 2017. The work began by blocking hill drains, by blocking of these hill drains more water would be held on the hill improving the conditions for blanket bog habitat restoration. Providing the suitable conditions for cotton grasses and peat forming sphagnum mosses to grow.

In October 2019, further work began to improve the quality of the habitat. This time through complex peat hag reprofiling and peat pan restoration where there are no conventional hill drains present to enable blocking, but extensive areas of eroding peat hags needed to be addressed.

In order to strive for high quality industry leading peatland restoration and to tie in with wider landscape scale restoration projects, SSE Renewables have been working with Strath Caulaidh Ltd (SCL) to advise on the latest innovative restoration techniques, which have been developed during a large-scale landscape restoration projects within the Monadhliath region.

We will employ this approach at Aberarder Wind Farm, with this work continuing over the life of the windfarm.

Working with the Environment

The Great Glen and the surrounding areas are famous for many things, but Golden Eagles comes close to the top of the list. With many people visiting the area to catch a glimpse of this magnificent bird of prey.

Aberarder Wind Farm will contribute to the Regional Eagle Conversation Management Plan (RECMP), established in 2015 in collaboration with SSE Renewables.

The RECMP was commissioned to:

1. repeatedly review and monitor the status of breeding golden eagle in the region and;

2. to fund research on the biology of the species, both regionally and nationally.

The golden eagle research, conservation and monitoring project covers the Central Highlands Natural Heritage Zone (known as NHZ10), centred in the Monadhliath mountains. The RECMP activity is also promoted and taken under advice by an independent advisory board consisting of representatives from the following organisations:

- SSE Renewables
- The Highland Council
- NatureScot
- RSPB
- Highland Raptor Study Group
- Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation
- Natural Research Ltd
- Nevis Environmental

The aims are to provide an accurate reflection of factors influencing population numbers and eagle distribution to promote territory occupation and help boost the local population. And, also, to promote a greater understanding of golden eagle biology through research analyses which incorporate products created by the project.

Ongoing considerable survey effort has established that the area hosts one of the most rapidly increasing golden eagle populations in Scotland, albeit with many seemingly suitable areas remaining vacant. In a UK context, these increases are unprecedented. The fundamental research programme continues to narrow knowledge gaps and will serve more widely as a successful model for golden eagle conservation.

SSE Renewables provides funding and management assistance within the NHZ to enhance the conservation of breeding golden eagles. As well as the research programme, this has included the funding of a dedicated Golden Eagle Project Officer to support the RECMP.

About SSE Renewables

SSE Renewables is a leading developer and operator of renewable energy projects, headquartered in the UK and Ireland with a growing presence internationally. Our strategy is to lead the transition to a net zero future through the world-class development, construction and operation of renewable power assets.

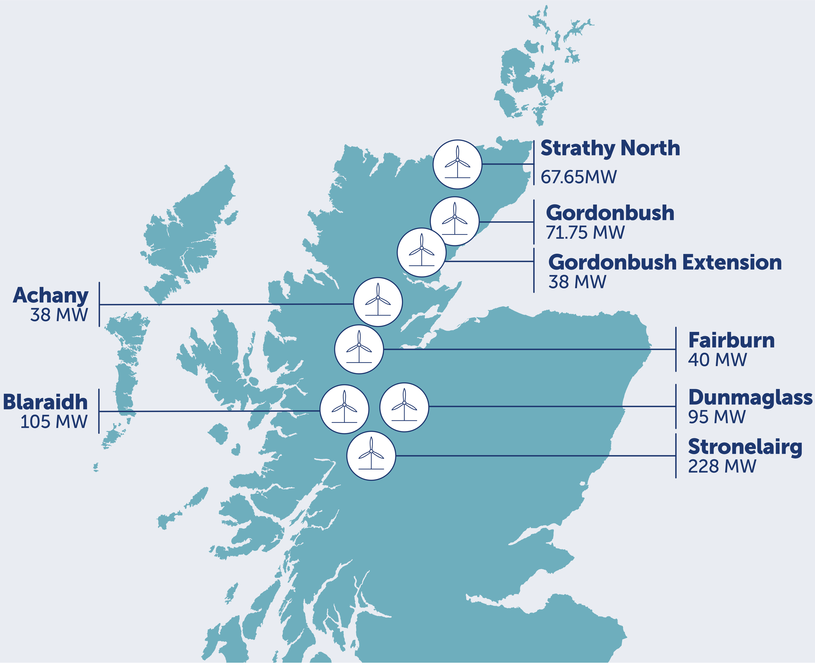
We are part of SSE plc, the UK-listed energy infrastructure company which is investing £18bn to 2027, or £10m a day, to contribute to net zero and address climate change head on. This includes plans by SSE Renewables to increase its installed renewable energy capacity to 9GW by 2027, and over 16GW by 2032.

Aberarder will play an important part in helping the UK meet its climate goals and ending reliance on volatile energy markets, providing more secure homegrown energy.

SSE Renewables in the Highlands

SSE Renewables has a long history in the Highlands, starting 80 years ago bringing power to the glens via hydro-electricity. As technologies advanced, we have harnessed the power of wind with our onshore and offshore wind farms, delivering clean, renewable energy to homes and businesses across the Highlands and beyond.

We operate eight onshore wind farms across the Highlands, generating 685MW of power, helping to generate clean energy for 680,000 homes.



Keeping in touch

Our ambition is to work collaboratively with our stakeholders during the development, construction and operation of our assets, so that as many areas as possible can benefit positively from our proposals.

We know that there is no one size fits all approach when it comes to working with the communities in which we work. That is why we seek to make ourselves as accessible as possible.

Your dedicated SSE Renewables Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Eilidh Edgar will look to keep the community up to date through the construction stages by:

Community Liaison Groups
Setting up regular meetings with community representatives to discuss the project and upcoming activities.

Email Updates
We will provide regular updates on the progress of the project.

Project point of contact
Eilidh Edgar will be available by phone for any questions you might have relating to the project.

Website
Providing project information and milestones, such as turbine deliveries.

Building links with local schools
Engaging with the future workforce.

Newsletters
We will share regular updates from the project and community engagement.

Face to face chats
Being based locally, allows the opportunity to sit down for a cuppa and blether.

Eilidh Edgar
Stakeholder Engagement Manager
eilidh.edgar@sse.com 07879992917

Working with the Community

Delivering benefit locally

SSE Renewables has a long-term commitment to invest in our local communities. Over the next 25 years the SSE Renewables' Community Benefit Funds will generate at least £315 million across all UK and Ireland projects with a £100 million of that being delivered across the Highlands.

SSE Renewables is one of the world's largest developers of renewable energy. We have always believed in sharing the value of our renewable energy projects with communities, maximising the benefits of local, sustainable power.

We made a commitment in 2012 to invest in local communities. Our ambition is to make sure every single penny of that money is spent wisely; it makes a difference and reflects the priorities of local people. We think the best way to achieve this is for the grant decisions to be made by local people.

A community investment fund will be established for Aberarder valued at **£5,000 per MW,** with £2.5k distributed to local communities and £2.5k contribution to the Highland Sustainable Development Fund. The funds will be available once main construction starts.

Through our existing Dunmaglass Wind Farm fund we make a contribution of around **£306,000 per year** to the local communities of Strathnairn, Strathdearn and Stratherrick and Foyers. The Fund was established in 2015 and is estimated to provide **£7.4m, to invest in local projects over the 25 year lifetime of the fund.**

The funds are managed by the local third-party community organisations based in each of the three areas. This model supports local employment to manage and administer the funds and develop officers to establish projects and initiatives. In the last **8 years over £3.6 million has been awarded to local projects** across the 3 communities.

In addition, Dunmaglass Wind Farm contributes towards a joint 3-year scholarship programme with Stronelairg Wind Farm which **supports 2 undergraduate students £5,000 each** and **£10,000 towards one postgraduate per year.**

To find out more about how to apply to the funds scan our QR code:

*** The Dunmaglass Wind Farm ltd is a partnership between SSE Renewables and Greencoat UK Wind Plc.**

sse Renewables

How our funds are used:

Strathnairn Highlights

- The employment of a community development officer to assist with meeting the community's aspiration outlined in the Community Action Plan.
- To develop a community orchard, picnic area and link path Strathnairn Community Woodland.
- To support the annual Vintage Tractor Rally.

Strathdearn Highlights

- The creation of Strathdearn Hub a modern amenity built to highest eco-standards, this energy-efficient building offers a first-class venue for a variety of social events, from weddings to ceilidhs.
- The development of amenities housing plans in Tomatin.
- Supported the running cost of the community shop

Stratherrick and Foyers Highlights

- Holding a range of community engagement events across the year at the Wildside Centre.
- Support the development of Riverside fields sports facility in Foyers.
- Develop a community growing project

Jesscia Boughey
Community Development Officer