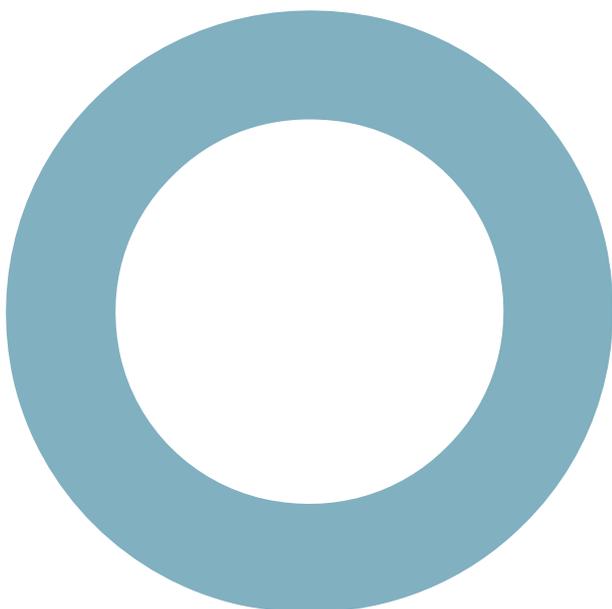


## **APPENDIX 14.1: TECHNICAL REPORT**



# Tangy IV Wind Farm. Environmental noise assessment.

REVISION 2 - 06 AUGUST 2018



**Audit sheet.**

Rev.	Date	Description	Prepared	Verified
1	20/06/2018	First version		
2	06/08/2018	Revised following comments and traffic information		

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## Non-Technical Summary

Hoare Lea Acoustics (HLA) have been commissioned by the applicant to undertake a noise assessment for the construction and operation of the proposed Tangy IV Wind Farm. Noise will be emitted by equipment and vehicles used during construction and decommissioning of the wind farm and by the turbines during operation. The level of noise emitted by the sources and the distance from those sources to the receiver locations are the main factors determining levels of noise at receptor locations.

### Construction Noise

Construction noise has been assessed with a desk based study of a potential construction programme and by assuming the wind farm is constructed using standard and common methods. Noise levels have been calculated for receiver locations closest to the areas of work and compared with guideline and baseline values. Construction noise, by its very nature, tends to be temporary and highly variable and therefore much less likely to cause adverse effects. Various mitigation methods have been suggested to reduce the effects of construction noise, the most important of these being suggested restrictions of hours of working. It is concluded that noise generated through construction activities will have a minor effect.

De-commissioning is likely to result in less noise than during construction of the proposed development. The construction phase has been considered to have minor noise effects, therefore de-commissioning will, in the worst case, also have minor noise effects.

### Operational Noise

Operational turbines emit noise as the rotating blades pass through the air. This noise can sometimes be described as having a regular 'swish'. The amount of noise emitted varies depending on the wind speed. When there is little wind the turbine rotors will turn slowly and produce lower noise levels than during high winds when the turbine reaches its maximum power output and maximum rotational speed. Background noise levels at nearby properties will also change with wind speed, increasing with wind speed due to factors such as wind in trees and around buildings, etc.

Noise levels from the operation of the turbines have been predicted for those locations closest to the site. Baseline noise levels were determined from surveys undertaken in the area. Noise limits have been derived from data about the existing noise environment following the method stipulated in national planning guidance. Predicted noise levels take full account of the potential combined effect of the noise from the proposed development along with the consented Beinn An Tuirc III Wind Farm. Other, more distant wind farms were not considered as they do not make an acoustically relevant contribution to cumulative noise levels.

Predicted operational noise levels have been compared to the limit values to demonstrate that turbines of the type and size which would be installed can operate within the limits so derived. It is concluded therefore that operational noise levels from the wind farm will be within levels deemed, by national guidance, to be acceptable for wind energy schemes.

This Non-Technical Summary contains an overview of the noise assessment and its conclusions. No reliance should be placed on the content of this Non-Technical Summary until this report has been read in its entirety.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 This report presents an assessment of the potential construction and operational noise effects of the Tangy IV Wind Farm (the proposed development) on the residents of nearby dwellings. The assessment considers both the construction and operation of the proposed development and also the likely effects of its de-commissioning. Assessment of the operational noise effects accounts for the cumulative effect of the proposed development and the consented Beinn An Tuirc III Wind Farm, approximately 4 km to the north east of the proposed development. Other, more distant wind farms, including Beinn An Tuirc I (approximately 7.5 km from the proposed development) and Beinn An Tuirc II (approximately 6 km from the proposed development) were not considered as their noise contribution was considered negligible. For the avoidance of doubt, the existing Tangy I and Tangy II turbines would be removed before the Tangy IV turbines are constructed and are therefore not considered in this assessment.
- 1.1.2 The site of the proposed development is similar to that of the consented Tangy III wind farm which was assessed in the Tangy III ES (2014). The turbines of the proposed development are located in the same position as for the consented Tangy III Wind Farm layout, but the dimensions of the turbines which would be potentially installed could be larger, and therefore a different candidate turbine model has been considered in this assessment.
- 1.1.3 Noise and vibration which arises from the construction of a wind farm is a factor which should be taken into account when considering the total effect of the proposed development. However, in assessing the effects of construction noise, it is accepted that the associated works are of a temporary nature. The main work locations for construction of the turbines are distant from the nearest noise sensitive residences and are unlikely to cause significant effects. The construction and use of access tracks may, however, occur at lesser separation distances. Assessment of the temporary effects of construction noise is primarily aimed at understanding the need for dedicated management measures and, if so, the types of measures that are required.
- 1.1.4 Once constructed and operating, wind turbines may emit two types of noise. Firstly, aerodynamic noise is a 'broad band' noise, sometimes described as having a characteristic modulation, or 'swish', which is produced by the movement of the rotating blades through the air. Secondly, mechanical noise may emanate from components within the nacelle of a wind turbine. This is a less natural sounding noise which is generally characterised by its tonal content. Traditional sources of mechanical noise comprise gearboxes or generators. Due to the acknowledged lower acceptability of tonal noise in otherwise 'natural' noise settings such as rural areas, modern turbine designs have evolved to ensure that mechanical noise from wind turbines is negligible. Aerodynamic noise is usually only perceived when the wind speeds are fairly low, although at very low wind speeds the blades do not rotate, or rotate very slowly and so, at these wind speeds, negligible aerodynamic noise is generated. In higher winds, aerodynamic noise is generally masked by the normal sound of wind blowing through trees and around buildings. The level of this natural 'masking' noise relative to the level of wind turbine noise determines the subjective audibility of the wind farm. The primary objective of this noise assessment is therefore to establish the relationship between wind turbine noise and the naturally occurring masking noise at residential dwellings lying around the proposed development and to assess these levels of noise against accepted standards.
- 1.1.5 An overview of the environmental noise assessment process and a glossary of noise terms are provided in Annex A.

## 2. Policy and Guidance Documents

### 2.1 Planning Policy and Advice Relating to Noise

2.1.1 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)<sup>i</sup> provides advice on how the planning system should manage the process of encouraging, approving and implementing renewable energy proposals including onshore wind farms. Whilst SPP suggests noise impacts are one of the aspects that will need to be considered it provides no specific advice. Planning Advice Note PAN1/2011<sup>ii</sup> provides general advice on the role of the planning system in preventing and limiting the adverse effects of noise without prejudicing investment in enterprise, development and transport. PAN1/2011 provides general advice on a range of noise related planning matters, including references to noise associated with both construction activities and operational wind farms. In relation to operational noise from wind farms, Paragraph 29 states that:

*'There are two sources of noise from wind turbines - the mechanical noise from the turbines and the aerodynamic noise from the blades. Mechanical noise is related to engineering design. Aerodynamic noise varies with rotor design and wind speed, and is generally greatest at low speeds. Good acoustical design and siting of turbines is essential to minimise the potential to generate noise. Web based planning advice on renewable technologies for Onshore wind turbines provides advice on 'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms' (ETSU-R-97) published by the former Department of Trade and Industry [DTI] and the findings of the Salford University report into Aerodynamic Modulation of Wind Turbine Noise.'*

2.1.2 The Scottish Government's Online Renewables Planning Advice on Onshore wind turbines<sup>iii</sup> provides further advice on noise, and confirms that the recommendations of 'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms' (ETSU-R-97)<sup>iv</sup> "should be followed by applicants and consultees, and used by planning authorities to assess and rate noise from wind energy developments". The aim of ETSU-R-97 is:

*'This document describes a framework for the measurement of wind farm noise and gives indicative noise levels thought to offer a reasonable degree of protection to wind farm neighbours, without placing unreasonable restrictions on wind farm development or adding unduly to the costs and administrative burdens on wind farm developers or local authorities. The suggested noise limits and their reasonableness have been evaluated with regard to regulating the proposed development of wind energy in the public interest. They have been presented in a manner that makes them a suitable basis for noise-related planning conditions or covenants within an agreement between a developer of a wind farm and the local authority.'*

2.1.3 The recommendations contained in ETSU-R-97 provide a robust basis for assessing the noise implications of a wind farm. ETSU-R-97 has become the accepted standard for such developments within the UK. Guidance on the application of ETSU-R-97 has been provided by the Institute of Acoustics (IOA Good Practice Guide or GPG)<sup>v</sup>. This was subsequently endorsed by the Scottish Government<sup>vi</sup> which advised in the web based planning advice note that this 'should be used by all IOA members and those undertaking assessments to ETSU-R-97'. The methodology of ETSU-R-97 and the IOA GPG has therefore been adopted for the present assessment and is described in greater detail below.

2.1.4 With regard to infrasound and low-frequency noise, the above-referenced online planning advice note, Onshore wind turbines refers to a report for the UK Government which concluded that 'there is no evidence of health effects arising from infrasound or low frequency noise generated by the wind turbines that were tested'.

2.1.5 PAN1/2011 and the Technical Advice Note<sup>vii</sup> accompanying PAN1/2011 note that construction noise control can be achieved through planning conditions that limit noise from temporary construction-sites,

or by means of the Control of Pollution Act (CoPA) 1974<sup>viii</sup>. The CoPA provides two means of controlling construction noise and vibration. Section 60 provides the Local Authority with the power to impose at any time operating conditions on the proposed development site. Section 61 allows the developer to negotiate a prior consent for a set of operating procedures with the Local Authority before commencement of site works.

- 2.1.6 For detailed guidance on construction noise and its control, the Technical Advice Note refers to British Standard BS 5228<sup>ix</sup> 'Noise control on construction and open sites', Parts 1 to 4 but confirms that the updated version of this standard, published in January 2009 is relevant when used within the planning process. The 2009 version consolidates all previous parts of the standard into BS 5228-1: 2009 (amended 2014)<sup>x</sup> (BS 5228-1) for airborne noise and BS 5228-2: 2009 (amended 2014)<sup>xi</sup> (BS 5228-2) for ground-borne vibration. These updated versions have therefore been adopted as the relevant versions upon which to base this assessment.
- 2.1.7 BS 5228-1 provides guidance on a range of considerations relating to construction noise including the legislative framework, general control measures, example methods for estimating construction noise levels and example criteria which may be considered when assessing effect significance. Similarly, BS 5228-2 provides general guidance on legislation, prediction, control and assessment criteria for construction vibration.
- 2.1.8 Planning Advice Note PAN50<sup>xii</sup> "Controlling the Environmental Effects of Surface Mineral Workings" gives guidance on the environmental effects of mineral working. The main document summarises the key issues with regard to various environmental effects relating to surface mineral extraction and processing such as road traffic, blasting, noise, dust, visual intrusion etc. In addition, several annexes to the main document have been published which consider specific aspects in more detail: Annex A, "The Control of Noise at Surface Mineral Workings" and Annex D "The Control of Blasting at Surface Mineral Workings". BS 5228-1 and BS 5228-2 also provide guidance relating to surface mineral extraction including the assessment of noise and vibration effects associated with quarry blasting. BS 6472-2 2008<sup>xiii</sup> gives similar guidance on assessing vibration from blasting associated with mineral extraction.

## 3. Scope and Methodology

### 3.1 Methodology for Assessing Construction Noise

- 3.1.1 Construction works include both moving sources and static sources. The moving sources normally comprise mobile construction plant and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). The static sources include construction plant temporarily placed at fixed locations and in some instances noise arising from blasting activities where rock is to be worked through.
- 3.1.2 The analysis of construction noise has been undertaken in accordance with BS 5228-1 which provides methods for predicting construction noise levels on the basis of reference data for the emissions of typical construction plant and activities. These methods include for the calculation of construction traffic along access tracks and haul routes and also for construction activities at fixed locations such as the bases of turbines, site compounds or sub stations.
- 3.1.3 The BS 5228 calculated levels are then compared with absolute noise limits for temporary construction activities which are commonly regarded as providing an acceptable level of protection from the short-term noise levels associated with construction activities.
- 3.1.4 Separate consideration is also given to the possible noise impacts of construction related traffic passing to and from the site along local surrounding roads. In considering potential noise levels associated with

construction traffic movement on public roads, reference is made to the accepted UK prediction methodology provided by 'Calculation of Road Traffic Noise'<sup>xiv</sup> (CRTN).

- 3.1.5 The nature of works and distances involved in the construction of a wind farm are such that the risk of significant effects relating to ground borne vibration are very low (excluding blasting). Occasional momentary vibration can arise when heavy vehicles pass dwellings at very short separation distances, but again this is not sufficient to constitute a risk of significant impacts in this instance. Accordingly, vibration impacts do not warrant detailed assessment and are therefore not discussed further in this assessment.
- 3.1.6 Rock extraction from borrow pits by means of blasting operations could be required in some instances. The analysis of the related potential impacts has been made in accordance with PAN50, BS 6472-2 2008 and BS 5228.

## 3.2 Methodology for Assessing Wind Farm Operational Noise

- 3.2.1 The ETSU-R-97 assessment procedure specifies that noise limits should be set relative to existing background noise levels at the nearest properties and that these limits should reflect the variation in both turbine source noise and background noise with wind speed. The wind speed range which should be considered is between the cut-in speed (the speed at which the turbines begin to operate) for the turbines and 12 m/s, where all wind speeds are referenced to a ten-metre measurement height (refer to Annex F for a discussion of how wind speeds are referenced to ten metre height).
- 3.2.2 Separate noise limits apply for the day-time and night-time. Day-time limits are chosen to protect a property's external amenity whilst outside their dwellings in garden areas and night-time limits are chosen to prevent sleep disturbance indoors. Absolute lower limits, different for day-time and night-time, are applied where the line of best-fit representation of the measured background noise levels equates to very low levels (< 30 dB(A) to 35 dB(A) for day-time, and < 38 dB(A) during the night).
- 3.2.3 The day-time noise limit is derived from background noise data measured during the 'quiet periods of the day' defined in ETSU-R-97: these comprise weekday evenings (18:00 to 23:00), Saturday afternoons and evenings (13:00 to 23:00) and all day and evening on Sundays (07:00 to 23:00). Multiple samples of ten-minute background noise levels using the  $LA_{90,10min}$  measurement index are measured contiguously over a wide range of wind speed conditions (a definition of the  $LA_{90,10min}$  index is given in Annex A). The measured noise levels are then plotted against the simultaneously measured wind speed data and a 'best-fit' curve is fitted to the data to establish the background noise level as a function of wind speed. The ETSU-R-97 day-time noise limit is then set to the greater of either: a level 5 dB(A) above the best-fit curve to the background noise data over a range of up to 12 m/s wind speed range or a fixed level in the range 35 dB(A) to 40 dB(A). The precise choice of the fixed lower limit within the range 35 dB(A) to 40 dB(A) depends on a number of factors: the number of noise affected properties, the likely duration and level of exposure and the consequences of the choice on the potential power generating capability of the wind farm.
- 3.2.4 ETSU-R-97 clearly indicates that the day-time limit is intended to lie within the range from 35 dB(A) to 40 dB(A). Therefore, one can conclude that there must be projects where 35 dB(A) is appropriate and conversely, projects where 40 dB(A) is appropriate. Within ETSU-R-97 there is a specific example: "A single wind turbine causing noise levels of 40 dB(A) at several nearby residences would have less planning merit (...) than 30 wind turbines also causing the same amount of noise at several nearby residences". Therefore, where a project offers relatively low power generating potential, the day-time limit should naturally tend towards the lower end of the range, unless the number of noise affected properties and the extent to which those properties would be affected by the higher noise levels is sufficiently low to justify noise limits tending towards the upper end of the range. Conversely, sites with relatively large power generating capacity should naturally justify limits towards the upper end of

the range. The proposed development, if permitted, would have a relatively large energy generating potential. In addition, the dominant wind directions are north-westerly and south-easterly, whereas the majority of properties are to the south and round to the west of the proposed development, meaning that they would be infrequently downwind of the proposed development. This guidance suggests that the appropriate daytime limit for the proposed development should tend towards the middle or upper end of the 35 dB(A) to 40 dB(A) range. The appropriate choice of value is considered subsequently in this report.

- 3.2.5 The night-time noise limit is derived from background noise data measured during the night-time periods (23:00 to 07:00) with no differentiation being made between weekdays and weekends. The  $L_{A90,10min}$  noise levels measured over these night-time periods are again plotted against the concurrent wind speed data and a 'best-fit' correlation is established. As with the day-time limit, the night-time noise limit is also set as the greater of: a level 5 dB(A) above the best-fit background curve or a fixed level of 43 dB(A). This fixed lower night-time limit of 43 dB(A) was set in ETSU-R-97 on the basis of World Health Organization (WHO) guidance<sup>xv</sup> for the noise inside a bedroom and an assumed difference between outdoor and indoor noise levels with windows open. In the time since ETSU-R-97 was released, the WHO guidelines were revised to suggest a lower internal noise level, but conversely, a higher assumed difference between outdoor and indoor noise levels. Notwithstanding the WHO guideline revisions, the ETSU-R-97 limit remains consistent with current national planning policy guidance with respect to night-time noise levels. In addition, following revision of the night-time WHO criteria, ETSU-R-97 has been incorporated into planning guidance for Wales, England and Scotland and at no point during this process was it felt necessary to revise the guidance within ETSU-R-97 to reflect the change in the WHO guideline internal levels. The advice contained within ETSU-R-97 remains a valid reference on which to continue to base the fixed limit at night.
- 3.2.6 The exception to the setting of both the day-time and night-time lower fixed limits occurs in instances where a property occupier has a financial involvement in the wind farm development. Where this is the case then the lower fixed portion of the noise limit at that property may be increased to 45 dB(A) during both the day-time and the night-time periods alike.
- 3.2.7 The noise limits defined in ETSU-R-97 relate to the total noise occurring at a dwelling due to the combined noise of all operational wind turbines. The assessment will therefore need to consider the combined operational noise of the proposed development with other wind farms in the area to be satisfied that the combined cumulative noise levels are within the relevant ETSU-R-97 criteria. ETSU-R-97 also requires that the background levels from which the noise limits are derived do not include a contribution from any existing turbine noise, to prevent unreasonable cumulative increases.
- 3.2.8 To undertake the assessment of noise effects in accordance with the foregoing methodology the following steps are required:
- specify the number and locations of the wind turbines on all wind farms;
  - identify the locations of the nearest, or most noise sensitive, neighbours;
  - measure the background noise levels as a function of site wind speed at the nearest neighbours, or at least at a representative sample of the nearest neighbours;
  - determine the day-time and night-time noise limits from the measured background noise levels at the nearest neighbours;
  - specify the noise emission characteristics of the wind turbines;
  - calculate the noise immission levels due to the operation of the wind turbines as a function of site wind speed at the nearest neighbours; and
  - compare the calculated wind farm noise immission levels with the derived noise limits and assess in the light of planning requirements.
- 3.2.9 The foregoing steps, as applied to the proposed development, are set out subsequently in this assessment.

- 3.2.10 Note that in the above, and subsequently in this assessment, the term ‘noise emission’ relates to the sound power level actually radiated from each wind turbine, whereas the term ‘noise immission’ relates to the sound pressure level (the perceived noise) at any receptor location due to the combined operation of all wind turbines on the proposed development.

### 3.3 Construction Noise Criteria

- 3.3.1 BS 5228-1 indicates that a number of factors are likely to affect the acceptability of construction noise including site location, existing ambient noise levels, duration of site operations, hours of work, attitude of the site operator and noise characteristics of the work being undertaken.
- 3.3.2 BS 5228-1 informative Annex E provides example criteria that may be used to consider the significance of any construction noise effects. The criteria do not represent mandatory limits but rather a set of example approaches intended to reflect the type of methods commonly applied to construction noise. The example methods are presented as a range of possible approaches (both facade and free field noise levels, hourly and day-time averaged noise levels) according to the ambient noise characteristics of the area in question, the type of development under consideration, and the expected hours of construction activity. In broad terms, the example criteria are based on a set of fixed limit values which, if exceeded, may result in a significant effect unless ambient noise levels (i.e. regularly occurring levels without construction) are sufficiently high to provide a degree of masking of construction noise.
- 3.3.3 Based on the range of guidance values set out in BS 5228 Annex E, and other reference criteria provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) and PAN50 Annex A: The Control of Noise at Surface Mineral Workings (1996), the following significance criteria have been derived. The values have been chosen in recognition of the relatively low ambient noise typically observed in rural environments. The presented criteria have been normalised to free-field day-time noise levels occurring over a time period, T, equal to the duration of a working day on-site. BS 5228-1 Annex E provides varied definitions for the range of day-time working hours which can be grouped for equal consideration. The values presented in Table 1 have been chosen to relate to day-time hours from 07:00 to 19:00 on weekdays, and 07:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays.

**Table 1 - Free-field Noise Criteria against which Construction Noise Effects are Assessed**

Significance	Condition
Major	Construction noise is greater than 72 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ for any part of the construction works or exceeds 65 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ for more than 4 weeks in any 12 month period
Moderate	Construction noise is less than or equal to 65 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ throughout the construction period.
Minor	Construction noise is generally less than or equal to 60 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ , with periods of up to 65 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ lasting not more than 4 weeks in any 12 month period
Negligible	Construction noise is generally less than or equal to 55 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ , with periods of up to 60 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ lasting not more than 4 weeks in any 12 month period

- 3.3.4 When considering the impact of short-term changes in traffic, associated with the construction activities, on existing roads in the vicinity of the Project, reference can be made to the criteria set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB<sup>xvi</sup>). A classification of magnitudes of changes in the predicted traffic noise level calculated using the CRTN methodology is set out: for short-term changes, such as those associated with construction activities, changes of less than 1 dB(A) are considered negligible, 1 to 3 dB(A) is minor, 3 to 5 dB(A) moderate and changes of more than 5 dB(A) constitute a major impact. This classification can be considered in addition to the criteria of Table 1.

- 3.3.5 Blasting operations can generate airborne pressure waves or “air overpressure”. This covers both those pressure waves generated which are in the frequency range of human audibility (approximately 20 Hz to 20 kHz) as well as infrasonic pressure waves (those with a frequency of below 20 Hz), which, although outside the range of human hearing, can sometimes be felt.
- 3.3.6 Noise from blasting (i.e. pressure waves in the human audible range) is not considered in the same way as noise from other construction activities due to the fact that a large proportion of the energy contained within pressure waves generated by a blast is at frequencies that are below the lower frequency threshold of human hearing, and that the portion of energy contained within the audible range is generally of low frequency and of smaller magnitude than the infrasonic pressure variations.
- 3.3.7 The relevant guidance documents advise controlling air overpressure (and hence noise from blasting) through the use of good practices during the setting and detonation of charges as opposed to absolute limits on the levels produced, therefore no absolute limits for air overpressure or noise from blasting will be presented in this assessment.
- 3.3.8 In accordance with the guidance in BS 6472-2: 2008 and PAN50 Annex D, ground vibration caused by blasting operations will be considered acceptable if peak particle velocity (PPV) levels, at the nearest sensitive locations, do not exceed 6 mm/s for 95% of all blasts measured over any 6-month period, and no individual blast exceeds a PPV of 12 mm/s.

### **3.4 Operational Noise Criteria**

- 3.4.1 The acceptable limits for wind turbine operational noise are clearly defined in the ETSU-R-97 document. Consequently, the test applied to operational noise is whether or not the calculated wind farm noise immission levels at nearby noise sensitive properties lie below the noise limits derived in accordance with ETSU-R-97. Depending on the levels of background noise the satisfaction of the ETSU-R-97 derived limits can lead to a situation whereby, at some locations under some wind conditions and for a certain proportion of the time, the wind farm noise may be audible. However, noise levels at the properties in the vicinity of the proposed development will still be within levels considered acceptable under the ETSU-R-97 assessment method.

### **3.5 Consultation**

- 3.5.1 Prior to undertaking the background surveys for the assessment of the consented Tangy III scheme, a summary of the proposed monitoring locations was forwarded to the Environmental Health Department of Argyll and Bute Council for comment, and were subsequently agreed to be representative for the purposes of an ETSU-R-97 assessment. This consultation was based on a preliminary project layout which was of a similar form to the layout currently proposed.
- 3.5.2 In particular, the use of proxy locations to represent baseline noise levels at various properties around the proposed development was discussed with the Council. At the time of the survey, the existing Tangy I and Tangy II turbines were operational and, as such, it was not possible to obtain measurements in the vicinity of the existing site without these measurements being influenced to some degree by noise from the existing turbines. As such, proxy locations were discussed and agreed that are far enough from the existing turbines not to be affected by noise from Tangy I and Tangy II, but can be considered representative of baseline noise levels in the vicinity of the proposed development. The final locations of the monitoring equipment were also agreed during a joint site visit. The agreed noise monitoring locations are shown on the plan in Annex B. Further information about the equipment used and pictures of the survey locations are presented in Annex C.
- 3.5.3 Following submission of the Tangy III ES (2014), a representative of the Environmental Health Department of Argyll and Bute Council reviewed the noise assessment<sup>xvii</sup> and had no adverse

comments. In this response, noise limits were proposed for the Tangy III Wind Farm in isolation, taking into account potential cumulative impacts at certain properties. It is these noise limits which were applied in condition 26 of the consent<sup>xviii</sup> for the Tangy III Wind Farm.

- 3.5.4 At scoping stage, it was proposed<sup>xix</sup> that the previous baseline survey undertaken in 2013 as part of the assessment of the Tangy III Wind Farm could still be used to assess the proposed development as it remained representative of the area. A representative of the Argyll and Bute Council Environmental Health Department confirmed by email in June 2018 that this would be acceptable.

## 4. Baseline

### 4.1 General Description

- 4.1.1 The proposed development will cover an area extending approximately 2 kilometres north to south and 2.5 kilometres west to east and is located in an area of relatively low population density. The noise environment in the surrounding area is generally characterised by sources such as wind disturbed vegetation, birds, farm animals and to the west of the site, coastal water movement. Other sources of noise include intermittent local road and agricultural vehicle movements in the area.

### 4.2 Details of the Baseline Background Noise Survey

- 4.2.1 A total of four noise monitoring locations were previously agreed with the Local Authority as being representative of the background noise environment in the vicinity of the Proposed Development. The four locations are shown on the plan in Annex B and listed in Table 2.

Table 2 - Background Noise Monitoring Locations (approximate Easting / Northing)

No.	Property	Easting	Northing
1	Killocrow	166031	630687
2	Drum Farm	167140	625475
3	Gobagrennan	170591	628598
4	Corrylach	170526	630384

- 4.2.2 The assessment has considered the effects of the proposed development at the monitoring locations noted above, as well as other residential properties: these assessment locations are listed in Table 3. In some instances, the results obtained from the survey positions have been used to represent the background environment expected to occur at other nearby assessment locations. The use of the data in this way is justified by the dominant influence of 'natural' sources on background noise levels throughout the area (particularly at increased wind speeds) and considerations of the local noise environment and sources including the existing operational Tangy turbines (see below). This approach is consistent with the guidance provided by ETSU-R-97 and the IOA GPG. The background noise monitoring location used to represent background noise levels at each survey location are presented in Table 3. The use of proxy measurement locations was discussed and agreed with Argyll and Bute Council prior to the survey being undertaken, as discussed in Section 3.5 above. In particular, the above measurement locations were selected so as to be representative of baseline noise levels at properties in the vicinity of the proposed development, whilst also being far enough from the existing and operational Tangy turbines not to be affected by turbine noise.

Table 3 - Assessment Properties in the Vicinity of the Wind Farm

Property (* denotes Financial Involvement)	Easting	Northing	Approximate Distance to Closest Turbine (m)	Closest Turbine (ID)	Survey Location
Breakachy	167055	626871	1,300	T1	Drum Farm (2)
Corrylach	170526	630384	1,610	T11	Corrylach (4)
Drumalea	166136	627143	1,550	T1	Killoccraw (1)
Gobagrennan	170591	628598	1,640	T12	Gobagrennan (3)
Hazels Cottage	167597	627306	890	T1	Drum Farm (2)
High Ballevain Cottage	166571	626825	1,520	T1	Killoccraw (1)
Killarow*	166269	628025	1,060	T1	Killoccraw(1)
Killoccraw	166031	630687	1,720	T8	Killoccraw (1)
South Lagalgarve	165949	629339	1,550	T6	Killoccraw (1)
Tangy Farm*	167489	627768	430	T1	Drum Farm (2)
Tangy Glen Cottages	166067	627768	1,300	T1	Killoccraw (1)
Tangy Mill	166305	627780	1,080	T1	Killoccraw (1)
Tangy Mill Croft	166125	627650	1,290	T1	Killoccraw (1)
Tangylee*	167444	627615	560	T1	Drum Farm (2)
Tangymoile*	166244	628594	1,150	T3	Killoccraw (1)
Tigh na Mara	166078	628173	1240	T1	Killoccraw (1)

- 4.2.3 It should be noted that the receptor locations listed above do not constitute an exhaustive list of all residential properties in the local area and, in some instances, a receptor location listed above represents several residential properties. Where this is the case, the receptor location has been selected such that conservative predictions are obtained for all properties that are represented by the receptor location.
- 4.2.4 The previous baseline surveys were undertaken in 2013 and there have not been significant changes to the noise environment to the area since then and these measurements therefore remain representative of background noise levels in the area, as agreed in consultation with Argyll and Bute Council.
- 4.2.5 The equipment used for the survey comprised four Rion NL-31 / NL-32 logging sound level meters. All sound level meters were calibrated in a laboratory in accordance with accepted requirements as set out in the IOA GPG, with details provided in Annex C, and certificates available on request. All meters were enclosed in environmental cases with battery power to enable 21 days continuous logging at the required ten-minute averaging periods. Outdoor windshield systems were used to reduce wind induced noise on the microphones and provide protection from rain. These windshield systems were supplied by the sound level meter manufacturer and maintain the required performance of the whole measurement system when fitted. The environmental enclosures provided an installed microphone height of approximately 1.2 to 1.5 metres above ground level, consistent with the requirements of ETSU-R-97.

- 4.2.6 The sound level meters were located on the wind farm side of the property in question where possible, never closer than 3.5 metres from the façade of the property and as far away as was practical from obvious atypical localised sources of noise such as running water, trees or boiler flues. Details and photographs of the measurement locations are presented in Annex C.
- 4.2.7 All measurement systems were field-calibrated on their deployment on 13th September 2013 and upon collection of the equipment on the 6th October 2013 (except for the meter at Gobagrennan that was deployed and field-calibrated on the 13th September, field-calibrated on the 6th October and field-calibrated and collected on the 5th November 2013 due to an extension to the monitoring period at this location that was necessary owing to a battery failure). No acoustically important ( $>0.5$  dB(A)) drifts in calibration were found to have occurred on any of the systems. This equates to a total ETSU-R-97 analysis period of at least 20 days at Killocrow, Drum Farm and Corrylach and 14 days at Gobagrennan. The total survey period is in excess of the minimum of one week required by ETSU-R-97, and a suitably representative range of wind conditions was obtained.
- 4.2.8 All measurement systems were set to log the  $L_{A90,10min}$  and  $L_{Aeq,10min}$  noise levels continuously over the deployment period. The internal clocks on the sound level meters were all synchronized with Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) by the use of a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver. The clock on the meteorological mast from which wind data was collected was also set to GMT.

### 4.3 Measured Background Noise Levels

- 4.3.1 The ETSU-R-97 assessment method requires noise data to be related to wind speed data at a standardised height of ten metres, with wind speeds either directly measured at a height of ten metres or by calculation from measurement at other heights, the appropriate choice being determined by practitioner judgement and the available data sources. Since the publication of ETSU-R-97, the change in wind speed with increasing height above ground level has been identified as a potential source of variability when carrying out wind farm noise assessments. The effect of site specific wind shear can be appropriately addressed by implementing the ETSU-R-97 option of deriving ten metre height reference data from measurements made at taller heights. It is this method that has been used in the noise assessment for the proposed development to account for the potential effect of site-specific wind shear. This method is consistent with the preferred method described in the IOA GPG. Wind speeds were measured on an 80 metre high meteorological mast located within the boundary of the proposed development site. Values of wind speed at a standardised height of ten metres were calculated from those measured on the mast (to obtain a “standardised wind speed”). This analysis was updated in the present assessment to account for potential hub heights of 90 m, which is marginally higher than the 80 m previously assumed in the analysis for the Tangy III Wind Farm. Full details of the calculation method are given in Annex F.
- 4.3.2 Figures D1 to D4 in Appendix D show the range of wind conditions experienced during the noise survey period. During the quiet daytime and night time periods wind speeds were typically less than 18 m/s. The wind was observed to be directed most frequently from the north west during the survey period, with a wind direction from the south east also being common. It is understood that this is generally in line with the long-term wind rose for the site.
- 4.3.3 Figure E1 to E8 in Appendix E show the results of the background noise measurements at each of the four monitoring locations. The background noise data are presented in terms of  $L_{A90,10min}$  background noise levels plotted as a function of the standardised ten metre wind speed. Two plots are shown for each location, one for quiet daytime periods and the other for night time periods, both derived in accordance with ETSU-R-97.
- 4.3.4 Data from all survey locations were inspected to identify periods which may have been influenced by extraneous noise sources, giving rise to atypical and elevated levels. ETSU-R-97 suggests that any data

that may have been affected by rainfall be excluded from the analysis. The meteorological monitoring system had a rain gauge installed during the noise survey period; data from this gauge were therefore used to exclude those periods where rain was indicated.

- 4.3.5 In addition to the impact noise of rainfall on surrounding vegetation and the sound level meter itself, in some environments rainfall can result in appreciable changes in background sound levels, for example as a result of wet roads which increase tyre noise emissions or dissipating flow noise in water courses and drainage systems. Observations whilst on site indicated traffic noise to be a negligible influence on background sound levels, and thus the possible effect of increased tyre noise from wet roads is not considered relevant to this site.
- 4.3.6 In terms of water flow noise, some locations around the site (and in particular Corrylach and Gobagrennan) have burns that run in relatively close proximity to the property. In these instances, the noise monitoring equipment was located as far as reasonably practical from water courses. Water flow noise in water courses was evident in some of the measurements obtained, characterised by relatively high noise levels after periods of rain followed by a gradual reduction in noise levels, and the measured data has been filtered to remove these periods.
- 4.3.7 Notwithstanding this, the possibility exists that some of the measured background noise data at low wind speeds may have been increased by other extraneous or rain-related influences. Time histories of the noise levels at each survey location were inspected to look for any atypical relationships when compared to the wind speeds present during that time. Any elevated levels found in this way were excluded. The trend of the data when plotted against wind speed was also inspected to look for atypical relationships or outliers within the data-set which were excluded. A variation in background noise levels with wind direction was observed at some of the monitoring locations, and in particular at Killocrow due to the relatively exposed character of the location in westerly winds. For these properties, data was excluded for wind directions under which background noise levels were elevated. Any data removed from the analysis is indicated on the charts as red circles.
- 4.3.8 Following removal of these data points, best fit lines were generated using a polynomial fit of a maximum of 3rd order, as considered appropriate in each case. These lines of best fit were then used to derive the noise limits required by ETSU-R-97 that apply during the daytime and night time periods for wind speeds up to 12 m/s. For the purposes of assessing the potential noise impact of the proposed development, the noise limits have been set either at the measured background level plus 5 dB, or at the relevant fixed lower limit, whichever is the greater. During daytime, a fixed limit value of 38 dB(A) has been adopted, approximately in the middle of the possible range of daytime fixed limit values referenced in ETSU-R-97. This is considered wholly appropriate for this scheme, based on the relevant considerations set out in ETSU-R-97. First of all, the potential generating capacity of the Proposed Development is relatively large. Furthermore, there are only few dwellings that are located to the north-west or south-east of the Proposed Development, and therefore for the majority of the time these would not be downwind from the turbines under the prevailing winds at the site. These factors justify a limit towards the upper end of the range in ETSU-R-97.
- 4.3.9 During night-time, the ETSU-R-97 limit of 43 dB(A) has been adopted. For financially involved properties, the lower absolute limit becomes 45 dB(A) during both day and night. The resulting ETSU-R-97 noise limits are set out in Tables 4 and 5 below.

Table 4 - Day time ETSU-R-97 Noise Limits ( $L_{A90}$ , dB) Derived from the Baseline Noise Survey According to ETSU-R-97

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)								
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Breakachy	38.0	38.0	38.5	40.2	41.9	43.6	45.4	47.3	49.2
Corrylach	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.0	42.6	45.2	47.7	49.8
Drumalea	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Gobagrennan	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	39.5	41.7	43.9	45.9
Hazels Cottage	38.0	38.0	38.5	40.2	41.9	43.6	45.4	47.3	49.2
High Ballevain Cottage	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Killarow	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.6
Killocrow	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
South Lagalgarve	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Tangy Farm	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.4	47.3	49.2
Tangy Glen Cottages	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Tangy Mill	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Tangy Mill Croft	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Tangylee	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.4	47.3	49.2
Tangymoill	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.6
Tigh na Mara	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6

Table 5 - Night time ETSU-R-97 Noise Limits ( $L_{A90}$ , dB) Derived from the Baseline Noise Survey According to ETSU-R-97

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)								
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Breakachy	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	44.4	47.0	49.8
Corrylach	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	44.6	48.1	51.9
Drumalea	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Gobagrennan	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	44.0
Hazels Cottage	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	44.4	47.0	49.8
High Ballevain Cottage	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Killarow	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0
Killocrow	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
South Lagalgarve	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Tangy Farm	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	47.0	49.8
Tangy Glen Cottages	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Tangy Mill	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Tangy Mill Croft	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Tangylee	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	47.0	49.8
Tangymoill	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0
Tigh na Mara	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0

## 5. Predicted Noise Effects

### 5.1 Predicted Construction Noise Levels

- 5.1.1 The level of construction noise that occurs at the surrounding properties will be highly dependent on a number of factors such as the final site programme, equipment types used for each process, and the operating conditions that prevail during construction. It is not practically feasible to specify each and every element of the factors that may affect noise levels, therefore it is necessary to make reasonable allowance for the level of noise emissions that may be associated with key phases of the construction.
- 5.1.2 In order to determine representative emission levels for this study, reference has been made to the scheduled sound power data provided by BS 5228. Based on experience of the types and number of equipment usually associated with the key phases of constructing a wind farm, the scheduled sound power data has been used to deduce the upper sound emission level over the course of a working day. In determining the rating applicable to the working day, it has generally been assumed that the plant will operate for between 75% and 100% of the working day. In many instances, the plant would actually operate for a reduced percentage of the working day, thus resulting in noise levels lower than predicted in this assessment.
- 5.1.3 To relate the sound power emissions to predicted noise levels at surrounding properties, the prediction methodology outlined in BS 5228 has been adopted. The prediction method accounts for factors including screening and soft ground attenuation. The size of the site and resulting separation distances to surrounding properties allows the calculations to be reliably based on positioning all the equipment at a single point within a particular working area (for example, in the case of turbine erection, it is reasonable to assume all associated construction plant is positioned at the base of the turbine under consideration). In applying the BS 5228 methodology, it has been conservatively assumed that there are no screening effects, and that the ground cover is characterised as 50% hard / 50% soft.
- 5.1.4 Table 6 lists the key construction activities, the associated types of plant normally involved, the expected worst-case sound power level over a working day for each activity, the property which would be closest to the activity for a portion of construction, and the predicted noise level. It must be emphasised that these predictions only relate the noise level occurring during the time when the activity is closest to the referenced property. In many cases, such as access track construction and turbine erection, the separating distances will be considerably greater for the majority of the construction period and the predictions are therefore the worst-case periods of the construction phase.

Table 6 - Predicted Construction Noise Levels

Task Name	Plant/Equipment	Upper Collective Sound Emission Over Working Day $L_{WA,T}$ dB(A)	Nearest Receiver	Minimum Distance to Nearest Receiver	Predicted Upper Day-Time $L_{Aeq}$
Upgrade Access Track	excavator / dump trucks / tippers / dozers / vibrating rollers	120	Tangy Farm	250	62
Construct temporary site compounds	excavator / dump truck / tippers / rollers/ delivery trucks	120	Tangy Farm	630	53

Task Name	Plant/Equipment	Upper Collective Sound Emission Over Working Day $L_{WA,T}$ dB(A)	Nearest Receiver	Minimum Distance to Nearest Receiver	Predicted Upper Day-Time $L_{Aeq}$
Construct site tracks	excavators / dump trucks / tippers / dozers / vibrating rollers	120	Tangy Farm	400	57
Construct Sub-Station	excavator / concrete truck / delivery truck	110	Tangy Farm	2000	32
Construct crane hardstandings	excavators / dump trucks	120	Tangy Farm	430	57
Construct turbine foundations	Piling Rigs / excavators / tippers / concrete trucks / mobile cranes / water pumps / pneumatic hammers / compressors / vibratory pokers	120	Tangy Farm	430	57
Excavate and lay site cables	excavators / dump trucks / tractors & cable drum trailers / wacker plates	110	Tangy Farm	430	47
Erect turbines	cranes / turbine delivery vehicles / artics for crane movement / generators / torque guns	120	Tangy Farm	430	57
Reinstate crane bases	excavator / dump truck	115	Tangy Farm	430	52
Reinstate road verges	excavator / dump truck	115	Tangy Farm	400	52
Borrow Pit Quarrying	Primary and secondary stone Crushers / excavators / screening systems / pneumatic breakers / conveyors	125	Tangy Farm	360	63
Concrete Batching <sup>1</sup>	Batching Plant	110	Tangy Farm	1200	37

<sup>1</sup> Note that it has not yet been determined whether or not concrete batching will be carried out on site. Calculations have, however, been presented here on the assumption that concrete batching will occur on-site in order to provide a reasonable worst case assessment of construction noise. For the purposes of the calculations presented here, concrete batching has been assumed to take place within the proposed laydown area.

Task Name	Plant/Equipment	Upper Collective Sound Emission Over Working Day $L_{WA,T}$ dB(A)	Nearest Receiver	Minimum Distance to Nearest Receiver	Predicted Upper Day-Time $L_{Aeq}$
Forestry felling around turbines and access tracks	Harvesters and forwarders, characterised by saw noise diesel engine noise emissions commonly associated with tractors and excavation noise	115	Tangy Farm	1500	40

- 5.1.5 Comparing the above predicted noise levels to the range of background noise levels measured around the proposed development suggests that the noisier construction activities would be audible at various times throughout the construction phase. However, comparing the levels to the significance criteria presented previously in Table 1 indicates that the majority of construction activities will have effects of negligible to minor significance. During the initial upgrade of a portion of the site access track and extraction of rock from the nearest borrow pit, predicted noise levels at Tangy Farm are of the order of 63 dB(A). The likely short-term nature of these activities, combined with the financially involved nature of this location mean that the effects are considered to be of minor significance.
- 5.1.6 Other receptor locations are located further from the construction activities; for example, Tangylee (which is also financially involved) is approximately 520 m and Hazels Cottage approximately 720 m from the nearest borrow pit, with predicted noise levels from the use of the borrow pit being 60 dB(A) and 57 dB(A) respectively, and therefore equating to a minor impact. Noise levels at these further locations would therefore be lower and thus correspond to a minor significance.
- 5.1.7 Whilst decommissioning of the existing Tangy I and Tangy II turbines is not specifically considered in Table 6 above, the nature of works involved in the decommissioning of the existing turbines is such that the noise impacts caused by the decommissioning of these turbines will be lower than those caused by the construction of the proposed new development.
- 5.1.8 In addition to on-site activities, construction traffic passing to and from the site will also represent a potential source of noise to surrounding properties. The traffic statement for the proposal presented in Chapter 15 of the EIA Report has identified that the most intensive traffic will occur in month 17 of the construction programme, which will include some days when concrete will be poured for the turbine foundations. Predicted traffic flows against projected baseline values are presented in Tables 15.22 and 15.23 of Chapter 15 of the EIA Report and are reproduced below in Table 7 for clarity.
- 5.1.9 Calculations of the change in road traffic noise that would be predicted due to the increases in road traffic flows on the A83 have been carried out in line with the prediction methodology outlined in the Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN). The results of these calculations are presented in Table 8 below.
- 5.1.10 Comparison of the predicted changes in noise levels with the criteria for short term changes in road traffic noise set out above based on the DMRB guidance indicates that for the majority of the construction period, road traffic noise impacts on these road links would be negligible. During concrete delivery days, the calculation suggests that the noise impact due to construction traffic flows would increase to a minor effect. However, given that these increased flows are only expected to occur for 16 non-consecutive days during the entire 22 month construction programme, the impact in reality will be more limited.

Table 7 - Projected Traffic Flows

Road	Without Development		With Development (typical maximum during construction phase)		With Development (during concrete delivery days, maximum of 13 non-consecutive days)	
	Annual Average Daily Traffic Flow	% Heavy Goods Vehicles	Annual Average Daily Traffic Flow	% Heavy Goods Vehicles	Annual Average Daily Traffic Flow	% Heavy Goods Vehicles
1 - A83 South of Kilchenzie	1897	23.0%	1986	23.5%	2076	26.8%
2 - A83 South of Low Ballevain	1722	24.0%	1811	24.5%	1900	28.1%
3 - Unnamed Road South of High Ballevain Farm	90	17.8%	179	25.7%	269	50.6%

Table 8 - CRTN Predicted Increase in Day time Average Traffic Noise Levels ( $L_{A10,18\text{hour}}$ , dB(A))

Road	Typical Maximum Change in Traffic Noise Level	Maximum Change in Traffic Noise Level during concrete delivery days
1 - A83 South of Kilchenzie	+0.4	+1.1
2 - A83 South of Low Ballevain	+0.5	+1.2

5.1.11 The traffic flows on the unnamed road south of High Ballevain Farm are below the minimum road traffic flow of 1000 vehicles per day that can be considered under the CRTN prediction methodology. As such, the impact of road traffic flows on this road has been calculated using the prediction methodology outlined in BS 5228-1 for the assessment of construction haul routes. These calculations have been based on an assumed sound power level of 108 dB(A) for a heavy goods vehicle, a traffic speed of 35 km per hour (approximately 20 miles per hour), a separation distance of 5 m from the road centreline to the nearest residential dwellings along this road and the predicted HGV traffic flows referenced above. This results in predicted levels of 56 dB  $L_{Aeq}$  during typical worst-case traffic conditions and 63 dB  $L_{Aeq}$  during concrete delivery days. Comparison of these predictions with the construction noise significance criteria set out in Table 1, taking into account the short-term and intermittent nature of the increased traffic for concrete delivery, results in a minor effect.

5.1.12 In conclusion, noise from construction activities has been assessed and is predicted to result in a temporary negligible to minor effect.

## 5.2 Construction Noise & Vibration Levels – Blasting

5.2.1 Because of the difficulties in predicting noise and air overpressure resulting from blasting operations, these activities are best controlled following the use of good practice during the setting and detonation of charges, as set out earlier in this report.

5.2.2 The transmission and magnitude of ground vibrations associated with blasting operations at borrow pits are subject to many complex influences including charge type and position, and importantly, the precise nature of the ground conditions (material composition, compaction, discontinuities) at the source, receiver, and at every point along all potential ground transmission paths. Clearly any estimation of such conditions is subject to considerable uncertainty, thus limiting the utility of predictive exercises.

Mitigation of potential effects of these activities is best achieved through on-site testing processes carried out in consultation with the Local Authorities, as described earlier in this report.

### 5.3 De-commissioning Noise

- 5.3.1 De-commissioning is likely to result in less noise than during construction of the proposed development. The construction phase has been considered to have minor noise effects, therefore de-commissioning will, in the worst case, also have **minor** noise effects.

### 5.4 Operational Wind Turbine Emissions Data

- 5.4.1 The exact model of turbine to be used at the site will be the result of a future tendering process and therefore an indicative turbine model has been assumed for this noise assessment. A number of different turbine models were considered as representative of the range of turbines which could be installed within the dimensions for the Proposed Development: the Enercon E-126 4.2 MW, the Siemens SWT-DD-130 and SWT-DD-120, the Vestas V117 4.2 MW and Vestas 126 3.6 MW. It was determined that the predictions for the SWT-DD-120 were the highest of those considered and it was therefore retained as a candidate model as representative of the upper end of the noise emissions for the type of turbine which could be installed at the site. This therefore represents a conservative assessment of potential operational noise effects.
- 5.4.2 This operational noise assessment is therefore based upon the noise specification of the Siemens SWT-DD-120 wind turbine. 16 turbines have been modelled using the layout as set out on the map and coordinates within Annex B. The candidate turbine is a variable speed, pitch-regulated machine with a rotor diameter of 120 metres and a hub height of 90 metres. Due to its variable speed operation, the sound power output of the SWT-DD-120 turbine varies considerably with wind speed, being quieter at the lower wind speeds when the blades are rotating more slowly.
- 5.4.3 In addition to this general low-noise characteristic at lower wind speeds, the candidate turbine also incorporates noise control technology. This allows the sound power output of the turbine to be reduced across a range of operational wind speeds, albeit with some loss of electrical power generation, to enable the best compromise to be achieved in any given situation between emitted noise and electrical power generation. Noise control of the candidate turbine is provided in a number of noise control modes with various noise/power output combinations. Similar noise reduction management systems are also offered by other wind turbine manufacturers. These systems are generally similar in that they rely on the turbine's computer based controller adjusting either the pitch of the blades or holding back the rotational speed of the blades to reduce emitted noise under selected wind conditions (time, direction, speed or some combination of these). In this manner noise management only comes into play (and therefore potential power generation capacity is only lost) for those conditions under which it is required.
- 5.4.4 For the purposes of the present assessment the wind turbines on the proposed development have been modelled assuming selective use of the 'Low Noise' control mode for certain turbines. Specifically, it has been assumed that turbines 1 and 2 operate in Mode 3, and turbine 3 operates in Mode 2, whereas all other turbines operate in Mode 1 (which corresponds to standard operation).
- 5.4.5 Siemens have supplied specification noise emission data for the SWT-DD-120 turbine which has been derived from various sound power tests. In the absence of specific information about uncertainty allowances in the data, a further correction factor of +2 dB was added to the specification data in line with advice in the IOA GPG. The sound power data has been made available for standardised reference wind speeds of 4 m/s to 12 m/s inclusive. In addition to the overall sound power data, reference has been made to a representative sound spectrum for the turbine specified by Siemens. The overall sound power and spectral data are presented in Table 9 and Table 10. As this is a recently developed turbine

model, the noise data provided is considered provisional and therefore conservative in nature. As a result, the assumed noise emission levels of Table 9 are relatively high compared to other turbines of a similar size and generation capacity, which means the assessment of operational has been made on a worst-case basis.

- 5.4.6 Assessment of cumulative effects from operating the Beinn An Tuirc III Wind Farm together with the proposed development also requires similar source information. The data previously assumed for the Beinn An Tuirc III Wind Farm was based on a 2.3 MW Siemens 2.3-VS93 turbine with a 93 m rotor diameter and an 80 m hub height. Table 9 sets out noise data based on levels which are understood to have been warranted by the manufacturer and include a suitable margin of uncertainty. The Beinn An Tuirc III Wind Farm is now consented, with a noise condition which limits noise from that Development to not exceed 35 dB  $L_{A90}$  at any neighbouring residential location. Based on a predictive analysis, a further uplift of +3 dB on the source data for these turbines was added (as indicated in brackets in Table 9). This is because the emissions from the Beinn An Tuirc III Wind Farm could not be higher than this without breaching the consent noise limit for this Wind Farm at the nearest dwelling considered (Corrylach), which represents a “controlling property” as described in the IOA GPG guidance. This therefore represents a robust basis for the analysis in line with current good practice<sup>xx</sup>.

Table 9 - Wind Turbine Sound Power Levels (dB  $L_{Aeq}$ ) Used in the Noise Assessment, including uncertainty allowances

Standardised Wind Speed (m/s)	Sound Power Level (dB $L_{Aeq}$ )			
	Siemens SWT-DD-120			Siemens
	Mode 1	Mode 2	Mode 3	VS93 2.3 MW
4	96.8	96.8	96.8	101.0 (+3)
5	101.1	101.1	101.1	103.0 (+3)
6	105.3	105.3	105.2	105.0 (+3)
7	108.7	108.2	107.0	107.0 (+3)
8	111.3	109.0	107.0	107.0 (+3)
9	111.5	109.0	107.0	107.0 (+3)
10	111.5	109.0	107.0	107.0 (+3)
11	111.5	109.0	107.0	107.0 (+3)
12	111.5	109.0	107.0	107.0 (+3)
<i>Derived from:</i>	<i>Siemens, Standard Acoustic Emission, SWT-DD-120, document reference GS-40-0000-031AA18-00, 04/01/2018</i>			<i>Document PG-03-10-0000-0066-01 BSN,HST, 12/07/2006</i>

Table 10 - Octave Band Sound Power Spectrum (dB  $L_{Aeq}$ ) For Reference Wind Speed Conditions ( $v_{10} = 8$  m/s)

Octave Band Centre Frequency (Hz)	A-Weighted Sound Power Level (dB(A))	
	Siemens SWT-DD-120	Siemens VS93 2.3 MW
63	89.9	86.3

Octave Band Centre Frequency (Hz)	A-Weighted Sound Power Level (dB(A))	
	Siemens SWT-DD-120	Siemens VS93 2.3 MW
125	96.3	95.3
250	99.0	102.0
500	103.1	102.6
1000	106.7	99.0
2000	106.4	95.0
4000	101.7	90.2
8000	92.7	85.4
<i>Derived from:</i>	<i>Document GS-40-0000-031AA18-00, 04/01/2018</i>	<i>Document PG-03-10-0000-0066-01 BSN,HST, 12/07/2006</i>

## 5.5 Choice of Wind Farm Operational Noise Propagation Model

- 5.5.1 The ISO 9613-2 model<sup>xxi</sup> has been used to calculate the noise immission levels at the selected nearest residential neighbours as advised in the IOA GPG. The model accounts for the attenuation due to geometric spreading, atmospheric and ground absorption, and barrier and ground effects. All attenuation calculations have been made on an octave band basis and therefore account for the sound frequency characteristics of the turbines.
- 5.5.2 For the purposes of the present assessment, all noise level predictions have been undertaken using a receiver height of four metres above local ground level, mixed ground (G=0.5) and an air absorption based on a temperature of 10°C and 70% relative humidity. A receiver height of four metres will be typical of first floor windows and result in slightly higher predicted noise levels than if a 1.2 to 1.5 metre receiver height were chosen in the ISO 9613 algorithm. The attenuation due to terrain screening accounted for in the calculations has been limited to a maximum of 2 dB(A). In situations of propagation above concave ground, a correction of +3 dB was added.
- 5.5.3 This method is consistent with the recommendations of the above-referenced Institute of Acoustics Good Practice Guide which provides recommendations on the appropriate approach when predicting wind turbine noise levels. The IOA GPG also allows for directional effects to be taken into account within the noise modelling: under upwind propagation conditions between a given receiver and the wind farm the noise immission level at that receiver can be as much as 10 dB(A) to 15 dB(A) lower than the level predicted using the ISO 9613-2 model. However, predictions have been made assuming downwind propagation from every turbine to every receptor at the same time as a worst-case.

## 5.6 Predicted Wind Farm Operational Noise Immission Levels

- 5.6.1 Table 11 shows predicted noise immission levels at each of the selected assessment locations for each wind speed from 4 m/s to 12 m/s inclusive. All wind farm noise immission levels in this report are presented in terms of the  $L_{A90,T}$  noise indicator in accordance with the recommendations of the

ETSU-R-97 report, obtained by subtracting 2 dB(A) from the calculated  $L_{Aeq,T}$  noise levels based on the turbine sound power levels presented in Table 9 and Table 10.

**Table 11 - Predicted  $L_{A90,T}$  Wind Farm Noise Immission Levels at Each of the Noise Assessment Locations as a Function of Standardised Wind Speed for the proposed development alone.**

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)								
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Breakachy	25.6	29.9	34.1	36.8	38.4	38.5	38.5	38.5	38.5
Corrylach	18.9	23.2	27.4	30.8	33.3	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5
Drumalea	20.8	25.1	29.2	32.0	33.7	33.8	33.8	33.8	33.8
Gobagrennan	21.7	26.0	30.2	33.5	36.0	36.2	36.2	36.2	36.2
Hazels Cottage	27.3	31.6	35.8	38.4	39.9	40.1	40.1	40.1	40.1
High Ballevain Cottage	19.2	23.5	27.6	30.4	32.2	32.3	32.3	32.3	32.3
Killarow	25.0	29.3	33.4	36.2	37.8	37.9	37.9	37.9	37.9
Killocrow	20.5	24.8	29.0	32.3	34.7	34.9	34.9	34.9	34.9
South Lagalgarve	21.4	25.7	29.9	33.0	35.2	35.4	35.4	35.4	35.4
Tangy Farm	32.9	37.2	41.4	43.7	44.6	44.7	44.7	44.7	44.7
Tangy Glen Cottages	22.7	27.0	31.1	33.9	35.5	35.7	35.7	35.7	35.7
Tangy Mill	24.2	28.5	32.6	35.3	36.7	36.9	36.9	36.9	36.9
Tangy Mill Croft	22.7	27.0	31.1	33.9	35.5	35.6	35.6	35.6	35.6
Tangylee	30.7	35.0	39.2	41.6	42.7	42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8
Tangymoil	25.8	30.1	34.3	37.3	39.1	39.3	39.3	39.3	39.3
Tigh na Mara	23.9	28.2	32.4	35.3	37.0	37.1	37.1	37.1	37.1

5.6.2 Table 12 shows predicted cumulative noise immission levels at each of the selected assessment locations for each standardised wind speed from 4 m/s to 12 m/s inclusive. These predictions are cumulative with the Beinn An Tuirc III Wind Farm. A comparison of the predictions shown in Tables 11 and 12 shows that, except for at two properties, Corrylach and Gobagrennan, the cumulative predictions are only marginally higher (generally 0.4 dB or less) than the predictions for the proposed development operating in isolation. With reference to the guidance set out in the IOA GPG, this represents a negligible impact<sup>2</sup>. It should also be noted that the above predictions assume that all receptors are directly downwind of all turbines. The Tangy III turbines are located to the west of both Corrylach and Gobbagrennan, with the Beinn An Tuirc III turbines located to the east of these properties. In reality, these properties are unlikely to be directly downwind of both the proposed development and the proposed Beinn An Tuirc III wind farm simultaneously, and therefore these predictions are conservative.

**Table 12 - Predicted Cumulative  $L_{A90,T}$  Wind Farm Noise Immission Levels at Each of the Noise Assessment Locations as a Function of Standardised Wind Speed**

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)								
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Breakachy	26.3	30.3	34.3	37.0	38.5	38.6	38.6	38.6	38.6

<sup>2</sup> If a new source of noise is 10 dB below an existing source of noise, this is commonly assumed to represent a negligible impact: see IOA GPG. The theoretical cumulative effect of the two sources operating together represents an increase of 0.4 dB, as a consequence of the laws of logarithmic arithmetic which apply to decibels (dB).

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)								
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Corrylach	29.2	31.5	33.9	36.3	37.1	37.2	37.2	37.2	37.2
Drumalea	21.4	25.4	29.4	32.2	33.8	34.0	34.0	34.0	34.0
Gobagrennan	26.5	29.4	32.6	35.4	37.2	37.3	37.3	37.3	37.3
Hazels Cottage	27.6	31.8	35.9	38.5	40.0	40.1	40.1	40.1	40.1
High Ballevain Cottage	20.1	24.0	28.0	30.7	32.3	32.5	32.5	32.5	32.5
Killarow	25.3	29.5	33.5	36.3	37.8	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0
Killocrow	21.4	25.4	29.3	32.5	34.8	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0
South Lagalgarve	22.1	26.1	30.1	33.2	35.3	35.5	35.5	35.5	35.5
Tangy Farm	33.0	37.3	41.4	43.7	44.7	44.7	44.7	44.7	44.7
Tangy Glen Cottages	23.1	27.2	31.3	34.0	35.6	35.8	35.8	35.8	35.8
Tangy Mill	24.5	28.7	32.7	35.4	36.8	36.9	36.9	36.9	36.9
Tangy Mill Croft	23.1	27.2	31.3	34.0	35.6	35.7	35.7	35.7	35.7
Tangylee	30.9	35.1	39.2	41.6	42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8
Tangymoill	26.1	30.3	34.4	37.3	39.2	39.3	39.3	39.3	39.3
Tigh na Mara	24.3	28.4	32.5	35.4	37.1	37.2	37.2	37.2	37.2

## 5.7 ETSU-R-97 assessment

- 5.7.1 Figures E1 to E32 (Annex E) show the calculated wind farm noise immission levels at the 16 noise assessment locations and correspond to those already presented in Tables 11 and 12 plotted as a function of standardised wind speed. The calculated noise immission levels are shown overlaid on the derived day-time and night-time ETSU-R-97 noise limits of Tables 4 and 5.
- 5.7.2 The ETSU-R-97 noise limits assume that the wind turbine noise contains no audible tones. Where tones are present a correction is added to the measured or predicted noise level before comparison with the recommended limits. The audibility of any tones can be assessed by comparing the narrow band level of such tones with the masking level contained in a band of frequencies around the tone called the critical band. The ETSU-R-97 recommendations suggest a tone correction which depends on the amount by which the tone exceeds the audibility threshold and should be included as part of the consent conditions. The turbines to be used for this site will be chosen to ensure that the noise emitted will comply with the requirements of ETSU-R-97 including any relevant tonality corrections.
- 5.7.3 The assessment (shown in tabular form in Table 13 and Table 14) shows that the predicted cumulative windfarm noise immission levels meet the ETSU-R-97 derived noise limits (based on a lower day-time limit of 38 dB for all non-financially involved locations) under all wind speeds and at all locations. These predicted noise immission levels have been made assuming worst-case downwind propagation. Directional effects, such as those suggested in the IOA GPG, would mean that the operational constraints assumed for three of the turbines, as set out in Section 5.4, would likely only be required over a limited range of wind directions. Furthermore, as set out in Section 5.4, the candidate turbine was chosen on a conservative basis, and operational restrictions may be more limited or not required at all for other turbines models.

Table 13 - Difference between the ETSU-R-97 Derived Day time Noise Limits and the Cumulative Predicted  $L_{A90,T}$  Wind Farm Noise Immission Levels at Each Noise Assessment Location. Values are based on a 38 dB lower day time limit and negative values indicate the noise immission level is below the limit.

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)									
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Breakachy	-11.7	-7.7	-4.1	-3.2	-3.4	-5.0	-6.8	-8.7	-10.5	
Corrylach	-8.8	-6.5	-4.1	-1.8	-2.8	-5.4	-8.0	-10.5	-12.6	
Drumalea	-16.7	-12.6	-8.6	-5.8	-4.2	-4.0	-6.2	-8.8	-11.6	
Gobagrennan	-11.5	-8.6	-5.5	-2.6	-0.8	-2.1	-4.4	-6.6	-8.6	
Hazels Cottage	-10.4	-6.2	-2.6	-1.7	-1.9	-3.5	-5.3	-7.2	-9.0	
High Ballevain Cottage	-17.9	-14.0	-10.0	-7.3	-5.7	-5.5	-7.7	-10.3	-13.1	
Killarow	-19.7	-15.6	-11.5	-8.7	-7.2	-7.0	-7.0	-7.0	-7.6	
Killocrow	-16.6	-12.7	-8.7	-5.5	-3.2	-3.0	-5.2	-7.7	-10.6	
South Lagalgarve	-16.0	-11.9	-7.9	-4.8	-2.7	-2.5	-4.7	-7.2	-10.1	
Tangy Farm	-12.0	-7.7	-3.6	-1.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.7	-2.5	-4.4	
Tangy Glen Cottages	-14.9	-10.8	-6.7	-4.0	-2.4	-2.3	-4.4	-7.0	-9.9	
Tangy Mill	-13.5	-9.4	-5.3	-2.6	-1.2	-1.1	-3.2	-5.8	-8.7	
Tangy Mill Croft	-14.9	-10.8	-6.7	-4.0	-2.4	-2.3	-4.4	-7.0	-9.9	
Tangylee	-14.1	-9.9	-5.8	-3.4	-2.3	-2.2	-2.6	-4.4	-6.3	
Tangymoil	-18.9	-14.7	-10.6	-7.7	-5.8	-5.7	-5.7	-5.7	-6.3	
Tigh na Mara	-13.7	-9.6	-5.5	-2.7	-0.9	-0.8	-3.0	-5.5	-8.4	

Table 14 - Difference between the ETSU-R-97 Derived Night time Noise Limits and the Cumulative Predicted  $L_{A90,T}$  Wind Farm Noise Immission Levels at Each Noise Assessment Location. Negative values indicate the immission level is below the limit

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)									
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Breakachy	-16.7	-12.7	-8.7	-6.0	-4.5	-4.4	-5.8	-8.4	-11.2	
Corrylach	-13.8	-11.5	-9.1	-6.8	-5.9	-5.8	-7.4	-10.8	-14.7	
Drumalea	-21.7	-17.6	-13.6	-10.8	-9.2	-9.0	-9.0	-9.0	-9.0	
Gobagrennan	-16.5	-13.6	-10.5	-7.6	-5.8	-5.7	-5.7	-5.7	-6.6	
Hazels Cottage	-15.4	-11.2	-7.1	-4.5	-3.0	-2.9	-4.3	-6.9	-9.7	
High Ballevain Cottage	-22.9	-19.0	-15.0	-12.3	-10.7	-10.5	-10.5	-10.5	-10.5	
Killarow	-19.7	-15.6	-11.5	-8.7	-7.2	-7.0	-7.0	-7.0	-7.0	
Killocrow	-21.6	-17.7	-13.7	-10.5	-8.2	-8.0	-8.0	-8.0	-8.0	
South Lagalgarve	-21.0	-16.9	-12.9	-9.8	-7.7	-7.5	-7.5	-7.5	-7.5	
Tangy Farm	-12.0	-7.7	-3.6	-1.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-2.2	-5.0	
Tangy Glen Cottages	-19.9	-15.8	-11.7	-9.0	-7.4	-7.3	-7.3	-7.3	-7.3	
Tangy Mill	-18.5	-14.4	-10.3	-7.6	-6.2	-6.1	-6.1	-6.1	-6.1	
Tangy Mill Croft	-19.9	-15.8	-11.7	-9.0	-7.4	-7.3	-7.3	-7.3	-7.3	
Tangylee	-14.1	-9.9	-5.8	-3.4	-2.3	-2.2	-2.2	-4.1	-6.9	
Tangymoil	-18.9	-14.7	-10.6	-7.7	-5.8	-5.7	-5.7	-5.7	-5.7	
Tigh na Mara	-18.7	-14.6	-10.5	-7.7	-5.9	-5.8	-5.8	-5.8	-5.8	

- 5.7.4 The ETSU-R-97 fixed part of the limit during the day-time should lie within the range from 35 dB(A) to 40 dB(A). The factors to be used to determine where in this range have been discussed above. Given the relatively large energy generating potential of the proposed development and the relatively low number of surrounding properties to the north-east of the scheme, which would be downwind of the turbines for the majority of the time, it is considered wholly appropriate to set the limit towards the middle of the range, at 38 dB(A).
- 5.7.5 The consent for the Tangy III Windfarm was based on 38 dB(A) as the relevant fixed component of the limit at surrounding dwellings for the day-time period. The proposed development represents an increase to the already significant energy output of the Tangy III Windfarm, with a comparable level of noise emission. This reinforces the argument that a fixed lower limit of 38 dB(A) is appropriate for the proposed development.
- 5.7.6 Satisfactory control of cumulative noise immission levels would be achieved through enforcement of individual consent limits for each of the individual wind farms. Partial noise limits which would apply to the proposed development in isolation are set out in Tables 15 and 16. It was verified that the predictions of Table 11, for the proposed development in isolation, comply with the limits of Table 15 and 16.
- 5.7.7 The partial limits of Tables 15 and 16 were derived by reducing the total ETSU-R-97 limit in relation to the proportion of predicted noise levels between the proposed development and the other sites considered in the cumulative noise assessment. Specifically, a reduction of the total ETSU-R-97 limit of 1 dB was applied for Gobagrennan and of 3 dB for Corrylach. This differs from the reduction of 3 dB applied at both of these properties, on simplified basis, by Argyll and Bute Council as a basis for the consent for the Tangy III Windfarm. The proposed updated apportionment is more detailed and is consistent with the levels permitted for the Beinn An Tuirc III Wind Farm as part of its consent, as the present robust analysis demonstrates.
- 5.7.8 The resulting partial noise limits are therefore such that compliance of the Development with these noise limits would maintain the conclusion of the cumulative assessment and result in cumulative levels which do not exceed the derived ETSU-R-97 noise criteria.
- 5.7.9 It should also be noted that the above analysis is based on predictions assuming that receptor locations are directly downwind of all turbines simultaneously. As discussed above, when a given receptor location is upwind of the turbines, noise immission levels would be expected to be of the order of 10 dB lower (as advised in the IOA GPG). This will be particularly conservative for the properties concerned, for which an apportioned limit has been used and which are located between the two wind farms considered.

Table 15 - Day time partial noise limits ( $L_{A90}$ , dB) applicable to the proposed development in isolation

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)								
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Breakachy	38.0	38.0	38.5	40.2	41.9	43.6	45.4	47.3	49.2
Corrylach	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	37.0	39.6	42.2	44.7	46.8
Drumalea	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Gobagrennan	37.0	37.0	37.0	37.0	37.0	38.5	40.7	42.9	44.9
Hazels Cottage	38.0	38.0	38.5	40.2	41.9	43.6	45.4	47.3	49.2
High Ballevain Cottage	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Killarow	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.6
Killocrow	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)								
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
South Lagalgarve	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Tangy Farm	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.4	47.3	49.2
Tangy Glen Cottages	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Tangy Mill	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Tangy Mill Croft	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6
Tangylee	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.4	47.3	49.2
Tangymoil	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.6
Tigh na Mara	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	40.2	42.7	45.6

Table 16 - Night time partial noise limits ( $L_{A90}$ , dB) applicable to the proposed development in isolation

Property	Standardised 10 m Wind Speed (m/s)								
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Breakachy	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	44.4	47.0	49.8
Corrylach	40.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	41.6	45.1	48.9
Drumalea	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Gobagrennan	42.0	42.0	42.0	42.0	42.0	42.0	42.0	42.0	43.0
Hazels Cottage	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	44.4	47.0	49.8
High Ballevain Cottage	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Killarow	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0
Killocrow	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
South Lagalgarve	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Tangy Farm	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	47.0	49.8
Tangy Glen Cottages	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Tangy Mill	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Tangy Mill Croft	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
Tangylee	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	47.0	49.8
Tangymoil	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0
Tigh na Mara	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0

## 5.8 Low Frequency Noise, Vibration and Amplitude Modulation

- 5.8.1 Low frequency noise and vibration resulting from the operation of wind farms are issues that have been attracting a certain amount of attention over recent years. Consequently, Annex A includes a detailed discussion of these topics. In summary of the information provided therein, the current recommendation is that ETSU-R-97 should continue to be used for the assessment and rating of operational noise from wind farms.
- 5.8.2 Annex A also discusses the most recently published research on the subject of wind turbine blade swish, Amplitude Modulation (or AM). As a consequence of the combined results of this research, and in particular the proposed development by the IOA of an objective technique for identifying and quantifying AM noise, as well as a review of the subjective response to AM noise by a Government-commissioned research group, a penalty-type approach to account for instances of increased AM

outside what is expected from 'normal' blade swish has been proposed. Some uncertainty remains at this stage over the application of such a penalty and this will be subject to a period of testing and review over the next few years.

## 5.9 Evaluation of Effects

Table 17 – Summary of effects

Potential Effect	Evaluation of Effect
Construction Noise	Noise levels have been predicted using the methodology set out in BS 5228. Based on assessment criteria derived and supported by a range of noise policy and guidance, overall construction noise levels are considered to represent a minor effect, and therefore considered not significant in EIA terms.
Operational Noise	Noise criteria have been established in accordance with ETSU-R-97. It has also been shown that these criteria are achievable with a commercially available turbine suitable for the site. The basis of the ETSU-R-97 method is to define acceptable noise limits thought to offer reasonable protection to residents in areas around wind farm developments. At some locations under some wind conditions and for a certain proportion of the time, the wind farm noise may be audible; however, operational noise immission levels are acceptable in terms of the guidance commended by planning policy for the assessment of wind farm noise, and therefore considered not significant in EIA terms.

## 6. Mitigation, Offsetting and Enhancement Measures

### 6.1 Proposed Construction Noise Mitigation Measures

6.1.1 To reduce the potential effects of construction noise, the following types of mitigation measures are proposed:

- Those activities that may give rise to audible noise at the surrounding properties and heavy goods vehicle deliveries to the site would be limited to the hours 07:00 to 19:00 Monday to Friday and 07:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays. Turbine deliveries would only take place outside these times with the prior consent of the Council and the Police. Those activities that are unlikely to give rise to noise audible at the site boundary will continue outside of the stated hours.
- All construction activities shall adhere to good practice as set out in BS 5228.
- All equipment will be maintained in good working order and any associated noise attenuation such as engine casing and exhaust silencers shall remain fitted at all times.
- Where flexibility exists, activities will be separated from residential neighbours by the maximum possible distances.
- A site management regime will be developed to control the movement of vehicles to and from the proposed development site.
- Construction plant capable of generating significant noise and vibration levels will be operated in a manner to restrict the duration of the higher magnitude levels.

- 6.1.2 The potential noise and vibration effects of blasting operations will be reduced according to the guidance set out in the relevant British Standards and PAN50 annex D and discussed below:
- Blasting should take place under strictly controlled conditions with the agreement of the relevant authorities, at regular times within the working week, that is, Mondays to Fridays, between the hours of 10.00am and 16.00pm. Blasting on Saturday mornings should be a matter for negotiation between the contractor and the local authorities;
  - Vibration levels at the nearest sensitive properties are best controlled through on-site testing processes carried out in consultation with the Local Authorities. This site testing based process would include the use of progressively increased minor charges to gauge ground conditions both in terms of propagation characteristics and the level of charge needed to release the requisite material. The use of onsite monitoring at neighbouring sensitive locations during the course of this preliminary testing can then be used to define upper final charge values that will ensure vibration levels remain within the criteria set out previously, as described in BS 5228-2 and BS 6472-2 2008;
  - Blasting operations shall adhere to good practice as set out in BS 5228-2, and in PAN50, Annex D, Paragraph 95 in order to control air overpressure.
  - A scheme will be submitted to the mineral planning authority, for approval of blasting details, which will outline the mitigation measures to be adopted.

## 6.2 Proposed Operational Noise Mitigation Measures

- 6.2.1 The selection of the final turbine to be installed at the site would be made on the basis of enabling the relevant ETSU-R-97 noise limits to be achieved at the surrounding properties.

## 7. Monitoring

- 7.1.1 It is proposed that if planning consent is granted for the proposed development, conditions attached to the planning consent should include the requirement that, in the event of a noise complaint, noise levels resulting from the operation of the wind farm are measured in order to demonstrate compliance with the conditioned noise limits. Such monitoring should be done in full accordance with ETSU-R-97 and include penalties for any tonal characteristics of the noise (if present).
- 7.1.2 The relevant noise limits which should apply for the proposed development are those of Tables 15 and 16 above which were determined to maintain compliance with the overall ETSU-R-97 noise limits, taking into account the limits consented for the Beinn An Tuirc III Wind Farm. Satisfactory control of cumulative noise immission levels would be achieved through enforcement of individual consent limits for each of the individual wind farms.

## 8. Summary of Key Findings and Conclusions

- 8.1.1 This report has presented an assessment of the effects of construction and operational noise from the proposed development on the residents of nearby dwellings.
- 8.1.2 A number of residential properties around the wind farm have been selected as being representative of properties in the vicinity of the wind farm. Noise assessments have been undertaken at these properties by comparing predicted construction and operational noise levels with relevant assessment criteria. In the case of construction noise, relevant assessment criteria are in the form of absolute limit values derived from a range of environmental noise guidance. In relation to operational noise, the limits have been derived from the existing background noise levels at four surrounding properties, as derived from measurements made over 2 weeks or more at each location. The minimum separation distance

between the nearest turbine and the closest located involved residential property is approximately 430 metres. The minimum separation distance to the closest residential property not involved with the scheme is 890 metres.

- 8.1.3 The construction noise assessment has determined that associated levels are expected to be audible at various times throughout the construction programme, but remain with acceptable limits such that their temporary effects are considered minor.
- 8.1.4 Operational noise from the wind farm has been assessed in accordance with the methodology set out in the 1996 DTI Report ETSU-R-97, 'The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind farms'. This document provides a robust basis for assessing the operational noise of a wind farm as recommended in Scottish Planning Policy.
- 8.1.5 By applying the ETSU-R-97 derived noise limits at the assessment locations it has been demonstrated that both the day-time and night-time noise criterion limits can be satisfied at all properties across all wind speeds. This outcome may be achieved through use of turbine constraints applied to three of the turbines. This assessment has been based on the use of robust manufacturer's sound power data for the Siemens SWT-DD-120 wind turbine which is representative of the upper end of noise emissions for the type and size of turbine which may be considered for this site, and assuming worst case downwind propagation. For other turbine models, these noise limits may be achieved with less or no operational mitigation.
- 8.1.6 In summary, the overall levels of construction noise are considered to represent a **minor** effect, and therefore considered not significant in EIA terms. At some locations under some wind conditions and for a certain proportion of the time, the wind farm noise may be audible; however, operational noise immission levels are acceptable in terms of the guidance commended by planning policy for the assessment of wind farm noise, and therefore considered not significant in EIA terms.

## 9. References

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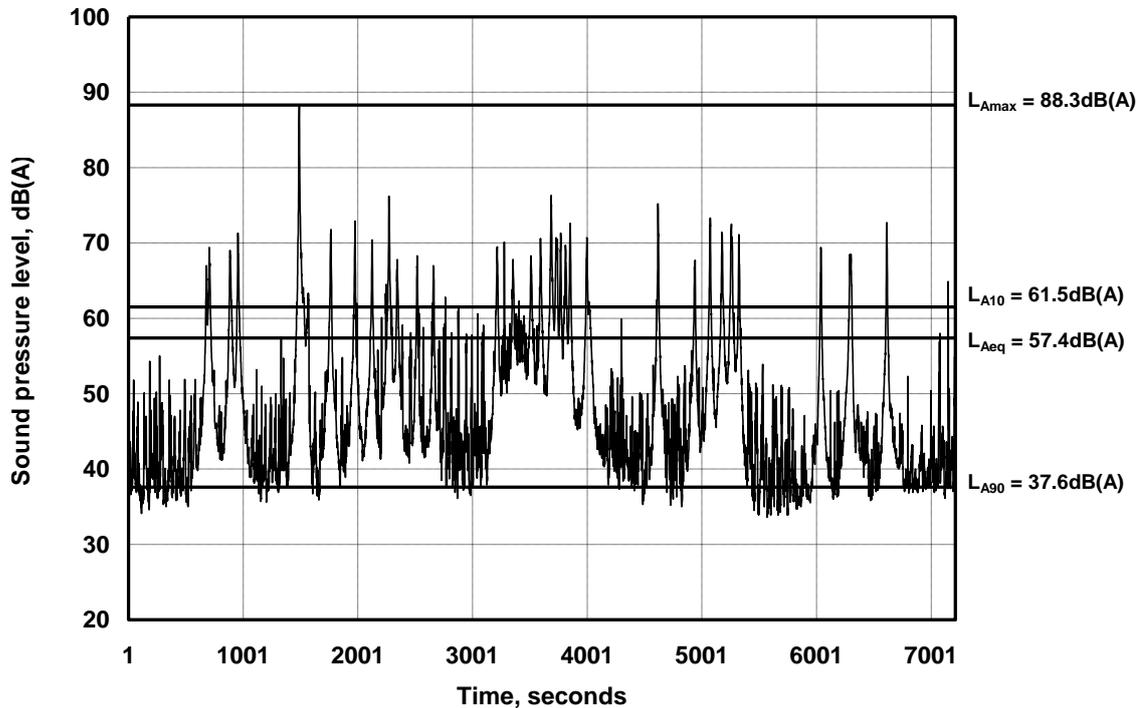
## Annex A - General Approach to Noise Assessment & Glossary

- A.1 Some sound, such as speech or music, is desirable. However, desirable sound can turn into unwanted noise when it interferes with a desired activity or when it is perceived as inappropriate in a particular environment.
- A.2 When assessing the effects of sound on humans there are two equally important components that must both be considered: the physical sound itself, and the psychological response of people to that sound. It is this psychological component which results in those exposed differentiating between desirable sound and unwanted noise. Any assessment of the effects of sound relies on a basic appreciation of both these components. This Annex provides an overview of these topics. A glossary of acoustic terminology is included at the end of this Annex.
- A.3 The assessment of environmental noise can be best understood by considering physical sound levels separately from the likely effects that these physical sound levels have on people, and on the environment in general.
- A.4 Physical sound is a vibration of air molecules that propagates away from the source. As acoustic energy (carried by the vibration back and forth of the air molecules) travels away from the source of the acoustic disturbance it creates fluctuating positive and negative acoustic pressures in the atmosphere above and below the standing atmospheric pressure. For most types of sound normally encountered in the environment these acoustic pressures are extremely small compared to the atmospheric pressure. When acoustic pressure acts on any solid object it causes microscopic deflections in the surface. For most types of sound normally encountered in the environment these deflections are so small they cannot physically damage the material. It is only for the very highest energy sounds, such as those experienced close to a jet engine for example, that any risk of physical damage exists. For these reasons, most sound is essentially neutral and has no cumulative damaging physical effect on the environment. The effects of environmental sound are therefore limited to its effects on people or animals.
- A.5 Before reviewing the potential effects of environmental sound on people, it is useful first to consider the means by which physical sound can be quantified.

### Indicators of Physical Sound Levels

- A.6 Physical sound is measured using a sound level meter. A sound level meter comprises two basic elements: a microphone which responds in sympathy with the acoustic pressure fluctuations and produces an electrical signal that is directly related to the incident pressure fluctuations, and a meter which converts the electrical signal generated by the microphone into a decibel reading. Figure A1 shows an example of the time history of the decibel readout from a sound level meter located approximately 50 metres from a road. The plot covers a total time period of approximately 2 hours. The peaks in the sound pressure level trace correspond to the passage of individual vehicles past the measurement location.
- A.7 Assigning a single value to the time varying sound pressure level presented in Figure A1 is clearly not straightforward, as the sound pressure level varies by over 50 dB with time. To overcome this, the measurement characteristics of sound level meters can be varied to emphasise different features of the sound that are thought to be most relevant to the effect under consideration.

Figure A1 Sample plot of the sound pressure level measured close to a road over a period of approximately two hours.



### Objective measures of noise

- A.8 The primary purpose of measuring environmental noise is to assess its effects on people. Consequently, any sound measuring device employed for the task should provide a simple readout that relates the objectively measured sound to human subjective response. To achieve this, the instrument must, as a minimum, be capable of measuring sound over the full range detectable by the human ear.
- A.9 Perceived sound arises from the response of the ear to sound waves travelling through the air. Sound waves comprise air molecules oscillating in a regular and ordered manner about their equilibrium position. The speed of the oscillations determines the frequency, or pitch, of the sound, whilst the amplitude of oscillations governs the loudness of the sound. A healthy human ear is capable of detecting sounds at all frequencies from around 20 Hz to 20 kHz (20,000 Hz) over an amplitude range of approximately 1,000,000 to 1. Even relatively modest sound level meters are capable of detecting sounds over this range of amplitudes and frequencies, although the accuracy limits of sound level meters vary depending on the quality of the unit. When undertaking measurements of wind turbine noise, as with all other noise measurements, it is important to select a measurement system that possesses the relevant accuracy tolerances and is calibrated to a matching standard.
- A.10 Whilst measurement systems exist that are capable of detecting the range of sounds detected by the human ear, the complexities of human response to sound make the derivation of a likely subjective response from a simple objective measure a non-trivial problem. Not only does human response to sound vary from person to person, but it can also depend as much on the activity and state of mind of an individual at the time of the assessment, and on the 'character' of the sound, as it can on the actual level of the sound. In practice, a complete range of responses to any given sound may be observed. Thus, any objective measure of noise can, at best, be used to infer the average subjective response over a sample population.

### Sound Levels and Decibels

- A.11 Because of the broad amplitude range covered by the human ear, it is usual to quantify the magnitude of sound using the decibel scale. When the amplitude of sound pressure is expressed using decibels (dB) the resultant quantity is termed the sound pressure level. Sound pressure levels are denoted by a capital 'L', as in L dB. The conversion of sound pressure from the physical quantity of Newton per square metre, or  $\text{Nm}^{-2}$ , to sound pressure level in dB reduces the range from 0 dB at the threshold of hearing to 120 dB at the onset of pain. Both of these values are derived with respect to the hearing of the average healthy young person.
- A.12 Being represented on a logarithmic amplitude scale, the addition and subtraction of decibel quantities does not follow the normal rules of linear arithmetic. For example, two equal sources acting together produce a sound level 3 dB higher than either source acting individually, so  $40 \text{ dB} + 40 \text{ dB} \approx 43 \text{ dB}$  and  $50 \text{ dB} + 50 \text{ dB} = 53 \text{ dB}$ . Ten equal sound sources acting together will be 10 dB louder than each source operating in isolation. Also, if one of a pair of sources is at least 10 dB quieter than the other, then it will contribute negligibly to the combined noise level. So, for example,  $40 \text{ dB} + 50 \text{ dB} = 50 \text{ dB}$ .
- A.13 An increase in sound pressure level of 3 dB is commonly accepted as the smallest change of any subjective significance. An increase of 10 dB is often claimed to result in a perceived doubling in loudness, although the basis for this claim is not well founded. An increase of 3 dB is equivalent to a doubling in sound energy, which is the same as doubling the number of similar sources. An increase of 10 dB is equivalent to increasing the number of similar sources tenfold, whilst an increase of 20 dB requires a hundredfold increase in the number of similar sources and an increase of 30 dB requires a thousand times increase in the number of sources.

### Frequency Selectivity of Human Hearing and A-weighting

- A.14 Whilst the hearing of a healthy young individual may detect sounds over a frequency range extending from less than 20 Hz to greater than 20 kHz, the ear is not equally sensitive at all frequencies. Human hearing is most sensitive to sounds containing frequency components lying within the range of predominant speech frequencies from around 500 Hz to 4000 Hz. Therefore, when relating an objectively measured sound pressure level to subjective loudness, the frequency content of the sound must be accounted for.
- A.15 When measuring sound with the aim of assessing subjective response, the frequency selectivity of human hearing is accounted for by down-weighting the contributions of lower and higher frequency sounds to reduce their influence on the overall reading. This is achieved by using an 'A'-weighting filter. Over the years, the A-weighting has become internationally standardised and is now incorporated into the majority of environmental noise standards and regulations in use around the world to best replicate the subjective response of the human ear. A-weighting filters are also implemented as standard on virtually all sound measurement systems.
- A.16 Sound pressure levels measured with the A-weighting filter applied are referred to as 'A weighted' sound pressure levels. Results from such measurements are denoted with a subscripted capital A after the 'L' level designation, as in 45 dB  $L_A$ , or alternatively using a bracketed 'A' after the 'dB' decibel designation, as in 45 dB(A).

### Temporal Variation of Noise and Noise Indices

- A.17 The simple A-weighted sound pressure level provides a snapshot of the sound environment at any given moment in time. However, as is adequately demonstrated by Figure A1, this instantaneous sound level can vary significantly over even short periods of time. A single number indicator is therefore required that best quantifies subjective response to time varying environmental noise, such as that shown in Figure A1. The question thus arises as to how temporal variations in level should be accounted for. This is most often achieved in practice by selecting a representative time period and

calculating either the average noise level over that time period or, alternatively, the noise level exceeded for a stated proportion of that time period, as discussed below.

#### Equivalent Continuous Sound Level, $L_{Aeq,T}$

- A.18 The equivalent continuous sound level, or  $L_{Aeq,T}$  averages out any fluctuations in level over time. It is formally defined as the level of a steady sound which, in a stated time period 'T' and at a given location, has the same sound energy as the time varying sound. The  $L_{Aeq,T}$  is a useful 'general' noise index that has been found to correlate well with subjective response to most types of environmental noise.
- A.19 The equivalent continuous sound level is expressed  $L_{Aeq,T}$  in dB, where the A-weighting is denoted by the subscripted 'A', the use of the equivalent continuous index is denoted by the subscripted 'eq', and the subscripted 'T' refers to the time period over which the averaging is performed. So, for example, 45 dB  $L_{Aeq,1hr}$  indicates that A-weighted equivalent continuous noise level measured over a one hour period was 45 dB.
- A.20 The disadvantage of the equivalent continuous sound level is that it provides no information as to the temporal variation of the sound. For example, an  $L_{Aeq,1hr}$  of 60 dB could result from a sound pressure level of 60 dB(A) continuously present over the whole hour's measurement period, or it could arise from a single event of 96 dB(A) lasting for just 1 second occurring within a continuous level of 30 dB(A) which exists for the remaining 59 minutes and 59 seconds of the hour period. Clearly, the subjective effect of these two apparently identical situations (if one were to rely solely on the  $L_{Aeq}$  index) could be quite different.
- A.21 The aforementioned feature can produce problems where the general ambient noise level is relatively low. In such cases the  $L_{Aeq,T}$  can be easily 'corrupted' by individual noisy events. Examples of noisy events that often corrupt  $L_{Aeq,T}$  noise measurements in situations of low ambient noise levels include birdsong or a dog bark local to a noise monitoring point, or an occasional overflying aircraft or a sudden gust of wind. This potential downside to the use of  $L_{Aeq,T}$  as a general measurement index is of particular relevance to the assessment of ambient noise in quiet environments, such as those typically found in rural areas where wind farms are developed.
- A.22 Despite these shortcomings in low noise environments, the  $L_{Aeq,T}$  index is increasingly becoming adopted as the unit of choice for both UK and European guidance and legislation, although this choice is often as much for reasons of commonality between standards as it is for overriding technical arguments. In the Government's current planning policy guidance notes the  $L_{Aeq,T}$  noise level is the index of choice for the general assessment of environmental noise. This assessment is undertaken separately for day time ( $L_{Aeq,16hr}$  07:00 to 23:00) and night time ( $L_{Aeq,8hr}$  23:00 to 07:00) periods. However, it is often the case for quiet environments, or for non-steady noise environments, that more information than can be gleaned from the  $L_{Aeq,T}$  index may be required to fully assess potential noise effects.

#### Maximum, $L_{Amax}$ , and percentile exceeded sound level, $L_{An,T}$

- A.23 Figure A1 shows, superimposed on the time varying sound pressure level trace and in addition to the  $L_{Aeq,T}$  noise level, examples of three well established measurement indices that are commonly used in the assessment of environmental noise impacts. These are the maximum sound pressure level,  $L_{Amax}$ , the 90 percentile sound pressure level,  $L_{A90,T}$  and the ten percentile sound pressure level,  $L_{A10,T}$ .
- A.24 The  $L_{Amax,F}$  readings is suited to indicating the physical magnitude of the single individual sound event that reaches the maximum level over the measurement period, but it gives no indication of the number of individual events of a similar level that may have occurred over the time period.
- A.25 Unlike the  $L_{Aeq,T}$  index and the  $L_{Amax,F}$  indices, percentile exceeded sound levels, percentage exceeded sound levels provide some insight into the temporal distribution of sound level throughout the averaging period. Percentage exceeded sound levels are defined as the sound level exceeded by a

fluctuating sound level for  $n\%$  of the time over a specified time period,  $T$ . They are denoted by  $L_{An,T}$  in dB, where 'n' can take any value between 0% and 100%.

- A.26 The  $L_{A10,T}$  and  $L_{A90,T}$  indices are the most commonly encountered percentile noise indices used in the UK.
- A.27 The 10 percentile index, or  $L_{A10,T}$  provides a measure of the sound pressure level that is exceeded for 10% of the total measurement period. It therefore represents the typical upper level of sound associated with specific events, such as the passage of vehicles past the measurement point. It is the traditional index adopted for road traffic noise. This index is useful because traffic noise is not usually constant, but rather it fluctuates with time as vehicles drive past the receptor location. The  $L_{A10,T}$  therefore characterises the typical level of peaks in the noise as vehicles drive past, rather than the lulls in noise between the vehicles.
- A.28 The  $L_{A90,T}$  noise index is the noise level exceeded for 90% of the time period,  $T$ . It provides an estimate of the level of continuous background noise, in effect performing the inverse task of the  $L_{A10,T}$  index by detecting the lulls between peaks in the noise. It is for this reason that the  $L_{A90,T}$  noise index is the favoured unit of measurement for wind farm noise where, for the reasons discussed above, the generally low  $L_{Aeq,T}$  noise levels are easily corrupted by intermittent sounds such as those produced by livestock, agricultural vehicles or the occasional passing vehicle on local roads. The  $L_{A90,T}$  noise level represents the typical lower level of sound that may be reasonably expected to be present for the majority (90%) of the time in any given environment. This is usually referred to as the 'background' noise level.

#### Temporal Variations Outside the Noise Index Averaging Periods, 'T'

- A.29 Averaging noise levels over the time period 'T' of the  $L_{Aeq,T}$  and  $L_{An,T}$  noise indices can successfully account for variations in noise over the time period,  $T$ . Some variations, however, exhibit trends over longer periods. At larger distances from noise sources meteorological factors can significantly affect received noise levels. At a few hundred metres from a constant level source of noise the potential variation in noise levels may be greater than 15 dB(A). To account for this variability consideration must be taken of meteorological conditions, particularly wind direction, when measurements and predictions are undertaken. As a general rule, when compared with the received noise level under neutral wind conditions, wind blowing from the source to the receiver can slightly enhance the noise level at the receiver (typically by no more than 3 dB(A)), but wind blowing from the receiver to the source can very significantly reduce the noise level at the receiver (typically by 15 dB(A) or more).
- A.30 A similar effect occurs under conditions of temperature inversion, such as may exist after sunset when radiative cooling from the ground lowers the temperature of the air lying at low level more quickly than the air at higher levels, by loss of temperature through convective effects. This results in the air temperature increasing with increasing height above the ground. Depending on the source to receiver distance relative to the heights of the source and receiver, this situation can lead to sound waves becoming 'trapped' in the layer of air lying closest to the ground. The consequence is that noise levels at receptor locations can increase relative to those experienced under conditions of a neutral temperature gradient or a temperature lapse. The maximum increases compared to neutral conditions are similar to those experienced under downwind conditions of no more than around 3 dB(A). It is also worth noting that temperature lapse conditions, which is the more usual situation where temperature decreases with increasing height, can result in reductions in noise level at receptor locations by 15 dB(A) or more compared with the neutral conditions. The similarity between the magnitude of potential variations in noise levels for wind induced and temperature induced effects is not surprising, as the physical mechanisms behind the variations in level are the same for both situations: both variations result from changes in the speed of sound as a function of height above local ground level.
- A.31 Temperature inversions on very still days can also affect noise propagation over much larger distances of several kilometres. These effects can produce higher than expected noise levels even at these very large distances from the source. A classic example that many people have experienced is the distant, usually inaudible, railway train that suddenly sounds like it is passing within a few hundred metres of a

dwelling. However, these situations must generally be considered as rare exceptions to the usually encountered range of noise propagation conditions, especially in the case of wind farm noise as they rely on calm wind conditions under which wind turbines do not operate.

### Effects of Sound on People

- A.32 Except at very high peak acoustic pressures, the energy levels in most environmental sounds are too low to cause any physical disruption in any part of the body, just as they are too low to cause any direct physical damage to the environment. The main effects of environmental sound on people are therefore limited to possible interference with specific activities or to some kind of annoyance response. Some researchers have claimed statistical associations between environmental noise and various long term health effects such as clinical hypertension or mental health problems, although there is no consensus on possible causative mechanisms. Evidence in support of health effects other than annoyance and some indicators of sleep disturbance is weak. However, the theory that psychological stress caused by annoyance might contribute to adverse health effects in otherwise susceptible individuals seems plausible. Health effects in the 'more usual' definition of physiological health therefore remain as a theoretical possibility which has neither been proved nor disproved. However, the World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health in the wider context of:

*'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of infirmity'.*

And within this wider context potential health effects of environmental noise are summarised by the World Health Organisation as:

- interference with speech communications;
- sleep disturbance;
- disturbance of concentration;
- annoyance; and
- social and economic effects.

### Speech Interference

- A.33 The instantaneous masking effects of unwanted noise on speech communication can be predicted with some accuracy by using specialist methods of calculation, but the overall effect of a small amount of speech interference on everyday life is harder to judge. The significance of speech masking depends on the context in which it occurs. For example, isolated noise events could interfere with telephone conversations by masking out particular words or parts of words but, because of the high redundancy in normal speech, the masking of individual words can often have no significant effect on the intelligibility of the overall message. Notwithstanding the above, noise levels from wind farms at even the closest located dwellings in otherwise quiet environments are usually no more than around 30 dB(A) indoors, even with windows open. This internal noise level is 5 dB(A) below the 35 dB(A) suggested by the World Health Organisation as the lowest potential cut-on level for issues relating to speech intelligibility.

### Sleep Disturbance

- A.34 Although sleep seems to be a fundamental requirement for humans, the most significant effect of sleep loss seems to be increased sleepiness the next day. Sleep normally follows a regular cyclic pattern from awake through light sleep to deep sleep and back, this cycle repeating several times during the night at around 90 minute intervals. Most people wake for short periods several times every night as part of the normal sleep cycle without necessarily being aware of this the next day. REM, or rapid eye movement, sleep is associated with dreaming and occurs several times each night during the lighter sleep stages.
- A.35 Electroencephalography (EEG) and similar techniques can be used to detect transient physiological responses to noise at night. Transient responses can be detected by short bursts of activity in the recorded waveforms which often settle back down to the same pattern as immediately before the

event. Sometimes a transient response will be the precursor of a definite lightening of sleep, or even of an awakening, but often no discernible physical event happens at all.

- A.36 These results suggest that at least parts of the auditory system remain fully operational even while the listener is asleep. The main purpose of this seems to be to arouse the listener in case of danger or in case some particular action is required which cannot easily be accomplished whilst remaining asleep. On the other hand, the system appears to be designed to filter out familiar sounds which experience suggests do not require any action. A very loud sound is likely to overcome the filtering mechanism and wake the listener, while intermediate and quieter sounds might only wake a listener who has a particular focus on those specific sounds. There is no evidence that the transient physiological responses to noise whilst asleep are anything other than normal. There is also considerable anecdotal evidence that people habituate to familiar noise at night, although some of the research evidence on this point is contradictory.
- A.37 There is no consensus on how much sleep disturbance is significant. Some authorities take a precautionary approach, under which any kind of physiological response to noise is considered important, irrespective of whether there are any next day effects or not. Other studies suggest that transient physiological responses to unfamiliar stimuli at night are merely an indication of normal function and do not need to be considered as adverse effects unless they contribute to significant next-day effects. Recent World Health Organisation guidelines based mainly on laboratory studies suggest indoor limit values of 30 dB  $L_{Aeq}$  and 45 dB  $L_{Afm\max}$  to avoid sleep disturbance, while other studies carried out in-situ, where habituation to the noise in question may have occurred, have found that much higher levels can be tolerated without any noticeable ill-effects.

#### Noise Annoyance

- A.38 Noise annoyance describes the degree of 'unwantedness' of a particular sound in a particular situation. People's subjective response to noise can vary from not being bothered at all, through a state of becoming aware of the noise, right through to the point of becoming annoyed by the noise when it reaches a sufficiently high level. There is no statutory definition of noise annoyance.
- A.39 Numerous noise annoyance surveys carried out over the last three decades have attempted to establish engineering relationships between the amount of noise measured objectively using sound level meters and the amount of community annoyance determined from questionnaires. The chief outcome of 'reported annoyance' has been measured using a very large range of different ideas. Both the wording of any questionnaire used and the context in which the question is put, and the manner in which it is therefore interpreted by respondents, can be very important. Some researchers are developing standardised questionnaire formats to encourage greater comparability between different studies, but this does not address the possibility of different contextual effects.
- A.40 Notwithstanding these problems, there is a general consensus that average reported annoyance increases with aggregate noise level in long term static situations. However, there has been comparatively little research and consequently no real agreement on the effects of change. Some studies have found that even small changes in noise level can have unexpectedly large consequences on reported annoyance, while others have found the opposite. The most likely explanation for these apparent discrepancies is that underlying or true annoyance depends on many non-acoustic factors in addition to noise level alone, and that the extent to which reported annoyance actually represents underlying annoyance can be highly dependent on context. As a consequence, attempts to find a common relationship across all noise sources and listening situations have generally floundered. This task has been complicated by the great range of individual sensitivities to noise observed in the surveys, often affected as much by attitude as by noise level.
- A.41 Whether or not an exposed individual has a personal interest in a given sound often has a significant bearing on their acceptance of it. For example, if recipients gain benefit from an association with the sound producer, or if they accept that the sound is necessary and largely unavoidable, then they are likely to be more tolerant of it. This is often the case even if they don't necessarily consider it desirable.

A good example of this is road traffic noise which is the dominant noise heard by over 90% of the population but results in relatively few complaints.

- A.42 Notwithstanding the fact that attitudes may be as important as overall levels in determining the acceptance of a particular noise, there still remains a need to objectively quantify any changes in noise level. Whilst it may not be possible to attribute a particular degree of annoyance to a given noise level, an objective measure of noise that bears some relationship to annoyance is still useful. This objective measure enables an assessment of the effect of changes to be assessed on the basis that any reduction in overall noise level must be beneficial. Possible noise mitigation measures form a central consideration of any noise assessment, so an appropriate methodology must be adopted for assessing the effectiveness of any noise mitigation measures adopted.
- A.43 When assessing the potential effects of any new source of noise, it is common practice to compare the A-weighted 'specific' noise level produced by the new source (usually measured using the  $L_{Aeq,T}$  index) against the existing A-weighted 'background' noise level measured using the  $L_{A90,T}$  index, as this is the typical level of noise that can be reasonably expected to be present the majority of the time to potentially 'mask' the new 'specific' noise. The assessment is therefore undertaken within the context of the existing noise environment. In some circumstances, it may prove equally instructive to compare the absolute level of a new specific noise against accepted absolute levels defined in standards or other relevant documents. The assessment is therefore undertaken against benchmark values, rather than against the context of the existing noise environment. Whatever approach is actually adopted for final assessment purposes, and often a combination of the two approaches is appropriate, it is important that the relevance of both contextual and benchmark assessments is at least considered in all cases.
- A.44 Table 4.1 of the WHO Guidelines presents guideline benchmark values for environmental noise levels in specific environments. The noise levels relevant to residential dwellings are listed here in Table A1.

**Table A1 Relevant Extracts from Table 4.1 'Guideline Values for Community Noise in Specific Environments'**

Specific Environment	Critical Health Effects	$L_{Aeq,T}$	Time base (hrs)	$L_{Amax}$ (dB)
Outdoor living area	Serious annoyance, day time and evening	55	16	-
	Moderate annoyance, day time and evening	50	16	-
Dwelling, indoors	Speech intelligibility and moderate annoyance, day time and evening	35	16	-
	Sleep disturbance, night time	30	8	45
Outside bedrooms	Sleep disturbance, window open (outdoors)	45	8	60
School class rooms (included for potential effects on concentration)	Speech intelligibility, disturbance of information extraction, message communication	35	-	-

- A.45 The text accompanying the Table in the WHO Guidelines explains that the levels given in the Table are set at the lowest levels at which the onset of any adverse health due to exposure to noise has been identified. The text continues:

*'These are essentially values for the onset of health effects from noise exposure. It would have been preferred to establish guidelines for exposure-response relationships. Such relationships*

*would indicate the effects to be expected if standards were set above the WHO guideline values and would facilitate the setting of standards for sound pressure levels (noise immission standards)'.*

- A.46 In addition to consideration of the absolute A-weighted level of a new specific source of noise, other properties of the noise can heighten its potential effects when introduced into an existing background noise environment. Such properties of noise are commonly referred to as 'acoustic features' or the 'acoustic character'. These acoustic features can set apart the new source of noise from naturally occurring sounds. Commonly encountered acoustic features associated with transport and machinery sources, for example, can include whistles, whines, thumps, impulses, regular or irregular modulations, high levels of low frequency sound, rumbling, etc.
- A.47 Due to the potential of acoustic features to increase the effects of a noise over and above the effects that would result from an otherwise 'bland' broad band noise of the same A-weighted noise level, it is common practice to add a 'character correction' to the specific noise level before assessing its potential effects. The resulting character corrected specific noise level is often referred to as the 'rated' noise level. Such character corrections usually take the form of adding a number of decibels to the physically measured or calculated noise level of the specific source. Typical character corrections are around +5 dB(A), although the actual correction depends on the subjective significance of the particular feature being accounted for.
- A.48 The objective identification and rating of acoustic features can introduce a requirement to analyse sound in greater detail than has thus far been discussed. To this point all discussion has focussed on the use of the overall A-weighted noise level. This single figure value is derived by summing together all the acoustic energy present in the signal across the entire audible spectrum from around 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz, albeit with the lower and higher frequency contributions down-weighted in accordance with the A-weighting filter characteristics to account for the reduced sensitivity of the human ear at these frequencies.
- A.49 However, in order to identify the presence of tones (which are concentrations of acoustic energy over relatively small bands of frequency), or in order to identify excessive levels of low frequency noise, it may be necessary to determine the acoustic energy present in the noise signal across much smaller frequency bands. This is where the concept of octave band analysis, fractional (e.g. 1/3, 1/12, 1/24) octave band analysis, or even narrow band Fast Fourier Transform (FFT) analysis is introduced. The latter enables signals to be resolved in frequency bandwidths of down to 1 Hz or even less, thereby enabling tonal content to be more easily identified and measured. As standard, noise emission data for wind turbines is supplied as octave band data, with narrow band tests also being undertaken to establish the presence of any tones in the radiated noise spectrum.

#### **Effects of Noise on Wildlife**

- A.50 There are large numbers of papers in the literature which describe the effects of noise on birds and animals, both wild and livestock.
- A.51 Just as the assessment of noise effects on humans is made difficult by the variability of responses between different people and between different situations, assessment of noise effects on wildlife is even more problematical, not least due to the problem of monitoring the response of wildlife to noise.
- A.52 For larger species, it may be possible to install telemetry on the body of the animal to relay information about its body systems (e.g. heart rate, temperature etc.). However, the minimum physical sizes of telemetry systems means this is not an option for smaller species. Also, even where it is possible, the fact that the animals must first be captured to have a system installed disturbs them, and the results of the subsequent study may be biased. In the absence of such telemetric data, researchers must rely on observations such as flight from nests, short term departure from usually populated areas and deviations from expected line of travel. However, flock and pack instincts often mean that just one animal changing course or taking flight can result in all the others doing the same.
- A.53 The only truly robust determinant to the effects of noise on wildlife is the long-term desertion of traditionally inhabited areas, or a reduction in breeding numbers. However, even these factors can be brought into question when the noise is a result of some other local activity, such as the passage of

vehicles. In these cases, it is often difficult to establish whether the observed effect is a consequence of the visual disturbance or the noise.

- A.54 Direct comparisons of results between species, or even between different research findings into the same species, are therefore often unclear, and it is difficult to draw firm conclusions as to the effects of noise on wildlife, other than in a highly generalised manner.
- A.55 General features apparent from the literature are that the most sensitive time for animals is during nesting or breeding seasons. Those that take flight whilst sitting on their eggs or tending their young can leave them open to predators, even if they return fairly quickly. However, many species have been shown to habituate to noise of all types, including road traffic noise, aircraft noise or even the decreasing effectiveness with time of impulsive type bird scarers, such as those used around airports.

#### Low Frequency Noise and Vibration – Wind Farms

- A.56 One issue that has increasingly been raised concerning potential noise effects of operational wind farms relates not to the overall noise levels, but to the specific issue of low frequency sound. However, confusion sometimes arises from the use of the generalised term 'low frequency sound' to describe specific effects that may, or sometimes may not, actually relate to the low frequency character of the sound itself.
- A.57 In this respect, there are three distinct characteristics of sound that should be clearly differentiated between:
- Low frequency sound in the range from around 20 Hz to 200 Hz, which therefore lies within the commonly referenced range of human hearing of around 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz;
  - Very low frequency sound, or infrasound, below 20 Hz, which therefore lies below the commonly referenced lower frequency limit of human hearing;
  - Amplitude modulated sound that characterises the 'swish, swish' sound sometimes heard from rotating wind turbine blades.
- A.58 Looking at the first two of the three types of sound referred to in the preceding bullet points, a distinction is usually made between low frequency sound and very low frequency sound, otherwise termed infrasound. This distinction is based on the fact that the frequency range of audible noise is generally taken to be from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz. Therefore, the range of frequencies from about 20 Hz to 200 Hz is usually taken to cover audible low frequency sound, whereas frequencies below 20 Hz are usually described as infrasound. The implication here is that low frequency sound is audible and infrasound is inaudible. However, this relatively arbitrary distinction between low frequency sound and infrasound can introduce some confusion in that frequencies below 20 Hz can still be heard provided they produce a sound pressure level at the ear of the listener that lies above the threshold of audibility of that listener to sound at that particular frequency.
- A.59 The fact that low frequency sound and infrasound from wind farms has only relatively recently been highlighted as a potential problem by some groups does not mean that the wind energy industry had not previously considered the issue. In fact, the issue of low frequency sound was one of the predominant technical hurdles associated with some of the earliest larger scale wind turbines installed in the USA. These turbines were of the 'downwind' type, 'downwind' referring here to the fact that the rotor blades were located downwind of the turbine tower rather than upwind of it, as is the case for current machines. It was found that the interruption of wind flow past the tower resulted in a region of lower than average wind speed immediately in the wake of the tower. The passage of the blades into this region of lower wind speed in the wake of the tower, then back into the higher wind speed as they emerged from the wake of the tower back into the main wind stream, resulted in the generation of low frequency sound, often in the subjective form of a distinctive impulse, often referred to as a 'thump' or 'tower thump'. It was for this reason that modern day turbine configurations now have the blades upwind of the tower, as research and measurements demonstrated that low frequency

sound radiation is reduced to sub-audible levels once the interaction of downwind tower wake effects with the rotating blades are removed from the design.

- A.60 One of the problems inherent in the assessment of both low frequency sound and infrasound is the variability of hearing sensitivity across human subjects with otherwise healthy hearing. This threshold for sound below 200 Hz varies significantly more between different subjects than does the hearing threshold at higher frequencies. However, what is always true is that the perception threshold to lower frequency noise is much higher than the perception threshold for speech frequencies between around 250 Hz to 4,000 Hz. For example, the average person with healthy hearing is some 70 dB less sensitive to sounds at 20 Hz than to sounds that fall within the range of speech frequencies. An additional factor relevant to the perception of infrasound is that, although audibility remains below 20 Hz, tonality is lost below 16 Hz to 18 Hz, thus losing a key element of perception.
- A.61 Both low frequency sound and infrasound are generally present all around us in modern life. They may be generated by many natural sources, such as thunder, earthquakes, waves and wind. They may also be produced by machinery including household appliances such as washing machines and air conditioning units, all forms of transport and by turbulence. The presence of low frequency sound and infrasound in our everyday lives is heightened by the fact that the attenuation of sound in air is significantly lower at low frequencies than at the mid to high frequencies. As a result, noise which has travelled over long distances is normally biased towards the low frequencies. However, the fact that human hearing naturally down-weights, or filters out, sounds of such low frequencies means we are generally not aware of its presence. It is only under circumstances when it reaches a sufficiently high level, for example in the ‘rumble’ of distant thunder or the sound of large waves crashing on a shore, that we become aware of its presence.

#### A-Weighting

- A.62 It is because the human ear increasingly filters out sounds of lower frequencies that environmental noise measurements are undertaken as standard using sound level meters that apply the A-weighting curve, as it filters out lower frequency sounds to the same degree as the hearing of a healthy person with unimpaired hearing. The A-weighted sound level is used as a measure of subjective perception of sound unless there exists such a predominance of low frequency sound or infrasound relative to the level of sound at higher frequencies that the use of the A-weighting curve would down-weight the actual source of the problem to such a degree that the resultant objective noise levels do not truly reflect the potential subjective effects of the noise. It is for this reason that a number of alternative weighting curves have been developed, specifically aimed at better accounting for the assessment of low frequency sound and infrasound.

#### C-Weighting

- A.63 One such curve is denoted C-weighting. Unlike the A weighting curve, which gradually reduces the significance of frequencies below 1000 Hz until at 10 Hz the attenuation is 70 dB, the C-weighting curve is flat to within 1 dB down to about 50 Hz and then drops by 3 dB at 31.5 Hz and 14 dB at 10 Hz. The C weighting curve was originally developed to reflect the fact that, at higher overall noise levels, low frequencies can have a greater subjective effect than at lower overall noise levels.
- A.64 One relatively simple measure of undertaking a first-pass assessment as to whether low frequency sound is likely to be an issue is to determine the difference between the overall C weighted noise level and the overall A weighted noise level. The C weighted level includes contributions from low frequency sound, whereas the A weighted level filters it out. It has been suggested in that a level difference of more than 20 dB indicates that low frequency sound may be subjectively significant, but more detailed investigations are in practice required to determine whether or not this is actually the case.

#### G-Weighting

- A.65 Another curve, termed the G weighting curve, has been specifically derived to provide a measure of the audibility of infrasound when considered separately from higher frequency noise. The G weighting

curve falls off rapidly above 20 Hz and below 20 Hz it follows assumed hearing contours with a slope of 12 dB per octave down to 2 Hz.

- A.66 Over the past few years there has been considerable attention paid to the possibility that operational wind farms may radiate sufficiently high levels of infrasound to cause health problems. It has, however, been the case that dedicated research investigations have shown this not to be the case.
- A.67 As early as 1997 a report by Snow [2] gave details of a comprehensive study of infrasound and low frequency sound (up to around 100 Hz) and vibration measurements made in the vicinity of a wind farm. Measurements were made both on the wind farm site, and at distances of up to 1 kilometre. During the experiments a wide range of wind speeds and directions were recorded. It was found that the vibration levels at 100 metres from the nearest turbine itself were a factor of 10 lower than those recommended for human exposure in the most critical buildings (i.e. laboratories for precision measurements), and lower again than the limits specified for residential premises. A similar comparison with recognised limits for assessing structural damage showed that the measured vibrations were a factor of 100 below the recommended guidelines at 100 metres from the turbines.
- A.68 Noise and vibration levels were found to comply with recommended residential criteria even on the wind turbine site itself. Although low level infrasonic (i.e. below 20 Hz) periodic noise from the wind farm was detected by instrumentation at distances up to 1 kilometre, the measuring instruments used were much more sensitive than human hearing. Based on his measurements Snow concluded that subjective detection of the wind turbines may be apparent at this distance, but if this is the case it will be due to higher frequency components (which are more readily masked by general ambient environmental noise) and not the low frequency components which lie below the threshold of audibility.
- A.69 In 2003, findings on both low frequency sound and infrasound have been compiled into the previously referenced extensive review report commissioned by DEFRA and prepared by Dr G Leventhall [1]. Dr Leventhall notes that despite the numerous published studies there is little or no agreement about the biological effects of infrasound or low frequency sound on human health. Leventhall notes that direct evidence of adverse effects of exposure to low-intensity levels of infrasound (less than 90 dB) is lacking. He goes on to describe the low frequency hearing threshold i.e. the lowest levels which are audible to an average person with normal hearing. He notes the threshold at 4 Hz is about 107 dB, at 10 Hz it is about 97 dB and at 20 Hz it is 79 dB. As such, high levels of infrasound are required to exceed the hearing thresholds at such low frequencies. Leventhall therefore concluded that most people can be reassured that there will be no serious consequences to peoples' health from infrasound exposure.
- A.70 Indeed, specifically in relation to wind farms and infrasound, Leventhall went further still with his statement of reassurance. This additional reassurance followed the voicing of concerns by some interested parties that, because infrasound and very low frequency vibrations could be measured from wind farms, then it must follow that these were a potential hazard and source of annoyance. In fact what those concerned observers failed to account for is that highly sensitive electronic measuring equipment designed solely to detect such infrasonic sounds and vibrations is orders of magnitude more sensitive than even the most sensitive human. Thus, whilst such measurement systems may be able to detect such low-level phenomena, the same stimuli can have no effect on humans. In the light of this, Leventhall issued an open statement:
- 'I can state quite categorically that there is no significant infrasound from current designs of wind turbines. To say that there is an infrasound problem is one of the hares which objectors to wind farms like to run. There will not be any effects from infrasound from the turbines.'*
- A.71 In 2004/2005 researchers from Keele University investigated the effects of the extremely low levels of vibration resulting from wind farms on the operation of a seismic array installed at Eskdalemuir in Scotland. This is one of the most sensitive ground-borne vibration detection stations in the world. The results of this study have frequently been misinterpreted, as just discussed for the DEFRA/Leventhall report, in that if infrasonic vibrations from wind farms can be measured, then they must

consequentially have some potential effect on humans. In order to clarify their position, the authors have subsequently explained that [3]:

*'The levels of vibration from wind turbines are so small that only the most sophisticated instrumentation and data processing can reveal their presence, and they are almost impossible to detect'.*

A.72 They then continue:

*'Vibrations at this level and in this frequency range will be available from all kinds of sources such as traffic and background noise – they are not confined to wind turbines. To put the level of vibration into context, they are ground vibrations with amplitudes of about one millionth of a millimetre. There is no possibility of humans sensing the vibration and absolutely no risk to human health'.*

A.73 In relation to airborne infrasound as opposed to ground-borne vibrations, the researchers are equally robust in their conclusions, stating:

*'The infrasound generated by wind turbines can only be detected by the most sensitive equipment, and again this is at levels far below that at which humans will detect low frequency sound. There is no scientific evidence to suggest that infrasound [at such an extremely low level] has an impact on human health'.*

A.74 Even more recently, in 2006, the results of a study specifically commissioned by the UK Department of Trade and industry (DTI) to look at the effects of infrasound and low frequency noise (LFN) arising from the operation of wind farms have been published in what is commonly referred to as the DTI LFN Report [4].

A.75 The DTI LFN Report is a comprehensive study containing many pages of detailed results of measurements of both infrasound and low frequency sound around the three wind farms included in the study. These measurements were undertaken using measurement systems capable of detecting noise down to frequencies of 1 Hz, with results being reported up to a frequency of 500 Hz, thus extending beyond the full spectrum of what is normally considered to cover both infrasound (<20 Hz) and low frequency sound (20 Hz to 200 Hz).

A.76 The measurement locations at the three wind farms were selected to be at residential properties where occupants had raised concerns relating to low frequency sound disturbance. Noise immission measurements are reported both externally to and internally to the properties in question. In addition to these noise immission measurements, the results of noise emission measurements undertaken on a number of wind turbines are also reported with the aim of quantifying the level of infrasound actually emitted from individual wind turbines and wind farms.

A.77 Before summarising the findings of the DTI LFN Report, it is noted that the prevalence of the perceived problem of infrasound and/or low frequency sound is not a widespread one. Quoting from the Executive Summary to the DTI LFN Report:

*'of the 126 wind farms operating in the UK, 5 have reports of low frequency sound problems which attract adverse comment concerning the noise. Therefore, such complaints are the exception rather than a general problem which exists for all wind farms'.*

A.78 The DTI LFN Report was actually commissioned primarily to investigate the effects of infrasound. This investigation was commissioned as a direct result of the claims made in the press concerning health problems arising from noise of such a low frequency 'that it is beyond the audible range, such that you

can't hear it but you can feel it as a resonance'. For this reason the results pertaining to infrasound are reported separately from those pertaining to audible low frequency sound above 20 Hz.

- A.79 In respect of infrasound, the DTI LFN Report is quite categorical in its findings: infrasound is not the perceived health threat suggested by some observers, nor should it even be considered a potential source of disturbance. Quoting from the Executive Summary to the DTI LFN Report:

*'Infrasound noise emissions from wind turbines are significantly below the recognised threshold of perception for acoustic energy within this frequency range. Even assuming that the most sensitive members of the population have a hearing threshold which is 12 dB lower than the median hearing threshold, measured infrasound levels are well below this criterion.*

*The document "Community Noise" prepared for the World Health Organisation, states that "there is no reliable evidence that infrasound below the hearing threshold produce physiological or psychological effects". Other detection mechanisms of infrasound only occur at levels well above the threshold of audibility.*

*It may therefore be concluded that infrasound associated with modern wind turbines is not a source which will result in noise levels which may be injurious to the health of a wind farm neighbour'.*

- A.80 In conclusion, whilst it is known that infrasound can have an adverse effect on people (potential adverse health impacts are listed by the World Health Organisation as stress, irritation, unease, fatigue, headache, possible nausea and disturbed sleep), these effects can only come into play when the infrasound reaches a sufficiently high level. This is a level above the threshold of audibility. However, all available information from measurements on current wind turbines reveals that the level of infrasound emitted by these wind turbines lies below the threshold of human perception.
- A.81 Indeed, in the face of the apparent misunderstanding of the conclusions reached in the various reports on infrasound, and how these conclusions should be applied to consideration of the radiation of such noise from wind farms, the British Wind Energy Association have issued a fact sheet relating to the subject [5]. This fact sheet concludes:

*'With regard to effects of noise from wind turbines, the main effect depends on the listener's reaction to what they may hear. There are no direct health effects from noise at the level of noise generated by wind turbines. It has been repeatedly shown by measurements of wind turbine noise undertaken in the UK, Denmark, Germany and the USA over the past decade, and accepted by experienced noise professionals, that the levels of infrasonic noise and vibration radiated from modern, upwind configuration wind turbines are at a very low level; so low that they lie below the threshold of perception, even for those people who are particularly sensitive to such noise, and even on an actual wind turbine site'.*

### Low Frequency Sound

- A.82 A report prepared for DEFRA by Casella Stanger [6] lists wind farms as a possible source of audible low frequency sound (20 Hz to 200 Hz). However, this is one possible source in a list of many commonly encountered sources such as pumps, boilers, fans, road, sea and rail traffic, the wind, thunder, the sea, etc. The report only considers the general issues associated with low frequency sound and makes no attempt to quantify the potential problem associated with each of these sources. This is in contrast to other reports which have considered the specific situation associated with wind farms.
- A.83 In respect of low frequency sound as opposed to infrasound, the DTI LFN Report identified that wind farm noise levels at the studied properties were, under certain conditions, measured at a level just above the threshold of audibility. The report therefore concluded that 'for a low frequency sensitive person, this may mean that low frequency sound associated with the operation of the three wind farms could be audible within a dwelling'. This conclusion was, however, placed into some context with the qualifying statement that 'at all measurement sites, low frequency sound associated with traffic movements along local roads has been found to be greater than that from the neighbouring wind farm'. In particular, it was concluded that, although measurable and under some conditions may be audible,

levels of low frequency sound were below permitted night time low frequency sound criteria, including the latest UK criteria resulting from the 2003 DEFRA study into the effects of low frequency sound.

- A.84 Based on the findings of the DTI LFN Report, low frequency sound in the greater than 20 Hz frequency range may, under some circumstances, be measured to be of a comparable or higher level than the threshold of audibility. On such occasions this low frequency sound may become audible to low frequency sensitive persons who may already be awake inside nearby properties, but not to the degree that it will cause awakenings. However, such noise should still be assessed for its potential subjective effects in the conventional manner in which environmental noise is generally assessed. In particular, the subjective effects of this audible low frequency sound should not be confused with the claimed adverse health effect arguments concerning infrasound which, in any event, have now been shown from the results of the DTI LFN Report to be wholly unsubstantiated.
- A.85 In November 2006, the UK Government released a statement [7] concerning low frequency sound, reiterating the conclusion of the DTI LFN report that:

*‘there is no evidence of health effects arising from infrasound or low frequency sound generated by wind turbines’.*

- A.86 The Government statement concluded the position regarding low frequency sound from wind farms with the definitive advice to all English Local Planning Authorities and the Planning Inspectorate that PPS22 and ETSU-R-97 should continue to be followed for the assessment of noise from wind farms.

#### **Blade Swish (Amplitude Modulation)**

- A.87 The noise assessment methodology presented in ETSU-R-97, sets out noise limits which already account for typically encountered levels of blade swish. Notwithstanding the conclusions and advice presented in the preceding paragraphs concerning both infrasound and low frequency sound, the DTI LFN Report went on to suggest that, where complaints of noise at night had occurred, these had most likely resulted from an increased amplitude modulation of the blade passing noise, making the ‘swish, swish, swish’ sound (often referred to as ‘blade swish’) more prominent than normal. Whilst it was therefore acknowledged that this effect of enhanced amplitude modulation of blade aerodynamic noise may occur, it was also concluded that there were a number of factors that should be borne in mind when considering the importance to be placed on the issue when considering present and proposed wind farm installations:
- it appeared that the effect had only been reported as a problem at a very limited number of sites (the DTI report looked at the 3 out of 5 U.K. sites where it has been reported to be an issue out of the 126 onshore wind farms reported to be operational at the time in 2006);
  - the effect occurred only under certain conditions at these sites (the DTI LFN Report was significantly delayed while those involved in taking the measurements waited for the situation to occur at each location);
  - at one of the sites concerned it had been demonstrated that the effect can be reduced to an acceptable level by the introduction of a Noise Reduction Management System (NRMS) which controls the operation of the necessary turbines under the relevant wind conditions (this NRMS had to be switched off in order to gain the data necessary to inform the DTI LFN Report);
  - whilst still under review, it appeared that the most likely cause of the increased amplitude modulation was related to an increase in the stability of the atmosphere during evening and night time periods, hence the increased occurrence of such an effect at these times, but this effect had been shown by measurement of wind speed profiles to be extremely site specific;
  - internal noise levels were below all accepted night time criteria limits and insufficient to wake residents, it was only when woken by other sources of a higher level (such as local road traffic) that there were self-reported difficulties in returning to sleep.
- A.88 The Government then commissioned an independent research project to further investigate the prevalence of the impact of enhanced levels of amplitude modulation across UK wind farms. This research work was awarded to the University of Salford who reported on their findings in July 2007 [8]. The Salford study concluded that that the occurrence of increased levels of ‘blade swish’ was

infrequent, but suggested it would be useful to undertake further work to understand and assess this feature of wind turbine noise.

- A.89 As a consequence of the findings of the report by the University of Salford, the UK Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR formerly the DTI) issued a statement in August 2007 [9] which concluded:

*'A comprehensive study by Salford University has concluded that the noise phenomenon known as aerodynamic modulation (AM) is not an issue for the UK's wind farm fleet.*

*AM indicates aerodynamic noise from wind turbines that is greater than the normal degree of regular fluctuation of blade swoosh. It is sometimes described as sounding like a distant train or distant piling operation.*

*The Government commissioned work assessed 133 operational wind projects across Britain and found that although the occurrence of AM cannot be fully predicted, the incidence of it from operational turbines is low'.*

- A.90 The statement then concludes with the advice:

*'Government continues to support the approach set out in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 22 – Renewable Energy. This approach is for local planning authorities to "ensure that renewable energy developments have been located and designed in such a way to minimise increases in ambient noise levels", through the use of the 1997 report by ETSU to assess and rate noise from wind energy development'.*

- A.91 This represents an aspect of wind turbine noise which has become the subject of considerable research in the UK and abroad in the past years and the state of knowledge on the subject is rapidly evolving. An extensive research programme entitled 'Wind Turbine Amplitude Modulation: Research to Improve Understanding as to its Cause and Effect' was published in 2013. This research, commissioned by RenewableUK (ReUK) was specifically aimed at identifying and explaining some of the key features of wind turbine AM noise.

- A.92 Claims have emerged from different researchers that wind turbines were capable of generating noise with characteristics outwith that expected of them. This characteristic was an enhanced level of modulated aerodynamic noise that resulted in the blade swish becoming more impulsive in character, such that those exposed to it would describe it more as a 'whoomp' or 'thump' than a 'swish'. It could also become audible at distances from the wind turbines that were considerably greater than the distances at which blade swish could ordinarily be perceived. It has since emerged that this may be similar to the character of the noise identified in the DTI LFN study. Hence for the purposes of the ReUK project, any such AM phenomena with characteristics falling outside those expected of this "normal" AM (NAM) were therefore termed 'Other AM' (OAM).

- A.93 The research identified the most likely cause of OAM noise is transient stall on the wind turbine blade (i.e. stall which occurs over a small area of each turbine blade in one part of the blade's rotation only). The occurrence of transient stall will be dependent on a combination of factors, including the air inflow conditions onto the individual blades, how these inflow conditions may vary across the rotor disc, the design of the wind turbine blades and the manner in which the wind turbine is operated. Variable inflow conditions may arise, for example, from any combination of wind shear, wind veer, yaw errors, turbine wake effects, topographic effects, large scale turbulence, etc. However, the occurrence of OAM on any particular site cannot be predicted at this stage.

- A.94 As a consequence of the combined results of the ReUK research, and most notably the proposed development of objective techniques for identifying and quantifying AM noise and the ability to relate such an objective measure to the subjective response to AM noise, ReUK has proposed an AM test [11] for implementation as a planning condition, although this was subject to discussion.

- A.95 The Institute of Acoustics (IOA) published in 2016 a standardised methodology [12] for the assessment and rating of AM magnitude. The method provides a decibel level each 10 minute which represents the magnitude of the modulation in the noise, and minimises the influence of sources not related to wind

turbines. The proposed method, unlike other methods that have previously been proposed, utilises as the core of its detection capability the fact that AM noise from wind turbines, by definition, exhibits periodicity at a rate that is directly related to the rotational speed of the source wind turbine. The IOA document does not however provide any thresholds or criteria methodology for using the resulting AM values.

- A.96 The UK Government (DECC or Department of Energy and Climate Change, now obsolete) commissioned a review focused on the subjective response to AM with a view to recommend how this feature may be controlled. The outcome of this research has been published [13] in October 2016 by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (DBEIS). This report recommends the use of a “character penalty” approach, in which a correction is applied to the overall A-weighted noise level to account for AM in the noise in a manner similar to that used to assess tonality in the noise according to ETSU-R-97. This penalty is based on the above IOA methodology for detecting AM. The researchers make a number of recommendations for local authorities to consider and qualifications for the use of such controls, and note that the current state of knowledge on the subject and the implications of their proposed control is limited and that a period of testing and review over the next few years would be beneficial. The authors were however unable to provide clarity on how exactly the recommendations would operate in practice for any particular wind farm. On publication of the report, DBEIS encouraged local authorities in England to consider the research but provided limited guidance on how the outcomes were to be accounted for within the planning system. The Scottish Government is currently reviewing this report in the context of the Scottish planning system.

#### References for LFN and AM Section

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- [2] ‘Low frequency noise and vibration measurements at a modern wind farm’, D. Snow, ETSU Report ETSU W/13/00392/REP, 1997
- [3] ‘Wind farm noise’, P. Styles, letter by Prof P Styles and S Toon printed in The Scotsman, August 2005.
- [4] ‘The measurement of low frequency noise at three UK wind farms’, M. Hayes, DTI Report W/45/00656/00, 2006
- [5] ‘Low frequency noise and wind turbines’, BWEA Briefing Sheet, 2005
- [6] ‘Low frequency noise’, Report by Casella Stanger for DEFRA, 2001
- [7] ‘Advice on Findings of the Hayes McKenzie Report on Noise Arising from Wind Farms’, URN 06/2162 (November 2006)
- [8] ‘Research into Aerodynamic Modulation of Wind Turbine Noise’, Report by University of Salford, URN 07/1235 (July 2007)
- [9] ‘Government statement regarding the findings of the Salford University report into Aerodynamic Modulation of Wind Turbine Noise’, BERR, Ref: 2007/033 (1st August 2007)
- [10] Wind Turbine Amplitude Modulation: Research to Improve Understanding as to its Cause and Effect, Renewable UK, December 2013.
- [11] Template Planning Condition on Amplitude Modulation (guidance notes), RenewableUK, December 2013.
- [12] Institute of Acoustics (IOA) Amplitude Modulation Working Group, Final Report, A Method for Rating Amplitude Modulation in Wind Turbine Noise, June 2016.
- [13] Review of the evidence on the response to amplitude modulation from wind turbines, WSP for Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-the-evidence-on-the-response-to-amplitude-modulation-from-wind-turbines>

## Glossary of Acoustics Terminology

Terminology	Description
A-weighting	a filter that down-weights low frequency and high frequency sound to better represent the frequency response of the human ear when assessing the likely effects of noise on humans
acoustic character	one or more distinctive features of a sound (e.g. tones, whines, whistles, impulses) that set it apart from the background noise against which it is being judged, possibly leading to a greater subjective effect than the level of the sound alone might suggest
acoustic screening	the presence of a solid barrier (natural landform or manmade) between a source of sound and a receiver that interrupts the direct line of sight between the two, thus reducing the sound level at the receiver compared to that in the absence of the barrier
ambient noise	All-encompassing noise associated with a given environment, usually a composite of sounds from many sources both far and near, often with no particular sound being dominant
annoyance	a feeling of displeasure in this case evoked by noise
attenuation	the reduction in level of a sound between the source and a receiver due to any combination of effects including: distance, atmospheric absorption, acoustic screening, the presence of a building façade, etc.
audio frequency	any frequency of a sound wave that lies within the frequency limits of audibility of a healthy human ear, generally accepted as being from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz
background noise	the noise level rarely fallen below in any given location over any given time period, often classed according to day time, evening or night time periods (for the majority of the population of the UK the lower limiting noise level is usually controlled by noise emanating from distant road, rail or air traffic)
dB	abbreviation for 'decibel'
dB(A)	abbreviation for the decibel level of a sound that has been A-weighted
decibel	the unit normally employed to measure the magnitude of sound
directivity	the property of a sound source that causes more sound to be radiated in one direction than another
equivalent continuous sound pressure level	the steady sound level which has the same energy as a time varying sound signal when averaged over the same time interval, T, denoted by $L_{Aeq,T}$
external noise level	the noise level, in decibels, measured outside a building
filter	a device for separating components of an acoustic signal on the basis of their frequencies
frequency	the number of acoustic pressure fluctuations per second occurring about the atmospheric mean pressure (also known as the 'pitch' of a sound)
frequency analysis	the analysis of a sound into its frequency components

Terminology	Description
ground effects	the modification of sound at a receiver location due to the interaction of the sound wave with the ground along its propagation path from source to receiver
hertz	the unit normally employed to measure the frequency of a sound, equal to cycles per second of acoustic pressure fluctuations about the atmospheric mean pressure
impulsive sound	a sound having all its energy concentrated in a very short time period
instantaneous sound pressure	at a given point in space and at a given instant in time, the difference between the instantaneous pressure and the mean atmospheric pressure
internal noise level	the noise level, in decibels, measured inside a building
$L_{Aeq}$	the abbreviation of the A-weighted equivalent continuous sound pressure level
$L_{A10}$	the abbreviation of the 10 percentile noise indicator, often used for the measurement of road traffic noise
$L_{A90}$	the abbreviation of the 90 percentile noise indicator, often used for the measurement of background noise
level	the general term used to describe a sound once it has been converted into decibels
loudness	the attribute of human auditory response in which sound may be ordered on a subjective scale that typically extends from barely audible to painfully loud
noise	physically: a regular and ordered oscillation of air molecules that travels away from the source of vibration and creates fluctuating positive and negative acoustic pressure above and below atmospheric pressure.  Subjectively: sound that evokes a feeling of displeasure in the environment in which it is heard, and is therefore unwelcomed by the receiver
noise emission	the noise emitted by a source of sound
noise immission	the noise to which a receiver is exposed
noise nuisance	an unlawful interference with a person's use or enjoyment of land, or of some right over, or in connection with it
octave band frequency analysis	a frequency analysis using a filter that is an octave wide (the upper limit of the filter's frequency band is exactly twice that of its lower frequency limit)
percentile exceeded sound level	the noise level exceeded for n% of the time over a given time period, T, denoted by $L_{An,T}$
receiver	a person or property exposed to the noise being considered
residual noise	the ambient noise that remains in the absence of the specific noise whose effects are being assessed
sound	physically: a regular and ordered oscillation of air molecules that travels away from the source of vibration and creates fluctuating positive and negative acoustic pressure above and below atmospheric pressure

Terminology	Description
	subjectively: the sensation of hearing excited by the acoustic oscillations described above (see also 'noise')
sound level meter	an instrument for measuring sound pressure level
sound pressure amplitude	the root mean square of the amplitude of the acoustic pressure fluctuations in a sound wave around the atmospheric mean pressure, usually measured in Pascals (Pa)
sound pressure level	a measure of the sound pressure at a point, in decibels
sound power level	the total sound power radiated by a source, in decibels
spectrum	a description of the amplitude of a sound as a function of frequency
standardised wind speed	Values of wind speed at hub height corrected to a standardised height of ten metres using the same procedure as used in wind turbine emission testing
threshold of hearing	the lowest amplitude sound capable of evoking the sensation of hearing in the average healthy human ear (0.00002 Pa)
tone	the concentration of acoustic energy into a very narrow frequency range

## Annex B – Location Maps and Turbine Coordinates

Figure B1 Map showing the layout of the proposed Tangy IV turbines (green circles), the Beinn An Tuirc III turbines (red circles), the noise monitoring locations (blue dots within orange circles) and the additional noise assessment locations (black and white quartered circles).

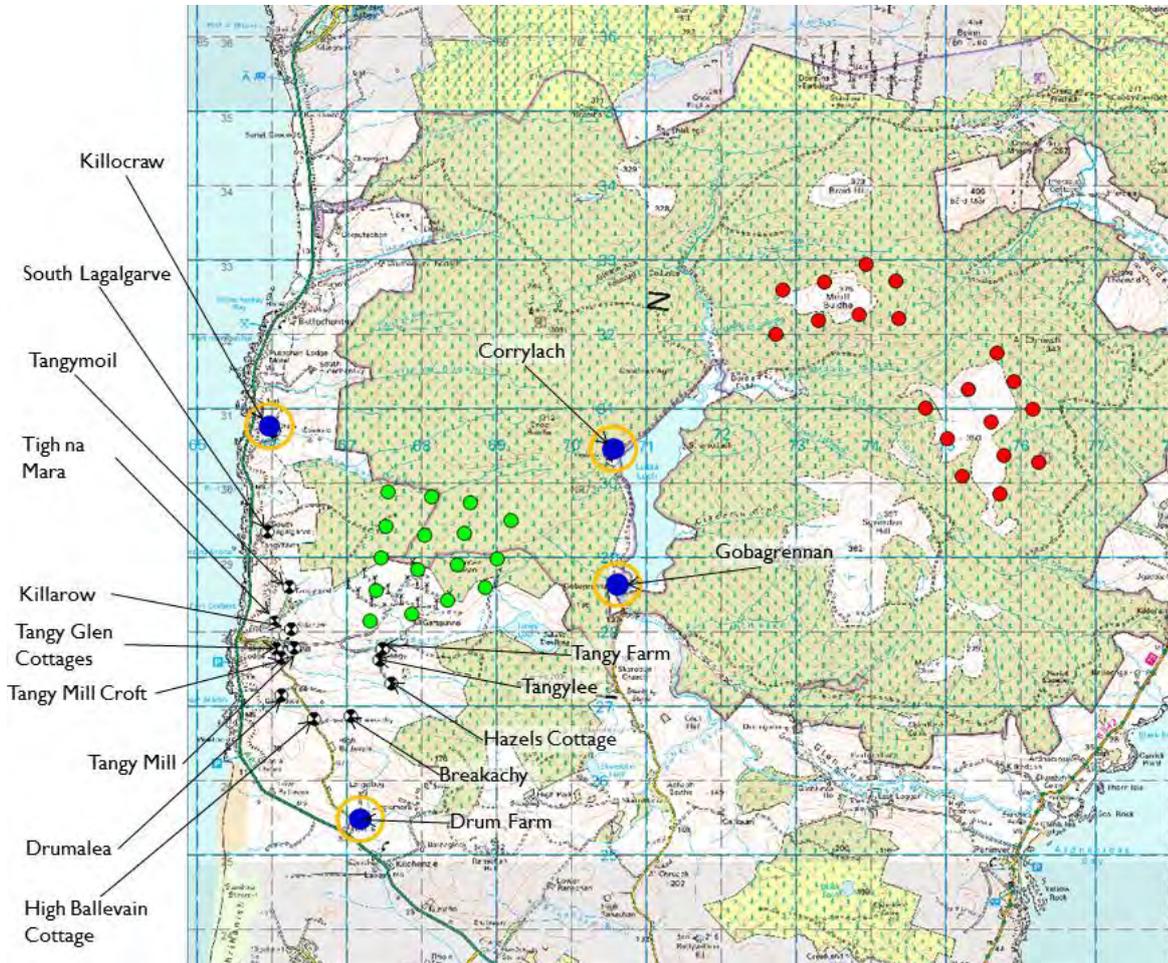


Table B1 - turbine coordinates

Turbine	Easting	Northing
1	167315	628150
2	167860	628240
3	167392	628558
4	168349	628427
5	168850	628597
6	167456	628996
7	167517	629424
8	167555	629887

Turbine	Easting	Northing
9	168130	629820
10	168650	629740
11	169185	629495
12	169000	628979
13	168475	628908
14	167951	628835
15	168040	629307
16	168573	629327

Table B2 - Propagation attenuation effects (dB) for the first set of receptor locations. Positive numbers are due to terrain shielding barrier effects (e.g. 2), representing a decrease in noise levels, and negative numbers (e.g. -3) represent an increase in predicted noise levels due to concave ground effects. Where there is a zero shown, neither terrain shielding nor concave ground were found.

Turbine number	Property							
	High Ballevain Cottage	Drumalea	Tangy Glen Cottages	Killarow	South Lagalgarve	Tangylee	Tangy Farm	Breakachy
1	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0
2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	-3
3	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	-3
4	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	-3
5	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	-3
6	2	0	2	2	2	0	0	-3
7	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0
8	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	-3
9	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	-3
10	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	-3
11	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0
12	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	-3
13	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	-3
14	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	-3
15	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
16	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0

Table B3 - Propagation attenuation effects (dB) for the first set of receptor locations. Positive numbers are due to terrain shielding barrier effects (e.g. 2), representing a decrease in noise levels, and negative numbers (e.g. -3) represent an increase in predicted noise levels due to concave ground effects. Where there is a zero shown, neither terrain shielding nor concave ground were found.

Turbine number	Property							
	Hazels Cottage	Tangymoill	Corrylach	Killocrow	Gobagrennan	Tangy Mill	Tangy Mill Croft	Tigh na Mara
1	0	2	2	2	0	2	0	2
2	0	0	2	2	0	2	2	2
3	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	2
4	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	0
5	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
6	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	0
7	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	2
8	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	0
9	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
10	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
11	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	0
12	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
13	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
14	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
15	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	0
16	0	0	2	0	2	2	2	0

## Annex C – Noise Monitoring Information Sheets

Table C1 – Information on the measurement location, equipment and noise data at Killocrow.

Measurement Location	Killocrow
Measurement Location Description	<p>Two residential properties next to a working farm. This monitoring location was selected as being representative of residential properties along the coast, whilst being far enough away from the existing Tangy wind farm not to be affected by noise from the existing operational turbines. The monitoring equipment was situated in the garden area of the residential properties, to the west of the building. This location was selected as being representative of the external amenity areas associated with the residential properties and was more than 3.5m from acoustically reflective surfaces such as the buildings. In addition, the residential buildings are located between the monitoring location and the farm, thereby providing a degree of screening from farm activities.</p> <p>The meter was located on the edge of the lawn, adjacent to some small shrubs. There are two mature trees in the garden area, which were at a distance of approximately 5 m from the monitoring location. The A83 runs at a distance of approximately 100 m to the west of this property, with the coast at a distance of approximately 150 m to the west of the property. Livestock were also noted in the fields in the vicinity of the property.</p> <p>Noise sources that were audible at this location during installation and collection of the equipment included the breeze in the trees, occasional road traffic on the A83, coastal water movement, livestock and birdsong.</p> <p>SLM Location: 166031, 630687.</p>

Equipment	Type	Serial Number	Last Calibrated (UKAS)
Sound Level Meter	Rion NL-31	00110060	31/01/2012
Pre-amplifier	Rion NH-21	07772	31/01/2012
Microphone	Rion UC-53A	307276	31/01/2012
Calibrator	B&K 4231	3000377	21/12/2012
SLM Range	20 – 110 dB(A)		

File	Time Start (GMT)	Time End (GMT)	Cal Start	Cal End	Drift	Notes
1	13/09/2013 10:20	06/10/2013 06:30	94.0	93.7	-0.3	No significant drift

Data Exclusions
Data was excluded from this location during periods of rainfall and for wind directions within the sector between 170 and 360 degrees, as it was noted that measured baseline noise levels were significantly higher at this location when winds were from the west.

Figure C1 View of the monitoring location at Killocrow looking south-east



Figure C2 View of the monitoring location at Killocrow looking north west



Figure C3 View of the monitoring location at Killocrow looking west



Table C2 – Information on the measurement location, equipment and noise data at Drum Farm.

Measurement Location	Drum Farm
Measurement Location Description	<p>The monitoring location at Drum Farm was selected as being representative of background noise levels at residential properties to the south of the proposed Development, but far enough away from the existing Tangy wind farm not to be affected by noise from the existing operational turbines. The A83 runs at a distance of approximately 250 m to the south west of the monitoring position. The monitoring equipment was located in a field, adjacent to the field boundary, at a distance of approximately 150 m to the north east of Drum Farm. There were no acoustically reflective surfaces within 3.5 m of the monitoring location.</p> <p>The monitoring equipment was located adjacent to the southernmost field boundary, approximately half way along the length of the field boundary. This location was selected so as to be as far as possible from both the water course that runs along the north-western field boundary (at a distance of approximately 70 m from the monitoring position) and the two wind turbines that are located at Drum Farm, approximately 100 m to the west of the monitoring position. Whilst the field in which the meter was located did not contain any livestock at the time that the meter was installed or removed, it is understood that for a short time during the noise survey, there was livestock in the field while being moved to another part of the farm. The noise monitoring equipment was fenced off from the field during this time.</p> <p>Noise sources that were audible at the monitoring location during the installation and collection of the equipment included farm machinery in use in the neighbouring fields and very occasional road traffic on the A83 and the minor local roads. No noise from the wind turbines at Drum Farm or the water course to the north west of the monitoring position was audible during installation or collection of the equipment.</p> <p>SLM Location:167140, 625475.</p>

Equipment	Type	Serial Number	Last Calibrated (UKAS)
Sound Level Meter	Rion NL-31	00910448	30/08/2013
Pre-amplifier	Rion NH-21	02286	30/08/2013
Microphone	Rion UC53A	101792	30/08/2013
Calibrator	B&K 4231	3000377	21/12/2012
SLM Range	20 – 110 dB(A)		

File	Time Start (GMT)	Time End (GMT)	Cal Start	Cal End	Drift	Notes
1	13/09/2013 11:00	09/10/2013 10:00	93.9	93.8	-0.1	No significant drift

Data Exclusions
Data recorded at this location was excluded during periods of rainfall and during wind directions of between 155 and 270 degrees, as it was observed that under these wind directions, baseline noise measurements were marginally higher than during other periods. This corresponded to downwind conditions from the turbines at the farm and therefore minimised the influence of that source on the measurements.

Figure C4 View of the monitoring location at Drum Farm looking south west.



Figure C5 View of the monitoring location at Drum Farm looking west.



Figure C6 View of the monitoring location at Drum Farm looking north west.



Table C3 – Information on the measurement location, equipment and noise data at Gobagrennan.

Measurement Location	Gobagrennan
Measurement Location Description	<p>An individual residential property located to the east of the proposed development. The monitoring location at Gobagrennan was selected as being representative of the residential properties to the east of the proposed development, inland from the coast and in the vicinity of Lussa Loch.</p> <p>The monitoring position was located in the garden area of the property, approximately 15 m to the west of the residential building, approximately 20 m from the burn that runs to the north of the residential property and approximately 280 m to the west of the dam at the end of Lussa Loch. Forestry consisting of mature evergreen trees was located at a distance of approximately 100m to the west of the monitoring location. The monitoring equipment was situated on a small patio area in the middle of the garden at the request of the property owner. There were no acoustically reflective surfaces (other than the ground) within 3.5 m of the monitoring equipment.</p> <p>Noise sources that were audible at this location during installation and removal of the monitoring equipment included the breeze in the trees, water flow in the burn, occasional dogs barking, very occasional road traffic on the lane that runs past the property and birdsong.</p> <p>Due to battery failures at this location, the meter was restarted when the remaining meters were collected, therefore the monitoring at this location covered a slightly different period than the other monitoring positions.</p> <p>SLM Location:170591, 628598.</p>

Equipment	Type	Serial Number	Last Calibrated (UKAS)
Sound Level Meter	Rion NL-32	00630481	10/06/2013
Pre-amplifier	Rion NH-21	09098	10/06/2013
Microphone	Rion UC-53A	305115	10/06/2013
Calibrator	B&K 4231	3000377	21/12/2012
SLM Range	20 – 110 dB(A)		

File	Time Start (GMT)	Time End (GMT)	Cal Start	Cal End	Drift	Notes
1	13/09/2013 12:00	25/09/2013 03:40	94.0	93.8	-0.2	No significant drift
2	09/10/2013 11:10	12/10/2013 21:00	93.8	93.9	0.1	No significant drift

Data Exclusions
Data recorded at this location was excluded during periods of rainfall.

Figure C7 View of the monitoring location at Gobagrennan looking east.



Figure C8 View of the monitoring location at Gobagrennan looking west.



Figure C9 View of the monitoring location at Gobagrennan looking north.



Table C4 – Information on the measurement location, equipment and noise data at Corrylach.

Measurement Location	Corrylach
Measurement Location Description	<p>A residential property to the east of the proposed development site and adjacent to the north end of Lussa Loch. The monitoring location at Corrylach was selected as being representative of baseline noise levels at Corrylach and the holiday property at the north end of Lussa Loch.</p> <p>The monitoring position was located within the garden area at a distance of approximately 20 m from the residential property at Corrylach, approximately 80 m from the forestry (consisting of mature evergreen trees) to the west of the property and approximately 200 m from Lussa Loch. The monitoring equipment was positioned roughly in the middle of the garden area in order to be as far as possible from the burns that run along the north and south sides of the garden area, at distances of approximately 20 m and 25 m from the monitoring location respectively. There were no acoustically reflective surfaces within 3.5 m of the monitoring location.</p> <p>Noise sources that were audible at this location during installation and removal of the monitoring equipment included the breeze in the trees, chickens and a cockerel that are kept in the garden area of the property, and some water flow noise in the burns adjacent to the property.</p> <p>SLM Location: 170526, 630384.</p>

Equipment	Type	Serial Number	Last Calibrated (UKAS)
Sound Level Meter	Rion NL-32	01030533	19/02/2013
Pre-amplifier	Rion NH-21	08179	19/02/2013
Microphone	UC-53A	304789	19/02/2013
Calibrator	B&K 4231	3000377	21/12/2012
SLM Range	20 – 110 dB(A)		

File	Time Start (GMT)	Time End (GMT)	Cal Start	Cal End	Drift	Notes
1	13/09/2013 12:30	03/10/2013 09:00	93.9	93.8	-0.1	No significant drift

Data Exclusions
Data recorded at this location was excluded during periods of rain and periods that were identified from the time histories as being affected by water flow noise.

Figure C10 View of the monitoring location at Corrylach looking east.



Figure C11 View of the monitoring location at Corrylach looking south.



Figure C12 View of the monitoring location at Corrylach looking north.



## Annex D – Wind Speeds and Directions

Figure D1 Wind speed and direction range during all quiet daytime periods at Killocrow, Drum Farm and Corrylach.

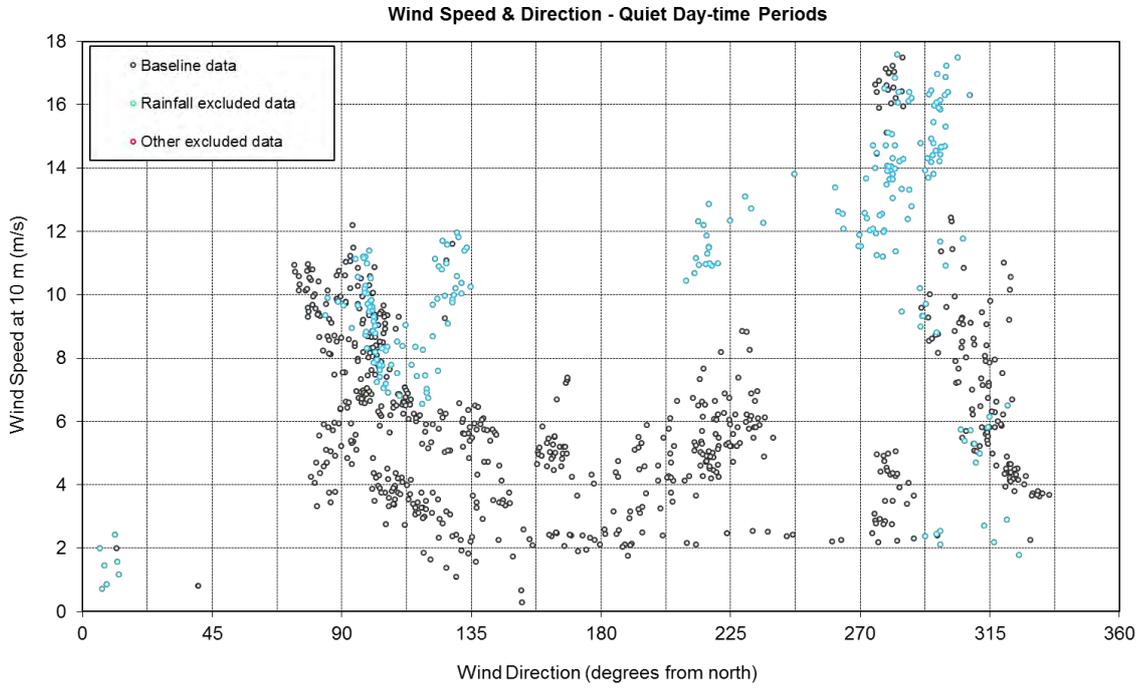


Figure D2 Wind speed and direction range during all night time at Killocrow, Drum Farm and Corrylach

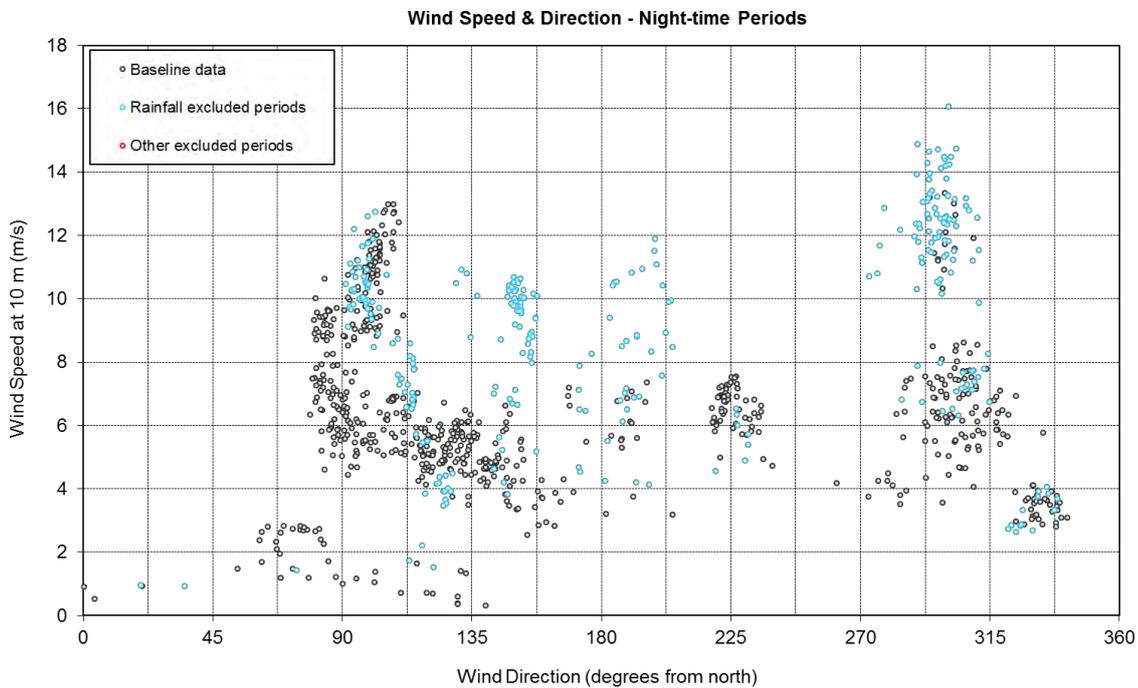


Figure D1 Wind speed and direction range during all quiet daytime periods at Gobagrennan.

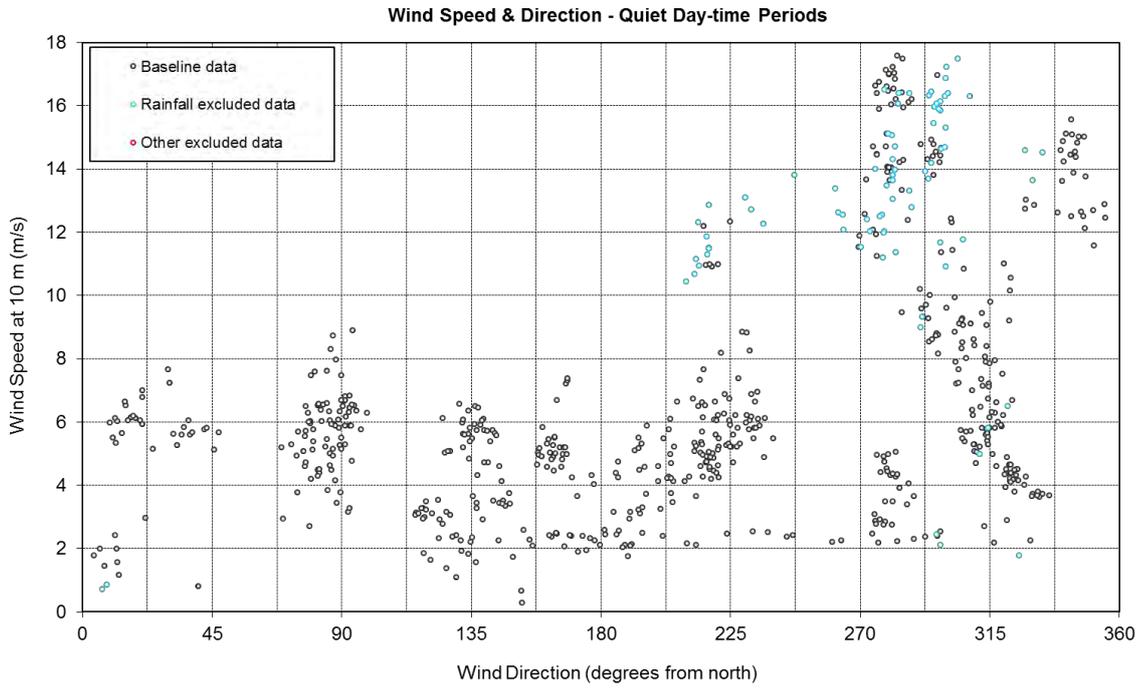
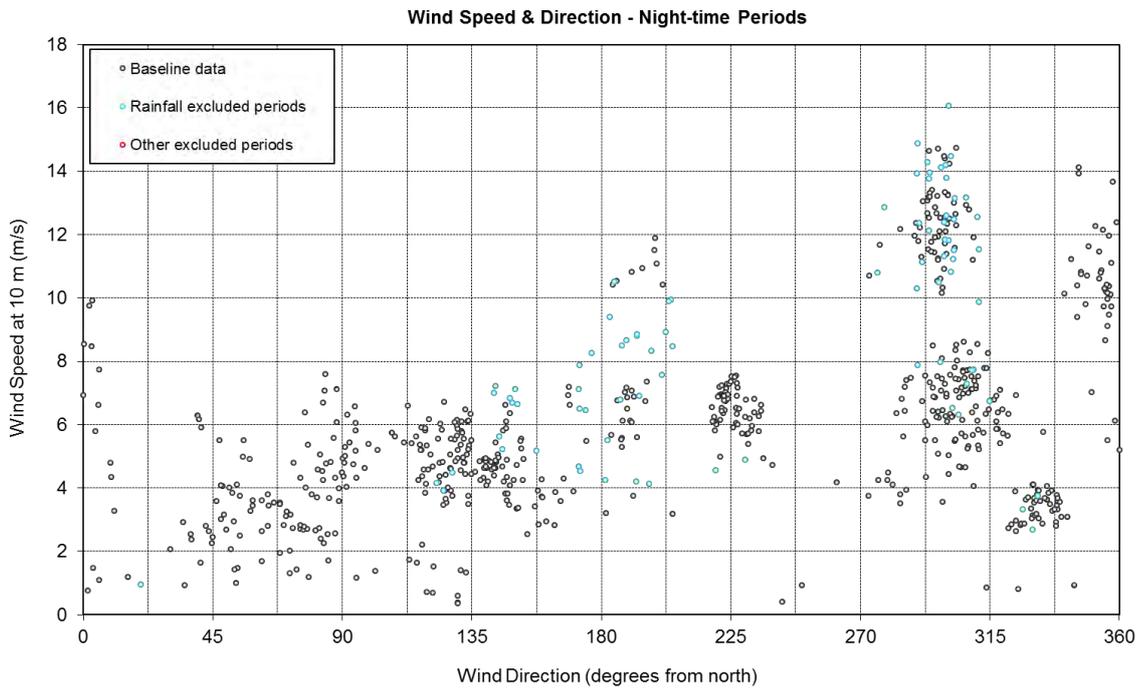


Figure D2 Wind speed and direction range during all night-time at Gobagrennan.



## Annex E – Background Noise and Noise Limits

Figure E1 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Breakachy during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

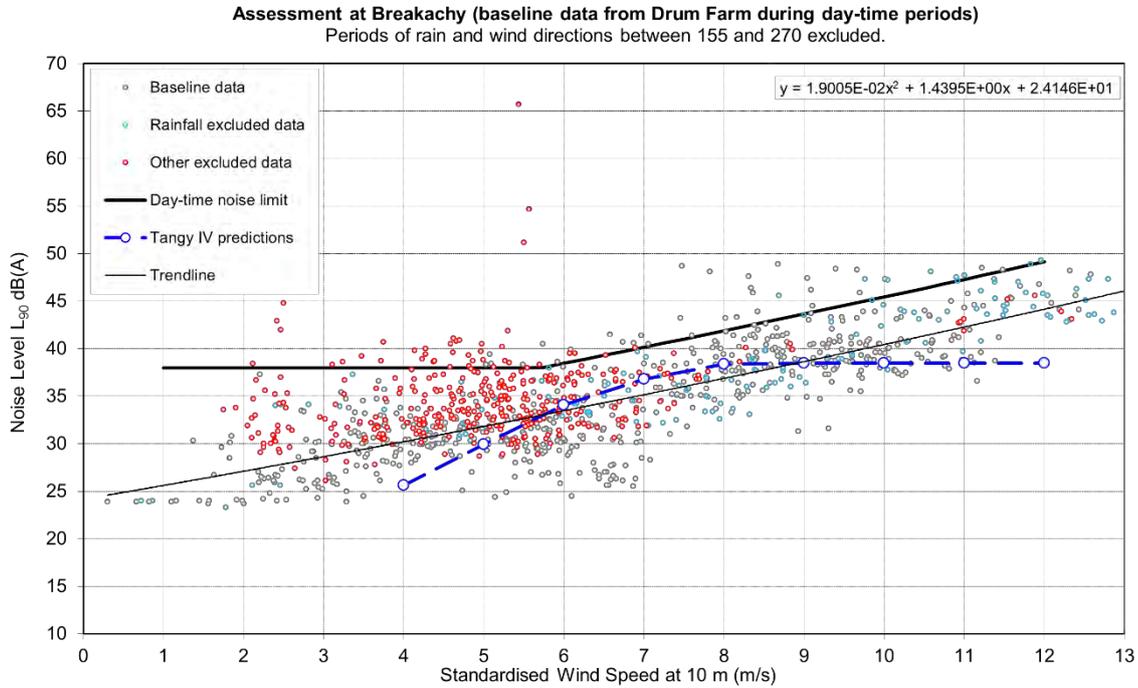


Figure E2 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Breakachy during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

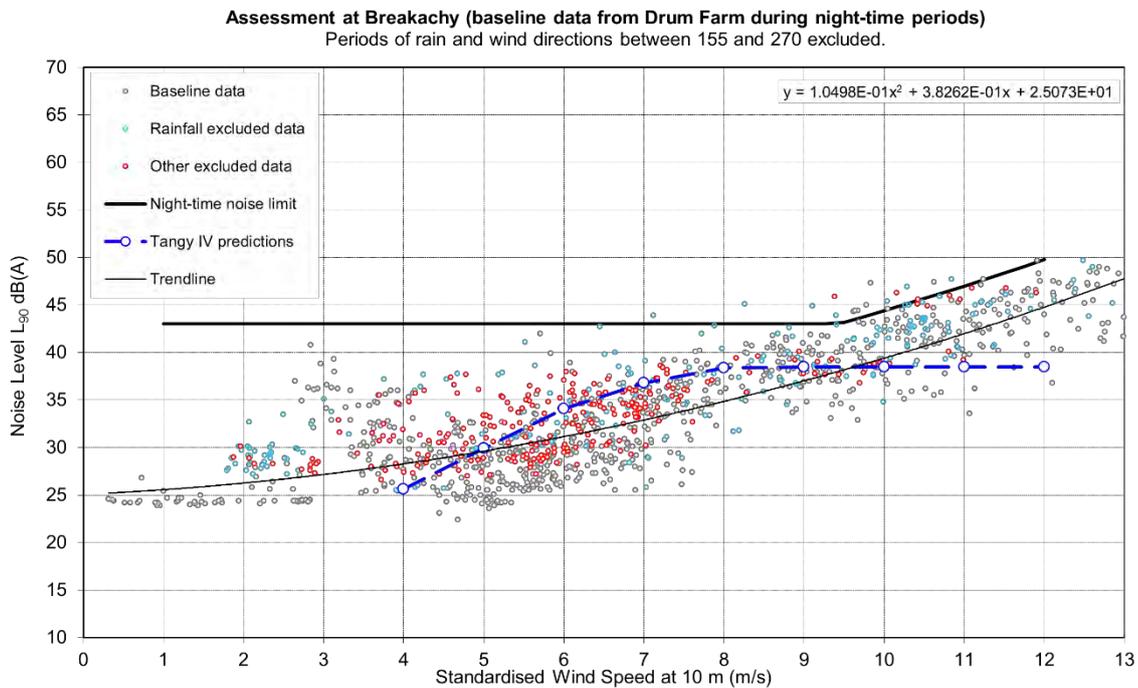


Figure E3 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Corrylach during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development and the other wind farm considered and the cumulative total.

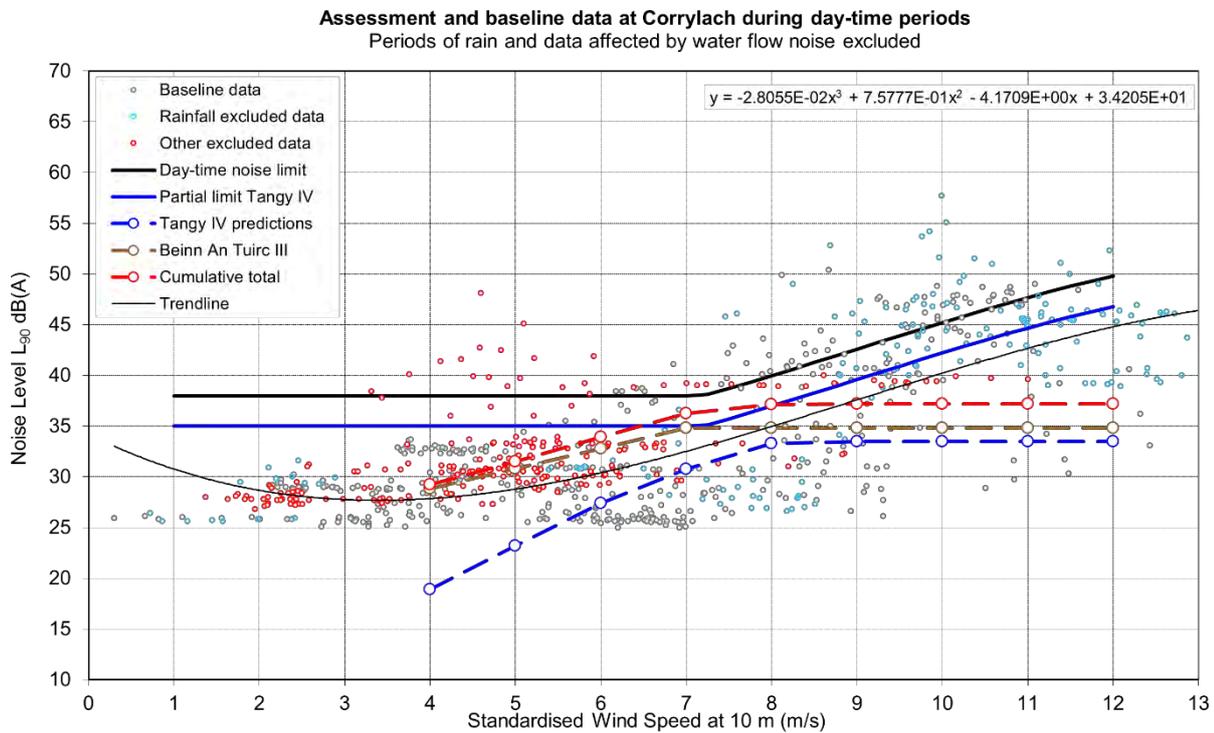


Figure E4 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Corrylach during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development and the other wind farm considered and the cumulative total.

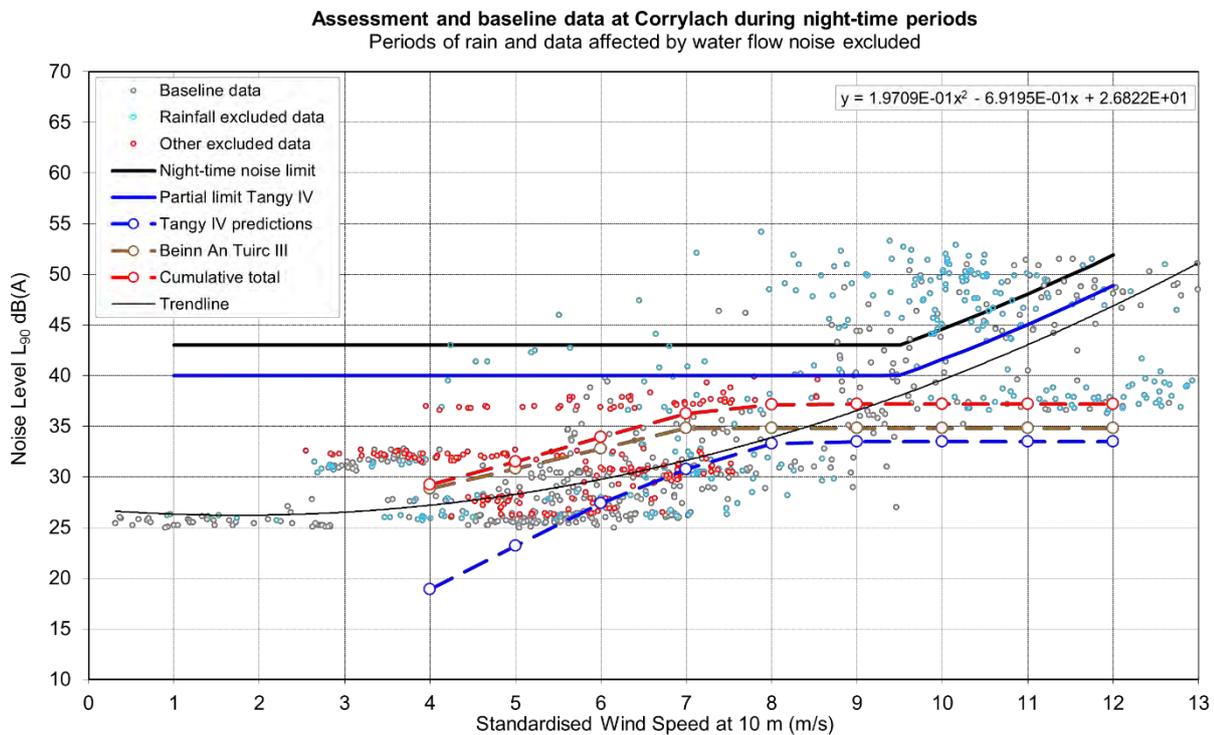


Figure E5 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Drumalea during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

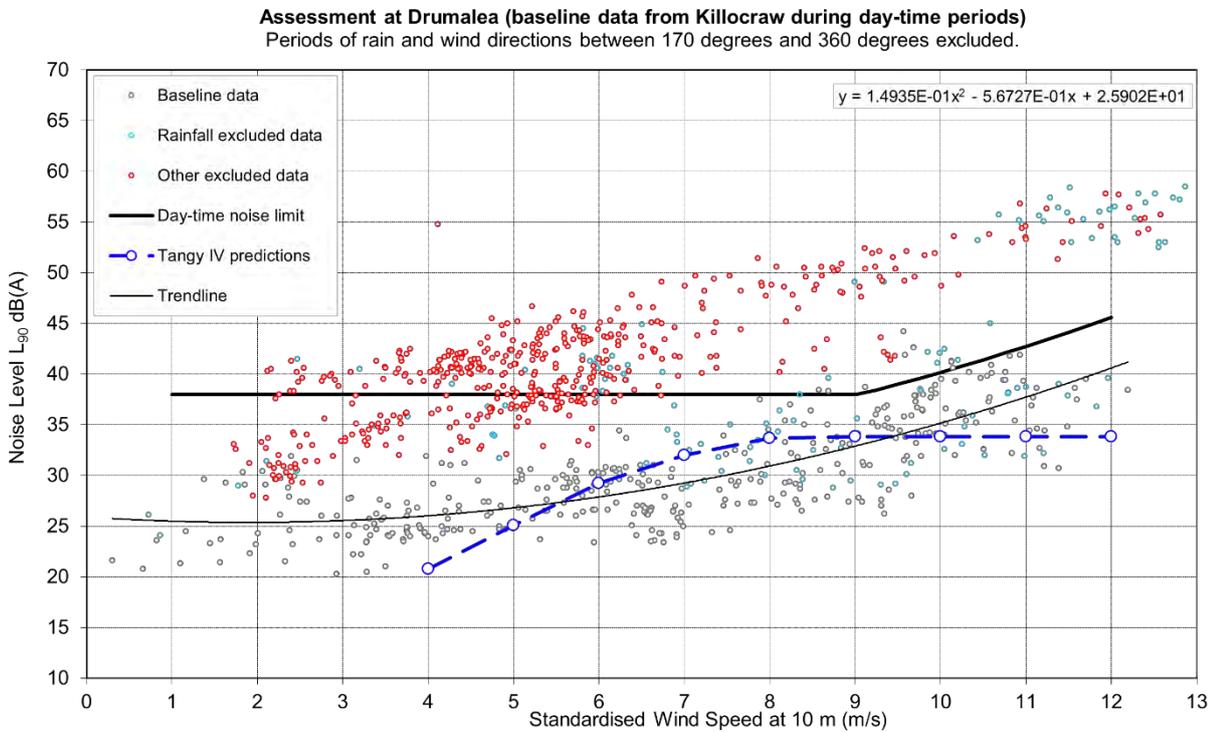


Figure E6 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Drumalea during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

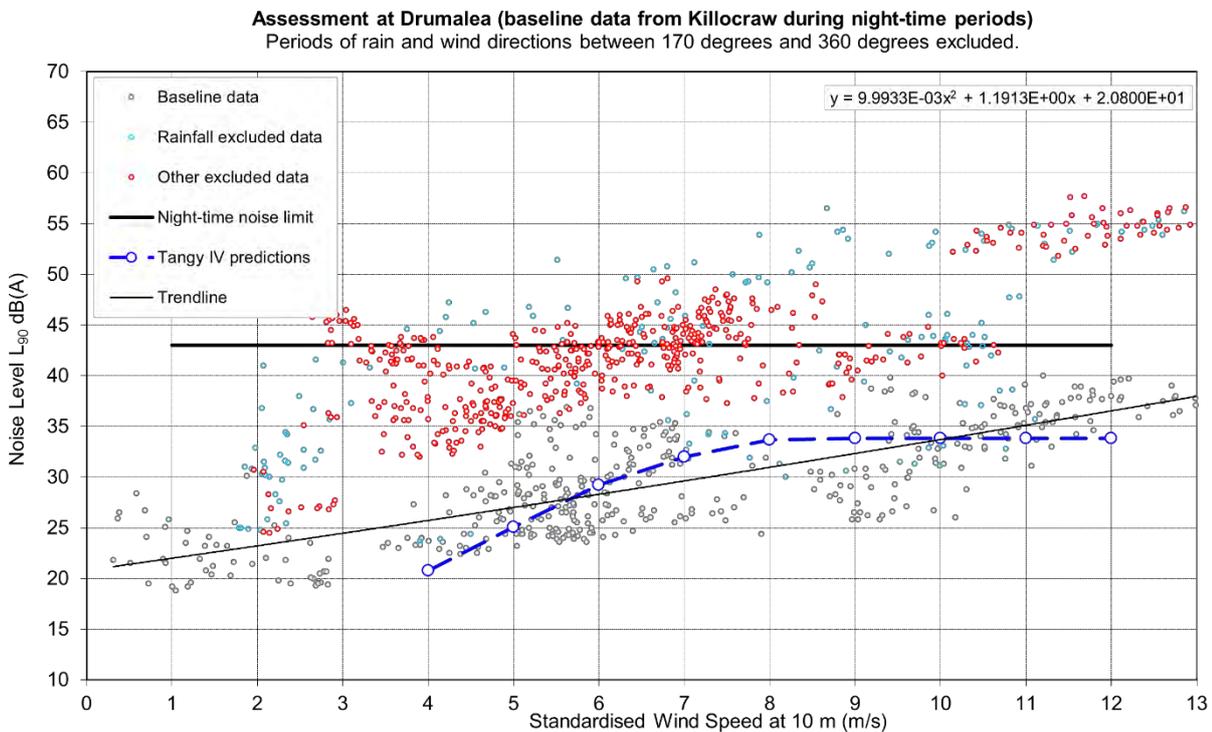


Figure E7 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Gobagrennan during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development and the other wind farm considered and the cumulative total.

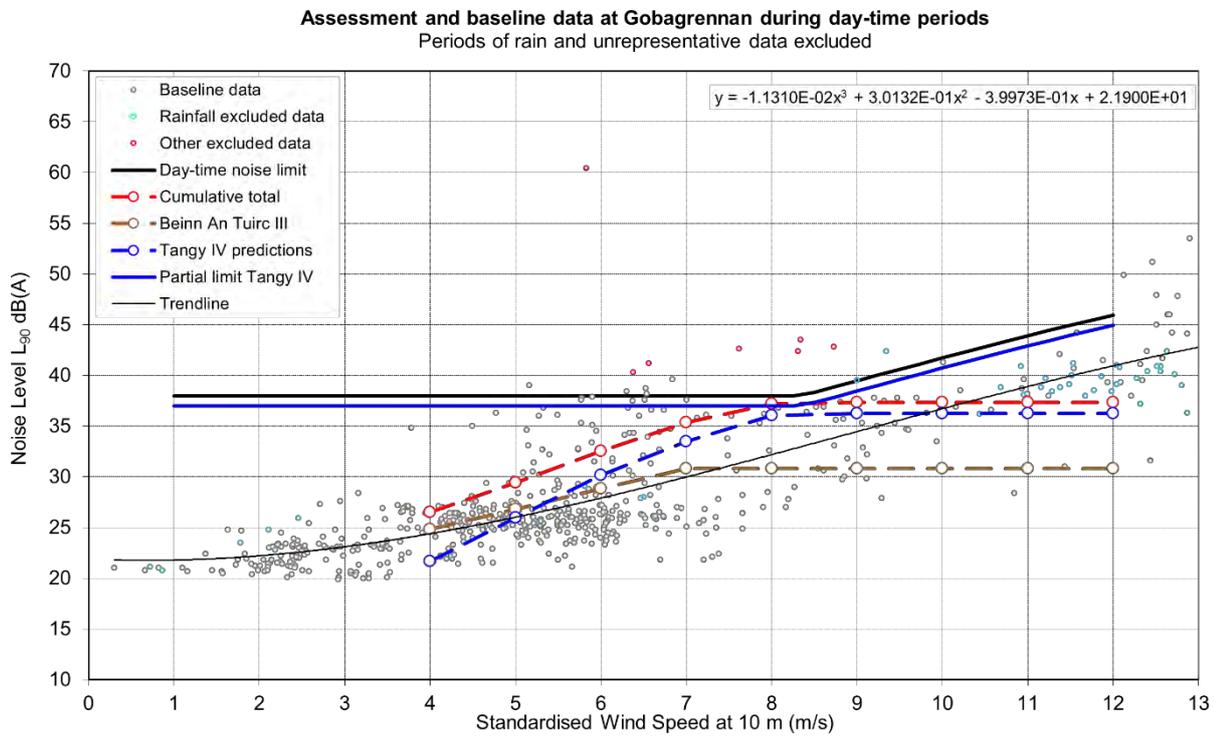


Figure E8 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Gobagrennan during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development and the other wind farm considered and the cumulative total.

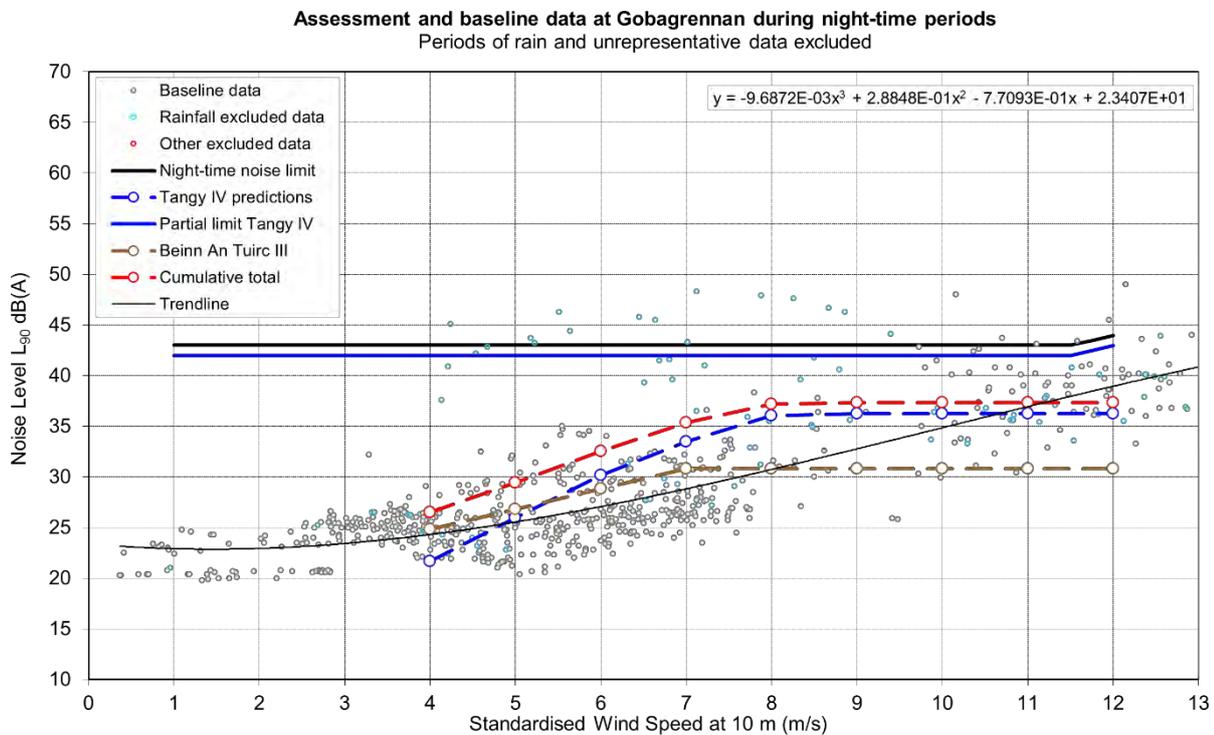


Figure E9 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Hazels Cottage during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

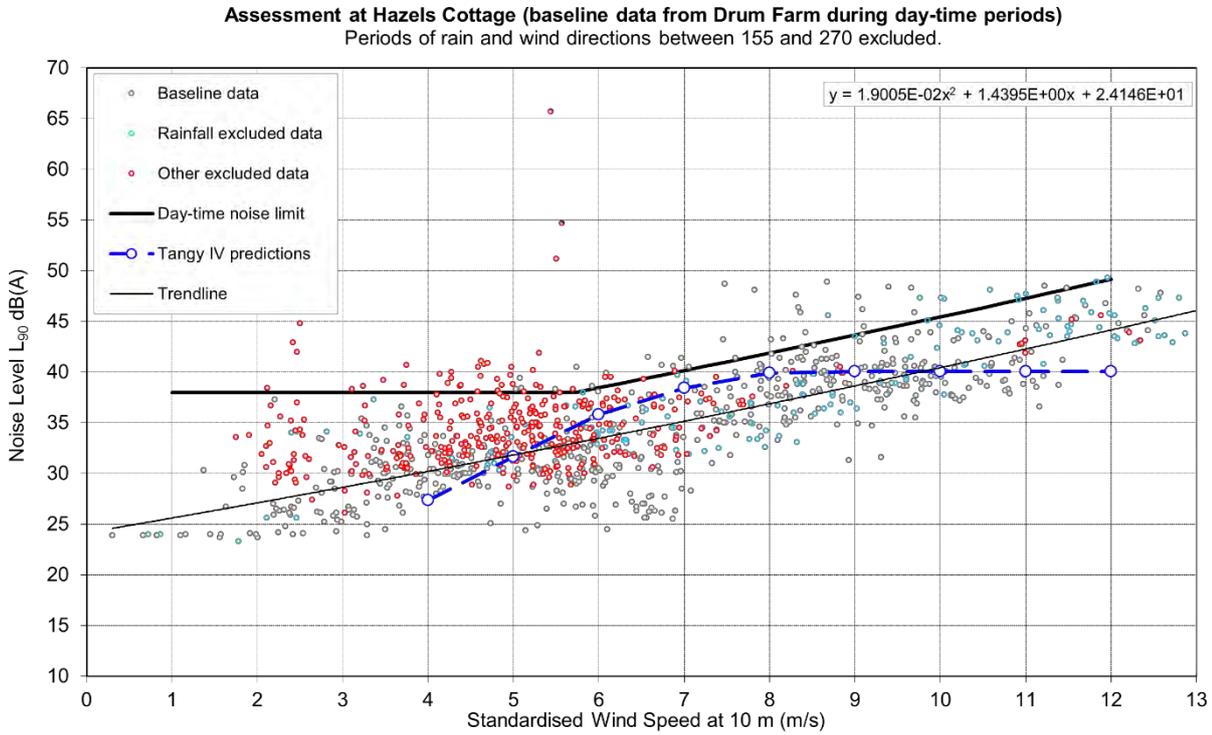


Figure E10 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Hazels Cottage during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

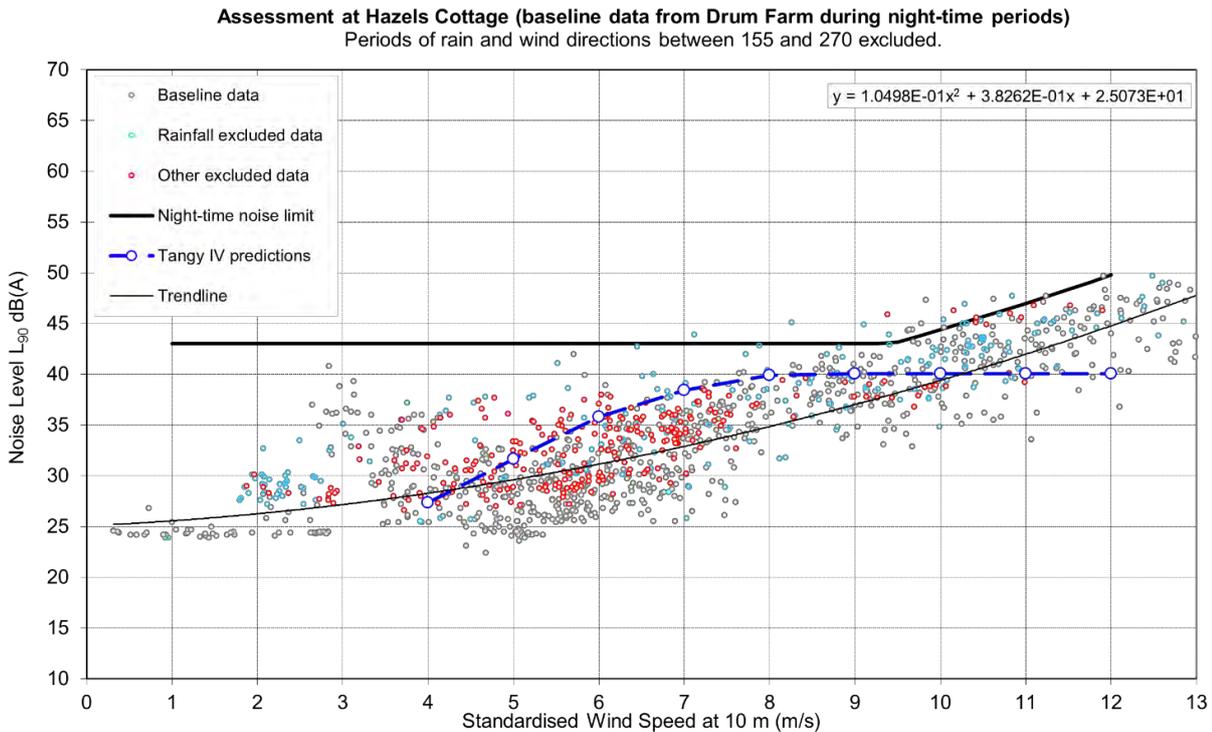


Figure E11 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for High Ballevain Cottage during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

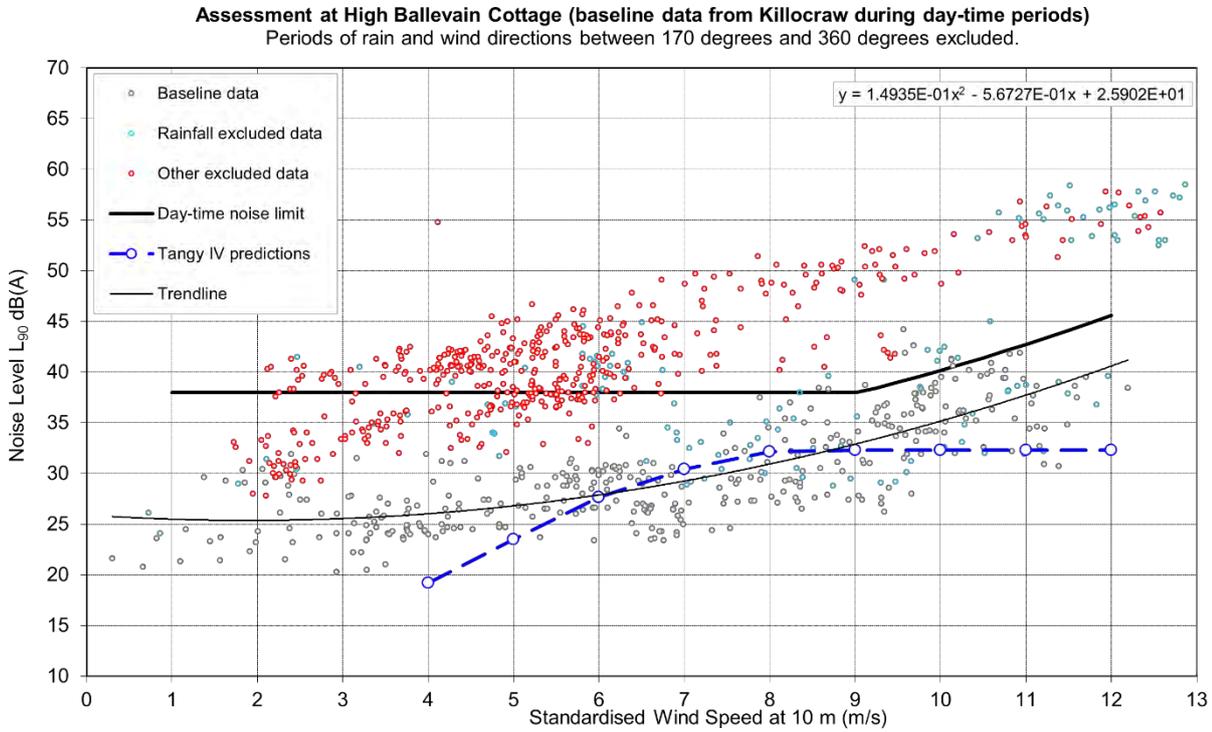


Figure E12 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for High Ballevain Cottage during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

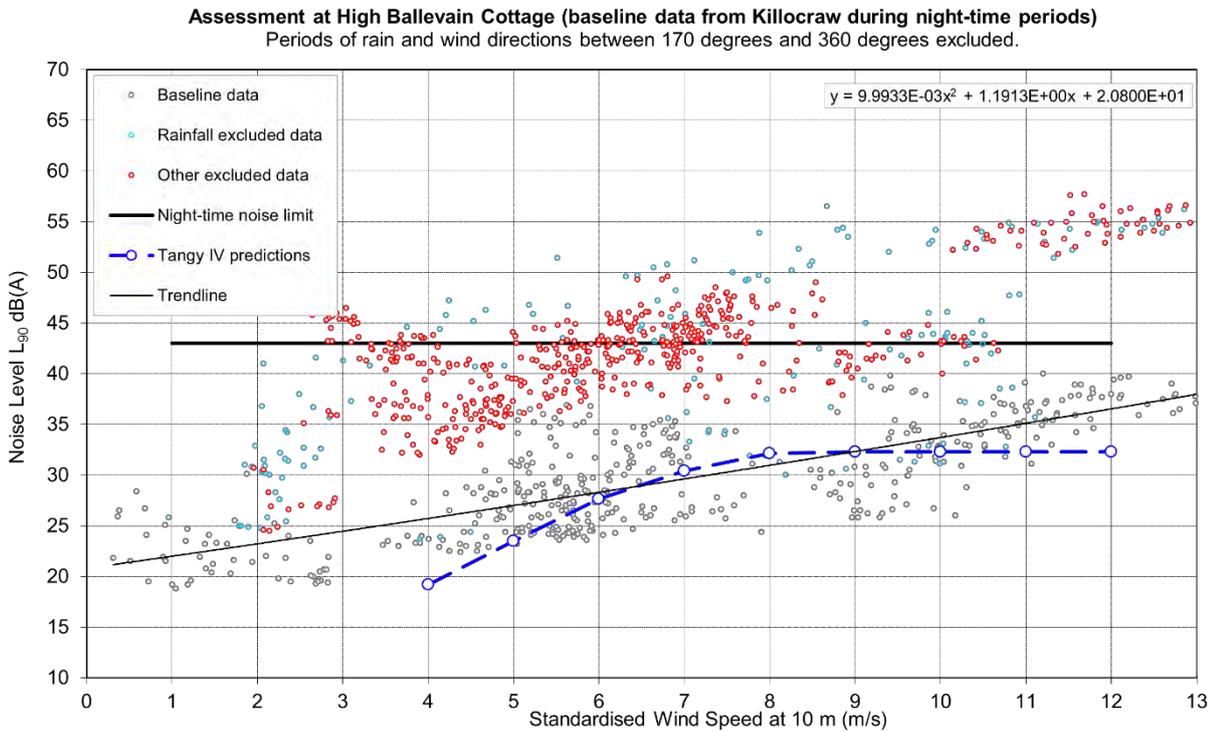


Figure E13 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Killarow during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

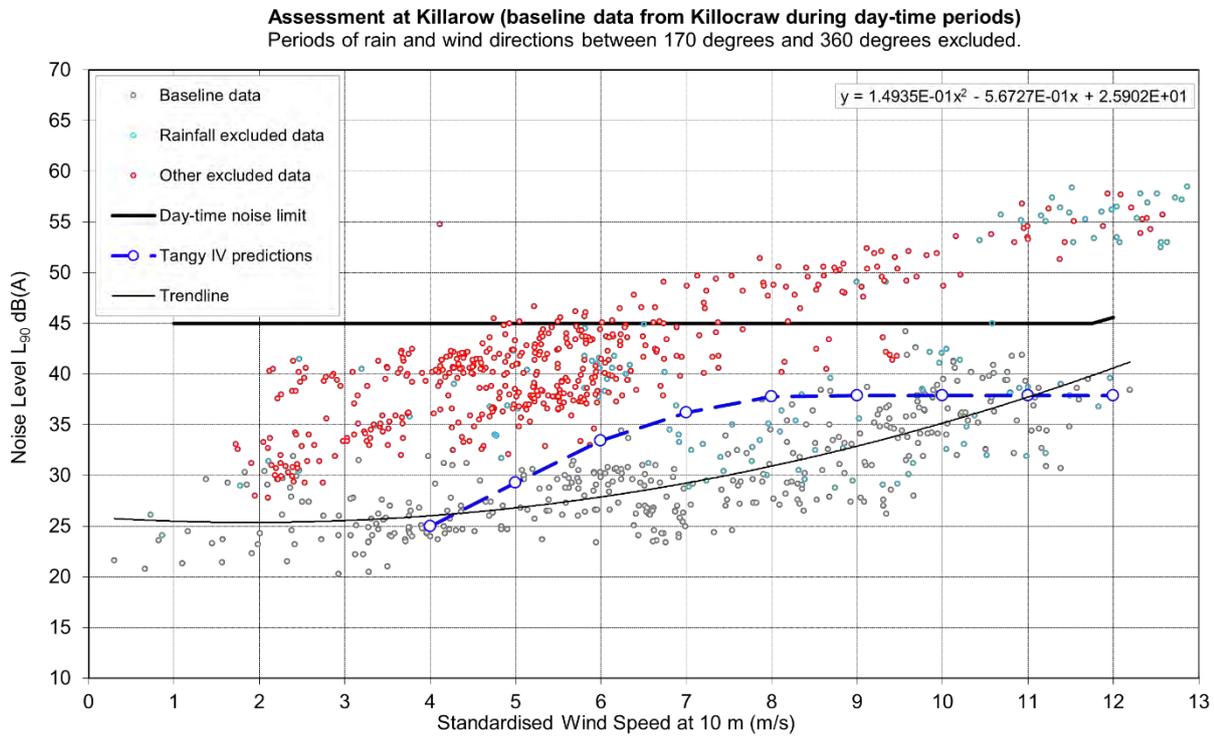


Figure E14 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Killarow during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

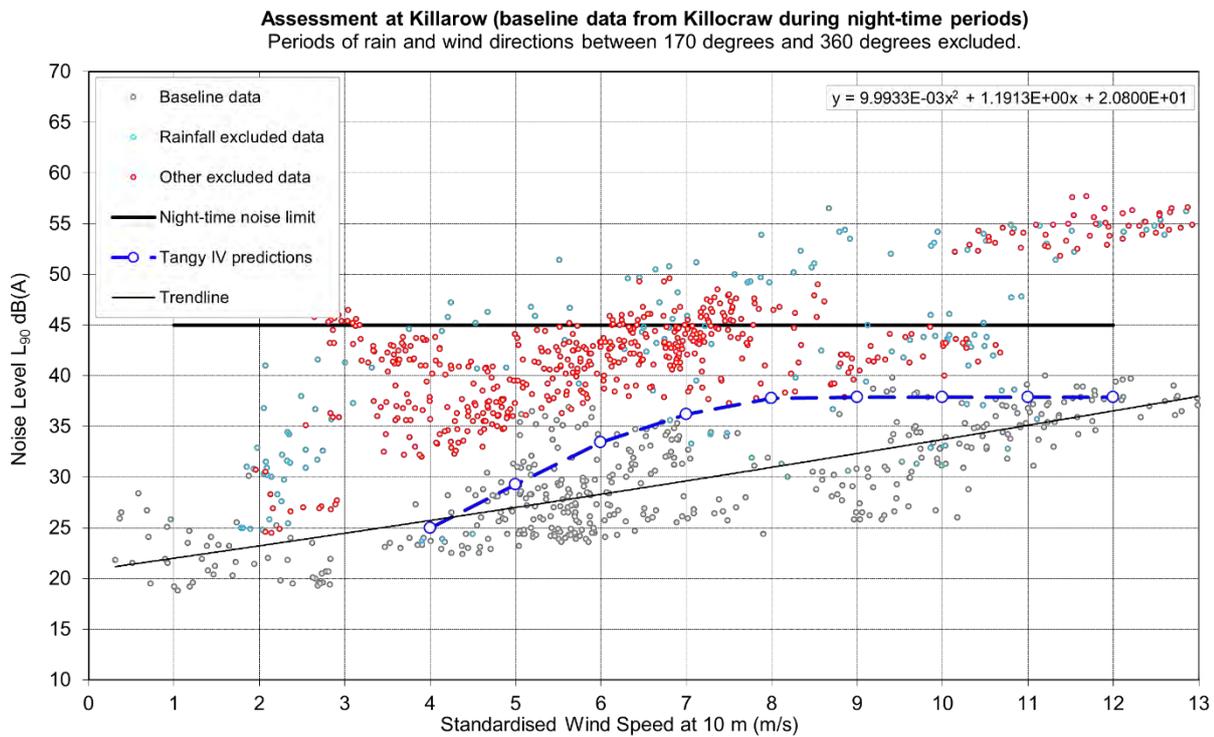


Figure E15 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Killocrow during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

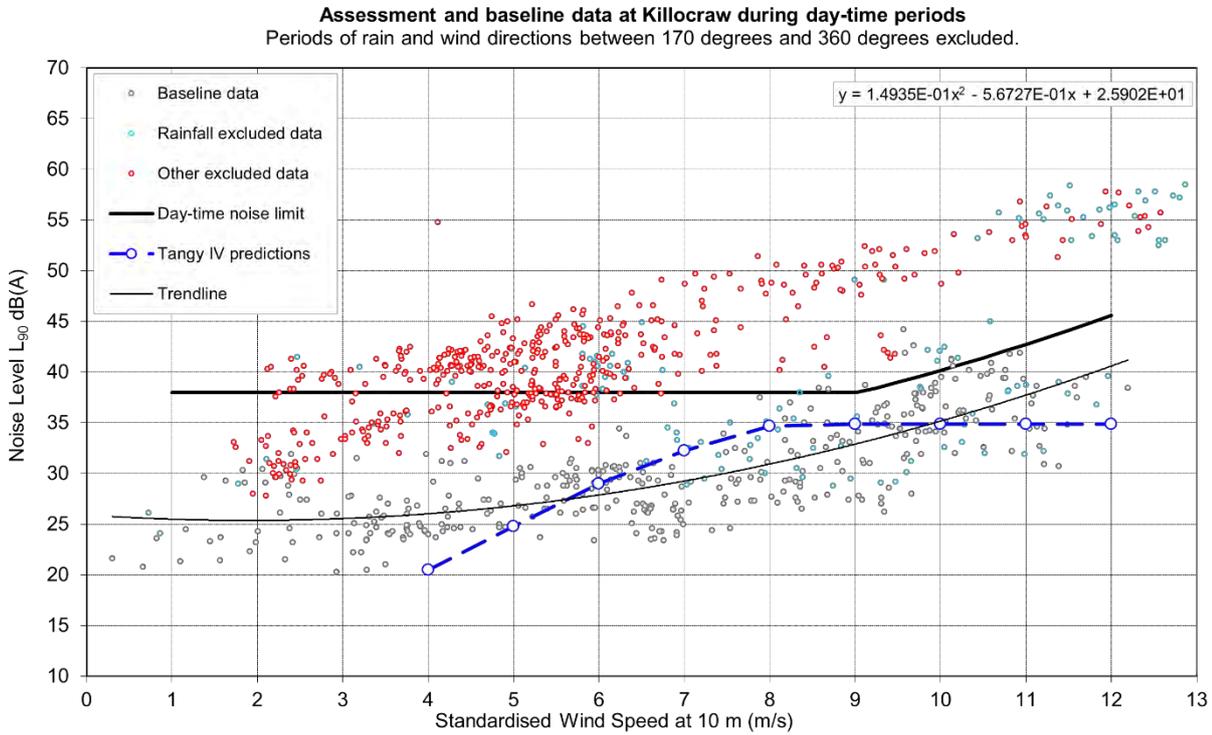


Figure E16 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Killocrow during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

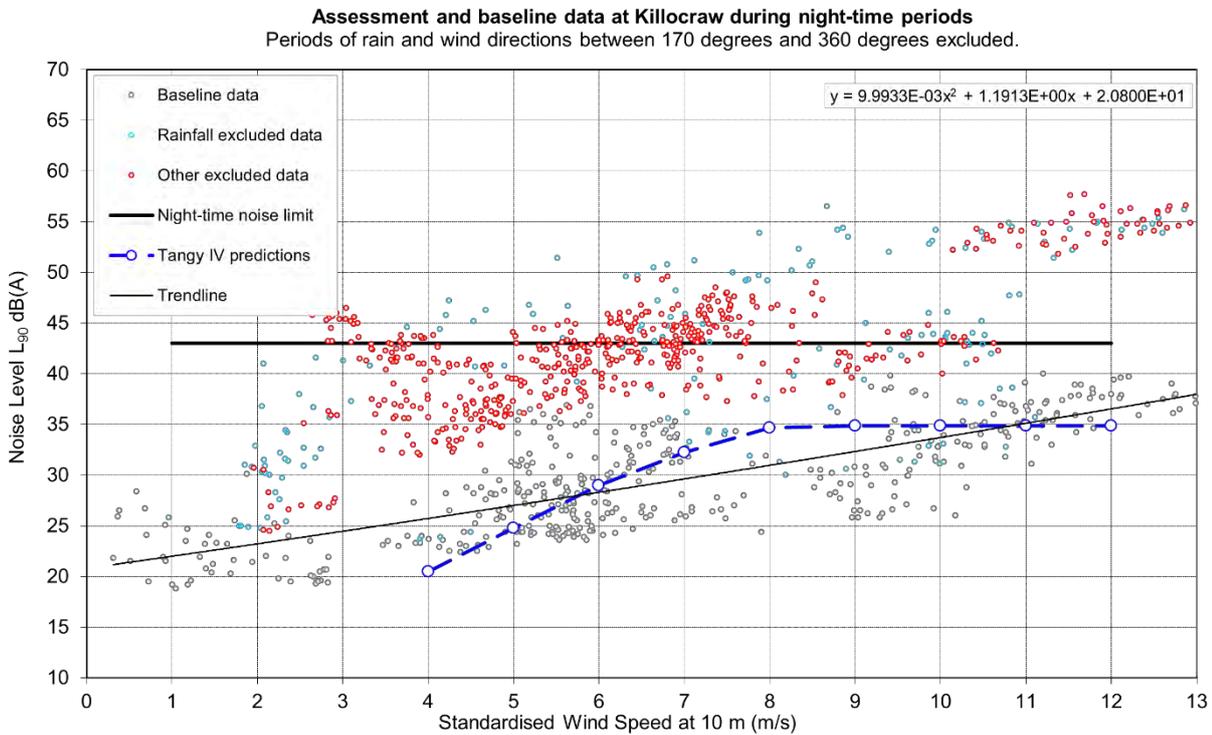


Figure E17 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for South Lagalgarve during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

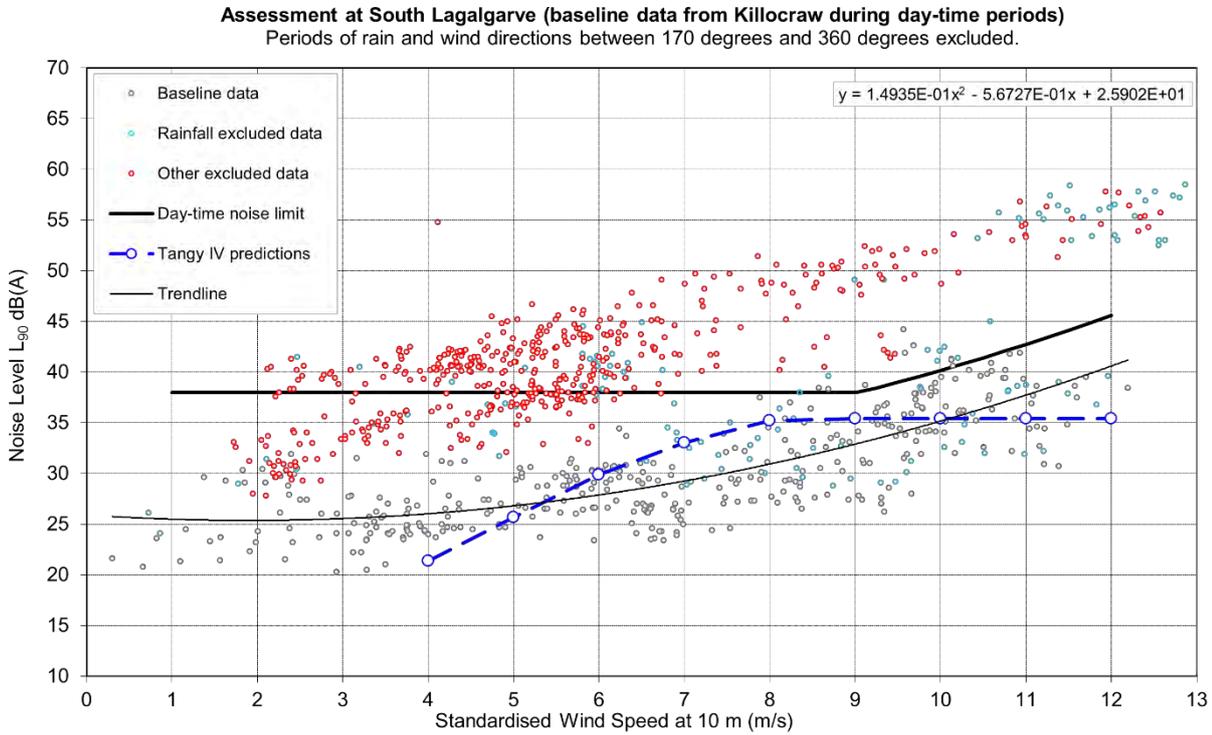


Figure E18 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for South Lagalgarve during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

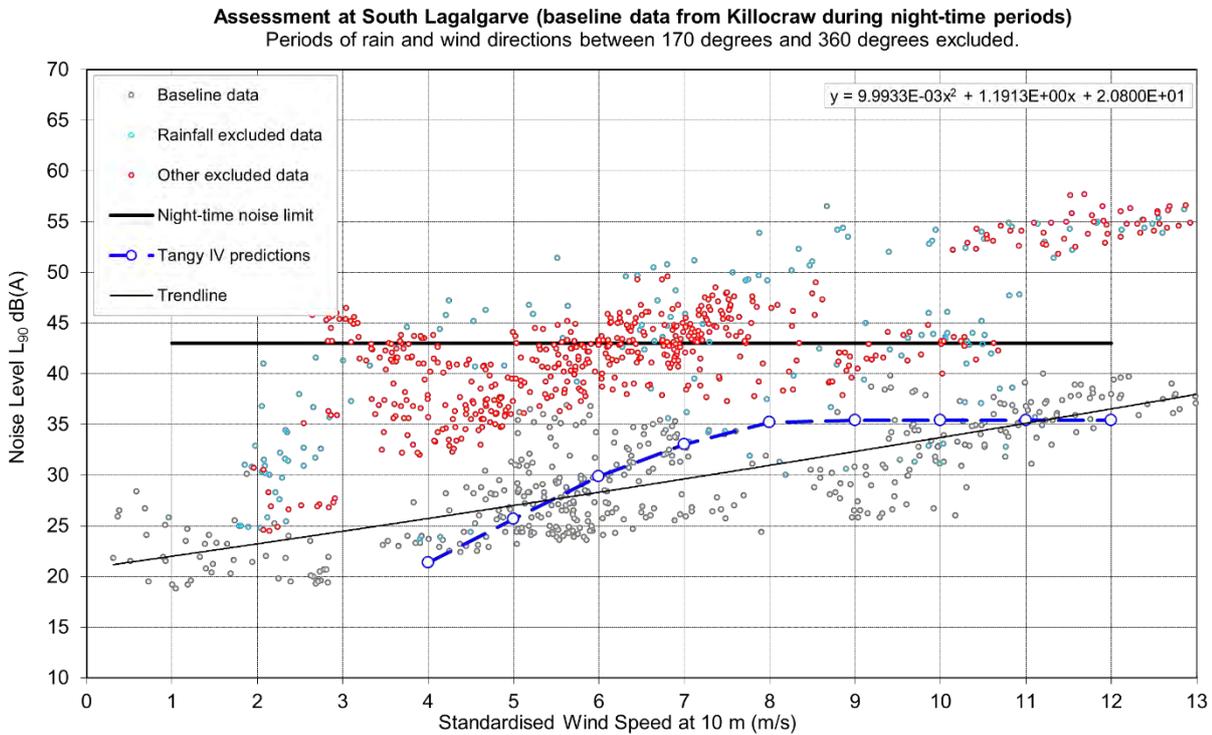


Figure E19 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangy Farm during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

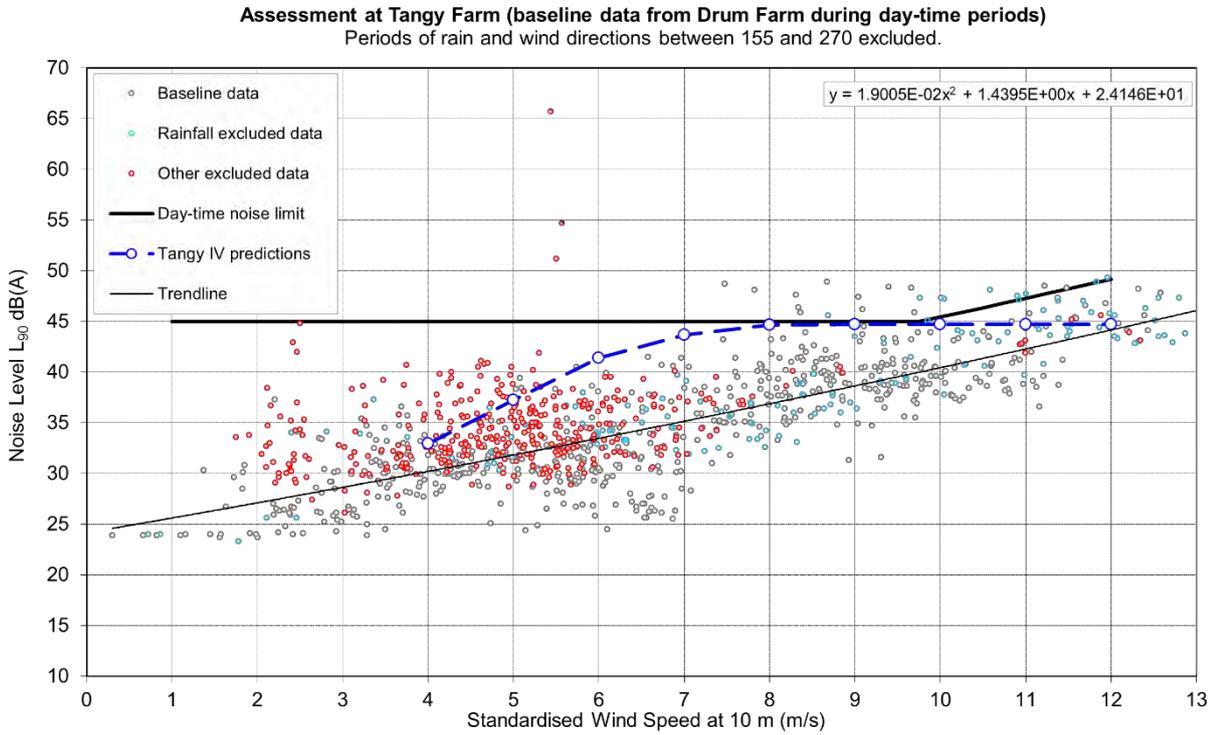


Figure E20 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangy Farm during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

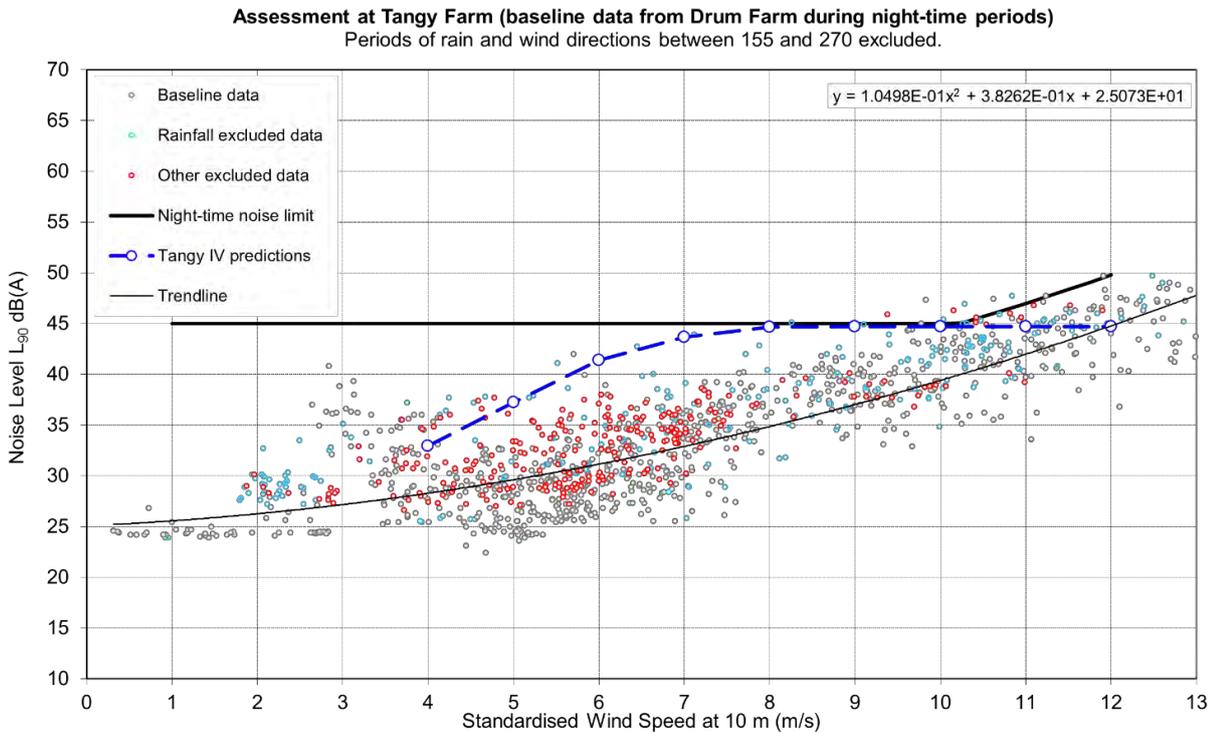


Figure E21 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangy Glen Cottages during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development

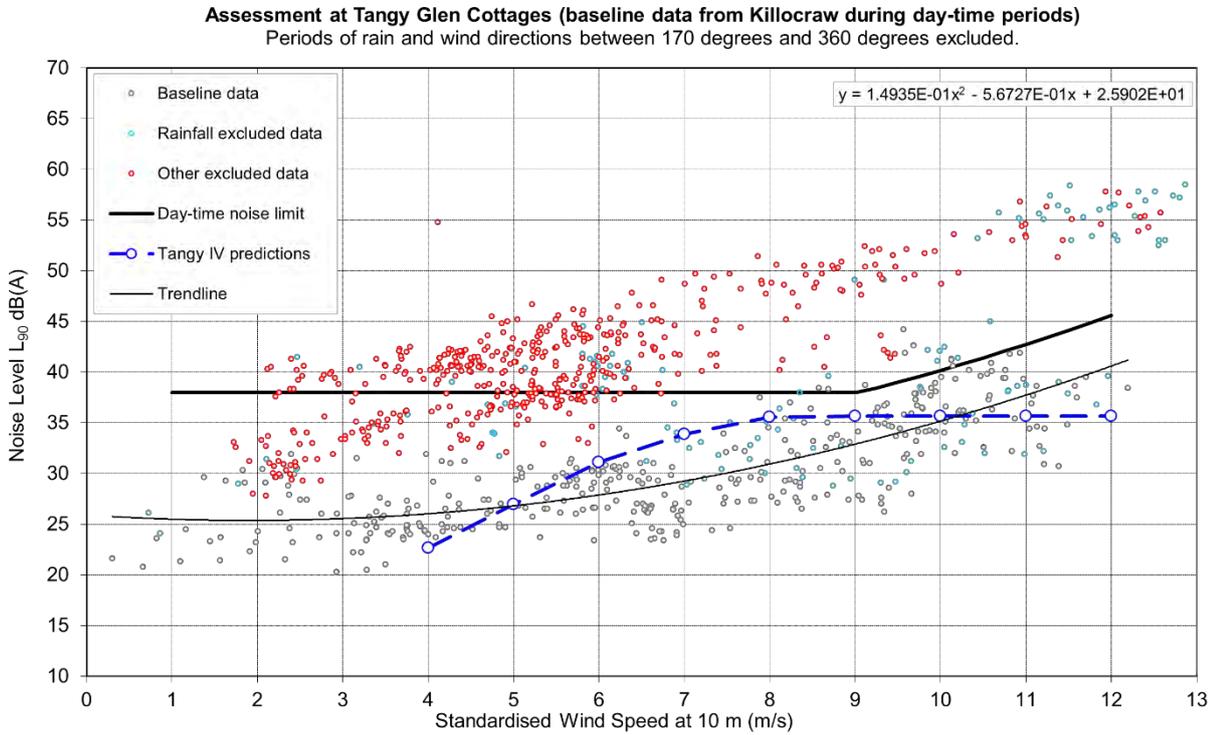


Figure E22 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangy Glen Cottages during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

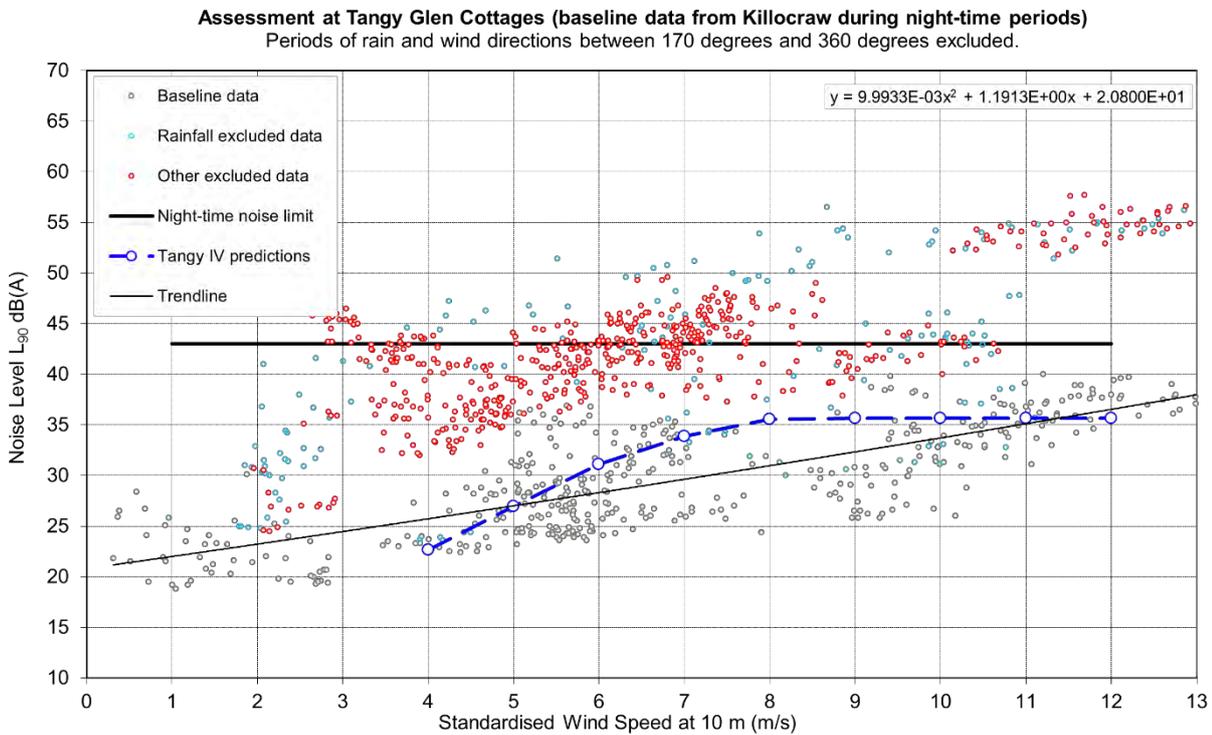


Figure E23 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangy Mill during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

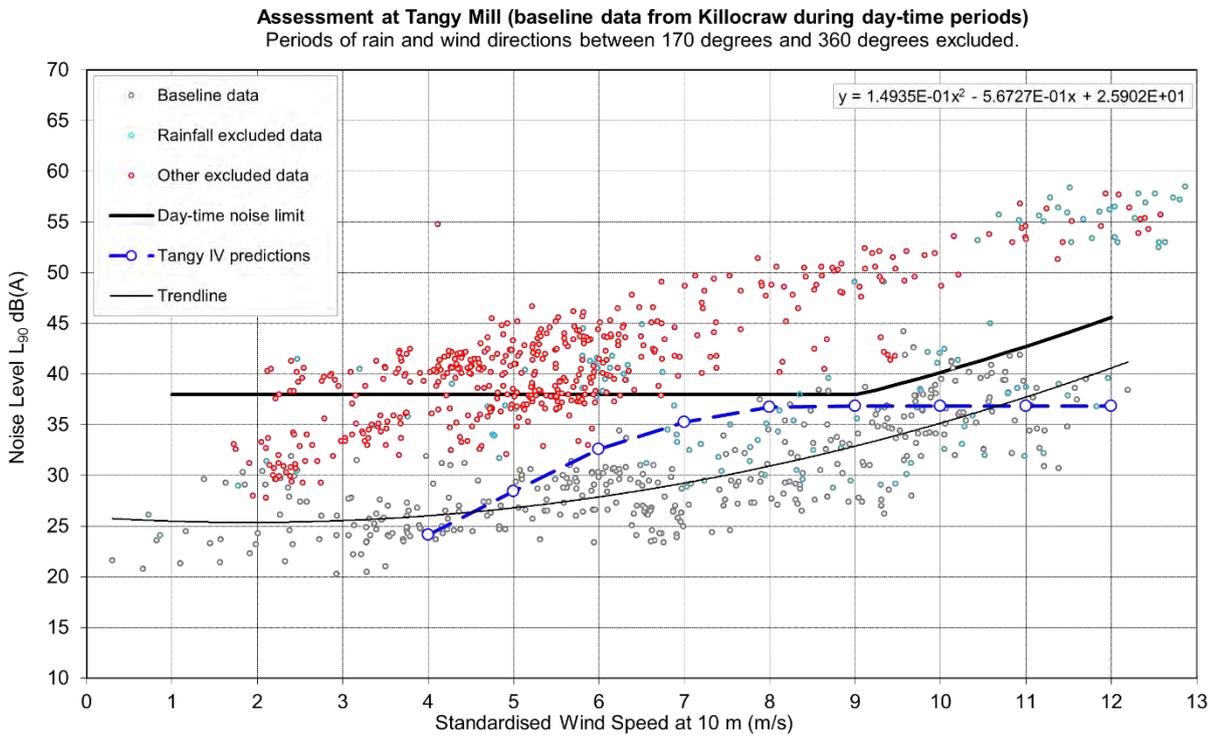


Figure E24 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangy Mill during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

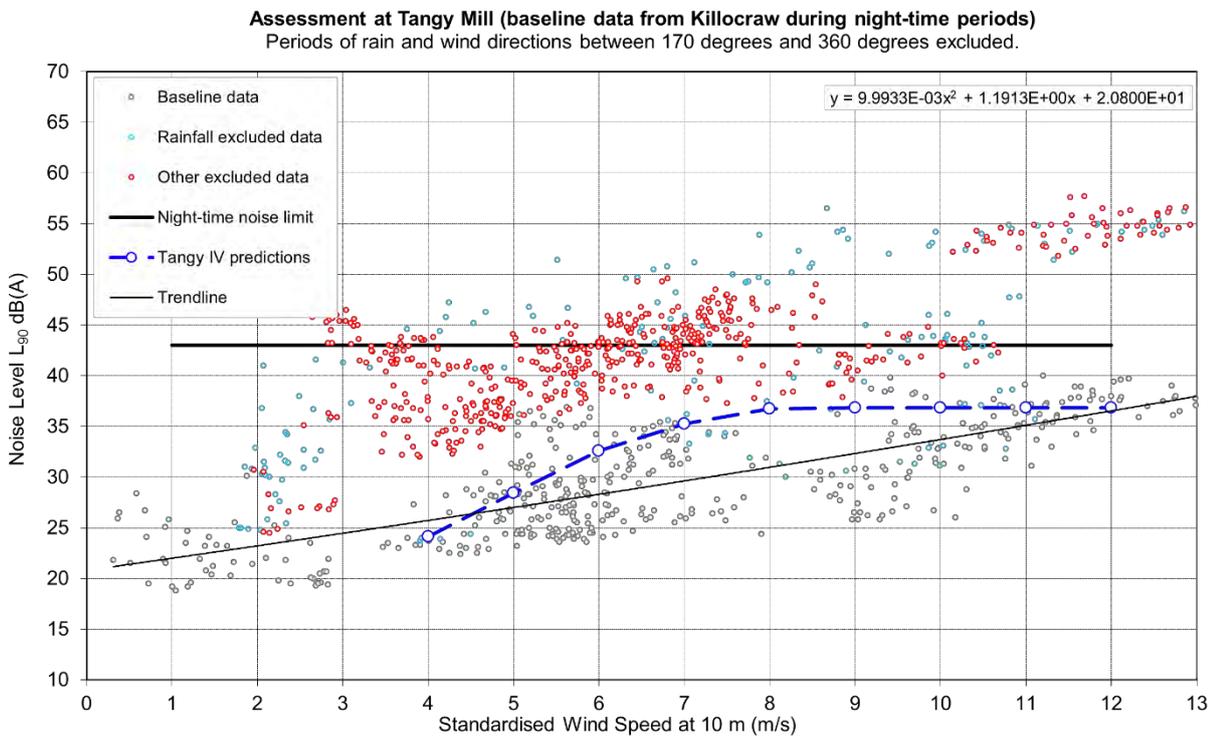


Figure E25 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangy Mill Croft during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

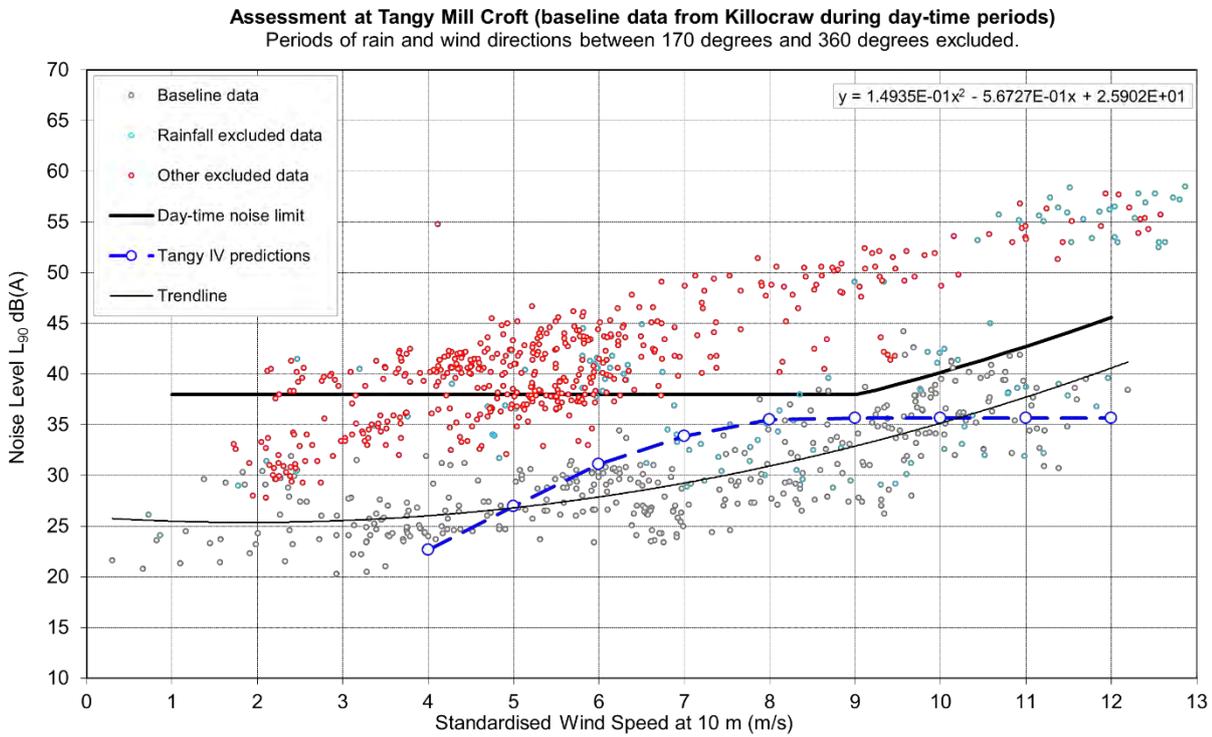


Figure E26 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangy Mill Croft during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

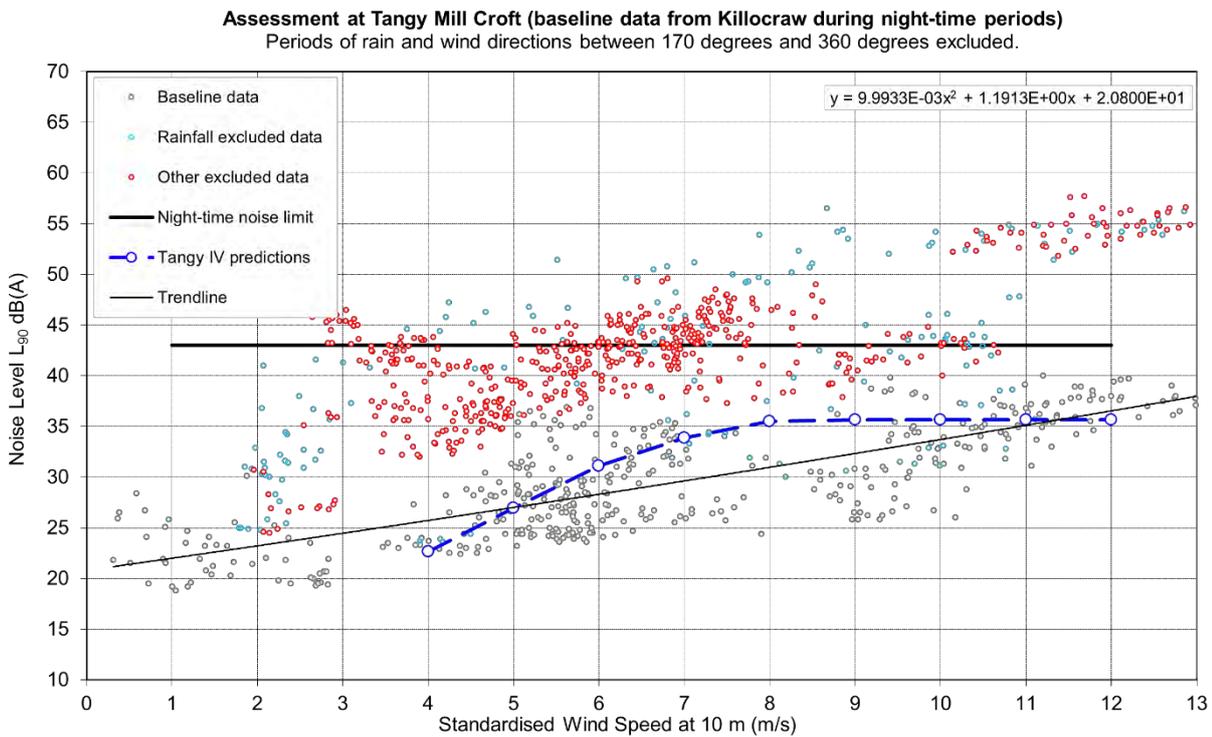


Figure E27 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangylee during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

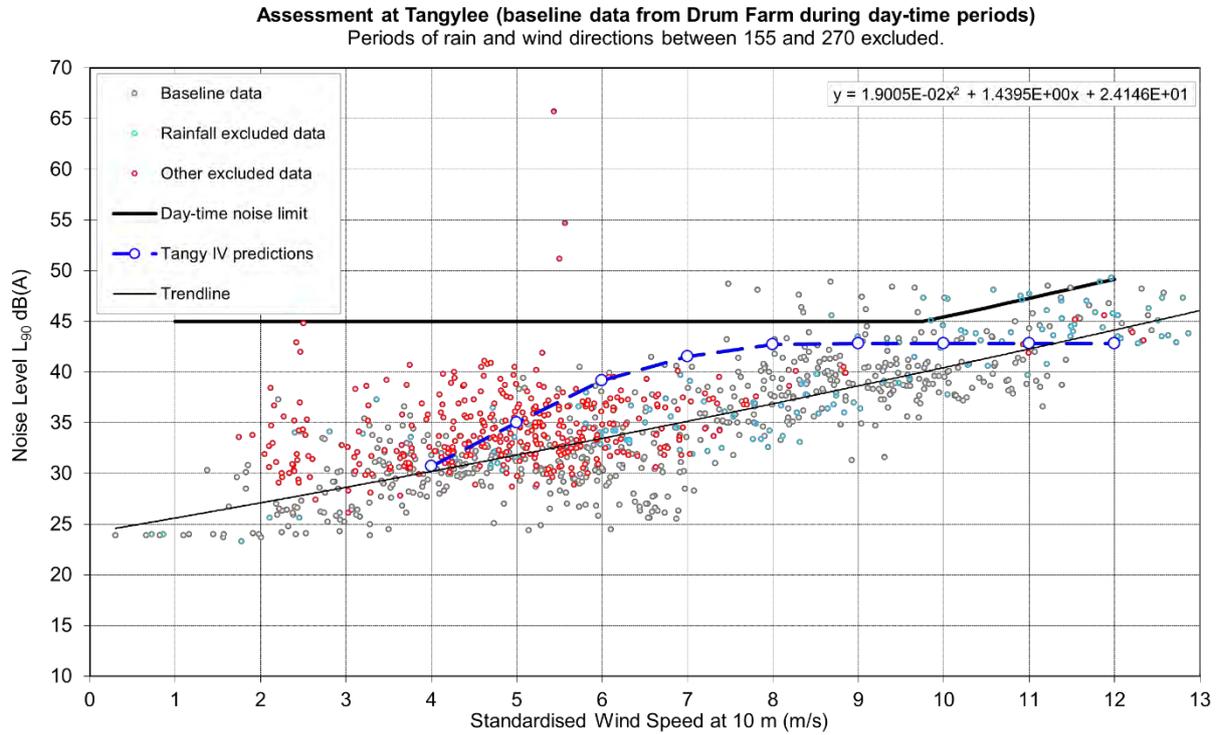


Figure E28 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangylee during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

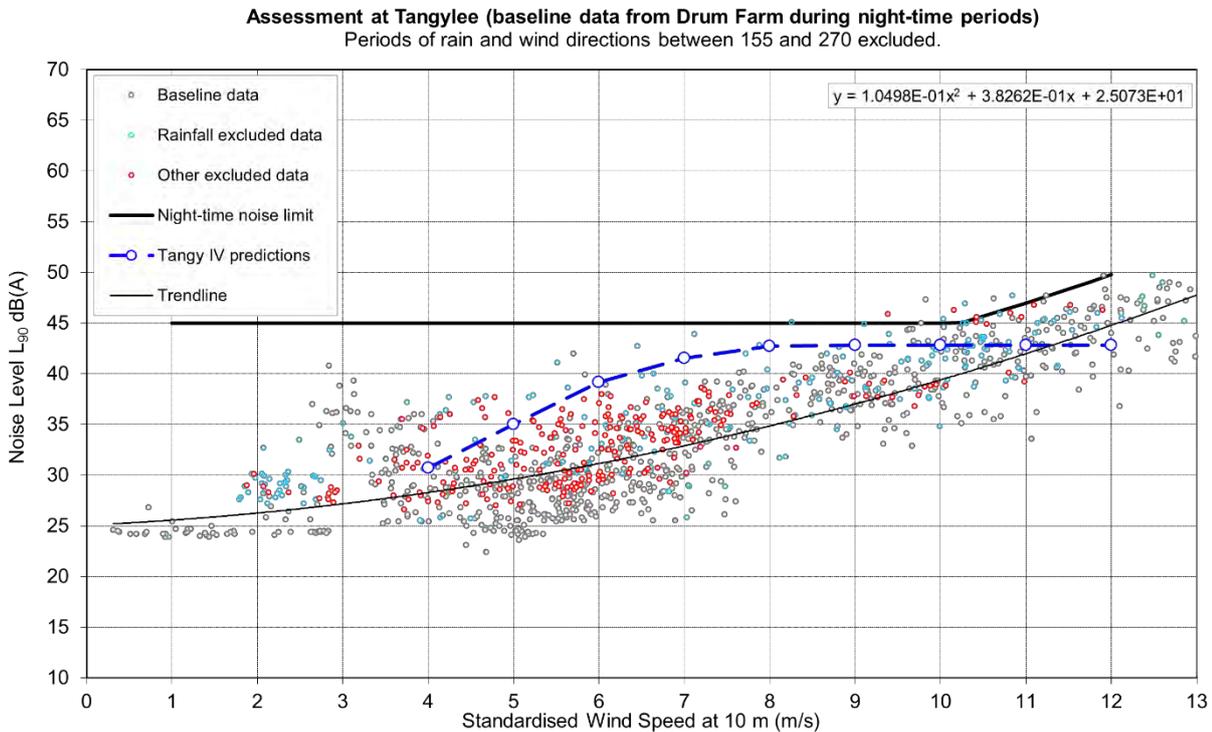


Figure E29 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangymoil during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

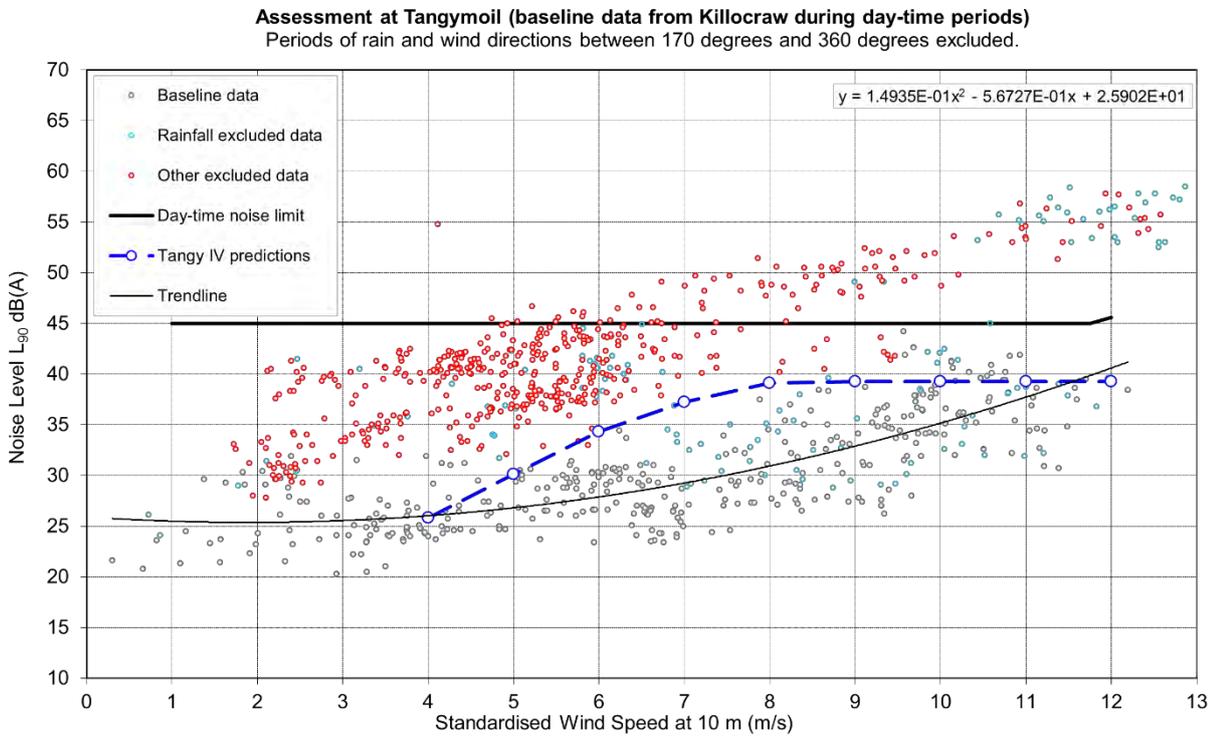


Figure E30 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tangymoil during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

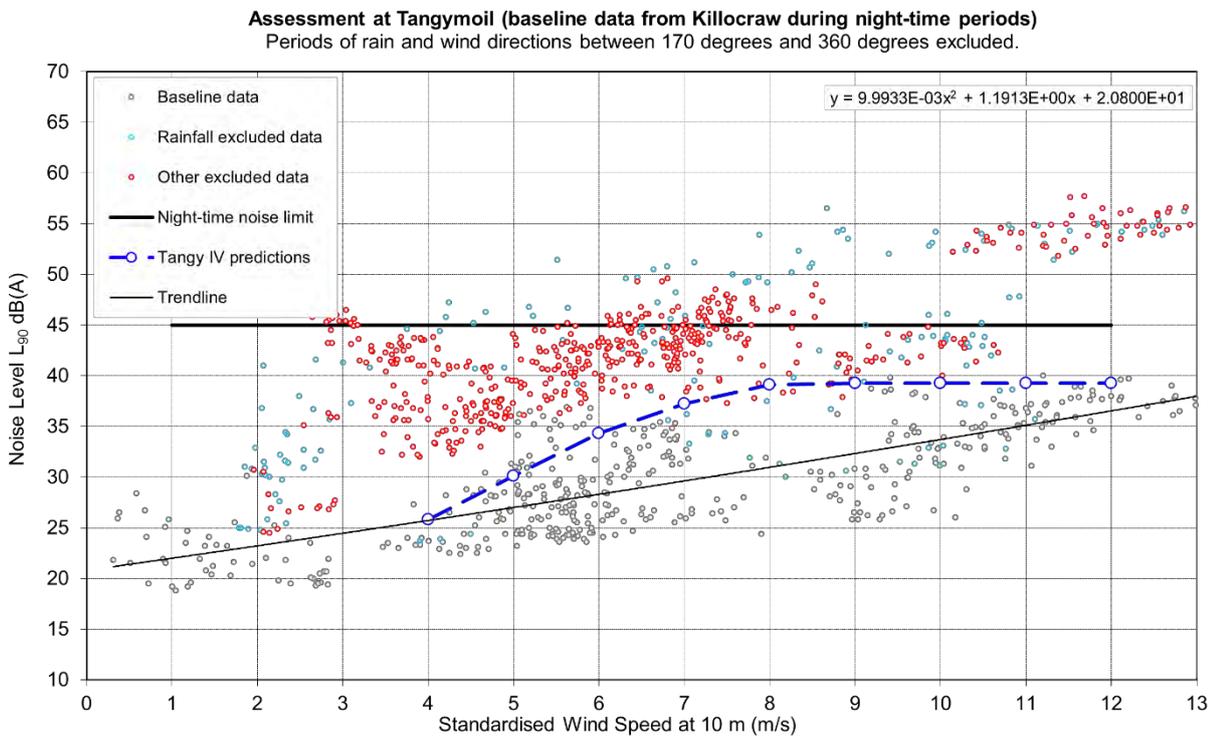


Figure E31 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tigh na Mara during quiet day time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.

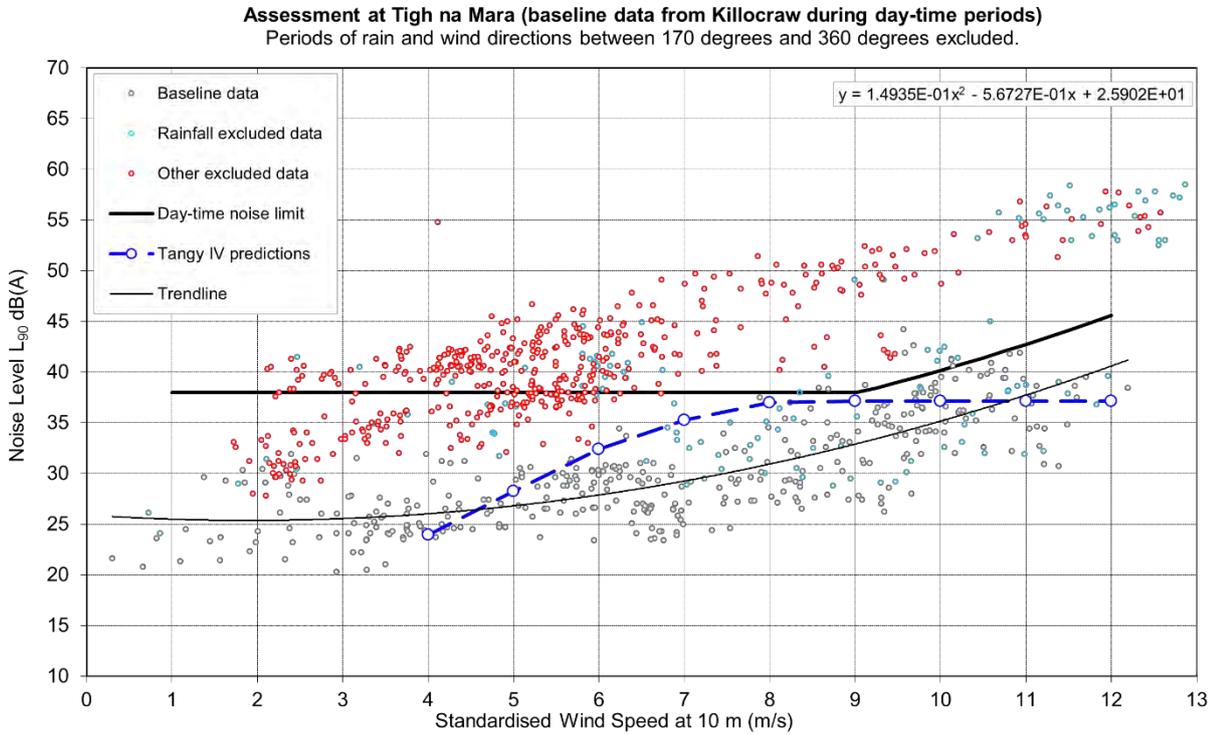
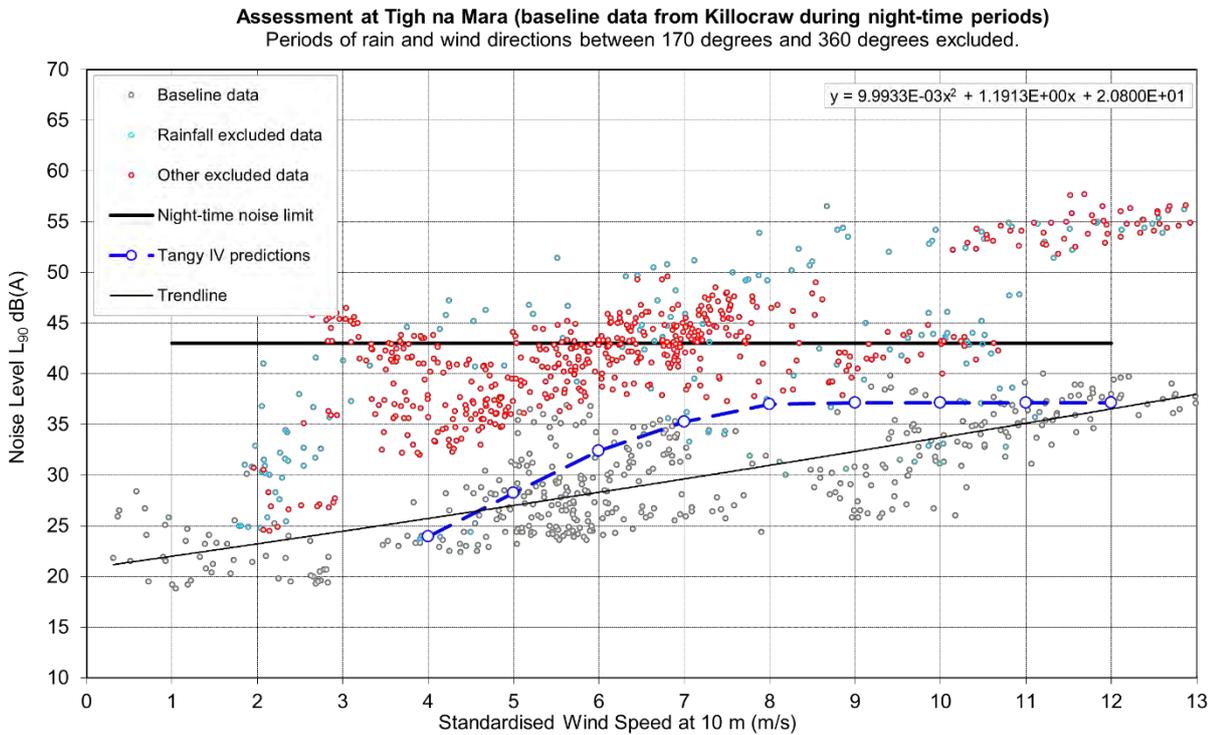


Figure E32 Chart of background noise levels against wind speeds, the best fit curve to the data, the derived noise limit curve for Tigh na Mara during night time periods. Predicted immission noise levels are also shown for the proposed development.



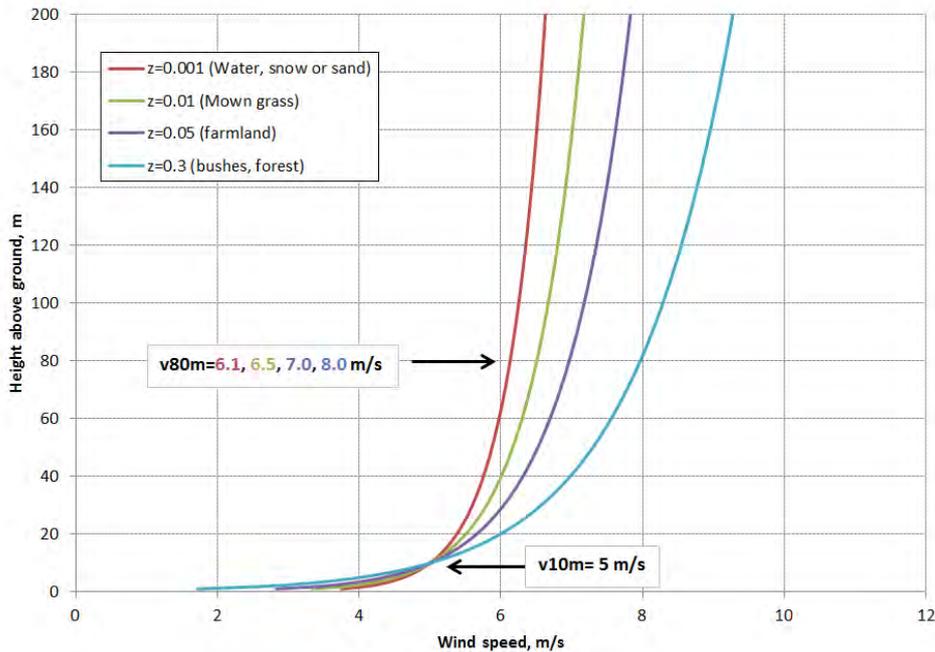
## Annex F – Wind Speed Calculations

- F.1 An important consideration when specifying the sound power outputs of wind turbines is the fact that wind speed varies with height above the ground. This effect is commonly termed ‘wind shear’. Therefore, if the wind speed on a site is characterised in terms of, say, the wind speed measured at ten metres above ground level, then some means must be available for converting this ten-metre height wind speed to whatever the hub height of the proposed turbine will be. This is important because it is this hub height wind speed (i.e. the wind speed experienced by the rotor of the wind turbine) that determines the actual sound power radiated by that turbine.
- F.2 The example of a ten-metre height wind speed is selected here because this height is frequently adopted as a ‘reference’. For example, in ETSU-R-97 [1] the wind speed dependent background noise levels are specified as a function of ten metre height site wind speeds. Likewise, the declared sound power data measured in accordance with the internationally adopted standard for the measurement of wind turbine sound power output, IEC61400-11 [2], is also referenced to a ten-metre height wind speed.
- F.3 The ground roughness length,  $z$ , indicates the degree to which wind is slowed down by friction as it passes close to the ground: the rougher the ground, the more the wind is slowed down and the larger the roughness length. Table 11 of ETSU-R-97 gives examples of roughness lengths, as repeated here in Table F.1. Figure F.1 shows the wind speed profiles corresponding to the four ground roughness lengths given in Table F1.
- F.4 However, it has been found from measurements that the influence of the ground may not be the only factor affecting the variation of wind speed as a function of height above the ground. Another key factor can be the amount of turbulence in the atmosphere itself.
- F.5 Generally speaking, under a typical day time meteorological scenario, the atmosphere lying above the ground will exhibit what is termed ‘neutral’ characteristics. In such cases the atmosphere itself has little effect on the wind speed profile which is then controlled primarily by ground roughness. However, under certain conditions, typically on a summer’s evening following a warm day, the radiative effects of the ground can cool the air lying close to the earth at a rate faster than the convective cooling of the air lying above. This can result in a highly stable atmosphere, one of the characteristics of which is a pronounced wind shear effect. This means that the relative difference between the wind speed at ten metres height and that at hub height during affected evening/night time periods may be significantly greater than the difference which typically exists during day time periods or other ‘neutral’ conditions.

Table F1 Table 11 of ETSU-R-97 showing the typical roughness lengths associated with different terrain types

Type of Terrain	Roughness Length, $z$ (metres)
Water, snow or sand surfaces	0.0001
Open, flat land, mown grass, bare soil	0.01
Farmland with some vegetation (reference)	0.05
Suburbs, towns, forests, many trees and bushes	0.3

Figure F1 Wind speed profiles calculated for the four different ground roughness lengths listed in Table F.1. The figure adopts a fixed wind speed at ten metres height of  $v_{10}=5 \text{ ms}^{-1}$  then presents the calculated wind speeds at other heights as the curved lines. The calculated wind speeds at 80 metres height corresponding to the assumed  $U_{10}=5 \text{ ms}^{-1}$  are also presented as numerical values, ranging from  $U_{80}=6.1 \text{ ms}^{-1}$  for a ground roughness length of  $z=0.001$  metres to  $U_{80}=8.0 \text{ ms}^{-1}$  for ground roughness length of  $z=0.3$  metres.



F.6 When undertaking noise certification measurements of wind turbine sound power outputs, the relevant procedure applies a standard means of converting between hub height and ten metres height wind speeds. This involves using a ‘standard’ roughness length of 0.05 metres in Equation F1, regardless of what the actual roughness length seen on the test site may have been. This ‘normalisation’ procedure is adopted to ensure direct comparability between test results for different turbines. However, when this standardised data is subsequently used to calculate the sound power radiated from an installed turbine on an actual wind farm site, it is important to convert between ten metres height wind speeds and hub height wind speeds using the actual wind speed differences experienced on the site itself. These hub height wind speeds may well be different from those calculated by assuming the standard 0.05 metres ground roughness length.

F.7 The relevance of this conversion between wind speeds at ten metres height and wind speeds at hub height has come under increasing scrutiny with the acknowledgement that, on some sites, the wind shear (i.e. the increase in wind speed with increasing height above ground level) can vary significantly between day time and evening/night time periods. This difference occurs for the reasons discussed above concerning the radiative cooling effects of the earth on the lower levels of air. When this effect occurs, the wind speed experienced by the turbine blades at night can be significantly higher than that derived using either a ‘standard’ assumed roughness length based on the characteristics of the general terrain, or from using on a roughness length or shear factor based on longer term averaged measurements of the difference in wind speeds measured at two different heights. This issue, and the manner in which it has been accounted for in the case of the proposed development, is discussed in the following section.

**Approach**

F.8 The site of the proposed development has a temporary 80 metre meteorological (met) mast installed which measured wind conditions at various heights as follows:

- 80 metre                      Wind speed
- 78 metre                      Wind direction
- 60 metre                      Wind speed

- 58 metre                      Wind direction
- 40 metre                      Wind speed

F.9 Wind speeds are needed at a height of ten metres for correlation with measured noise data as specified in ETSU-R-97. ETSU-R-97 also requires the noise assessment be performed with a wind speed maximum of no more than 12 m/s at ten metres height. Whilst it would be possible to use the direct measurement of wind speeds at a height of ten metres, this approach has been questioned due to potential differences in the wind shear profile during the evenings and night times when compared to the day time. In accordance with the preferred methodology set out in the Institute of Acoustic Good Practice Guide [3], all ten metre wind speed data is calculated from those which will be directly experienced by the wind turbines. Wind speeds are therefore related directly to those at hub height and calculated to be at ten metres height assuming reference conditions. Reference conditions are those used when reporting the measured and/or warranted sound power levels of the wind turbines and assume a ground roughness length of 0.05 metre. The process used to calculate the ten metres height wind speeds is therefore described below.

### Methodology

F.10 ETSU-R-97 specifies that where measurements are not made using a ten-metre met mast, measurements at other heights may be used to provide ten metre height wind speeds by calculation. Equation F1 is given in ETSU-R-97 for this purpose.

$$U_1 = U_2 \cdot \frac{\ln\left(\frac{H_1}{z}\right)}{\ln\left(\frac{H_2}{z}\right)} \quad [F1]$$

Where:

- $H_1$             The height of the wind speed to be calculated (10 metres)
- $H_2$             The height of the measured wind speed
- $U_1$             The wind speed to be calculated
- $U_2$             The measured wind speed
- $z$               The roughness length (0.05 metres in the case of reference conditions)

F.11 Equation F1 is of the same form as that given in BS EN 61400 11:2003 [2] for calculating ten metre wind speeds related to hub height wind speeds when providing source noise emission data for wind turbines. ETSU-R-97 suggests that the roughness length may be calculated from wind speed measurements at two heights, by inverting equation F1. Alternatively, wind shear can be described by the wind shear exponent according to equation F2 as follows:

$$U = U_{ref} \cdot \left[ \frac{H}{H_{ref}} \right]^m \quad [F2]$$

Where:

- $U$               calculated wind speed.
- $U_{ref}$           measured wind speed
- $H$               height at which the wind speed will be calculated
- $H_{ref}$           height at which the wind speed is measured
- $m$               shear exponent

- F.12 In this case, the wind shear exponent may be calculated from wind speed measurements at two heights, by inverting equation F2.
- F.13 Data from the met. mast were available for the duration of the survey. These data were used to perform a calculation of the shear exponent found between the highest two wind speed measurements of 80 and 60 metres for every ten-minute period. Where wind speeds were the same at both heights or lower at greater height, the shear exponent was assumed to be zero. The shear exponent so calculated for every ten-minute period were then used to calculate the hub height wind speed from that measured at 80 metres using equation F2. Equation F1 was then used to calculate a ten-metre height wind speed from the hub height wind speed every ten minutes assuming the reference roughness length of 0.05 metres.

### Conclusions

- F.14 By using this method, measured background noise levels were correlated to ten metre wind speeds calculated from wind speeds at hub height. Any likely difference in the shear profile during the 24 hours of the day will be accounted for within the method and be reflected in the resulting ten metre wind speed data.
- F.15 The method used to calculate ten metre wind speeds from those at hub height is the same as that used when deriving noise emission data for the turbines. Because the same method has been used, direct comparison of background noise levels, noise limits and predicted turbine noise immission levels may be undertaken. This method is consistent with guidance published in the Institute of Acoustic Bulletin Good Practice Guide [3].

### References for Wind Speed Calculations

- [1] ETSU-R-97, The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms, Final Report for the Department of Trade & Industry, September 1996. The Working Group on Noise from Wind Turbines.
- [2] IEC 61400 11:2003 Wind turbine generator systems - Part 11: Acoustic noise measurement techniques.
- [3] A Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise, M. Cand, R. Davis, C. Jordan, M. Hayes, R. Perkins, Institute of Acoustics, May 2013.



**MATTHEW CAND**  
SENIOR ASSOCIATE

+44 1454 806 620  
matthewcand@hoarelea.com

HOARELEA.COM

155 Aztec West  
Almondsbury  
Bristol  
BS32 4UB  
England

