

Agenda Item	5.1
Report No	PLN/007/20

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: North Planning Applications Committee
Date: 3 March 2020
Report Title: 20/00393/PAN: Innogy Renewables UK Ltd
Land 1120M SE Of Achvanich Farmhouse, Latheron
Report By: Acting Head of Development Management – Highland

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 Description:** Stemster Wind Farm - Up to 13 wind turbine generators of up to 175 meter tip height, with a capacity not exceeding 49 mw
- 1.2 Ward:** 03 – Wick and East Caithness

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the submission of the PAN and highlight any material issues they wish to be brought to the attention of the applicant before the submission of the application for planning permission.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 To inform the Planning Applications Committee of the submission of the attached Proposal of Application Notice (PAN).
- 3.2 The submission of the PAN accords with the provisions of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and was lodged and made valid on 29 January 2020. Members are asked to note this may form the basis of a subsequent planning application.
- 3.3 The submitted information attached includes:
- Proposal of Application Notice
 - Location Plan
 - Site Layout Plan

4. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The PAN provides notice of the developer's intention to submit a planning application for a proposed wind farm (known as Stemster Wind Farm). The wind farm would likely comprise of the following infrastructure and has the potential to generate up to 49MW of electricity:
- Up to 13 wind turbines, with a maximum height to blade tip of 175m;
 - Access tracks; and
 - Turbine foundations and transformer plinths and enclosures.

5. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 5.1 The proposed development site forms approximately 650 hectares. The site comprises an area of undulating but generally rising ground to the north, south and west of Stemster Hill. The site access would be from the A9 trunk road and then the local road network. The site is bounded by commercial forestry to the east.
- 5.2 The site is located approximately 6.3km north of Latheron, 18km south west of Wick and 24km south of Thurso. The immediate areas surrounding the turbine envelope is sparsely populated. The site is located adjacent to the A9 trunk road.
- 5.3 The site is located within a number of natural heritage designation, including the following:

Special Areas of Conservation

- Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands

Special Protection Area

- Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands

Special Landscape Area

- The Flow Country and Berridale Coast

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- Shielton Peatlands

RAMSAR

- Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands

5.4 There are a number scheduled monuments within the site. These include:

- Ballachly broch;
- Achkinloch chambered cairn; and
- Achkinloch stone setting.

In addition to this there are further scheduled monuments within a 5km radius of the site. These include:

- Halsary standing stones
- Wag of Forse, settlement
- Forse House, settlement, field system, burnt mound cairns
- Golsary broch
- Rumster broch
- Rangag standing stone
- Greysteil Castle broch

5.5 There are a number of watercourses present within and adjacent to the site. The most notable is Loch Stemster.

5.6 The site sits within the Sweeping Moorland and Flows Landscape Character Type. The Causeymire – Knockfin Flows Wild Land Area is located directly to the west of the site.

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application

6.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

- 28 - Sustainable Design
- 29 - Design Quality and Place-making
- 30 - Physical Constraints
- 31 - Developer Contributions
- 51 - Trees and Development
- 52 - Principle of Development in Woodland
- 55 – Peats and Soils
- 56 - Travel
- 57 - Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
- 58 - Protected Species
- 59 - Other Protected Species
- 60 - Other Important Habitats
- 61 – Landscape
- 63 – Water Environment
- 64 - Flood Risk
- 66 - Surface Water Drainage
- 67 - Renewable Energy Developments

68 – Community Renewable Energy Developments
72 – Pollution
77 – Public Access

6.2 **Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (2019)**

No site specific policies apply.

6.3 **Highland Council Supplementary Planning Policy Guidance**

Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects (August 2010)
Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)
Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (March 2013)
Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Planning Guidelines (May 2006)
Onshore Wind Energy: Supplementary Guidance including Landscape Appraisals (November 2016)
Standards for Archaeological Work (March 2012)
Sustainable Design Guidance
Trees, Woodlands and Development (Jan 2013)

6.4 **Scottish Government Planning Policy and Guidance**

Scottish Planning Policy (June 2014)
National Planning Framework 3 (June 2014)
Onshore Wind Policy Statement (December 2017)
Scottish Energy Strategy (December 2017)
PAN 1 / 2011 – Planning and Noise;
Circular 1/2017 – Environmental Impact Assessment;
PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage;
2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy;
Onshore Wind Turbines; and
Wind Farm developments on Peat Lands

7. POTENTIAL MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1
- Development Plan;
 - National Policy;
 - Planning History;
 - Roads and Transport;
 - Water Environment (including private water supplies);
 - Flood Risk and Drainage;
 - Peat;
 - Natural Heritage (including protected species, ornithology and designated sites);
 - Trees and Forestry;
 - Built and Cultural Heritage;
 - Design, Landscape and Visual Impact (including Cumulative impacts and Impact on Wild Land Areas);
 - Access and Recreation;

- Economic Impact and Tourism;
- Noise and Shadow Flicker;
- Telecommunications;
- Aviation;
- Construction.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The report sets out the information submitted to date as part of the PAN. Summarised are the policy considerations against which any future planning application will be considered as well as the potential material planning considerations and key issues based on the information available to date. The list is not exhaustive and further matters may arise as and when a planning application is received and in the light of public representations and consultation responses.

9. IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Resource: Not applicable

9.2 Legal: Not applicable

9.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable

9.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: Not applicable

9.5 Risk: Not applicable

9.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

10. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Committee notes the submission of the PAN and advises of any material issues it wishes to be brought to the applicant's attention.

Designation: Acting Head of Development Management – Highland

Author: Claire Farmer

Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 - Application Form

Plan 2 - Location Plan

Plan 3 – Site Layout Plan

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE
MOLADH BRATH IARRTAIS

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006
 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008

The Council will respond within 21 days of receiving the Notice. It will advise whether the proposed Pre-application Consultation is satisfactory or if additional notification and consultation above the statutory minimum is required. Please note that a planning application for this proposed development cannot be submitted less than 12 weeks from the date the Proposal of Application Notice is received by the Council and without the statutory consultation requirements having been undertaken. The planning application must be accompanied by a Pre-application consultation report.

Applicant	INNOGY RENEWABLES UK LTD (SCOT. L. NO.) RWE RENEWABLES	Agent	KRIS LYON MAMBOLL
Address	URQUHART HOUSE, BEECHWOOD BUSINESS PARK, INVERNESS IV2 3BW	Address	[REDACTED]
Phone No.	07920 297 399	Phone	[REDACTED]
E-mail	jean.gailord@innogy.com	E-mail	[REDACTED]

Address or Location of Proposed Development Please state the postal address of the prospective development site. If there is no postal address, please describe its location. Please outline the site in red on a base plan to a recognised metric scale and attach it to this completed Notice

SITE IS EAST OF A1 ROAD APPROX 6KM NORTH OF LATHERON AND 13KM SOUTH WEST OF WICK IN THE HIGHLANDS

SEE ATTACHED FIGURE

Description of Development Please include detail where appropriate – eg the number of residential units; the gross floorspace in m² of any buildings not for residential use; the capacity of any electricity generation or waste management facility; and the length of any infrastructure project. Please attach any additional supporting information.

UP TO 13 WIND TURBINE GENERATORS OF UP TO 175 METRE TALL HEIGHT, WITH A CAPACITY NOT EXCEEDING 69 MW

Pre-application Screening Notice

Has a Screening Opinion been issued on the need for a Proposal of Application notice by the Highland Council in respect of the proposed development?

If yes please provide a copy of this Opinion.

YES..... NO.....

Community Consultation [See checklist of Statutory minimum consultation attached]

State which other parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice.

Community Council/s	Date Notice Served
LATHERON...LYBSTER...A...CLYTH...COMMUNITY...COUNCIL...BERRIEDALE...&.....	
DOWBERTH...COMMUNITY...COUNCIL...HALLUIM...COMMUNITY...COUNCIL...WATTEN.....	
COMMUNITY COUNCIL.	
Names/details of any other parties	NOTICE SERVED TO ALL 29th JANUARY 2020 Date Notice Served

Please give details of proposed consultation

Proposed public event	Venue	Date and time
PUBLIC EXHIBITION	LATHERON VILLAGE HALL	03/03/20 FROM 11:30 UNTIL 20:00.
"	"	04/03/20 FROM 09:00 UNTIL 12:30

Newspaper Advert – name of newspaper	Advert date(when known)
PRESS & JOURNAL, JOHN O. GOATS JOURNAL, CATHNESS COURIER.	
DATES TBC.	

Details of any other consultation methods (date, time and with whom)

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Date...28/01/2020.....




Legend

Site Boundary

Notes:

Created by: FB Date: 15/01/20

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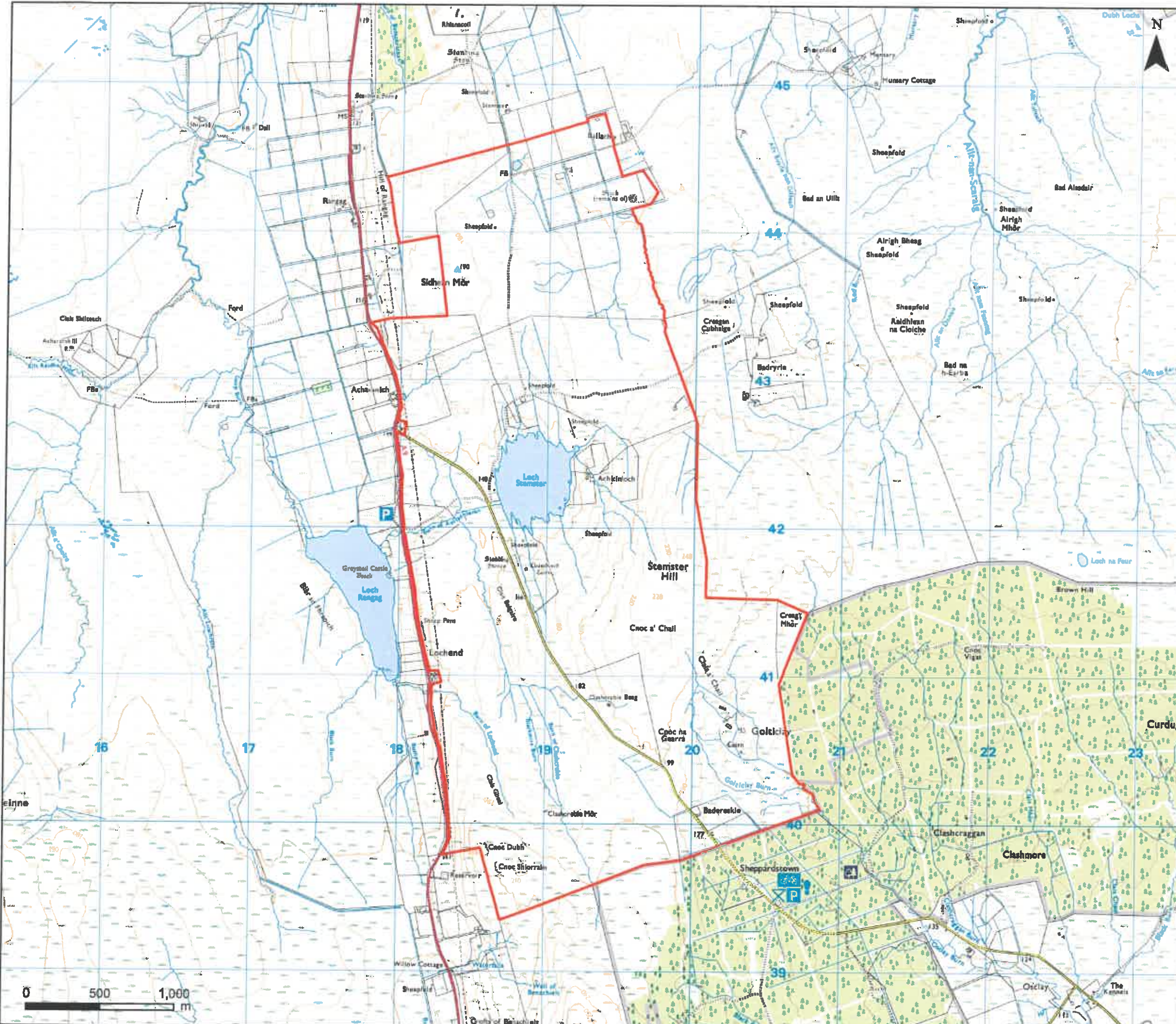
Innogy Renewables UK Ltd
 Earn House
 Broxden Business Park
 Lamberkine Drive
 Perth
 PH1 1RA

Sheet size: A3 Scale: 1:100,000

Site: **Stenster**

Title
Site Location and Boundary

Version: **Turbine Layout 7 Version 2**



Legend

Site Boundary

Notes:

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Innogy Renewables UK Ltd

Earn House
Broxden Business Park
Lamberkine Drive
Perth
PH1 1RA

Sheet size: A3

Scale: 1:25,000

Site: **Stenister**

Title

Site Boundary

Version:

Turbine Layout 7 Version 2