
| | | |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| 17. | SOCIO-ECONOMICS, TOURISM AND RECREATION | |
| 17.1. | Introduction | 17-2 |
| 17.2. | Methodology | 17-3 |
| 17.3. | Baseline Conditions | 17-3 |
| 17.4. | Change in Effects | 17-3 |
| 17.5. | Cumulative Effects | 17-4 |
| 17.6. | Summary | 17-5 |
| 17.7. | Statement of Significance | 17-5 |

17. Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation

17.1. Introduction

- 17.1.1. This Chapter does not repeat the information set out in *Chapter 17: Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation* of the Shepherds' Rig EIA Report (November 2018) where that information remains valid in the context of the reduced number of turbines now proposed as the Revised Development (**AEI Figure 4.1**). As such, the Additional Environmental Information (AEI) supplements Chapter 17 of the EIA Report (November 2018) and should be read in conjunction with it.
- 17.1.2. In response to the EIA Report (November 2018), consultation responses were received that referenced socio-economics, tourism and recreation impacts. These responses are discussed individually in AEI Table 17.1.

AEI Table 17.1: Post-Submission Consultation Responses

| Organisation | Consultee Comments | Response to Consultee |
|--|---|--|
| Carsphairn Community Woodland 17th March 2019 | This response mentioned impacts on the local economy and tourism in its opening sentence but does not provide evidence for such in the specific reasons for objection | No specific reasons for objection on socio-economic. As such, the response did not identify anything to alter the conclusions. |
| Scotways 27th February 2019 | This response highlighted concerns regarding the cumulative impact of developments around the Southern Upland Way (SUW). | The SUW is discussed in the original EIA and it highlights a lack of evidence of significant changes in economic behaviour as a result of wind farms near walking routes. The response did not provide any new evidence that would change these conclusions. |
| VisitScotland 27th December 2018 | This response requests that any potential detrimental impact of the proposed development on tourism is identified and considered in full. | This response highlighted reports and approaches that were already considered in the EIA report. |

| Organisation | Consultee Comments | Response to Consultee |
|---|--|--|
| Mountaineering Scotland 18 th January 2019 | The consultee highlight concerns regarding the errors in the Glasgow Caledonian Report were quoted in the EIA Report. The consultee also suggests that evidence of impact of wind farms on the tourism economy should find that these developments are detrimental to the tourism economy. | BiGGAR Economics acknowledges that the response identified errors in the Glasgow Caledonian study that were quoted in the EIA Report. However, BiGGAR Economics does not accept that there were flaws in the use of evidence in the EIA Report. To demonstrate an adverse impact on the local tourism sector, it would have been necessary to demonstrate that the proposed development would lead to changes in tourism behaviour that would lead to changes in tourism expenditure. The published independent research available provides no reasons to expect such a change as a result of the Revised Development. Therefore, the points made in the Mountaineering Scotland response would not alter what the conclusions are based on. |

17.2. Methodology

- 17.2.1. This section takes into account the legislation, policy and guidance referred to in the EIA Report (November 2018). The baseline information relied upon in order to make an assessment of the effects of the Revised Development is that information which has been provided in the EIA Report (November 2018). To ensure consistency of approach, the same significance criteria and assessment methodology as referred to in the EIA Report (November 2018) has been followed. Taking into account the relevant policy and guidance, baseline information, and assessment criteria, an assessment is presented below which details the effect of the Revised Development (**AEI Figure 4.1**).

17.3. Baseline Conditions

- 17.3.1. No notable changes took place in the baseline conditions with reference to what was already included in the EIA Report (November 2018). As such, Section 17.3 Socio-Economic Context and Section 17.8 Tourism and Recreation Context within Chapter 17 of the EIA Report (November 2018) remain valid.

17.4. Change in Effects

Socio-Economic

- 17.4.1. Following changes in the wind turbine capacity from 78.6 MW to 70.2 MW as a result of the Revised Development, the economic impacts of the construction and development, operation and maintenance, community benefits and tax contributions have been re-estimated.

17.4.2. As a result of the Revised Development, expenditure in the construction and development phase is expected to be around £103.1 million.

17.4.3. Consequently, it was estimated that the total impact from the construction and development phase would be £16.8 million and 150 job-years in Dumfries & Galloway and £46.0 million and 425 job-years in Scotland as detailed in AEI Table 17.2.

AEI Table 17.2: Economic Impact During Construction and development

| | Dumfries & Galloway | Scotland |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Economic Impact (£m) | 16.8 | 46.0 |
| Employment (job years) | 150 | 425 |

17.4.4. It was estimated that the total economic impact during the operation and maintenance phase would be £2.3 million and 43 job-years in Dumfries & Galloway and £3.7 million and 69 job-years in Scotland as detailed in AEI Table 17.3

AEI Table 17.3: Economic Impact During Operations and Maintenance

| | Dumfries & Galloway | Scotland |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Economic Impact (£m) | 2.3 | 3.7 |
| Employment (job years) | 43 | 69 |

17.4.5. As a result of the Revised Development, annual community benefits payments are expected to be around £351,000 and would equate to £8.8 million over the wind farm's lifetime.

17.4.6. The Revised Development could contribute £794,000 every year to public finances and £19.8 million over the 25-year wind farm's lifetime. The significance of this impact on public finances was not assessed in the EIA Report (November 2018). These impacts will be positive; however, there would be very little or no detectable change in national public finances as a result and therefore the significance of the impact is expected to be negligible as per the EIA regulations.

Tourism and Recreation

17.4.7. The Revised Development (**AEI Figure 4.1**) is expected to make no significant difference to the assessment of tourism and recreation effects. In addition, there is no new evidence available, either published or in the consultation responses received, that would change the conclusions reached in the EIA report. As such, Sections 17.9 and 17.10 of the EIA Report (November 2018) remain valid, which is that no significant impacts will occur.

17.5. Cumulative Effects

17.5.1. The list of other developments outlined in Chapter 2 does not change the findings of the assessment in this chapter.

17.6. Summary

- 17.6.1. In summary, the Revised Development is expected to have positive, either low or negligible, impacts on socio-economics and to have no significant impact on tourism and recreation. None of these potential effects is deemed significant.

17.7. Statement of Significance

- 17.7.1. Effects on socio-economics, tourism and recreation associated with the Revised Development are considered to be not significant. This represents no change to the conclusions outlined in the EIA Report (November 2018).