

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Environmental Statement (ES) accompanies a planning application to Dumfries and Galloway Council for full planning consent, under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, to construct and operate three wind turbines, up to a tip height of 149m, and associated infrastructure. This report has been prepared by Community Windpower (the Agent), on behalf of Drumbuie Renewables (the Applicant).

This ES and accompanying technical appendices report the work undertaken in the identification, assessment and mitigation of the environmental effects of the proposed scheme.

The ES is also accompanied by the Pre-Application Consultation Report (PAC) and a separate Planning Statement. All planning submission documents will be made available on the Dumfries and Galloway Planning Portal as well as on the Drumbuie Renewables website (www.drumbuie.com).

1.2 The Applicant

Drumbuie Renewables is a family run, local business with long term experience and interest in both renewable energy projects and progressive agriculture. With experience in the delivery of both Solar PV and Biomass heating systems, the business looks to progress to the next stage of development. Based in Sanquhar, Drumbuie Renewables will own and operate the Proposed Development with the electricity generated used to power important local commercial businesses.

1.3 The Agent

This Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared and written by Community Windpower Ltd (CWL) who are acting as agents ("The Agent") on behalf of Drumbuie Renewables. CWL have been developing renewable energy projects, particularly onshore wind farms since 2001. They are an independent UK company working with communities to build wind farms that can provide tangible economic, educational, and environmental benefits for whole communities and local schools. Drumbuie Renewables are utilising their knowledge and experience in renewable energy and pulling on local business ties to progress the Herds Hill Wind Farm.

Both CWL and Drumbuie Renewables believe in an open and consultative approach with communities during the development stage of the wind farm project and prior to the submission of a planning application. CWL will use its experience to design sites that are sympathetic to local landscapes and can provide generation to meet local and Scottish energy needs.

CWL have eight operational wind farms totalling 302.95 MW:

- **Dalry Community Wind Farm**, North Ayrshire: comprises 6 turbines, generating 18MW, and was commissioned in 2006.
- **Aikengall Community Wind Farm**, East Lothian: comprises 16 turbines, generating 48MW, and was commissioned in 2009.
- **Millour Hill Community Wind Farm**, North Ayrshire: comprises 6 turbines, generating 18MW, and was commissioned in 2012. This scheme stands adjacent to the Dalry Wind Farm.
- **Calder Water Community Wind Farm**, South Lanarkshire: comprises 13 turbines, generating 39MW, and was commissioned in 2014.



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- **Millour Hill Extension Community Wind Farm**, North Ayrshire: comprises 2 turbines, generating up to 6.4MW, and was commissioned in 2016. This scheme is an extension of the Millour Hill Wind Farm.
- **Aikengall II Community Wind Farm**, East Lothian: comprises 19 turbines, generating up to 60.8MW, and was commissioned in 2017. This scheme stands adjacent to the Aikengall Wind Farm.
- **Sanquhar Community Wind Farm**, Dumfries and Galloway: comprises 9 turbines, generating 31.05MW, and was commissioned in 2018.
- **Aikengall Ila Community Wind Farm**: East Lothian, and Scottish Borders: comprises 19 turbines, generating 81.7MW and was commissioned in 2021. This is an extension to our existing Aikengall and Aikengall II Community Wind Farms.
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CWL has a further two consented wind farms in Scotland totalling 327.8 MW, along with two large-scale applications currently in the S36 application process with the Scottish Government.

1.4 Potential Electricity Consumers

Herds Hill Wind Farm is designed with the intent to supply renewable electricity directly to local businesses within Kirkconnel and Sanquhar. Therefore, boosting the local economy, supporting local jobs and helping the local area become more reliant on clean, green energy.

Brown Brothers

Brown Brothers Ltd is a local business in Kirkconnel, that has been operational for thirty years and has been regularly extended since 1993. The business originally began as a small family-run butchers in Biggar, and now is one of the UK's largest cooked and sliced meat producers, supplying some of the country's largest supermarkets nationwide. The factory manufactures and distributes both frozen and chilled products via state-of-the-art equipment and has had several extensions to the site.

The Kirkconnel factory directly employs over 550 staff and is part of the wider Browns Food Group employing over 1200 staff. Environmental impacts and the offsetting of these are key to the success of the Group, with a specialised Green Team that represents all departments throughout the business to research and implement improvements. Hence, the development of the proposed wind farm will help to meet their sustainable and clean energy goals, through a low-carbon source. The business and the Kirkconnel factory is keen to shift towards 100% green energy and help to meet local and national climate change commitments, which Herds Hill Wind Farm would deliver if successful.

Shaw Europe Ltd

Shaw Europe Ltd offers a diverse portfolio of carpet and flooring for residential and commercial markets worldwide. Herds Hill aims to supply their Sanquhar plant (that employs over 150 people) with 100% renewable energy. The company has sustainability at the heart of the business, ensuring recycling and carbon neutrality responsibilities are met. It has been awarded the Presidential Green Chemistry Award by the US Environmental Protection Agency due to its recycling and reclamation programme and usage of renewable energy. Shaw Industries have established several commitments to achieve net zero operations by 2030, across the entire enterprise, while reducing the carbon footprint of products and value chains. To achieve these goals, the company pledges to employ and invest in renewable energy where possible and offset any remaining operational footprint. This

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partnership between Herds Hill Wind Farm and Shaw Europe Ltd would support this local business to achieve its green targets, helping it to become reliant on clean, renewable energy.

1.5 Site Location

The proposed Herds Hill Wind Farm is located within the administrative area of Dumfries and Galloway. The site is situated 5.06km west of Sanquhar and 2.68km south of Kirkconnel. The South of Scotland is responsible for just over 21% of Scotland's Onshore Wind Farms, with Dumfries and Galloway accounting for 57% of this total (1,081 MW) (BiGGAR Economics, 2023).

The proposed turbines fall within the Landscape Character Type of 'Southern Uplands' (Dumfries and Galloway Wind Farm Landscape Capacity Study 2017). The Capacity Study depicts the landscape type as being characterised as '*moorland and rough grazing... along with relict land-uses*'.

The proposed development is located to the north of the Drumbuie Moorhead, west of the summit of Herds Hill. The topography across the proposed development increases approximately 110m across a 1.3km distance, in a north to south direction.

Sanquhar Community Wind Farm is an operational site that borders the site to the southwest and consists of 9 turbines, at 130m to tip (Planning Ref: 10/P/3/0182). The Sanquhar II Community Wind Farm proposal also borders the site to the southwest, which has just received planning consent from the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) on behalf of the Scottish Ministers (ECU Ref: ECU00001801, WIN-170-2006). The Sanquhar II scheme consists of 44 turbines, with 42 turbines at 200m to tip and 2 turbines at 149m to tip. To the south, Rowancraig Wind Farm is currently in Scoping with Dumfries & Galloway Council which comprises 6 wind turbines at 180m to tip along with Cloud Hill which consists of 11 turbines at 180m to tip.

The site entrance and access track used to access Sanquhar Community Wind Farm, will be used to access the proposed development, as it runs through the south of the site boundary.

The size and location of the proposed turbines have been selected to minimise any potentially negative impacts on the local area and to ensure it would tie in with the operational and consented turbines in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development, thus they will be viewed alongside the existing turbine landscape.

References

- BiGGAR Economics. 2023. Baseline Report on Community Benefit and Shared Revenue from Onshore Wind Projects to Communities in the South of Scotland. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.southofscotlandenterprise.com/media/v0rpg3n3/baseline-report-on-community-benefits-from-onshore-wind-projects-in-the-south-of-scotland-final-18-10-23.pdf> [Accessed 13 November 2023].

