

Deucheran Hill 2 Wind Farm

Maximising Socio-economic Benefits

A report to RWE
May 2026



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Glossary

Term	Definition
Applicant	RWE Renewables UK Onshore Wind Limited.
Proposed Development	The Proposed Development refers to all components of the Deucheran Hill 2 repowering and extension, which includes up to 14 wind turbines, 3 with a maximum tip height of 220 m, 4 with a maximum tip height of 200 m and 7 with a maximum tip height of 180m and associated ancillary infrastructure.
Application Site Boundary	The red line boundary that encompasses the Proposed Development.

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
Applicant	RWE Renewables UK Onshore Wind Limited
B&Bs	Bed and Breakfast
BRES	Business Register and Employment Survey
CAPEX	Capital Expenditure
ECU	Energy Consents Unit
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
FID	Financial Investment Decision
FLS	Forestry and Land Scotland
GVA	Gross Value Added
GW	Giga Watt
km	kilometres
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
m	million
MW	Mega Watt
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
NRS	National Records of Scotland
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OPEX	Operations and Maintenance Expenditure
PAWS	Planted Ancient Woodlands Sites



Abbreviation	Description
RQF	Regulated Qualification Framework
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TOTEX	Total Expenditure



1.

Introduction

BiGGAR Economics was commissioned by the Applicant to undertake a socio-economic assessment for the proposed Deucheran Hill 2 Wind Farm, considering the commitments against Scottish Renewables Guidance on Maximising Net Socio-economic Benefit of Renewable Energy¹.

The Proposed Development is a proposed onshore wind farm located on Kintyre, 7 km north-west of Carradale in Argyll and Bute. The Proposed Development consist of up to 14 turbines, with a combined installed capacity over 50 MW.

The Application Site Boundary comprises of the existing Deucheran Hill Wind Farm. The original Deucheran Hill Wind Farm, consented on the 8 June 2001 and operational since December 2001, comprises of 9 turbines with a range of 76 metres (m) to 93 m tip heights, 66 m rotor and an installed capacity of 15.75 MW. The existing Deucheran Hill Wind Farm is due to be decommissioned in 2026.

The Applicant seeks to repower and extend the existing Deucheran Hill Wind Farm by submitting an application for generating capacity of renewable electricity of over 50 MW and up to 100 MW subject to final wind turbine procurement.

1.1 Policy Context

In the last couple of years, there has been a clear policy intent to ensure that the potential economic benefits of onshore wind to Scotland and to local communities are realised. This is driven by the Scottish Government's ambition to achieve Net Zero by 2045 and, in that process, to maximise benefits to Scotland. These policy ambitions are most clearly highlighted in the following policies:

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4);
- Scottish Onshore Wind Sector Deal; and
- Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2.

The Application is for consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 and deemed planning permission. The development plan (comprising NPF4 and Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2) does not have primacy in the determination of

¹ Scottish Renewables (2025) *Maximising Net Socio-Economic Benefit of Renewable Energy Guidance and Reporting Framework: Guidance for developers to comply with NPF4 Policy 11c*. [online] Scottish Renewables. Available at: https://www.scottishrenewables.com/assets/000/004/592/2025.03.18_Maximising_Net_Socio-Economic_Benefit_Reporting_Framework_original.pdf?1742308718



the Application, rather it is one of a number of relevant considerations. This report sets out how the Proposed Development will maximise net economic impacts in this context.

1.1.1 NPF4

NPF4² is Scotland's national spatial strategy, setting out the principles to be applied to planning decisions, regional priorities and national developments.

As part of Policy 11a of NPF4, "development proposals for all forms of renewable technologies will be supported". This is subject to the test outlined in Policy 11c, that:

"Development proposals will only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities."

This is challenging because no two projects are identical. Each faces a unique combination of financial and locational constraints and opportunities, each will be delivered by people with varying capabilities and priorities, and each will take place in communities with different needs, capacity and inclination to engage.

This means it is not possible to specify a general standard that can be applied to all projects and implies every project must be assessed on its own merits. To do this it is important to consider not just *what* developers propose to do but *how* they plan to do it and the context within which this takes place.

1.1.2 Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2

The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2³ is a planning document that guides how land is used and developed in the area. It sets out a long-term vision for sustainable growth, identifies suitable locations for development and is used by the Council to make decisions on planning applications, supporting the future of communities, businesses and infrastructure.

A strong local economy is essential for Argyll and Bute's future, supporting population retention and growth while building resilient communities. The plan promotes sustainable economic development by identifying sites for job creation and strengthening priority sectors, including renewable energy.

² Scottish Government (2023), National Planning Framework 4.

³ Argyll and Bute (2024), Local Development Plan 2: Written Statement.

The plan also supports the transition to Net Zero economy by focusing development in growth and regeneration areas, with supporting infrastructure and transport to improve access to jobs. This approach helps enable sectors like the onshore wind to contribute to economic growth and wider community benefits.

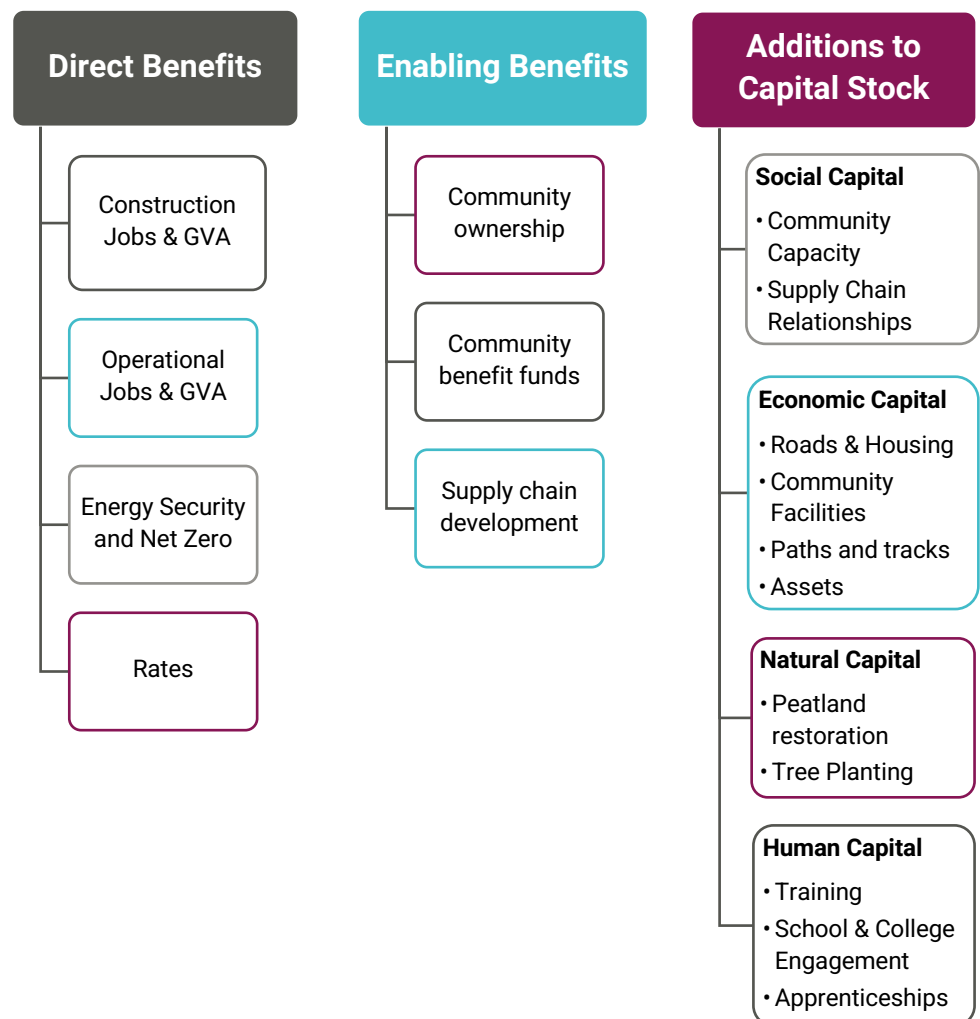
1.2 What: Types of Benefit

The purpose of this report is to consider how the Applicant will maximise the net economic impact of the Proposed Development and to assess potential impacts on local tourism. This will consider the different types of benefits that are generated by onshore wind projects. Examples of these are given in **Figure 1-1**, and this covers:

- **Direct Benefits** – these are the benefits and impacts over which developers have direct control and can most easily influence. This can include the economic impacts generated by the projects and their contribution to public policy and public finances;
- **Enabling Benefits** – many of the potential positive impacts associated with an onshore wind farm are not within the control of the developer. These can include how communities invest any funding made available and how the supply chain builds capacity through the project. However, the developers can influence and support these organisations and individuals to maximise these enabling benefits and therefore it is appropriate to consider how a developer is working to maximise these enabled benefits; and
- **Additions to Capital Stocks** – the development of an onshore wind project should leave the local communities wealthier across all types of capital stock, including human, social, economic and natural capital.



Figure 1-1 Types of benefits from onshore wind in Scotland



Source: BIGGAR Economics

The range of benefits that can be generated by a wind farm demands a structured approach to analysis. The Scottish Onshore Wind Sector Deal provides a good starting point for this.

1.2.1 Scottish Onshore Wind Sector Deal

The Onshore Wind Sector Deal⁴ (the Sector Deal) sets out how the Scottish Government and onshore wind industry will collaborate to deliver 20 GW of onshore wind in Scotland by 2030. Published around the same time as NPF4, it provides a good indication of the kind of benefits the Government may have been thinking about when developing Policy 11c of NPF4.

The Sector Deal contains 44 commitments that represent what “maximising socio-economic benefits” looks like at a national level. These commitments fall into four broad categories, which provide a useful starting point for structuring the analysis:

⁴ Scottish Government (2023) Onshore Wind Sector Deal

- developing the onshore wind **supply chain**;
- developing the **skills** needed to deliver the 2030 deployment target;
- **empowering communities** through effective design and management of community benefit funds and ownership arrangements; and
- protecting and enhancing **the environment**.

1.3 How: A Principles Based Approach

In 2025, Scottish Renewables published guidance⁵ to help developers deliver and enhance local benefits. This guidance sets out six principles that can be used to assess whether a project has been developed in a way that is likely to achieve the objective of maximising socio-economic benefits. These principles include:

- **Place-based:** every project and every community is slightly different, so packages of benefits that are tailored around the needs and capacity of the community in question are likely to generate greater benefits than a standardised approach.
- **Innovative:** many of the benefits that have been realised by renewables to date have happened because of innovation at the project level. To maintain this culture of continuous improvement developers must continue to innovate.
- **Collaborative:** many of the benefits of renewable energy developments are not directly within the gift of developers. They will require input and support of others in the public, private and third sector to realise, making a collaborative approach essential.
- **Transparent:** effective collaboration requires the parties involved to trust each other and an open and transparent approach is crucial for establishing this trust.
- **Flexible:** a lot can change between project inception and completion, and these changes can make a big difference to the benefits ultimately realised. A flexible approach that responds positively to such changes is therefore important.
- **Deliverable:** providing communities with realistic expectations about what can be delivered during the construction and operation phase of a project will help achieve trust with relevant stakeholders.

These principles highlight that in considering whether the Proposed Development maximises net economic impact, it is necessary to consider both the economic impacts that are expected and the approach that the Applicant is taking to ensure these benefits are consistent with community needs.

⁵ Scottish Renewables (2025) *Maximising Net Socio-Economic Benefit of Renewable Energy Guidance and Reporting Framework: Guidance for developers to comply with NPF4 Policy 11c*. [online] Scottish Renewables. Available at: https://www.scottishrenewables.com/assets/000/004/592/2025.03.18_Maximising_Net_Socio-Economic_Benefit_Reporting_Framework_original.pdf?1742308718



1.4 Report Structure

The structure of this report is:

- this section presents the introduction and outlines the policy context for maximising net economic impact;
- Section 2 presents the socio-economic baseline and key insights;
- Section 3 outlines the tourism baseline and assessment;
- Sections 4 – 7 will assess the criteria for maximising benefits; and
- Section 8 presents the economic impact of the Proposed Development.
- Section 9 includes the Appendix: Tourism Assets.



2.

Local Context

This section discusses the local context of the Proposed Development.

Understanding the socio-economic context in which a project will be built is crucial in ensuring that any intervention or proposed approach is place based and meets the needs of the communities that will be impacted.

2.1 Study Areas

The **socio-economic baseline** for the Proposed Development focuses on the following study areas:

- Kintyre and the Islands (the electoral ward considered as the 'Local Area')
- Argyll and Bute; and
- Scotland.

The baseline also covers characteristics related to the **environment, communities and onshore wind market** focusing on Argyll and Bute, and where relevant for comparison, Scotland.

2.2 Socio-Economics Baseline

2.2.1 Demographics

The most recent statistics shows that the Local Area had a population of 6,623, which was 7.5% of the total population in Argyll and Bute.

Argyll and Bute (58%) and the Local Area (57%) are characterised by lower-than-average working-age populations when compared to Scotland as a whole (63%). The proportion of the Local Area's residents over 65 is 29% which is higher than the average figure in Argyll and Bute (28%) and significantly higher than the Scottish (21%) share.

This may indicate a lack of economic opportunities in the Local Area with those of the working age having moved to different locations in search of more available employment options, and relative pressures on public services.

Table 2-1 Population Estimates, mid-2021* and mid-2024

Age	Local Area*	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
0-15	14%	14%	16%
16-64	57%	58%	63%
65+	29%	28%	21%
Total	6,623	87,690	5,546,900

Source: National Records of Scotland (2025), mid-2024 population estimates; National Records of Scotland (2022). *The latest population data at the electoral ward level is from NRS (2022) Electoral Ward population estimates by sex and single year of age, mid-2021.

Between 2024 and 2047, the population of Argyll and Bute is expected to decrease by 4% compared to an increase of 4% for Scotland. Over the same period, the number of working-age people in Argyll and Bute is projected to decrease by around 6,304 (a fall of about 12%).

All study areas are expected to have older populations by 2047. The population of Argyll and Bute aged over 65 is expected to increase to 36% by 2047, significantly above the Scottish (25%) average.

While the lack of economic opportunities may not be the sole factor leading to a higher decrease in the working-age population in Argyll and Bute, and consequently the Local Area, it may be a contributing factor, indicating a need for more economic opportunities.

Table 2-2 Population Projections, 2024 to 2047

	Argyll and Bute		Scotland	
	2024	2047	2024	2047
0-15	14%	11%	16%	14%
16-64	58%	52%	63%	61%
65+	28%	36%	21%	25%
Total	87,690	84,247	5,546,900	5,782,683

Source: National Records of Scotland (2025), mid-2024 population estimates. National Records of Scotland (2025), Subnational Population Projections for Scotland (2022-based).

2.2.2 Industrial Structure

As shown in **Table 2-3**, in 2024, accommodation and food service activities sector was the largest source of employment in the Local Area (18.1%) and Argyll and Bute (12.6%). Employment in this sector is relatively more important than in Scotland (8.1%) as a whole. This indicates that tourism is an important part of the local and regional economies.

Table 2-3 Industrial Structure, 2024

	Local Area	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Accommodation and food service activities	18.1%	12.6%	8.1%
Manufacturing	15.2%	4.7%	6.9%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	10.5%	10.7%	12.5%
Construction	9.5%	6.0%	5.9%
Human health and social work activities	9.5%	12.0%	16.2%
Education	8.0%	6.9%	8.2%
Transportation and storage	6.9%	5.0%	4.1%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6.1%	9.4%	3.1%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	3.8%	10.7%	6.5%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	3.4%	4.4%	3.0%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2.3%	3.8%	7.1%
Real estate activities	1.9%	1.9%	1.6%
Other service activities	1.3%	1.5%	1.9%
Administrative and support service activities	1.1%	6.9%	6.4%
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.8%	0.5%	0.7%
Information and communication	0.8%	1.1%	2.7%
Mining and quarrying	0.4%	0.5%	1.0%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.2%	0.9%	0.8%
Financial and insurance activities	0.2%	0.4%	3.4%
Total Employment	2,500	39,500	2,640,000

Source: ONS (2025), Business Register and Employment Survey, 2024.

Similarly, construction employs relatively more people in the Local Area (9.5%) than in Argyll and Bute (6.0%) and across Scotland (5.9%). This is likely to be one of the main beneficiaries of the opportunities for local content associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

There are several sub-sectors in the Local Area which may benefit from the construction phase of the Proposed Development. The Local Area and Argyll and Bute have a higher proportion of the population working in civil engineering (about 1.2%) compared to the Scottish average (0.9%).

Similarly, the Local Area has a higher concentration of the population working in specialised construction (5.2%) than Scotland (3.4%) which includes activities such as demolition and site preparation as well as electrical and plumbing.

The Local Area does have a significant number of individuals employed in Manufacturing, however the vast majority of this is linked with the manufacturing of whisky.

2.2.3 Economic Activity

The unemployment rate in Argyll and Bute was 2.6%, lower than the Scottish average of 3.7%. Argyll and Bute also had a lower rate of economic activity (74.3%) compared to Scotland as a whole (76.9%), indicating weaker economic performance.

However, **Table 2-4** shows that the median annual gross wage for residents (full and part-time) in Argyll and Bute was £30,436 which is lower than that of the Scottish average (£33,061).

Table 2-4 Labour Market Indicators

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Economic Activity Rate	74.3%	76.9%
Unemployment Rate (%)	2.6%	3.7%
Median Annual Gross Income (All Residents)	£30,436	£33,061

Source: ONS (2025), annual population survey – data for Jul 2024 to Jun 2025; ONS (2025), annual survey of hours and earnings – resident analysis – 2025; ONS (2025), model-based estimates of unemployment – data for Jul 2024 to Jun 2025.

2.2.4 Education

The workforce in Argyll and Bute has lower levels of qualifications than Scotland. Across Argyll and Bute, 51.7% of the population have achieved at least a Regulated Qualification Framework level four (RQF4). The proportion of people who have achieved no qualifications in Argyll and Bute (9.5%) is also higher than Scotland as a whole (8.2%).

Table 2-5 Education Levels, 2024

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
% with RQF4 and above	51.7%	55.1%
% with RQF3 and above	75.0%	73.7%
% with RQF2 and above	86.6%	87.1%
% with RQF1 and above	87.0%	87.9%
% with Other Qualifications	3.6%	3.9%
% with No Qualifications	9.5%	8.2%

Source: ONS (2025), annual population survey – data for Jan 2024 to Dec 2024.

2.2.5 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation which ranks small areas of Scotland across seven dimensions: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime, and housing. These areas can be ranked based on which quintile (fifth of the distribution) they belong to, with a small area in the first quintile being in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

The Local Area has 10 small areas. 10% are within the second most deprived quintile and the majority (80%) are clustered in the middle of the distribution. No areas are within the most deprived and least deprived quintiles. Geographical access is one of the domains that have the largest negative impact on the SIMD scores of the Local Area. Provision of benefits targeting this domain may play a more important role for the Local Area than others.

Of the small areas in Argyll and Bute, 8% are within the most deprived quintile and a slightly higher proportion of small areas (11%) in the least deprived quintile. The majority of the areas are clustered in the middle of the distribution, with relatively few areas of particular affluence or deprivation.

Table 2-6 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation by Quintile, 2020

	Local Area	Argyll and Bute
1 (most deprived)	0%	8%
2	10%	14%
3	80%	39%
4	10%	27%
5 (least deprived)	0%	11%

Source: Scottish Government (2020), Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020.



2.3 The Local Communities

The communities surrounding the Proposed Development are represented by a number of groups and representative bodies that would form the initial community capacity to deliver benefits from any community benefit funding.

Community Councils' responsibilities include co-ordinating and expressing the views of the local communities to Argyll and Bute Council and other public bodies with the purpose of strengthening the community, promoting health and sustainability and enhancing the environment. The Proposed Development is located between two community councils⁶:

- **East Kintyre Community Council**; and
- **West Kintyre Community Council**.

There is also the **East Kintyre Renewable Energy Group**⁷ which was formed by the **Carradale Community Trust**⁸ aiming to promote socio-economic benefits of onshore wind developments in the area and maximise community benefits and income streams offered to nearby communities. In addition, **Kintyre Wind**⁹, a non-profit volunteer-led collaborative project between the East Kintyre Renewable Energy Group and the abovementioned community councils, is present to deliver Community Shared Ownership and distribute the Community Benefit Funding from the onshore wind farms in the area, including the existing Deucheran Hill Wind Farm.

2.4 The Environment

2.4.1 Use of Natural Environment for Recreation

Residents of Argyll and Bute are more likely to use the outdoors for recreation than the Scottish average. Across Argyll and Bute, approximately 61% of residents visit the outdoors one or more times a week, compared to 54% of Scottish residents.

However, the residents of Argyll and Bute are living within a closer proximity to either green or blue space than the average Scottish resident. Across Argyll and Bute, approximately 67% of residents live within a 5-minute walk of either green or blue space, compared to 87% across Scotland. This indicates an increased outdoor recreation participation in the region.

⁶ Argyll and Bute Council (2025), Community Councils Interactive Map. [online]. Available at: <https://argyll-bute.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e20e1ac847424abbbfced0a71faac0d6>

⁷ Kintyre Wind (2025), Welcome to EKREG. [online]. Available at: <https://kintyrewind.com/ekreg/>

⁸ East Kintyre Community (2025), Carradale Community Trust. [online]. Available at: <https://eastkintyre.org/cct/>

⁹ Kintyre Wind (2025), Welcome to Kintyre Wind. [online]. Available at: <https://kintyrewind.com/>

Table 2-7 Outdoor Access data – Average for 2012 to 2023

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Visit the outdoors one or more times a week	61%	54%
Live within 5-minute walk of green/blue space	67%	87%

Source: Scottish Household Survey (2025), The Environment. Available at: <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-scottish-household-survey-data-explorer/>

2.4.2 Condition of Natural Environment

A native woodland condition indicator has been developed by the Forestry Commission using measures from the survey that are relevant to every unit area of native woodland and can indicate ecological health or condition in relation to biodiversity, no matter what the age or type of native woodland. Argyll and Bute appears to have poorer condition indicator than Scotland as a whole.

The Site Condition Monitoring is SEPA's programme for monitoring the condition of features on designated sites in Scotland. This is to establish whether each natural feature is likely to maintain itself in the medium to longer term under the current management regime and wider environment or other influences. This indicator shows that Argyll and Bute's natural features are in better condition than Scotland overall.

Table 2-8 Native Woodland Condition Indicator, 2006 to 2013

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Satisfactory	29.9%	39.3%
Unsatisfactory	48.3%	46.1%
Nearly-native woodland	1.5%	3.7%
Planted Ancient Woodlands Sites (PAWS)	20.2%	10.9%
Total (hectares)	56,407	364,208

Source: Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) (2025), Native Woodland Condition Indicator. Available at: <https://informatics.sepa.org.uk/ESHI/>

Table 2-9 Site Condition Monitoring, 2024

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Favourable	79.8%	71.1%
Recovering	4.2%	4.2%
Unfavourable	16.0%	24.7%
Total (sites)	499	5,431

Source: SEPA (2025), Site Condition Monitoring. Available at: <https://informatics.sepa.org.uk/ProtectedNatureSites/>

The Application Site Boundary is not characterised by a pristine or highly biodiverse natural environment. Land cover within this is predominantly commercial forestry, rather than native woodland, although some woodland is present within Argyll and Bute. The Proposed Development is also not located within any environmentally designated sites. This section provides baseline context for the whole region, which is considered lower overall condition relative to Scotland as a whole.

2.5 The Onshore Wind Market Context

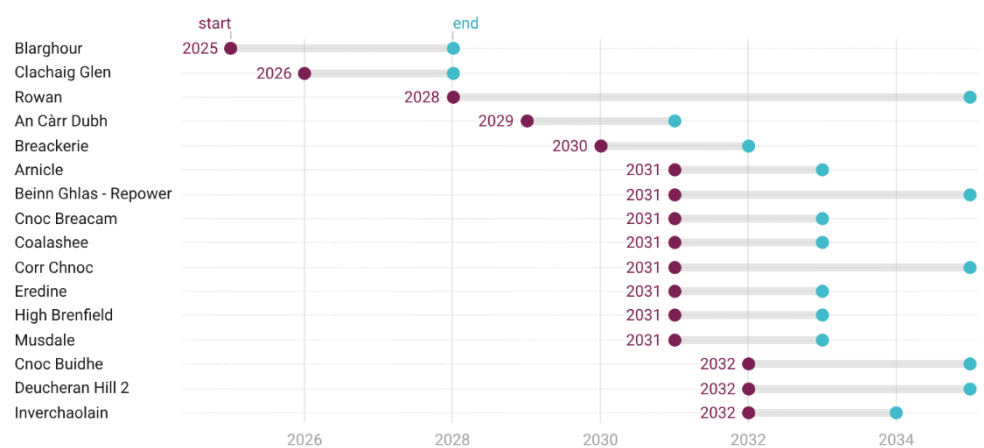
2.5.1 Onshore Wind Argyll and Bute Pipeline

Data from EnergyPulse suggests that between 2025 and 2035, a total of 2.4 GW of onshore wind energy is expected to commence construction in Argyll and Bute. Since 2020, Blair Hill, producing a combined 0.4 GW of energy, has been constructed and is currently operational.

Looking ahead, EnergyPulse expects 29 new onshore wind projects, totalling 2.4 GW, to be constructed in Argyll and Bute over the period from 2025 to 2035. Of these, seven are currently in planning, seven have received consent and 15 are in development. Most of the larger projects, exceeding 75 MW, are expected to begin in 2031 (eight projects) and 2032 (three projects).

Figure 2-1 Construction of Large (> 75 MW) Onshore Wind Projects in Argyll and Bute

Onshore Wind Construction in Argyll and Bute



Projects with a capacity of over 75 MW

Chart: BiGGAR Economics • Source: RenewableUK EnergyPulse • Created with Datawrapper

Source: BiGGAR Economics analysis of EnergyPulse Database.

Of these projects, **Deucheran Hill 2**, **Clachaig Glen** and **Eredine** Wind Farms will be developed by the Applicant.

2.6 Summary of Local Context

As the Local Area faces a projected rise in its ageing population over the next two decades, creating local employment opportunities will become even more important. The Proposed Development will help to increase employment in the Local Area through direct economic activities. Therefore, the Proposed Development will play a role in attracting and retaining the working-age population.

A notable feature of the economy of the Local Area is the concentration of employment in construction (9.5%). The construction sector is also more important in the Local Area and Argyll and Bute than in Scotland as a whole. This may offer opportunities for local employment, particularly in the employment and training opportunities surrounding civil engineering and specialised construction. Both the Local Area and Argyll and Bute could potentially benefit from manufacturing and construction contracts, which will contribute to the overall local impact.

Considering other socio-economic statistics, the labour market indicators showcase a regional economy which is more active and employed, yet with lower wages than Scotland. While none of the Local Area's small areas are in the most deprived quintile, challenges still remain, particularly in geographic access.

Given the presence of local community organisations in the Local Area these may serve as key mechanisms to ensure the Proposed Development is able to deliver economic benefit which serves the local community.

3.

Tourism Baseline and Assessment

This section sets out the tourism context and considers the impact of the Proposed Development on tourism and recreation.

3.1 Tourism Baseline

3.1.1 Visitor Numbers

Between 2022 and 2024, it was estimated that about 2.5 million day visits to Argyll and the Isles or 3.3% of all day visits to Scotland. Day visitors to Argyll and the Isles spent about £74 million, with visitors to Scotland spending almost £4.0 billion.

In the same period, the overnight domestic visitor market accounted for a further 0.4 million visits to Argyll and the Isles, or 3.8% of domestic overnight visits across Scotland. Overnight tourists spent £120 million in Argyll and the Isles, accounting for 3.6% of total spending in Scotland.

In Argyll and the Isles, international overnight tourism accounted for around 83,000 visits and £45 million in spend. This was equivalent to 1.8% of total international visits to Scotland and 1.1% of total spend from international overnight visitors.

Table 3-1 Visits and Visitor Spending, 2022-2024

	Argyll and the Isles	Scotland*
Visitor Numbers (million)		
Day Visitors	2.5**	76.8
Domestic Overnight Visitors	0.4	10.6
International Overnight Visitors	0.1	4.4
Spend (£ million)		
Day Visitors	73.7**	4,000.0
Domestic Overnight Visitors	120.0	3,300.0
International Overnight Visitors	45.0	4,000.0

Source: Visit Scotland (2024), Scotland Visitor Survey 2023 – Argyll & the Isles factsheet; Great Britain (2025), Tourism Survey Day Visits and Overnight Trips 2024; Visit Britain (2025), International Passenger Survey 2024. *Note data for Scotland are for 2024. **Note that these figures are estimates based on Visit Scotland (2021), Insight Department: Argyll and Bute Factsheet 2019 and Great Britain's Tourism Survey Day Visits 2024 data for Scotland.

3.1.2 Sustainable Tourism GVA and Employment

In its 2015 economic strategy¹⁰, the Scottish Government identified six sectors as growth sectors, that is, economic sectors where Scotland had a comparative advantage. Sustainable tourism was one of the sectors identified.

As shown in the Table 3-2, the sustainable tourism sector employed 6,000 people in Argyll and Bute in 2024¹¹. The area accounted for 2.5% of employment in the sector across Scotland, where 239,000 people worked in sustainable tourism. The sector generated £149.6 million GVA in Argyll and Bute, equivalent to 3.0% of the £4.9 billion GVA generated across Scotland.

With international overnight visitors accounting for only 1.8% of the total visitors and 1.1% of the total spend in Argyll and Bute, it is likely that the tourism sector is largely supported by residents and day visitors. It is also important to consider the seasonality of employment within this sector, with a proportion of tourism related jobs being temporary and only required during the summer months.

Table 3-2 Sustainable Tourism, 2023

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Employment	6,000	239,000
GVA (£ million)	149.6	4,944.8

Source: Scottish Government (2026), Industry Statistics.

3.1.3 Tourist Attractions

Using Visit Scotland and Google Maps, local visitor attractions were identified and categorised thematically. What emerged in the area surrounding the Proposed Development (15 km radius from the closest proposed turbine) was a tourism offering in the surrounding areas primarily consisting of cultural and historic attractions and outdoor attractions such as hillwalking.

This is also evident in the Scottish Visitor Survey 2023¹², where the 202 participants identified castles or forts, shopping, architecture and buildings, visitor or heritage centres and hill walking, mountaineering, hiking or rambling, as the top 5 attractions or activities undertaken in the wider area.

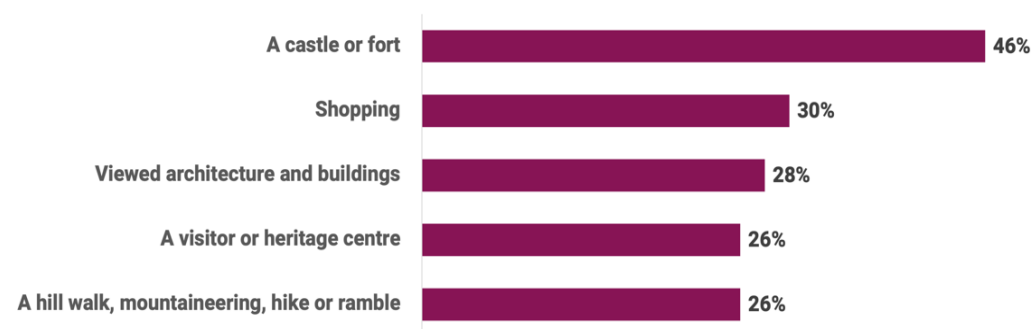


¹⁰ Scottish Government (2015), Scotland's Economic Strategy.

¹¹ Scottish Government (2026) Industry Statistics: Local Authority Area Statistics database. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/industry-statistics/>

¹² VisitScotland (2024) Scotland Visitor Survey 2023 – Argyll & the Isles factsheet. [online] Available at: <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/regions/argyll-isles>

Figure 3-1 Top 5 Attractions or activities undertaken/ visited in Argyll & the Isles



Source: VisitScotland (2024), Scotland Visitor Survey 2023 – Argyll & the Isles factsheet.

Tourist attractions are set out in the table below, alongside a short description of them and their distance from the closest turbine. The list of tourist attractions is included in **Table 9-1** in **Section 9** appendix at the end of this document.

3.1.4 Accommodation Providers

Based on the most recent Scotland Visitor Survey 2023¹³, about 55% of tourists stayed in serviced accommodation such as hotels, motels and inns (32%) or guest houses and bed and breakfast (B&Bs) (22%). The remaining 49% stayed in self-catering accommodation (24%), camping and caravan parks (22%) and friend's or relative's homes (4%).

Through online research on the VisitScotland portal and Google Maps, a number of accommodation providers were identified in the area surrounding the Proposed Development. There are **71 accommodation providers within 15 km from the Proposed Development**. Most of the accommodation providers (44) were identified to be located within 5-10 km from the Proposed Development. 19 providers were located within 10-15 km from the Proposed Development, including some at the coast of Isle of Gigha and Isle of Arran with potential views towards the Proposed Development.

Auchnabreac Cottage is a self-catering accommodation located approximately 1.1 km from the Proposed Development, whereas seven other providers are located within 5 km in areas such as Killeen, Rhunahaorine and Dippen. These include one hotel, one caravan park.



¹³ VisitScotland (2024) Scotland Visitor Survey 2023 – Argyll & the Isles factsheet. [online] Available at: <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/regions/argyll-isles>



3.1.5 Recreational Trails & Core Paths

There were **27 core paths**^{14 15} identified within 15 km of the Proposed Development. The following list provides the names and codes of five sections of core paths with the closest proximity to the Proposed Development:

- C094 - Tayinloan-Carradale East-West link (0.9 km from the Proposed Development);
- C088 - Campbeltown to Cloanaig (2.9 km from the Proposed Development);
- C093 - Carradale Forest circular (3.1 km from the Proposed Development);
- C097 - Carradale Bay circular (4.9 km from the Proposed Development); and
- C403 - Port na Cuile - Seneval Wood, Carradale (5.2 km from the Proposed Development).

There is also recreational activity in the area with **22 recreational trails** identified within 15 km through the portal Walkhighlands¹⁶. Of these, only **Kintyre Way Stage 4: Tayinloan to Carradale** passes through the Proposed Wind Farm Development Area. A section of this will be diverted during construction as safety mitigation. This will potentially be a permanent diversion, depending on the finalised layout design at one turbine location. The list of recreational trails, their description and distance from the Proposed Development are outlined in **Table 9-2 Recreational Trails in Section 9** appendix at the end of this document.

3.2 Summary of Tourism Baseline

Tourism is an important sector within Argyll and Bute, and the Kintyre area supports a range of visitor activity. However, the distribution of this activity is shaped by the geography of the area. Kintyre is served by two principal road corridors along the east and west coasts, with settlements, and the tourism activity they support, concentrated along these coastal routes.

The cluster of tourism activity nearest to the Proposed Development is centred on the village of Carradale, a historic fishing village on the east coast of Kintyre. Carradale offers a beach at Carradale Bay, along with cafes and accommodation providers. The most notable of these is Carradale Bay Holiday Park, which offers static caravan and touring pitches and is a prominent part of the local accommodation offer. The village and its coastal setting are the principal drivers of tourism activity in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

Beyond Carradale, the study area includes a number of other tourism and recreational assets, including walking routes such as the Kintyre Way and viewpoints at Deer Hill. While these contribute to the broader recreational offer of the area, they are not considered to be primary drivers of visitor activity. The Kintyre Way is a long-

¹⁴ Argyll and Bute Council (2026), Core Paths. [online]. Available at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-building/core-paths>.

¹⁵ Scottish Government SpatialData (2026), Core Paths – Scotland.

¹⁶ Walkhighlands (2026), Search Walks. [online]. Available at: <https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/walk-search.php>.

distance walking route that passes through the study area but is not in itself a destination that drives visitor activity to the local area.

In summary, the tourism baseline indicates that the local visitor economy in the vicinity of the Proposed Development is driven principally by Carradale and its coastal assets, with the broader recreational landscape playing a supporting rather than determining role in visitor decision-making.

3.3 Evidence on Wind Farms and Tourism

A number of studies have considered the relationship between wind farm developments and tourism activity.

A study undertaken in 2008 by the Moffat Centre at Glasgow Caledonian University¹⁷ examined the potential effects of wind farms on tourism. The study found that while there could be minor effects on tourism providers, the overall effect on tourism expenditure and employment would be very limited. Since this study, wind farms have become a more common feature in Scotland and any negative effects on the tourism economy as a result of their existence would now be apparent.

In 2021, BiGGAR Economics produced a report analysing the relationship between the construction of onshore wind farms and tourism employment at the national, regional, and local level¹⁸. Nationally, the report found that, while Scotland had experienced a significant increase in onshore wind energy since 2009, employment in tourism related sectors had increased by 20% over the same period. At the local authority level, those local authorities which had seen the largest increase in onshore wind energy, also experienced increases in tourism employment, equal to, or greater than, other areas across Scotland.

The report included case studies of 44 onshore wind farms constructed between 2009 and 2019. This included an updated analysis of 28 wind farms (included in a previous report¹⁹) constructed prior to 2015, and 16 additional wind farms constructed between 2015 and 2019. The study reported on changes in tourism-related employment in the data zones within 15 km of each wind farm. Of the 28 wind farms previously analysed, the local areas surrounding 18 of those experienced an increase in tourism employment above the Scottish average, in the years following the construction. Of the local areas surrounding the additional 16 onshore wind farms, 11 experienced increases in tourism employment, which outperformed the Scottish average. These results strongly suggested that tourism employment in

¹⁷ Moffat Centre (2008) *The Economic Impact of Wind Farms on Scottish Tourism*. [online] The Scottish Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/economic-impacts-wind-farms-scottish-tourism/>

¹⁸ BiGGAR Economics (2021) *Wind Farms & Tourism Trends in Scotland: Evidence from 44 Wind Farms*. [online] Available at: <https://biggareconomics.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/BiGGAR-Economics-Wind-Farms-and-Tourism-2021.pdf>

¹⁹ BiGGAR Economics (2017) *Wind Farms and Tourism Trends in Scotland*. [online] Available at: <https://biggareconomics.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Wind-farms-and-tourism-trends-in-Scotland.pdf>



local areas across Scotland changed independently of wind farms located in the area.

The report concluded that there was no pattern or evidence to suggest that the development of onshore wind farms in Scotland had any negative effects on the tourism economies in the immediate areas surrounding wind farms, the local authority areas, or indeed, across the country as a whole.

These conclusions are not surprising given that:

- Onshore Wind Policy Statement²⁰ acknowledges that while concerns about the impact on tourism exist, current evidence does not indicate negative effects but instead highlight the potential for developments to support local tourism through improved access, recreational opportunities and community-focused initiatives contributing positively to local economies and aligning with a ‘people and place’ approach;
- There are high levels of public support for renewable energy;²¹
- As wind farms are well-established in Scotland, tourists might already expect to see wind farms when visiting Scotland, especially rural Scotland;
- The factors that determine the success of the tourism sector do not include the presence or otherwise of an onshore wind farm; and
- Issues that influence tourism include the ability and willingness to travel, economic performance (and so whether tourists have disposable income available for leisure trips), exchange rates, the quality of the overall tourism product, the effectiveness of destination marketing and the quality and value for money of the services offered by tourism businesses.

NPF4 also does not identify tourism impacts as a material concern for onshore wind development that requires examination. Overall, it is accepted that onshore wind does not adversely impact tourism interests.

3.4 Implications for Tourism and Recreation

The evidence presented in Section 3.3 demonstrates that there is no statistical correlation between wind farm development and negative tourism trends. However, to ensure a robust assessment for the Proposed Development, it is necessary to consider the theoretical mechanisms by which an impact could occur.

3.4.1 Impact Mechanism

For a socio-economic impact on tourism receptors to materialise, the presence of the wind farm must trigger a chain of behavioural changes. It is not sufficient for the

²⁰ Scottish Government (2022) Onshore Wind Policy Statement 2022. [online] The Scottish Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/>

²¹ DESNZ (2025). Public Attitudes Tracker: Energy Infrastructure and Energy Sources. Winter 2024, UK. [online] Gov.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-winter-2024/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-energy-infrastructure-and-energy-security-winter-2024-uk#:~:text=In%20Winter%202024%20%5Bfootnote%201,from%2026%25%20to%2021%25.>

wind farm to be visible; it must be sufficiently intrusive to alter the decision-making of visitors.

The impact mechanism requires three distinct stages:

- **Visual Change:** The development must be visible from a tourism asset;
- **Behavioural Change:** This visibility must be negative enough to deter visitors from visiting, returning, or recommending the area; and
- **Economic Impact:** This behavioural change must result in a net reduction in expenditure within the local economy.

3.4.2 Drivers of Visitor Behaviour

Visitor surveys consistently show that tourists visit an area for a complex range of reasons, including cost, accessibility, accommodation quality, heritage interest, and specific activities.

While "scenery" is a factor, it is rarely the sole determinant. This is particularly relevant in Argyll and Bute, where tourism assets are predominantly activity-based rather than solely reliant on views.

- **Activity-Based:** Visitors to The Old Schoolhouse Gallery, Gigha Boats and Activity Centre, or local golf courses are focused on the specific activity or heritage asset. The quality of the wider horizon is secondary to the immediate experience.
- **View-Based:** Visitors to scenic viewpoints or wild land areas are more sensitive to landscape change.

3.4.3 Assessment Criteria: Susceptibility

Consequently, the susceptibility of a tourism asset to impact is determined by:

- **The dependency on views:** Is the view the primary product? (e.g., lookout points vs. an indoor museum);
- **The nature of the user:** Are they "scenery seekers" or "activity participants"?; and
- **Distance and Context:** Is the asset located in a landscape where wind energy is already established?

Overall, existing evidence indicates that wind farm developments across Scotland have not resulted in negative impacts on tourism activity. Wind energy infrastructure is now a well-established feature of the Scottish landscape, with no significant adverse effects on the tourism economy evident.

3.5 Assessment of Effects: Tourism and Recreation Receptors

This section assesses the potential for the Proposed Development to have a significant effect on tourism and recreation. The methodology for this is a two-stage process.

First, the assessment reviews the findings of the other relevant technical chapters to identify any primary significant effects. These are the direct environmental effects of the project, such as changes to the landscape or an increase in traffic. The chapters reviewed for this were:

- Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Amenity;
- Chapter 9: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage;
- Chapter 11: Noise; and
- Chapter 12: Traffic and Movement.

Second, where a primary significant effect is identified in these chapters, this assessment then considers whether that effect is likely to result in a secondary significant effect on tourism and recreation receptors. This is a change in visitor behaviour or the viability of a tourism business. The significance of this secondary effect is determined based on the susceptibility of the tourism asset and the magnitude of the potential change.

3.5.1 Local Visitor Attractions

As detailed in the baseline assessment, there are 32 local visitor attractions within 15 km of the Proposed Development, including beaches, historical sites, and golf courses (**Table 9-1**). A review of the relevant technical chapters identified no significant primary effects on these local visitor attractions; consequently, there is no plausible pathway for secondary significant effects on these local attractions.

3.5.2 Local Accommodation Providers

There are 71 accommodation providers within the 15 km study area, including hotels, B&Bs, and campsites. While visual impacts may be experienced from Arran, the accommodation providers on the East Coast of Arran already have views of operational wind farms in Kintyre and there is no indication that this has impacted tourism in the area. A review of other relevant technical chapters identified no significant primary effects on the accommodation providers considered in this report; consequently, there is no plausible pathway for secondary significant effects on these accommodation providers.

3.5.3 Recreational Trails and Core Paths

The study area contains 22 recreational trails and 22 core paths. A review of the relevant technical chapters identified significant landscape and visual effects across a number of receptors including: the Kintyre Way, Deer Hill, Pirnmill, the Arran Coastal Way, and hillwalkers on the western hills of Arran.

Deer Hill is a local walk, the majority of which passes through woodland with limited outward visibility. While it contributes to the recreational offer of the area, it is not a key driver of tourism activity, which as set out in the baseline summary, is driven principally by the village of Carradale and its coastal assets. The Kintyre Way is a long-distance walking route that passes through the study area and a section of it will be diverted for safety. However, it is not in itself a destination that drives visitor activity to the local area.

The receptors at Pirnmill, the Arran Coastal Way, and the western hills of Arran are all located on Arran and they do not relate to assets that drive tourism activity within the Argyll and Bute. While visual impacts may be experienced from Arran, most recreational trails and core paths already have views of operational wind farms in Kintyre and there is no indication that this has impacted tourism in the area.

There is therefore no plausible pathway for secondary significant effects on tourism as a result of the visual effects identified. No significant primary effects were identified in relation to the remaining recreational trails and core paths.

3.6 Summary of Tourism Assessment

The evidence base and national planning policy indicate that onshore wind development does not adversely affect tourism. The assessment of the Proposed Development supports this conclusion at the local level. While significant landscape and visual effects have been identified on a number of receptors, these receptors are not key drivers of tourism in the area. The principal driver of tourism activity in the vicinity of the Proposed Development, the village of Carradale and its coastal assets, is not identified as being subject to significant environmental effects.

The Proposed Development is therefore not expected to result in significant adverse effects on tourism or recreation.

4. Supply Chain

Construction plays a more important role in the Local Area and Argyll and Bute relative to Scotland presenting supply chain opportunities to local supply chain contractors.

This section includes three parts:

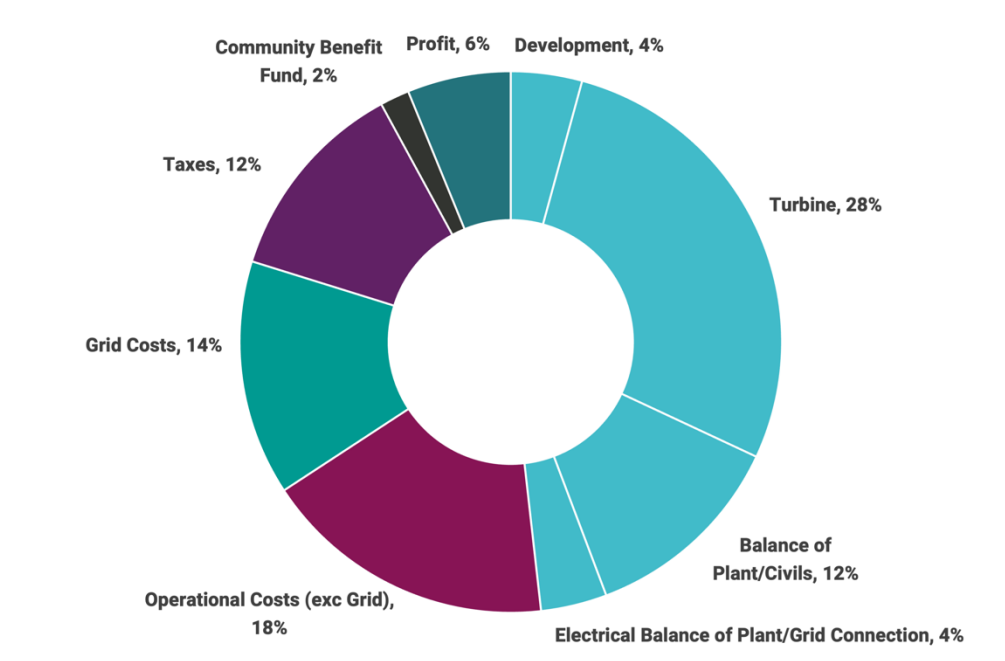
- Good practice and context related to the supply chain theme;
- The Applicant's commitments and approach;
- The assessment of these commitments and approach compared with good practice outlined in the Scottish Renewables Guidance²².

4.1 Maximising Benefits through the Supply Chain

The supply chain is vital for maximising economic benefits from wind farm development. The distribution of the costs of a typical onshore wind farm in Scotland is shown in **Figure 4-1**. This shows that the majority of the value of an onshore wind farm is captured within various elements of the supply chain. Areas that Scotland has the ability to supply the majority of the work (such as development, the electrical and civil balance of plant and operational activities) account for at least 30% of the value of an onshore wind farm and therefore, maximising the supply chain opportunities from any project is crucial to maximising the net economic benefits.

²² Scottish Renewables (2025) *Maximising Net Socio-Economic Benefit of Renewable Energy Guidance and Reporting Framework: Guidance for developers to comply with NPF4 Policy 11c*. [online] Scottish Renewables. Available at: https://www.scottishrenewables.com/assets/000/004/592/2025.03.18_Maximising_Net_Socio-Economic_Benefit_Reporting_Framework_original.pdf?1742308718

Figure 4-1 Distribution of costs of a Typical Onshore Wind Farm in Scotland



Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis

Building local supply chain capacity allows developers to reduce costs while supporting regional economic growth. This approach brings together national policy and community expectations for local supply chain content and job creation.

Onshore wind developers can only utilise a local supply chain if it exists and is competitive at the time the Applicant needs the goods or services it could provide.



Social Capital

Supply Chain Development can contribute to the development of social capital, in addition to the more obvious contribution to financial capital within these businesses.

The opportunity will be particularly relevant for the Applicant and the Proposed Development because of the number of proposed onshore wind projects that could be progressed in Argyll and Bute over the next ten years. The opportunities for repeat work within the business community can create bonds and networks within the supply chain that will encourage cooperation.

Effective capacity-building requires targeted outreach to raise awareness among local businesses about opportunities. This involves informing suppliers about technical standards, safety requirements and procurement processes and positions them to compete successfully for contracts. Clear communication of requirements and timelines gives local businesses the lead time needed to prepare, enhancing local competitiveness and reducing dependence on distant suppliers.

The supply chain serves as a strategic tool for developers to enhance economic returns, support communities and maximise local benefits at each stage of the development process, whilst also strengthening the renewable energy sector's sustainability and commitment to deliver value.

4.2 Assessment Approach

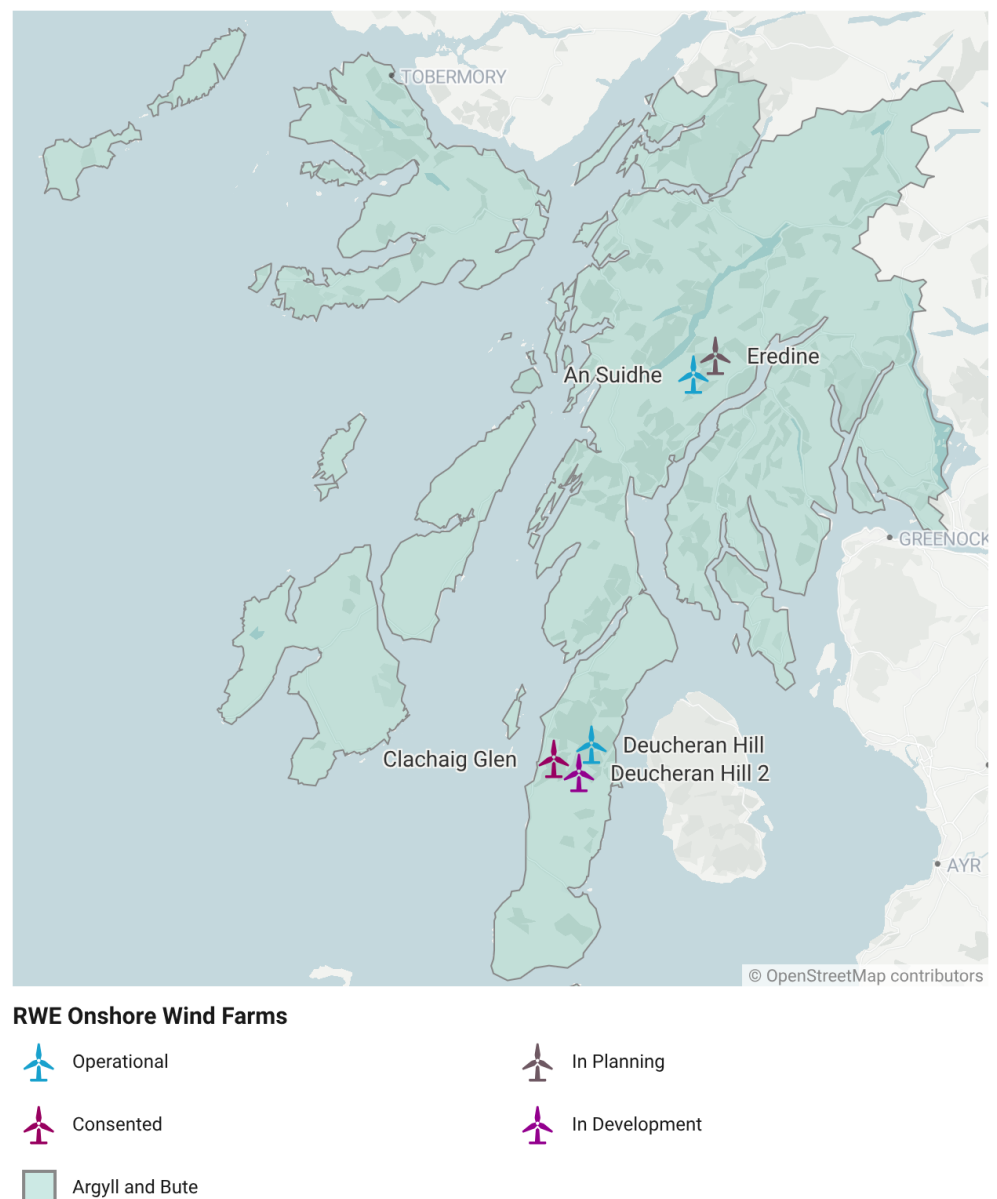
For a project to maximise its socio-economic benefits, it needs to be place-based, collaborative, flexible, transparent and innovative. For maximising benefits throughout the supply chain, this would mean the Applicant would need to:

- **research the local business base**, to understand the capacity to provide the goods and services needed, and identify opportunities to support supply chain development;
- take reasonable steps to **maximise local supply chain content**, including working with Tier 1 contractors to make use of local suppliers;
- adopt **progressive procurement practices** that make it easier to make use of small local businesses and social enterprises; and
- supporting ongoing efforts to **increase regional supply chain capacity** and clusters of expertise.

4.3 The Applicant's Actions and Commitments

The Applicant is aware that Argyll and Bute is a key area for the development of the onshore wind sector in Scotland and its portfolio. In addition to the Proposed Development, the Applicant has three other locations in Argyll and Bute with wind energy projects at various stages of development and operation. The existing Deucheran Hill will be decommissioned by the end of 2026. These are shown in Figure 4-2.

Figure 4-2 Applicant's Onshore Wind Projects in Argyll and Bute



Created with Datawrapper

Source: BiGGAR Economics using Datawrapper.

In addition to the Applicant's portfolio, a number of other onshore wind projects are expected to be constructed in Argyll and Bute over the next ten years. The significant level of activity within Argyll and Bute has implications for maximising supply chain content associated with Proposed Development. In particular, the pipeline of future developments will give local contractors the confidence and security needed to invest in plant, skills and other equipment that would be needed to enable them to provide the services required.

The Applicant is taking into consideration these implications and the following section shows how the wider cluster of Applicant's onshore wind projects will contribute to the maximisation of benefits for supply chain, including the continuation of actions and benefits enabled by existing operational onshore wind development such as An Suidhe and Deucheran Hill, and the approach taken through projects at a later stage of development like Clachaig Glen and Eredine.

4.3.1 Supply Chain Commitments

The Applicant is aware that the development of its projects, and others in the local area, represent an increase in aggregate demand for goods and services in Argyll and Bute. To enable the local area to maximise the benefits of this increased demand, there needs to be an increase in the supply chain to meet this demand and a willingness of the Applicant, and others, to engage with and commission this increased demand.

The Proposed Development forms part of a **wider cluster of Applicant's onshore wind developments within the area** that are in development and will be constructed in the near future. Therefore, the Proposed Development is considered as part of this cumulative programme of development, demonstrating the Applicant's continued investment and presence within Argyll and Bute.

Building on the approach established through projects in later stage of development, the Applicant intends to strengthen its commitments to local supply chain engagement. For consented projects in the area, the Applicant has created and maintained a **local supplier database**, ensuring that local and regional businesses are identified and informed about opportunities associated with the project. This helps to build an understanding of the existing business base and its capacity to provide goods and services relevant to the onshore wind development. The Applicant or their suppliers are also committed to hosting '**Meet the Developer**' events or other **supplier engagement events** for other developments in the area, helping to connect Tier 1 contractors with local businesses. Once consent is granted, the Applicant is committed to engaging further with the local supply chain to support them in preparing for contract opportunities in close collaboration with the Local Authority and relevant business groups in the area.

These initiatives and knowledge gained through early engagement will be carried forward and enhanced as part of the Proposed Development programme, ensuring that local companies are well placed to benefit from procurement and employment opportunities arising from the Proposed Development and helping maximise local content and retain value within the region at a continuous basis.

Progressive procurement processes that support Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs), employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, co-operatives and community businesses, can help achieve the abovementioned. By working collaboratively to support the development of regional supply chains, corporate investors can also help shift the long-term economic prospects for the regions they work in.

The procurement approach used in Applicant's consented developments in the area has been designed by the Applicant to ensure **accessibility for smaller local enterprises**, including social and community-based businesses. For the Proposed Development, which is part of the same cluster, the Applicant intends to apply and refine these progressive procurement methods, ensuring transparent processes and clear information on tender opportunities.

The Applicant is committed to supporting local procurement and strengthening regional supply chain capacity, building on the approach established through its other developments in the area.

The projects prior to the Proposed Development will establish valuable relationships with regional suppliers and contribute to the growth of skills within the local renewable energy sector. As part of the cluster of Applicant's onshore wind projects that are in development and will be constructed in the near future in Argyll and Bute, the Proposed Development will continue this by sharing learnings, promoting consistent engagement practices and supporting the development of local capabilities. This cumulative programme of investment will help to consolidate regional expertise and create a sustainable onshore wind supply chain for the long term.

4.4 Assessment of Maximising Economic Benefit Principles

This section considers whether the actions and commitments of the Applicant on the supply chain meet the principles required for them to maximise the local benefits.

4.4.1 Place-based

The Applicant's strategy for the three projects is tailored to the local context of Argyll and Bute:

- Inclusion of measures for local engagement such as 'Meet the Developer' events and local supplier database that target businesses in the surrounding area;



- Strengthen long-term local capability, not only for a single project but across multiple developments in the same region; and
- Application of knowledge from completed local projects, can help respond to the specific characteristics of the local area, supply chain and economy in its future projects.

4.4.2 Collaborative

The Applicant shows evidence of working with others to co-deliver benefits:

- Structured collaboration between the Applicant and local businesses through actions like 'Meet the Developer' events and the local supplier database to increase awareness of opportunities and skills required; and
- Joint learning from previous projects, informs the design and delivery of the Proposed Development, ensuring good practice is shared and adapted to local needs.

4.4.3 Innovative

An innovative approach is evident in the Applicant's **coordinated delivery model across multiple projects in the same area**. By sharing learning, maintaining a regional supplier database and adopting progressive procurement practices, the Applicant is enhancing local participation in a way that goes beyond standard project-by-project engagement.

4.4.4 Transparent

The 'Meet the Developer' events and publication of opportunities through the local supplier database make the procurement process visible and accessible to local businesses. The Applicant is open to reporting on other developments once completed to provide clear evidence of capabilities and economic outcomes to support future project plans.

4.4.5 Flexible

The Applicant's use of a cluster model allows supply chain and relevant engagements to be adjusted and refined for each project according to local needs, scale and timing. Experience from other projects in the area will evolve as feedback enabling the Applicant to adapt procurement and engage local businesses appropriately. This helps to identify opportunities and respond to change. On-going collaboration with local business organisations can strengthen this.

4.4.6 Deliverable

The proposals that the Applicant has committed to are deliverable in other projects in the cluster. There is nothing that has been proposed which would place an unmanageable financial burden on the developments and the process through which the Proposed Development will support the development of the local supply chain has been considered.

5.

Skills Development

Skills Development is a key enabler of supply chain capabilities and is therefore crucial if the Proposed Development is going to maximise its local economic benefits.

This section includes three parts:

- Good practice and context related to the skills development theme;
- The Applicant's commitments and approach; and
- The assessment of these commitments and approach compared with good practice outlined in the Scottish Renewables Guidance.

5.1 Maximising Benefits through Skills Development

Developing skills within a local region plays a pivotal role in maximising the economic benefits of wind farm projects. By investing in local workforce development and building relations with education and training providers, the Applicant can help ensure that the community directly benefits from the jobs and opportunities created by the Proposed Development, thus fostering long-term economic growth.

Skills development enhances the capacity of the local workforce to meet the technical demands of the renewables industry. Offering training programmes and upskilling opportunities ensures that local workers are prepared to take on both short-term construction roles and long-term operational positions, contributing to sustained employment.



Human Capital

Skills development is one of the key methods by which communities can build up human capital. Human capital includes the skills, knowledge and health/wellbeing that people accumulate throughout their lives. One of the ways in which this can be measured is through the total potential lifetime earnings of a community. A workforce with more skills is likely to earn more in the future.

In addition to greater potential lifetime earnings, a more skilled community has a greater level of economic resilience. Therefore, anything that can be done by the Applicant to develop skills will contribute to the long-term prosperity of the Local Area, and Argyll and Bute as a whole.

Building regional skills helps create a supply chain network, where local businesses can provide goods and services directly to the Proposed Development. This capacity-building in the local business community supports the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises, driving economic diversification and resilience.

Through initiatives that target specific skills gaps and address industry requirements, the Applicant not only maximises the immediate economic benefits of wind farm development but also fosters a skilled workforce that is competitive in future renewable energy sectors. This creates a foundation for the region's long-term economic vitality, ensuring that local communities remain integral to future renewable energy projects.

5.2 Assessment Approach

For a project to maximise its socio-economic benefits, it needs to be place-based, collaborative, flexible, transparent and innovative. For maximising benefits through skills development this would mean the Applicant would need to:

- Adhere to progressive employment and recruitment practices that meet or exceed current industry best practices;
- **Understand the local labour market** and its capacity to provide the skills needed in the short and longer term, and identify important skills gaps;
- **Build relationships with education and training providers** and work with them to implement the national skills strategy; and
- Work collaboratively with relevant training/education partners and community bodies to **develop bespoke labour market development solutions**, including apprenticeships where appropriate.



5.3 The Applicant's Actions and Commitments

The Applicant recognises the long-term success of the renewable energy developments in Argyll and Bute depends on the creation of a skilled and resilient workforce. It is exploring opportunities to enhance the Proposed Development's contribution to local skills and education. Consideration is being given to potential **partnerships with training providers and further education institutions**, including options for short courses or practical training in Campbeltown and at local colleges. There will be **on-site learning and apprenticeship scheme** opportunities, subject to project requirements. The Applicant has already in place a UK apprenticeships scheme for wind turbine technicians²³. The apprenticeships are linked to specific courses in colleges across the country and time is split between attending classes and training on-site across 3 years. These courses tend to be of high demand.

The Applicant is also assessing ways to promote awareness in career pathways within the onshore wind sector. This may include **engagement in career fairs, educational events and school visits**, supported by the Applicant's **STEM Ambassador Programme**, which encourages staff to participate in STEM activities. Team members of this programme are based in Scotland rather than in the vicinity of the Proposed Development. The engagement activities will also be at a Scotland-wide level. The Applicant will also explore the potential to take part in a **UK-wide volunteering platform**, creating opportunities for individuals who have worked on-site to contribute to the works and community skills initiatives.

Further discussions are expected with local enterprise and economic development bodies, such as the **Argyll and Bute Forum** and relevant **regional skills agencies**, to ensure that any training activity complements existing initiatives and aligns with local priorities. These actions remain under consideration and have not yet been formalised as project commitments, however they represent a clear direction consistent with the Applicant's broader programme of onshore wind developments in Argyll and Bute, where ongoing engagement and investment are helping to build local capacity and support regional economic growth.

5.4 Assessment of Maximising Economic Benefit Principles

5.4.1 Place-based

Place-based benefit is embedded across the initiatives:

- The proposed training and engagement activities are centred on Campbeltown, local colleges and schools within Argyll and Bute, ensuring that opportunities are developed and delivered within the surrounding area; and

²³ RWE (2026), *Apprenticeships in the UK*. [online]. Available at: <https://uk.rwe.com/careers/early-careers/apprenticeships/>

- Potential collaboration with regional education providers, enterprise agencies and the Argyll and Bute Forum will ensure that any initiatives reflect local skills and address specific gaps.

5.4.2 Innovative

The Applicant is aiming to cover skills development through:

- The exploration of STEM Ambassador activity and participation in career events shows innovation by connecting the onshore wind sector directly with education, increasing early engagement and future workforce development; and
- The potential to link on-site experience with volunteering platforms extends the influence beyond the Proposed Development's immediate delivery period.

5.4.3 Collaborative

The Applicant is following a partnership-based model with an intent to develop and implement skills strategies in partnership with those who understand the local context. This includes:

- Partnerships with local colleges, training providers and enterprise agencies to deliver training activities based on regional needs. This includes the consideration of apprenticeship schemes;
- Schools and STEM networks through career events and ambassador programmes at a Scotland-wide level;
- Third-party collaboration, such as the Argyll and Bute Forum, to ensure the delivery of relevant qualifications; and
- Direct community engagement to understand skills gaps.

5.4.4 Flexible

Skills development is typically a long-term objective, and interventions can take many years to have an impact on the labour market. Flexibility is therefore a challenge for skills development initiatives, as there needs to be a level of commitment and foresight on what the future skills demand will be.

The Applicant's current approach to skills development is general, in the sense that it is not targeting specific trades or positions at this point. The process of engaging with local education providers and supply chain companies will identify what the current gaps and needs are, relevant to the onshore wind sector. However, this engagement will be ongoing across the projects in the cluster in Argyll and Bute and will therefore evolve as priorities and requirements change over time.

Collaboration with education providers and third parties allows for adjustments in qualification provisions and formats, depending on the changing demands. A commitment to keep engaging with groups ensures adaptability to shifting skills needs.

5.4.5 Deliverable

The proposed commitments are deliverable because they are based on existing best practices. The costs associated with the skills development initiatives will not be a



barrier to their development, and over time, should represent a net financial benefit to the sector which needs to grow its skills base.

6.

Community Empowerment

The construction and operation of the Proposed Development has the potential to enable community empowerment through community benefit funding and associated capacity building, as well as the approach taken to understand and engage with the local communities.

This section includes three parts:

- Good practice and context related to the community empowerment theme;
- The Applicant's commitments and approach; and
- The assessment of these commitments and approach compared with good practice outlined in the Scottish Renewables Guidance.

6.1 The Role of Community Empowerment

Community empowerment initiatives play a role in maximising the socio-economic benefits derived from renewable energy projects. These initiatives extend the economic advantages beyond the physical construction phase, providing lasting support to local communities through mechanisms such as non-domestic rates payments, community benefit funds and community ownership, and an approach that focuses on understanding and engaging with local communities.

While financial mechanisms are not directly material to the planning process, they significantly enhance the socio-economic outcomes for the regions hosting renewable energy projects. Non-domestic rates payments contribute directly to local government funding, supporting essential public services and infrastructure.



Social Capital

Community benefit funding has the ability to build social capital in communities by providing residents with the resources needed to support networks, collaborate around shared objectives and enact change.

The community benefit funding from such projects will be delivered through either: representative bodies, such as community councils; or via community-owned enterprises. The capacity for leadership within these organisations, and the ability of the wider public to influence the decision-making process within these organisations will be a key component of generating social capital.

Community benefit funds are particularly impactful, as they offer direct financial support to the communities hosting wind farm developments. These funds align with the Scottish Government's 2019 Good Practice Principles on Community Benefits²⁴, which aim to provide long-term economic support and empower communities to invest in local social, environmental and economic projects. A new consultation draft, published in December 2024²⁵, proposes updated principles to reflect a wider range of net-zero technologies and evolving expectations around transparency, inclusivity and impact.

Additionally, community ownership initiatives, where local residents have the opportunity to participate in the development and operation of the wind farm, empower communities by giving them a stake in the success of the project. This sense of ownership can foster further economic activity, collaboration and economic returns to the community.

The approach taken by the developers and their engagement with the communities are important in supporting these initiatives for community empowerment.

6.2 Assessment Approach

For a project to maximise its socio-economic benefits, it needs to be place-based, collaborative, flexible, transparent and innovative.

²⁴ Scottish Government (2019) *Good practice principles for community benefits from onshore renewable energy developments*. Scottish Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-good-practice-principles-community-benefits-onshore-renewable-energy-developments/>

²⁵ Scottish Government (2024) *Community benefits from net zero energy developments: consultation*. Scottish Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-benefits-net-zero-energy-developments-consultation/documents/>

The assessment will consider the Applicant's role as an enabler of impact, and the approach it is taking that will allow the community to maximise the benefits

For maximising benefits through community empowerment, this would mean the Applicant would need to consider actions such as:

- working with local communities to understand local needs, aspirations, appetite and delivery capacity;
- developing a **community benefit package tailored to local needs** that is consistent with best practice principles and (where feasible) a proposition for community ownership;
- working closely with local communities to **build trusted relationships** to help support the emergence of innovative ideas and approaches, for example by appointing a single point of contact to manage discussions;
- working with community bodies to **establish effective governance**, administration, monitoring and evaluation arrangements consistent with best practice and providing data to enable the national community benefit register to be regularly updated; and
- engaging with regional partners in the public and third sectors to identify and develop opportunities to **generate regional benefits**.
- setting out any steps taken to **collaborate with other developers** working on nearby projects to secure greater impacts from community benefit proposals, for example by linking up access tracks to create a local network of paths or setting up joint governance arrangements for community benefit funds.

6.3 The Applicant's Actions and Commitments

6.3.1 Community Engagement and Benefit Fund

The Applicant's overall **approach includes supporting and diversifying local decision-making panels**, providing clear legal frameworks and terms of reference, and offering independent administration to simplify processes and widen participation. They have provided training, shared best practice, involved local authority officers where relevant, encouraged open and trusting grant-making principles and offered long-term support through their Community Investment Team. This approach will be embedded in Applicant's engagements with the communities surrounding the Proposed Development. The Applicant is committed to **support capacity building within rural communities** and help groups plan and manage community investments effectively.

The Applicant has taken important steps for community engagement in other projects in the cluster in Argyll and Bute. The engagement for the nearby **Clachaig**

Glen Wind Farm took place through a range of consultation activities, including public information events, online feedback opportunities and directly with local residents and community groups²⁶. The Applicant was committed to working with community organisations to address feedback received. Community input has informed revisions to the turbine layouts, showing that the Applicant has previously considered local views.

For **Eredine Wind Farm**, the Applicant organised a stakeholder workshop with local representatives to identify key strategic challenges for the next 40 years, prioritising themes such as: infrastructure, education, healthcare and sustainable housing to address issues like fuel poverty and an aging population. In collaboration with Foundation Scotland, they organised “Inform and Inspire” sessions with experts from Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company, Highland Hospice, Huntly Development Trust and Community Energy Scotland. This provided best practice examples to help Eredine communities develop scalable, transformative projects through the Eredine Fund that address these local needs. The long-term aim of this process is to help inform the development of a responsive engagement plan, based on the research and learning from proven national models, and foster strategic thinking among local leaders about maximising the positive impact of future community benefit funds.

The Applicant is actively engaging with the communities in Argyll and Bute to help them distribute the benefit funds according to their needs.

Building on this established model of engagement, the Applicant intends to further strengthen its approach through the Proposed Development. An annual community benefit fund of **£5,000 per MW of installed capacity**, in line with Scottish Government good-practice guidance, will be provided to the communities surrounding the Proposed Development. **Early engagement has already taken place with the communities** expected to benefit from the community fund. The Applicant completed three public information events for the Proposed Development in 2024, and a further three in 2025.

The Applicant has also researched the council areas and reviewed the current West Kintyre, East Kintyre and Isle of Arran Community Plans and has identified key themes for projects that could be supported through shared funding streams, including:

- Connectivity (e.g. roads, ferries, broadband);

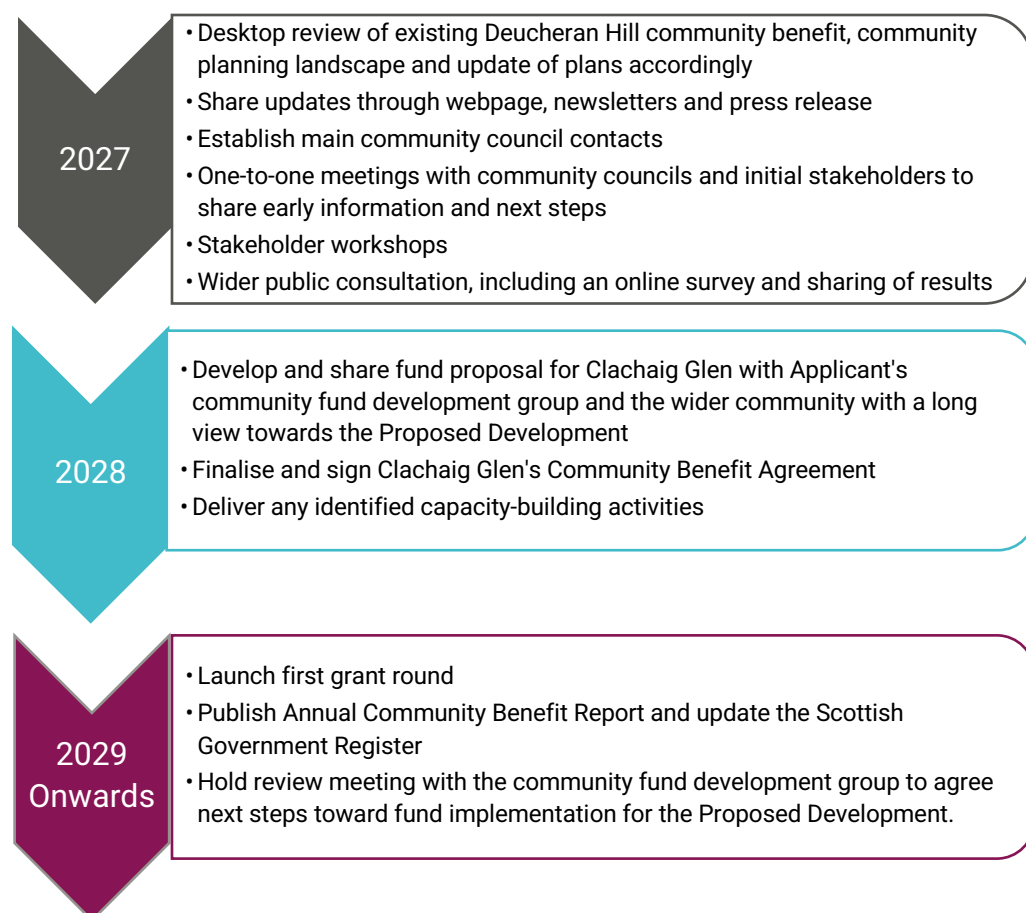
²⁶ RWE (2025), *Clachaig Glen: Planning Documents*. Available at: <https://uk.rwe.com/project-proposals/clachaig-glen/>

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- Affordable/worker housing;
 - Active travel and paths (Blue-Green Trails);
 - Energy-smart community assets (e.g. retrofitting initiatives); and
 - Nature and net zero.

These actions show a continuation and expansion of the Applicant's approach across the cluster of projects in Argyll and Bute. The Applicant's Community Investment Team has created a plan to community fund consultation and development, with ongoing fund delivery, monitoring, reporting, review and adaptation of community benefit funding commitments over the coming decade.

As shown in **Figure 6-1**, this phased plan demonstrates the Applicant's commitment to community empowerment by involving local stakeholders at each stage of preparing the future community benefit fund. Initial engagement will focus on key stakeholders already active in the Kintyre community benefit landscape, including East and West Kintyre Community Councils, the East and West Kintyre Community Funds, Argyll and Bute Council's Windfarm and Renewables Trust, Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) and Foundation Scotland as an independent fund administrator. Wider engagement will involve local residents, local voluntary groups such as youth and environmental organisations and schools and local businesses.

Figure 6-1 Approach to Community Fund Consultation and Development



Source: RWE (2025).

This evolving programme of work will directly inform and strengthen the approach taken for the Proposed Development, ensuring that best practice developed through earlier projects, such as Clachaig Glen Wind Farm, is applied and adapted as the cluster progresses. The area has an established history of wind energy development with previous community engagement and benefit associated with the existing Deucheran Hill Wind Farm which will be decommissioned by the end of 2026. This forms a baseline for the current proposal, which is expected to continue best practices and provide ongoing and improved opportunities for local people.

6.3.2 Shared Ownership

Options for **community ownership** are also being explored, showing a commitment to broaden local participation in financial returns. The Applicant has rolled out shared ownership consultation on current projects, including Clachaig Glen Wind Farm in the cluster in Argyll and Bute, and they are aiming to follow a similar approach for the Proposed Development.

The Applicant aims to increase local interest in the community ownership opportunity by building on previous experience and refining the offering.

The Applicant, following Scottish Government's guidance²⁷ and through the support from regulated intermediaries, committed to offering local communities the **opportunity to invest in the Proposed Development from a minimum of 2% up to a maximum of 49% of the total value of the project in the form of a shared revenue agreement**. The community will not be required to take up the full investment offer.

The Applicant proposed two alternative routes for the community to invest in the Proposed Development (each has different risks and benefits):

- **Option A (Higher Risk and Return):** Before construction starts, on the financial investment decision (FID) date, from 2% up to 49%. This is more suitable for experienced community investors and required fast decisions; and
- **Option B (Lower Risk and Return):** After Commissioning, about a month after the Proposed Development becomes fully operational, from 2% up to 10%. This is suitable for less experienced community investors and provided more time available to raise funds.

Although the Applicant retains the day-to-day control of the Proposed Development, they will establish a Special Purpose Vehicle, a Limited Company, to manage the project. Community groups within 10 km from the Proposed Development could then form a single 'community vehicle' to invest in this Special Purpose Vehicle. The community vehicle can raise funds by taking a lump sum of the community benefit funding upfront to use as investment capital²⁸, using cash reserves, or raising third-party finance. In this way the community can receive non-voting shares in the Special Purpose Vehicle.

²⁷ Scottish Government (2019), Shared Ownerships of Onshore Renewable Energy Developments.

²⁸ This will lead to a reduced annual community benefit payment, calculated to be Net Present Value neutral for the project.

6.4 Assessment of Maximising Economic Benefit Principles

6.4.1 Place based

Community empowerment commitments demonstrate a place-based approach, tailoring engagement and benefits to the needs of the local area:

- The Applicant has undertaken research into the specific council areas and reviewed existing Community Plans to identify local priorities and shape fund focus areas;
- £5,000 per MW annual community benefit fund is designed to be distributed locally to the communities in Argyll and Bute;
- Early engagement with the communities surrounding the Proposed Development has taken place and further workshops are planned to help determine how best to utilise the funding in line with local needs; and
- The Applicant recognised the limited capacity of rural communities through stakeholder workshops in the wider cluster in Argyll and Bute and is exploring the provision of professional support and training to manage funding.

Place-based considerations are integrated and reflect an understanding of regional challenges and opportunities.

6.4.2 Collaborative

Collaboration is an important feature of the Applicant's approach:

- their open fund-making principles show a desire to co-design the community benefit offering;
- direct communication through consultation events and engagement platform;
- community feedback shows continuous collaboration with the local people;
- support and workshops to help local groups plan and distribute funding effectively;
- engagement with a wide range of partners including local communities, authorities, decision-making panels, national experts and other stakeholders; and
- lessons from previous projects that the Applicant developed in the area will inform this approach.

Further collaboration with other developers in the area to support communities will strengthen this collaboration model.

6.4.3 Transparent

The Applicant is designing an approach which is transparent, in particular:

- the creation of open channels for sharing information, gathering feedback and keeping communities informed throughout the phases of the projects;
- clear information about community benefits, including the proposed £5,000 per MW per annum and community ownership options;
- fair community representation in decisions on benefit distribution;

- transparency builds on practices used for previous consented projects in the area, where feedback led directly to changes; and
- their long-term plan includes monitoring, reporting and reviewing which supports ongoing accountability.

6.4.4 Flexible

The proposals are deliberately designed to be flexible:

- the model allows for future adaptation based on community capacity and emerging priorities;
- there are also multiple engagement routes which provide flexibility to different levels of engagement; and
- lessons from other projects in Argyll and Bute will inform delivery over time.

This flexibility is intentional and positive, enabling community-led direction while recognising current delivery constraints.

6.4.5 Deliverable

The impacts from any community benefit funding or other initiatives delivered by other bodies will depend on the activities and decisions that they make. The Applicant shows a deliverable approach by building on experience from the projects that will be completed in the future. The Applicant acts as an enabler of these impacts and activities by providing delivery support and through the provision of funding. The presence of a detailed delivery and review plan over time shows clarity on process, milestones, governance and delivery. The Applicant also has a Community Investment Team committed to long-term support.

6.4.6 Innovative

By supporting rural groups to plan and manage funding and drawing on lessons from other projects in the cluster in Argyll and Bute, the approach promotes a progressive, regionally informed model of community benefit delivery. In addition, the use of expert input from national community-funding specialists and learning from proven national models shows they are actively integrating external innovation.

7. Environmental Protection and Enhancement

Environmental protection ensures sustainable, community-driven renewable energy that maximises economic benefit.

This section includes three parts:

- Good practice and context related to the environmental protection and enhancement theme;
- The Applicant's commitments and approach; and
- The assessment of these commitments and approach compared with good practice outlined in the Scottish Renewables Guidance.

7.1 Role of Environmental Protection

Environmental protection is another area where maximising the economic benefits of renewable energy projects ensures the long-term sustainability of both the natural environment and built environment. By demonstrating a commitment to environmental protection, developers can create opportunities that not only preserve but enhance the surrounding areas, contributing to lasting socio-economic benefits.



Natural Capital

Natural Capital covers the aspects of nature that have value to society, including forests, land and rivers. This value is derived from how they can be used commercially, but also how the natural capital can be used outwith the market. This includes the use of natural capital for outdoor recreation and landscape amenity.

Increasing the recreational use of natural capital will therefore increase the value that this has, particularly for the local community. For onshore wind projects, there is a public right to access on the majority of the sites in Scotland and the works on the land during the construction phase represent a significant opportunity to enhance the value of the natural capital to the local community through recreational access.

By enhancing biodiversity, improving local infrastructure, and creating recreational opportunities, these activities not only safeguard the natural environment but also support long-term sustainable economic growth. Investment in local roads and green

spaces typically increases accessibility, local wellbeing, boosts tourism and strengthens local businesses through positive spillover effects. Proactive planning for a project's future and collaboration with nearby developers on environmental issues and planning promotes efficient resource use and collective environmental management which fosters community support and ensures sustainable development.

7.2 Assessment Approach

For a project to maximise its socio-economic benefits, it needs to be place-based, collaborative, flexible, transparent and innovative. For maximising benefits through environmental protection and enhancement, developer will need to consider what elements of best practice are applicable on their project and apply accordingly. This will include:

- explain what has been (and will be) done to **protect and enhance biodiversity**;
- explain any **investment in local infrastructure** planned or undertaken to restore or improve local roads used during the construction stage;
- create new leisure and recreational opportunities to **improve community access to green and blue spaces**;
- **plan for the future** by putting a process in place to ensure communities are consulted on decisions about how a site is used at the end of its operational life; and
- set out any steps taken to **collaborate with other developers** working on nearby projects on planning and environmental issues.

7.3 The Applicant's Actions and Commitments

The Applicant is exploring a range of initiatives to support environmental protection and enhancement. The Applicant has **reviewed East Kintyre Community Action Plan** which indicates that local priorities include **improvements to access routes, circular walks and other recreational infrastructure**. As this Plan is expected to evolve over time, the precise nature of a potential access project cannot be defined at this early stage. However, the Applicant is committed to work collaboratively with the community to identify and deliver an appropriate **local access improvement project** as the scheme progresses.

The Proposed Development will seek to deliver **biodiversity enhancement**, including **peatland restoration and habitat management** initiatives that strengthen local ecosystems. See **Volume 3 Technical Appendix 7.4: Outline Habitat Management Plan** of the EIAR for more details. These are based on similar commitments identified for the Clachaig Glen Wind Farm in the cluster of projects in Argyll and Bute.

The Applicant is aiming to **engage with relevant local groups** to identify potential environmental initiatives that align with wider landscape and conservation priorities in Argyll and Bute.

7.4 Assessment of Approach

7.4.1 Place-based

The strategy is rooted in specific local environmental, investment and cultural needs:

- The Applicant acknowledges the character of the Kintyre landscape highlighting the importance of maintaining it; and
- Consideration of local recreation and access needs identified in the East Kintyre Community Action Plan.

These actions reflect the characteristics and priorities of the place in which the Proposed Development sits.

7.4.2 Innovative

Innovation is present in both environmental planning and lifecycle thinking. The commitments combine biodiversity enhancement with improvements to public access and recreation. The consideration of lessons from some of the Applicant's projects in the cluster can strengthen further this approach.

7.4.3 Collaborative

Collaboration is moderate and includes:

- Engagement with West and East Kintyre Communities to co-design plans; and
- Support for shared goals across environmental stakeholders.

This could be strengthened by developing formal partnerships, and access forums, as well as collaborate with other stakeholders in the area.

7.4.4 Flexible

Flexibility is a feature of the proposed approach:

- Measures such as access improvements and habitat management can be refined as environmental surveys or stakeholder input evolve;
- Biodiversity initiatives can be adjusted to reflect local conditions and opportunities;
- Lessons from other projects in the area will inform ongoing adaptation and refinement.

This flexibility supports long-term responsiveness to evolving priorities.

7.4.5 Deliverable

The Applicant has a deliverable approach to environmental protection and enhancement setting out manageable commitments including a local access improvement project, initiatives for better visitor experience such as improvements to recreational infrastructure, and habitat management.

7.4.6 Transparent

Transparency is shown in the following ways:

-
-
- The Applicant will share information on environmental measures and progress with local communities and stakeholders; and
 - Ongoing discussions with local partners ensure transparency in decision-making.

8. Economic Impact

This section estimates the economic impact that could be generated by the Proposed Development.

8.1 Economic Impact Methodology

8.1.1 Modelling the Economic Impact of Onshore Wind Farm Developments

The approach followed in estimating the economic impact from onshore wind developments is based on industry best practices and was used in a study undertaken in 2026 by BiGGAR Economics on behalf of RenewableUK ²⁹, on the construction and operational costs from numerous onshore wind farm projects across the UK. The methodology has now been used to assess the economic impact associated with numerous onshore wind developments across Scotland.

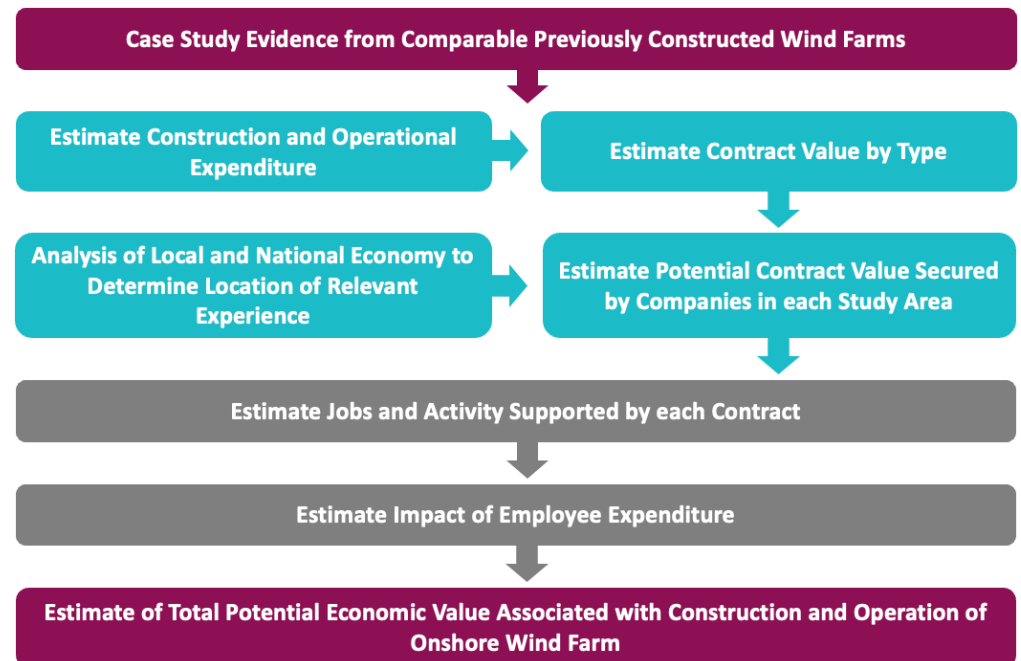
Assumptions about spending and economic impact in the area were informed by an analysis undertaken by BiGGAR Economics on the development, construction and operation of the Applicant's Proposed Development in Argyll & Bute.

To begin estimating the economic activity supported by the Proposed Development, it is first necessary to calculate the expenditure during the development and construction and operation and maintenance phases. The total expenditure figure is then divided into its main components using calculated assumptions regarding the share that could be expected by main and sub-contractors. This provides an estimate for each main component that could be secured in each study area. There are four key stages of the economic modelling, which are illustrated in the figure below:

- estimation of capital and operational expenditure;
- estimation of the value of component contracts that make up total expenditure;
- assessment of the capacity of businesses in the study area to perform and compete component contracts; and estimation of economic impact from resultant figures.

²⁹ Renewable UK (2026) *Onshore wind supply chain capability assessment summary report*. Available: <https://www.renewableuk.com/media/2mxe5pcn/onshore-wind-supply-chain-capability-assessment-summary-report-april-2026.pdf>

Figure 8-1 Approach to Economic Impact



Source: BIGGAR Economics

8.1.2 Sources of Economic Impact

The assessment will consider the following sources of economic impact:

- **direct impacts:** the economic value generated through the contracts associated with the Proposed Development;
- **indirect impacts:** the impact from the spending of contractors within their supply chains; and
- **induced impacts:** the impact from the spending of those workers carrying out contracts for the Proposed Development and on behalf of its contractors.

8.1.3 Measures of Economic Impact

The economic impacts are reported with respect to the following measures:

- **GVA:** a commonly used measure of economic output, GVA captures the contribution made by an organisation to national economic activity. This is usually estimated as the difference between an organisation's turnover and its non-staff operational expenditure; and
- **Employment:** this is expressed as years of employment for temporary contracts and as annual jobs for operations and maintenance contracts. Years of employment are used to report the short-term employment that is supported by the construction and development of the wind farm. As an example, a job that lasts for 18 months would support 1.5 years of employment.

8.1.4 Study Areas

Economic impacts were estimated with respects to the following study areas:

- Argyll and Bute; and
- Scotland.

8.2 Development and Construction Impacts

8.2.1 Expenditure

Based on the current capacity and number of turbines of the wind farm, it was estimated that the development and construction expenditure could be up to approximately £108.1 million. The expenditure was split according to the following component contracts:

- development and planning;
- turbine;
- balance of plant; and
- grid connection.

The greatest expenditure component was associated with turbines (£61.2 million or 57% of the total expenditure) followed by balance of plant (£33.2 million or 31% of expenditure). It was estimated that grid connection and development and planning would account for 6% of the total spending each.

Table 8-1 Development and Construction by Contract Type

	% Capex	Value (£m)
Development and Planning	6%	6.8
Turbines	57%	61.2
Balance of Plant	31%	33.2
Grid Connection	6%	6.9
Total	100%	108.1

Source: BIGGAR Economics. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

In assessing the economic impacts arising from the development and construction of the Proposed Development, it was necessary to make assumptions about the ability of businesses within each study area to carry out contracts.

Based on the evidence from similar developments within Argyll and Bute and Scotland, and the Applicant's established work with contractors, it was estimated that approximately 42% of the Proposed Development's contracts will be carried out by Scottish businesses, with a value of £45.8 million. It was estimated that spending on businesses based in Argyll and Bute would be approximately £16.4 million equivalent to 15% of total development and construction expenditure.

The greatest opportunity for Scottish businesses would be in contracts associated with the balance of plant, which could be worth £29.4 million. Balance of plant contracts would also be the largest opportunity for businesses in Argyll and Bute, worth up to £8.4 million.



Table 8-2 Development and Construction Expenditure by Study Area

	Argyll and Bute		Scotland	
	%	£m	%	£m
Development and Planning	35%	2.4	75%	5.1
Turbines	7%	4.0	10%	6.2
Balance of Plant	25%	8.4	89%	29.4
Grid Connection	23%	1.6	74%	5.1
Total	15%	16.4	42%	45.8

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

8.2.2 Economic Impact

Having estimated the size of the contracts that could benefit each of the study areas, it was possible to consider the GVA and short-term employment that these could support. Each contract category was split into its component contracts and assigned to an industrial sector. Direct GVA was then estimated by applying the relevant turnover to GVA ratio from the Scottish Annual Business Survey³⁰.

It was estimated that the development and construction of the Proposed Development could generate £7.1 million direct GVA in Argyll and Bute and £19.7 million direct GVA in Scotland.

Table 8-3 Development and Construction, Direct GVA by Study Area (£m)

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Development and Planning	1.1	2.7
Turbines	2.1	3.1
Balance of Plant	3.3	12.0
Grid Connection	0.6	1.9
Total	7.1	19.7

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Similarly, it was feasible to estimate the number of direct jobs supported by spending on construction and development contracts. This was achieved by dividing the expenditure in each contract by the turnover per job ratio for the relevant sector. It was estimated that the development and construction of the proposed development will generate 90 direct years of employment in Argyll and Bute and 235 direct years of employment in Scotland.

³⁰ Scottish Government (2024) *Scottish Annual Business Statistics 2022*. [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-annual-business-statistics-2022/>

Table 8-4 Development and Construction, Direct Employment by Study Area and Contract Type (Years of Employment)

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Development and Planning	10	30
Turbines	34	49
Balance of Plant	37	132
Grid Connection	9	24
Total	90	235

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Expenditure in development and construction contracts is also expected to generate 'knock-on' effects across the economy. In particular, it will be associated with further rounds of expenditure along the supply chain and with the spending of the wages and salaries of those involved in the development and construction of the Proposed Development. These are referred to as 'indirect' and 'induced' impacts.

To estimate indirect and induced impacts, it was necessary to apply the relevant Type 1 and Type 2 GVA and employment multipliers from the Scottish Government Input-Output Tables³¹ to direct GVA and direct employment. Since the multipliers refer to sectoral interactions occurring at the level of the Scottish economy, it was necessary to adjust them when considering impacts taking place in Argyll and Bute.

Adding up direct, indirect and induced impacts, it was estimated that the development and construction of the Proposed Development could generate £9.7 million GVA and 117 years of employment in Argyll and Bute and £34.5 million GVA and 388 years of employment in Scotland.

Table 8-5 Economic Impact of Development and Construction Spending (£m)

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Direct GVA	7.1	19.7
Indirect GVA	1.1	9.0
Induced GVA	1.5	5.8
Total GVA	9.7	34.5

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis. Note numbers may not sum due to rounding.

³¹ Scottish Government (2024) *Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables*. [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/about-supply-use-input-output-tables/>

Table 8-6 Economic Impact of Development and Construction Spending (Years of Employment)

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Direct Employment	90	235
Indirect Employment	13	102
Induced Employment	14	52
Total Employment	117	388

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis. Note numbers may not sum due to rounding

The employment and GVA impacts are expected to peak during the construction phase alone, in particular during the work associated with the balance of plant works in the first half of the construction period. The direct and indirect employment supported by the Proposed Development will be **166 jobs (peak) across Scotland**.

8.2.3 Opportunities in Argyll and Bute

There are a number of local opportunities associated with the construction of onshore wind projects such as Proposed Development. In particular, there will be opportunities related to the balance of plant contracts, including:

- provision of stone and aggregate;
- plant hire;
- civil engineering;
- road/bridge surfacing works;
- fencing;
- tree surgery and forestry;
- drainage;
- cleaning;
- and other trades activities (plumbing, metal fabrication, electricals, joinery, painting and scaffolding).

In addition, local accommodation providers will benefit from increased occupancy, including during the off-season.

8.3 Operations and Maintenance

8.3.1 Expenditure

The initial stage in determining the economic impact stemming from the operations and maintenance of the proposed development involved assessing the annual total expenditure necessary for its operation. Based on the number of turbines and the proposed development's capacity, it was estimated that the annual cost of operations and maintenance (OPEX) is likely to amount to approximately £5.1 million.

It was further assumed that businesses in Argyll and Bute could benefit from £1.3 million in operations and maintenance contracts (25% of OPEX) each year and annual expenditure on Scottish contractors could be up to £4.5 million (89% of OPEX).

Table 8-7 Operations and Maintenance Expenditure by Study Area (£m)

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Annual Turnover	1.3	4.5
Lifetime	44.3	157.2
Turnover (%)	25%	89%

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis.

8.3.2 Economic Impact

The total turnover generated in each study area was then divided by the turnover to GVA and turnover per job ratios of the sectors expected to carry out operations and maintenance contracts. In this way, it was estimated that the Proposed Development could generate £0.5 million direct GVA and four direct jobs in Argyll and Bute and £1.8 million direct GVA and 11 direct jobs in Scotland.

Table 8-8 Direct Economic Impact of Operational Spending (£m)

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
Direct GVA	0.5	1.8
Direct Operational & Maintenance Jobs	4	11

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis.

As with the development and construction of the Proposed Development, it was necessary to estimate the indirect and induced impacts associated with operations and maintenance contracts by applying the relevant GVA and employment multipliers.

Adding up direct, indirect and induced impacts, it was estimated that during its annual operations and maintenance, the Proposed Development could generate £0.7 million GVA and five jobs in Argyll and Bute and £3.4 million GVA and 22 jobs in Scotland.



Table 8-9 Annual Economic Impact of Operational Spending

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
GVA (£m)	0.7	3.4
Lifetime GVA (£m)	24.6	118.4
Total Operational & Maintenance Jobs	5	22

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis.

8.3.3 Opportunities in Argyll and Bute

The main economic opportunities for Argyll and Bute during the operational phase of the wind farm are likely to be related to land and civil maintenance, for example maintaining roads. There may also be opportunities to provide turbine maintenance services.

Jobs supported in the operation and maintenance of onshore wind tend to be in sectors that have relatively high levels of productivity and staff costs, such as the repair and installation of machinery, electric power generation, transmission and distribution and the rental sector³². This suggests that these are well-paid, high-quality jobs.

³² Office for National Statistics (2025), Non-financial business economy, UK (Annual Business Survey): 2023 results.



Economic Capital

Economic Capital includes cash in the bank, property and other tangible assets that are used by an organisation to support its activities. The economic activity that will be supported by the Proposed Development will enable the local business community to build up economic capital.

The direct income, and profits generated, will enable those businesses to invest in tangible assets. This capital investment will help these companies to compete in the future and generate additional economic activity.

The income received by the workforce can also contribute to increasing economic capital at a household level. Residents in Argyll and Bute have a lower median annual income than Scotland as a whole and are therefore less resilient to shocks. Elongated periods of well-paid employment can enable households to build up economic capital.

In addition, the Proposed Development will form part of the energy infrastructure that supports the Scottish economy. This infrastructure will therefore constitute an addition to the economic capital stock of the country. The value of this contribution to economic capital will be greater than the other ways the project has contributed to economic capital because all the financial value is generated from the electricity it produces. However, because this contribution to capital stock is across the national economy, this impact will be felt less acutely within the local community.

8.4 Community Benefits

Community benefits, an annual payment that is made by the developer to those communities in the proximity of the wind farms, have become a common practice to support local ambitions and needs. While they do not constitute a material consideration at the planning stage, commitment to a comprehensive package of community benefits has a role in fostering a good relationship between the developer and the community hosting the developments.

To provide a framework on how to deliver community benefits, in 2019 the Scottish Government published its 'Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments'³³, which updated previous guidance issued in 2015. The Scottish Government recommends onshore wind developers to deliver community benefit funding worth £5,000 per MW of installed capacity. The

³³ Scottish Government (2019), Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments.

document also encourages developers to engage in holistic ways to maximise benefits locally, going beyond a purely monetary approach.

Following this recommendation, the Applicant is proposing a tailored package of benefits for the community from the Proposed Development and according to the current layout design and installed capacity and a community benefit contribution of £5,000 per MW of installed capacity, this could equate to community benefit funding for the local area worth £415,500 annually, which is equivalent to £14.5 million over its operational lifetime.

This could support local aspirations and projects and generate economic impacts. The local needs and priorities can be identified from the community consultations taking place. The presence of the Proposed Development would provide local communities with additional funding, which could be used to deliver short-term and long-term strategic, large-scale projects/initiatives which create tangible and lasting benefits for local communities.

8.5 Non-Domestic Rates

The Proposed Development is expected to generate a stream of revenue for local authorities like Argyll and Bute through the annual payment of non-domestic rates. It would be liable for non-domestic rates, the payment of which would contribute directly to public sector finances and infrastructure investments supporting the requirements of the NPF4 Policy 11(c).

In 2023, the Scottish Assessors Association published guidance on the valuation of onshore wind³⁴ and solar photovoltaic panel developments³⁵. The rateable value of the onshore wind elements was calculated using the expected income per MW, the expected annual net yield, the cost of equipment per MW and the decapitalisation rate. A similar approach was followed for the battery elements. The annual liability of the Proposed Development was then calculated by multiplying the estimated rateable value by the Scottish Higher Property Rate of 56.8 pence³⁶.

Using this approach, it was projected that over its operational period, the Proposed Development could make a total annual contribution of approximately £1.0 million to public finances. Across a 35-year operational lifespan, this contribution towards non-domestic rates is anticipated to accumulate to around £36.0 million.

Demand for public services has been increasing whereas the funding has been reduced in recent years and Argyll and Bute Council expects the budget gap for 2025/26 to be over £11 million and is estimated to increase to nearly £57 million in

³⁴ Scottish Assessors Association (2026), Practice Note 2: Valuation of On-shore Wind Turbines.

³⁵ Scottish Assessors Association (2026), Practice Note 3: Valuation of Photovoltaic Electricity Generators.

³⁶ Scottish Government (2025), Non-domestic rates guidance.

the next four years³⁷. The Proposed Development would strengthen the financial position of the Council, supporting additional spending on public services, though in practice not all the income would necessarily go to the Council since the distribution of non-domestic rate revenues is determined nationally.

8.6 Total Economic Impact

The total expenditure associated with Proposed Development, including during the construction and operational phases, is expected to be £285.2 million. Of this:

- £60.6 million (21%) is expected to be secured in Argyll and Bute; and
- £203.0 million (71%) is expected to be secured in Scotland.

As can be seen in the table below, the main opportunity for the local authority is in operations and maintenance.

Table 8-10 Total Expenditure: Turnover by Study Area (£m)

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
CAPEX	16.4	45.8
OPEX	44.3	157.2
TOTEX	60.6	203.0
Total (%)	21%	71%

Source: BIGGAR Economics Calculations. Note, totals may not sum due to rounding.

Over the lifetime of the wind farm, total expenditure associated with these contracts is expected to support:

- £34.3 million GVA in Argyll and Bute; and
- £152.9 million GVA in Scotland.

Table 8-11 Total Expenditure: Economic Impact, GVA (£m)

	Argyll and Bute	Scotland
CAPEX	9.7	34.5
OPEX	24.6	118.4
TOTEX	34.3	152.9

Source: BIGGAR Economics Calculations. Note, totals may not sum due to rounding.

³⁷ Argyll & Bute (2025), Budget consultation. Available at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2025/feb/council-prepares-set-its-budget#:~:text=%22We%20face%20a%20budget%20gap,over%20the%20next%20four%20years.>

9.

Appendix: Tourism Assets

Table 9-1 Tourist Attractions

Tourist Attractions	Description	Distance to Nearest Turbine (km)
Grogport Picnic Area	A scenic coastal spot with picnic benches and views across the Kilbrannan Sound to the Isle of Arran.	3
Cour Bay	A sheltered bay ideal for peaceful walks, wildlife watching and enjoying the coastline.	5
The Old Schoolhouse Gallery	A gallery located in a former school, showcasing local art, crafts, and exhibitions.	5
Port na Cuile	A beach spot perfect for a peaceful stroll or beachcombing.	6
Point Sands beach	A sandy, family-friendly beach near Tayinloan, popular for walking, paddling, and birdwatching.	6
Carradale Golf Course	A picturesque 9-hole course with coastal views, welcoming visitors of all abilities.	6
Beinn an Tuirc Distillers	An eco-conscious gin distillery offering guided tours, tastings, and insight into sustainable distilling practices.	6
Dippen Bay	A peaceful and scenic bay, perfect for walking and relaxing by the sea in a natural setting.	6
Carradale Bay	A wide, sandy beach with shallow waters, ideal for families, dog walkers, with views towards Arran.	7
Port Righ Bay	A small bay near Carradale.	7
Seal Point	A scenic area where seals can be spotted.	9
Miller's Park	A public green space in Carradale with a play area and open grounds, popular with families and locals.	10
Saddell Abbey	The ruins of a 12th-century abbey with carved medieval grave slabs, located by the sea.	10



Tourist Attractions	Description	Distance to Nearest Turbine (km)
Ardminish Bay	Gigha's main bay, offering scenic views, calm waters, and easy access to the village.	10
Isle of Gigha Moorings	Visitor moorings for yachts and boats, for exploration of the island.	10
Gigha Boats and Activity Centre	A local centre hiring out kayaks, paddleboards and bikes, ideal for exploring Gigha's coast and countryside.	10
The Garden Centre, Glenbarr Stores	A garden centre and shop often visited by travellers for plants, gifts and local goods.	10
Glenbarr Stores, Cafe, and Garden Centre	A café and shop with a garden centre, offering refreshments and local produce.	10
Isle Of Gigha Heritage Trust	The community trust responsible for conserving and promoting Gigha's heritage, facilities and natural beauty.	10
Gigha Village Hall	A community venue hosting exhibition, music events and festivals open to visitors.	10
Cara Island	An uninhabited, rugged island south of Gigha, known for seabird colonies and boat or kayak trips.	10
Achamore Gardens	A 54-acre garden on Gigha with a mix of exotic and native plants, woodland walks and historic interest.	11
Edgelands Gallery & Cultural Centre	An artistic and cultural venue on Gigha featuring exhibitions, events and creative workshops in a rural setting.	11
Gigha Golf Course	A 9-hole course set in beautiful surroundings, open to visitors throughout the season.	11
Catacol Beach	A rocky beach on Arran's west coast, known for its natural beauty and peaceful atmosphere.	13
Old Byre Visitor Centre/ Cafe Thyme	A family-run visitor spot with a shop, café, and artisan flatbreads, set in the countryside near Machrihanish.	14

Tourist Attractions	Description	Distance to Nearest Turbine (km)
The Old Byre Visitor Centre	A craft and gift shop with a café, offering locally made items and a stop for travellers.	14
Kildonan Dun	The remains of an Iron Age fort with scenic views, offering a glimpse into the area's ancient history.	14
The Sailor's Grave	A coastal memorial marking the resting place of a sailor.	14
Kilnaish Nature Reserve Scotland	A nature reserve featuring native woodland, moorland and opportunities for birdwatching and walking.	14
Karen Beauchamp Studio - Experimental Printmaker and Artist	A working artist's studio where visitors can view original prints, meet the artist, and explore experimental printmaking.	15
Whitehouse Studio	An art studio and gallery showcasing work inspired by Argyll's natural landscapes and open to the public.	15

Source: Visit Scotland (2026); Visit Scotland (2026) Argyll & Bute. Google Maps (2026).

Table 9-2 Recreational Trails

Recreational Trails	Description	Distance to Nearest Turbine (km)
Kintyre Way Stage 4: Tayinloan to Carradale	A 24 km varied stretch of the Kintyre Way crossing remote moorland and forestry, finishing at the village of Carradale.	0
Deer Hill (Cnoc nan Gabhar), Carradale	A 6 km hill walk offering panoramic views over Carradale and across to Arran.	4
Kintyre Way Stage 3: Clachan to Tayinloan	This stage (15 km) features farmland, coastal views and a route along the western Kintyre coastline.	5
Kintyre Way Stage 5: Carradale to Campbeltown	A 34 km route of the Kintyre Way with rugged paths, dramatic scenery and exploration of Campbeltown.	5

Recreational Trails	Description	Distance to Nearest Turbine (km)
Carradale Bay and Point	An 8 km coastal walk exploring sandy beaches, rocky shoreline, and views across Kilbrannan Sound.	6
Kintyre Way Stage 2: Skipness to Clachan	A 20 km route combining woodland tracks, coastal views and remote glens along the eastern coast.	8
Lochranza to Imachar	A 15 km cross-island route on Arran through moorland and wooded glens with sea views.	9
Pirnmill Hills: Mullach Buidhe of Beinn Bharrain	A 14 km hill walk through the Pirnmill Hills offering summit views.	9
Dùn Skeig, Clachan	A 6 km climb to an Iron Age fort with views over West Loch Tarbert.	9
Coire Fhionn Lochan	A 5 km hike to a high-level lochan framed by rocky peaks.	10
Saddell Bay and sculptures, Saddell	A 4 km coastal walk to a historic bay featuring art installations and castle ruins.	10
Gigha north end and the twin beaches	A 16 km scenic walk exploring Gigha's north coast and its white sand beaches.	10
Creag Bhan and the Old Mill	A 9 km circular walk with a mix of woodland and moorland, passing an old mill and climbing Creag Bhan.	10
Achamore Gardens and Ardminish circuit	A 5 km circular walk combining lush gardens, quiet lanes and exploration of Gigha.	10
Imachar to Blackwaterfoot	A 16 km route along the west coast of Arran with ancient sites.	10
Gigha south coast circular	A 10 km circular walk through coves, farmland and views of Jura from Gigha's southern coast.	10
Cuddyport beach and the quernstone quarry	A 7 km short walk showcasing hidden industrial history and a beach with views over Kilbrannan Sound.	10



Recreational Trails	Description	Distance to Nearest Turbine (km)
Lochan a' Mhill, Catacol	A 4 km moorland route to a remote lochan in the hills above Catacol.	13
Glen Iorsa, from Dougarie	A 7 km walk in Arran's glens, surrounded by hills and deep solitude.	13
Sail Chalmadale, from Dougarie	A 11 km route up to one of Arran's western peaks, offering views and a wild upland feel.	13
Loch Tanna, from Catacol	A 14 km moorland hike to the remote Loch Tanna.	13
Loch na Davie circuit, Lochranza	A 17 km circuit route around Arran's northern loch, surrounded by crags and mountain scenery.	13

Source: Visit Scotland (2026) Argyll & Bute; Visit Scotland (2026) Argyll & Bute; Google Maps (2026); Walkhighlands (2026) Recreational trails Scotland.

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