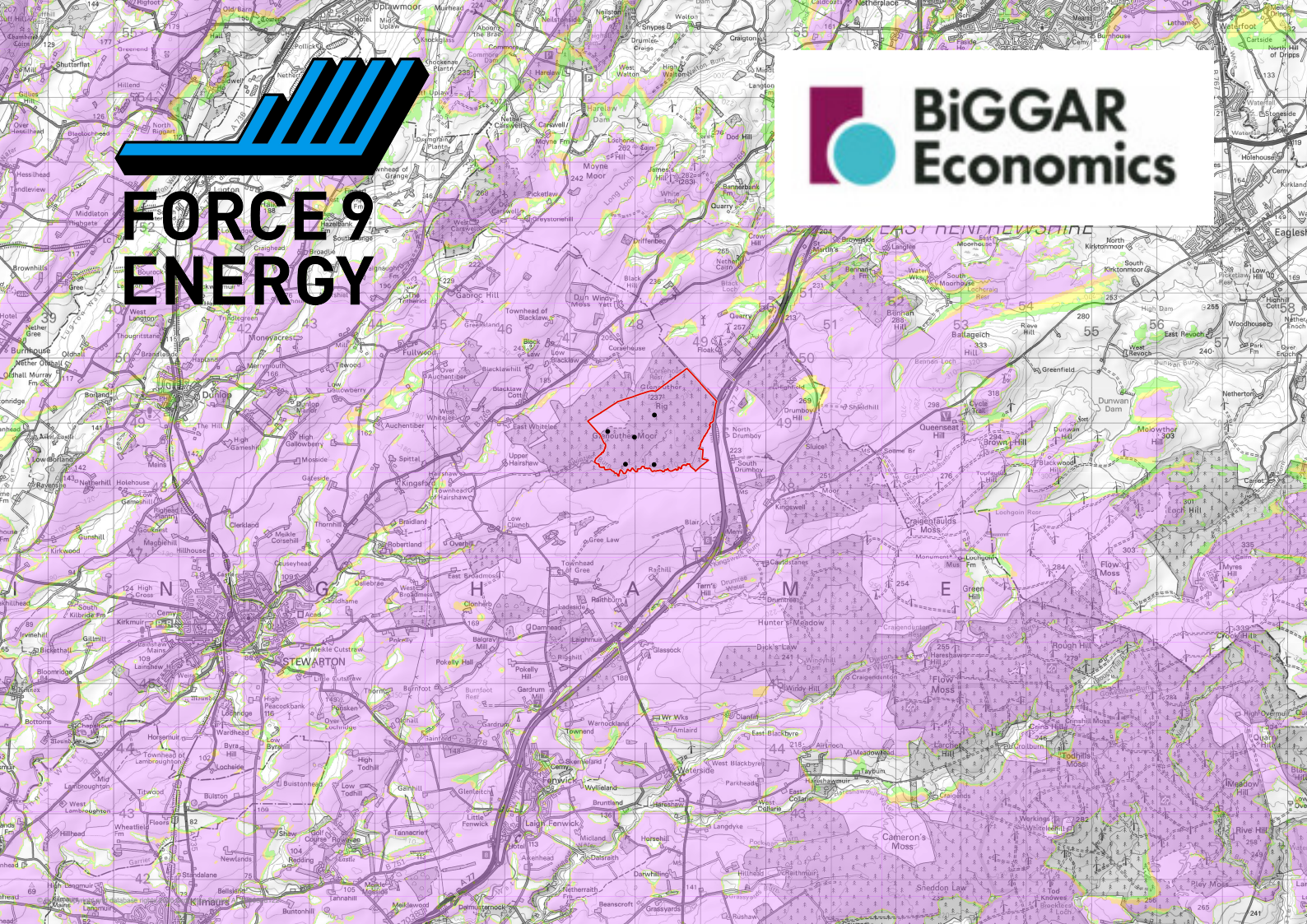
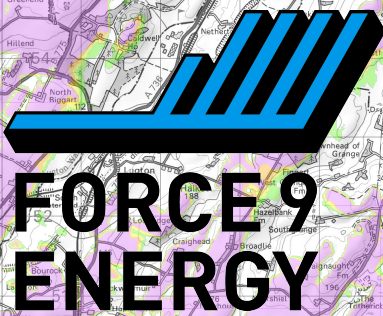




Glenouthier Wind Farm

Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation
Impact Assessment Report

LUC

August 2026

Glenouther Wind Farm

Socio-Economic, Tourism, and Recreation Impact Assessment Report

Prepared by BiGGAR Economics

On behalf of

Wind Power North Four Limited

August 2026



Preface

This Socio-Economics, Tourism, and Recreation Impact Assessment Report supports a planning application by Wind Power North Four Limited ('the Applicant') to East Ayrshire Council (EAC) under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended ('the Act') to construct and operate Glenouther Wind Farm ('the Proposed Development'). The Proposed Development is located on Glenouther Moor approximately 4.5 kilometres (km) north-east of Stewarton within the EAC administrative area. The Proposed Development will comprise up to five wind turbines and other ancillary infrastructure.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report has also been prepared to accompany the application and presents the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development. The EIA Report comprises the following volumes:

- Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary;
- Volume 2: Main Report;
- Volume 3a: Figures;
- Volume 3b: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Visualisations (Part 1);
- Volume 3c: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Visualisations (Part 2) and Cultural Heritage Visualisations;
- Volume 4: Technical Appendices; and
- Volume 5: Confidential Documents.

In addition to the above, the application is supported by a Planning Statement, a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report and a Design and Access Statement (DAS).

A hard copy of the EIA Report (excluding Volume 5) and the other supporting application documents will be available for public viewing during the application consultation period within business opening hours at the following addresses:

The Johnnie Walker Bond
Strand Street
Kilmarnock
East Ayrshire
KA1 1HU

Stewarton Community Library
17 Avenue Street, Stewarton
Kilmarnock
East Ayrshire
KA3 5AP

A hard copy of the EIA Report (excluding Volume 5) can be obtained at a cost of £1,200.00. Alternatively, a USB memory stick is available for £15.00. Any requests should be made using the following email address: glenouther@mucklemedia.co.uk. An electronic version of the EIA Report (excluding Volume 5) and supporting documents will also be available to view and download from the project website at: <https://glenouther.vestaswindprojects.com/> and the EAC planning portal: <https://eplanning.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/online/>.

Any public representations to the application may be submitted via the EAC planning portal at <https://eplanning.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/online/> or by email to submittoPlanning@east-ayrshire.gov.uk, identifying the proposal and specifying the grounds for representation. EAC will advertise the submission of the EIA Report in the local and national press and the EAC planning portal. The advert will state the deadline for submitting representations to the EAC in relation to the planning application.

Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation Impact Assessment of Glenouther Wind Farm

A report to Force 9 Energy and Vestas
August 2026



Vestas®



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1.

Executive Summary

Glenouther Wind Farm will generate significant economic and community benefits for East Ayrshire.

Scotland's Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 requires the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2045. Delivering on these commitments will require a major transformation in the energy system, including a substantial increase in renewable generation to replace fossil fuel-based capacity and to support the electrification of transport, heating, and industry. The Glenouther Wind Farm (the 'Proposed Development') represents a significant opportunity to contribute to these national targets, while also delivering tangible benefits to local communities and the wider Scottish economy.

1.1 Economic Impacts

The Proposed Development will deliver clear and measurable economic impacts across different phases of its lifecycle. During the development and construction phase, the project is expected to generate:

- **£4.3 million Gross Value Added (GVA)** and the equivalent of **50 years of employment** in **East Ayrshire**; and
- **£15.4 million GVA** and **175 years of employment** across **Scotland**.

These impacts will be realised through the use of local contractors and suppliers wherever possible. The Applicant has committed to active supply chain engagement, including the creation of a Local Contractor Database to ensure East Ayrshire firms are visible to the main contractor. Once operational, the Proposed Development will continue to provide annual economic benefits, supporting:

- **£0.5 million GVA** and **3 jobs** in East Ayrshire every year; and
- **£1.2 million GVA** and **8 jobs** across Scotland each year.

Over its expected 35-year operational lifetime, this will represent a long-term and stable source of economic activity. The project benefits from the involvement of Vestas, which has a strong existing regional footprint and service base in South West Scotland, providing a high degree of certainty regarding long-term technical employment.

1.2 Public Finance and Community Benefits

The Proposed Development will also make an important contribution to public finances through the payment of non-domestic rates. This is estimated at around **£0.4 million each year**, or **£15.6 million over 35 years**, helping to fund local services at a time of sustained pressure on public budgets.

In accordance with the Scottish Government's Good Practice Principles, the Applicant is committed to providing a voluntary community benefit package which is competitive, deliverable, and aligned with good practice at the time the project proceeds. At present the Scottish Government good practice guidance recommends the equivalent to £5,000 per installed megawatt per annum, index-linked for the operational lifetime of the project. On this basis a community fund from the Glenouther wind farm would be expected to provide approximately **£180,000 annually**, representing an **anticipated total value of £6.3 million** over the project's 35-year lifespan (excluding indexation) to support a lasting legacy for the host community, based on an installed capacity of 36MW.

This fund will be secured via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) if requested by participating communities to ensure it remains locally controlled and a commitment on any future owner of the wind farm. This enables communities to invest in projects and initiatives that address local priorities, from improving community facilities, to supporting local enterprise, or delivering social projects. The Applicant is also willing to explore a **Local Electricity Discount Scheme** out of its community benefit fund, to provide direct support to residents, if this is desired by community interests.

1.3 Tourism and Recreation

Tourism is often raised as a potential concern with onshore wind developments. However, consistent research evidence demonstrates that there is no significant relationship between wind farms and tourism activity in Scotland. In 2021, BiGGAR Economics published a comprehensive study that analysed tourism employment trends around wind farms at local, regional, and national levels. Onshore wind development has not had any measurable negative effects on tourism.

For the Proposed Development specifically, an assessment of tourism and recreation assets within 15km, including accommodation providers, visitor attractions, and recreation trails, concluded that no significant adverse impacts are expected. This evidence provides reassurance that the project can coexist successfully with the local tourism economy. Furthermore, the project commits to peatland restoration on Glenouther Moor, enhancing the local natural capital and biodiversity.

1.4 Conclusion

The Proposed Development will deliver measurable economic contributions, job creation, and long-term community investment without detrimental effects on tourism. These measures are specifically aimed at maximising socio-economic benefits, supporting the intent of National Planning Framework 4. By securing local supply chain opportunities and a robust community benefit fund, the project serves as a catalyst for both local economic development and Scotland's net zero transition.

2.

Introduction

BiGGAR Economics was commissioned to prepare this socio-economic, tourism and recreation impact assessment in support of the planning application for the Glenouther Wind Farm.

2.1 Project Background

The proposal brought forward by Wind Power North Four Ltd (hereafter, the 'Applicant'), a wholly owned subsidiary company of Vestas Development A/S ('Vestas') and developed under a development services agreement between Force 9 Energy and Vestas, is for the development of the Glenouther Wind Farm (hereafter, the 'Proposed Development'), an onshore wind farm located in East Ayrshire, approximately 4 km north-east of Stewarton. The project would be comprised of 5 turbines, each with a generating capacity of up to 7.2 MW, resulting in a total installed capacity of up to 36 MW.

The Proposed Development is consistent with Scotland's strategic energy objectives. Onshore wind will play a critical role in helping Scotland and the UK to meet their ambitious Net Zero targets and secure long-term energy supply.

2.2 Objectives of this Study

The primary objective of this study is to demonstrate how the Proposed Development addresses the requirements of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Policy 11(c) to maximise the net socio-economic benefit of renewable energy projects.

To achieve this, the assessment is structured to:

- **Quantify Economic Impact:** Estimate the Gross Value Added (GVA) and employment supported by the Proposed Development;
- **Demonstrate Policy Alignment:** Evidence how the Proposed Development actively contributes to national and local policy objectives, specifically the Scottish Government's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) and the Ayrshire Growth Deal's Community Wealth Building priorities;
- **Maximise Net Socio-Economic Benefits:** Detail the Applicant's strategy to deliver tangible social and community value, structured around four key themes:
 - **Theme 1: Supply Chain** (Maximising local procurement and business growth);



- **Theme 2: Skills** (Supporting education, apprenticeships, and workforce development);
 - **Theme 3: Community Empowerment** (Delivering community benefit funds); and
 - **Theme 4: Environment Protection and Enhancement** (Contributing to natural capital and green networks).
- **Assess Tourism and Recreation:** Provide an evidence-based analysis of the relationship between the project, the local visitor economy, and recreational assets.

2.3 Report Structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- **Section 3: Strategic and Policy Context:** Outlines the relevant national and regional strategies and policies.
- **Section 4: Socio-economic Context:** Provides an overview of the baseline socio-economic conditions.
- **Section 5: The Economic Opportunity:** Presents the results of the quantitative analysis of the Proposed Development's economic impact.
- **Section 6: Maximising Socio-economic Benefits:** Details the Applicant's strategy for Community Wealth Building, structured around the four themes of Supply Chain, Skills, Community Empowerment, and Environmental Enhancement.
- **Section 7: Tourism and Recreation Assessment:** Considers the relationship between the Proposed Development and the local tourism economy.
- **Section 8: Conclusions:** Contains a summary of the key findings and concludes on the overall net economic benefit of the project.
- **Appendix A: Methodology:** Describes the approach and data sources used for the economic and socio-economic assessment.
- **Appendix B: Tourism and Recreation Receptors:** Provides a list of the tourist attractions identified within 15km of the Proposed Development.



3.

Strategic and Policy Context

This section reviews relevant national and regional strategies and demonstrates how the Proposed Development supports their objectives.

3.1 National Strategic and Policy Context

3.1.1 Scotland's National Performance Framework

Aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Scotland's National Performance Framework (NPF)¹ aims to create a more successful Scotland by enhancing wellbeing and promoting sustainable, inclusive growth. All Scottish policies and strategies are designed to align with the NPF's purpose and outcomes.

The NPF emphasises 'increased wellbeing' and combines economic measures with broader wellbeing indicators to provide a comprehensive view of Scotland's progress. It aims to:

- Build a more successful Scotland;
- Provide opportunities for all residents;
- Enhance the wellbeing of people in Scotland;
- Foster sustainable and inclusive growth; and
- Reduce inequalities, giving equal importance to economic, environmental, and social progress.

NPF outlines 11 national outcomes underpinned by 81 indicators, offering a holistic picture of the country's advancement. These outcomes cover various aspects such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment, community fabric, culture, education, environment, health, and poverty alleviation. The Scottish Government focuses its activities and spending on these indicators to achieve the national outcomes. The 11 national outcomes are:

1. **Children and young people:** Ensuring they grow up loved, safe, and respected to reach their full potential;
2. **Communities:** Promoting inclusive, empowered, resilient, and safe communities;
3. **Culture:** Encouraging creativity and the widespread enjoyment of diverse cultures;
4. **Economy:** Developing a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive, and sustainable economy;
5. **Education:** Providing quality education and skills for societal contribution;
6. **Environment:** Valuing, enjoying, protecting, and enhancing the environment;

¹ Scottish Government (2023), National Performance Framework [online] Available at: <https://webarchive.nrscotland.gov.uk/20250311153853/https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/> (Accessed: January 2026).

7. **Fair work and business:** Supporting thriving businesses with quality jobs and fair work for all;
8. **Health:** Promoting healthy and active lifestyles;
9. **Human rights:** Respecting, protecting, and fulfilling human rights, and eliminating discrimination;
10. **International:** Being open, connected, and making positive international contributions; and
11. **Poverty:** Addressing poverty by equitably sharing opportunities, wealth, and power.

3.1.2 Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation

In March 2022, the Scottish Government published the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET)², which set out its ambition for Scotland's economy over the next decade. The Scottish Government's vision is to create a wellbeing economy where society thrives across economic, social and environmental dimensions, and delivers prosperity for all of Scotland's people and places. To deliver its vision, the strategy outlines six initiatives, including:

- establishing Scotland as a world-class entrepreneurial nation;
- strengthening Scotland's position in new markets and industries, generating new, well-paid jobs from a just transition to Net Zero;
- making Scotland's businesses, industries, regions, communities and public services more productive and innovative;
- ensuring that people have the skills they need to meet the demands of the economy, and that employers invest in their skilled employees;
- reorienting the economy towards wellbeing and fair work; and
- creating a culture of delivery.

The strategy highlights Scotland's significant energy potential and its expanding green industrial base. Whilst these characteristics provide a strong foundation for securing new market opportunities arising from the transition to Net Zero, the strategy recognises the need for continued investment and support to maximise the benefits associated with these opportunities.

3.1.3 Green Industrial Strategy

The Green Industrial Strategy³, published by the Scottish Government in September 2024, aims to help Scotland realise the economic benefits of the global transition to Net Zero. The strategy highlights Scotland's strengths and opportunities during the transition and outlines six key enabling factors that the Scottish Government and

² Scottish Government (2022), Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-national-strategy-economic-transformation/> (Accessed: January 2026).

³ Scottish Government (2024), Green Industrial Strategy [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2024/09/green-industrial-strategy/documents/green-industrial-strategy/green-industrial-strategy/govscot%3Adocument/green-industrial-strategy.pdf> (Accessed: January 2026).

partners will do to foster a positive environment for investment and growth. These include:

- supporting investment, ensuring an investment-friendly ecosystem;
- investing in strong research and development foundations;
- supporting the development of a skilled workforce;
- helping supply chain businesses to seize opportunities;
- delivering an agile planning and consenting system; and
- delivering required housing and enabling infrastructure.

The strategy emphasises the need for coordinated policies and collaborative working to maximise economic benefits. Given that onshore wind is Scotland's largest contributor to renewable electricity, maximising the wind economy is central to this strategy.

3.1.4 Onshore Wind Sector Deal

The Onshore Wind Sector Deal⁴, published in September 2023, outlines the commitment from the Scottish Government and the onshore wind sector to reach 20 GW of onshore wind by 2030, ensuring maximisation of benefits to Scotland. The Deal highlights the increased potential of onshore wind for a low-carbon and prosperous future, the creation of high-quality job opportunities and the empowerment of local communities in Scotland.

The document emphasises the following aspects, and the collaborative, sector and government action required to support the development of onshore wind in each of the following:

- **supply chain, skills and the circular economy:** support the enhancement of the current skills and training provision to deliver the needs of the wind industry;
- **community:** onshore wind will continue to collaborate with local communities, offering impactful community benefits;
- **land use and environment:** onshore wind projects will enhance biodiversity and optimise land use and environmental benefits;
- **planning:** reduce the time it takes to determine applications for onshore wind projects by increasing skills and resources;
- **legislative and regulatory:** develop evidence to support a strategic approach to delivering investment and transporting wind turbine components, and improve network connections;
- **technical:** enable cooperative coexistence between onshore wind and safe aviation operations; and

⁴ Scottish Government (2023), Onshore Wind Sector Deal [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/09/onshore-wind-sector-deal-scotland/documents/onshore-wind-sector-deal-scotland/onshore-wind-sector-deal-scotland/govscot%3Adocument/onshore-wind-sector-deal-scotland.pdf> (Accessed: January 2026).

- **implementation and governance:** key milestones to be delivered by agreed dates.

Taking these into consideration, the Deal shed light on the importance of onshore wind in accelerating the transition to Net Zero, driving economic growth, creating better job opportunities, and benefiting communities in Scotland. The Proposed Development would directly contribute to all the above increasing onshore wind generating capacity in East Ayrshire and Scotland.

3.1.5 Programme for Government 2025-26: Building The Best Future For Scotland

Published in May 2025, the Programme for Government 2025-26⁵ sets out the Scottish Government's legislative programme and priorities for the coming year under the title "Building The Best Future For Scotland". The programme is designed to deliver renewed and strengthened public services and protect people during the cost-of-living crisis. The programme focuses on four core priorities:

- **Growing the Economy:** Accelerating action to ensure businesses can create jobs, improve living standards, and contribute towards a just transition to net-zero.
- **Eradicating Child Poverty:** Continuing the national mission to eradicate child poverty through measures to reduce costs for families and maximise incomes.
- **Tackling the Climate Emergency:** Addressing the twin crises of climate change and nature loss, while maximising the economic potential of a green industrial revolution.
- **High Quality and Sustainable Public Services:** Equipping public services to deliver better outcomes, drive down waiting times, and ensure financial sustainability through reform.

The programme outlines specific initiatives relevant to the Proposed Development, particularly under the priorities of growing the economy and tackling the climate emergency. It emphasises the role of renewable energy in paving the way for lower bills and creating jobs. Specifically, the Scottish Government commits to supporting communities to benefit directly from energy infrastructure investment and working to reform consenting processes to reduce timescales for large-scale energy generation decisions. It also highlights the importance of creating an enabling environment for investment, including the launch of 'InvestScotland' to showcase opportunities.

⁵ Scottish Government (2025), Programme for Government 2025-26: Serving Scotland [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2025/05/programme-government-2025-26/documents/programme-government-2025-26/programme-government-2025-26/govscot%3Adocument/programme-government-2025-26.pdf> (Accessed: January 2026).



3.1.6 National Planning Framework 4

The Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4)⁶ is Scotland's national spatial strategy, setting out the principles to be applied to planning decisions, regional priorities and national developments.

The first of six spatial principles to be applied is a just transition that ensures the transition to Net Zero is fair and inclusive, as is rural revitalisation, supporting sustainable development in rural areas. Applying these and other principles is intended to support the planning and delivery of sustainable places, where emissions reduce, and biodiversity is restored and better connected.

As part of the policy 11(a), all forms of renewable technologies, including onshore wind and energy storage, will be supported. This is subject to the test outlined in Policy 11(c), which states 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”*. The Proposed Development will support employment and create opportunities for local businesses at both the construction, and operation and maintenance phases. The assessment includes a conclusion on the extent to which this project contributes to maximising the net economic impact in the context of NPF4 Policy 11(c).

Policy 11(e) also sets out a number of impacts that should be addressed during project design and mitigation. That list does not include tourism. Whilst not required by NPF4, Section 7 of this report does consider whether there could be any implications for tourism.

3.1.7 Community Wealth Building

Community Wealth Building (CWB) is an approach to local economic development that aims to keep wealth circulating locally to ensure more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable local economic development. It is a people-centred approach and aims to keep benefits in the hands of local people.⁷ It is formed of five pillars:

- Plural ownership of the economy
- Ensuring financial power works for local places;
- Fair employment and just labour markets;
- Progressive procurement of goods and services; and
- Socially productive use of land and property.

CWB is embedded within national strategies such as NSET and NPF4. The Scottish Government plans to introduce a CWB bill, while local authorities including Fife,

⁶ Scottish Government (2023), National Planning Framework 4 [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/> (Accessed: January 2026).

⁷ Centre for Local Economic Strategies (2026), [online] Available at: <https://cles.org.uk/community-wealth-building/how-to-build-community-wealth/> (Accessed: January 2026).

Glasgow City Region, South of Scotland, and Western Isles have piloted CWB strategies.

NPF4 Policy 25 supports *“development proposals which contribute to local or regional community wealth building strategies and are consistent with local economic priorities.”* While not mandatory for developers, contributing to CWB aligns with broader policy goals and local interests.

3.1.8 Tourism Strategy: Scotland's Outlook 2030

Following on from the Tourism Scotland 2020 (TS2020) strategy⁸, a collaborative network of industry experts created Scotland's Outlook 2030, a strategy document which is focused on creating a world-leading tourism sector in Scotland that is sustainable in the long-term. The strategy is focused on four key priorities:

- people;
- places;
- businesses; and
- experiences.

The strategy recognises the effects on tourism of climate change, technological advancements, Brexit and changing consumer behaviour and highlights the need for collaboration between government, communities, and the public and private sectors⁹. There are six conditions that the strategy has highlighted as being crucial for success:

- using technological advancements and information to understand changes and trends in tourist behaviours;
- ensuring policies are in place that support the vision;
- enabling investment opportunities into Scotland's tourism market;
- improving transport and digital infrastructure;
- greater collaboration between businesses in the industry; and
- positioning Scotland as a great place to live and visit locally and globally.

A main commitment of the strategy is to address the effects of energy demand associated with tourism and make the sector commit fully to Scotland's ambition of becoming a net-zero society by 2045.

⁸ Scottish Tourism Alliance (2012), Tourism Scotland 2020 [online] Available at: <https://scottishtourismalliance.co.uk/tourism-scotland-2020/> (Accessed: January 2026).

⁹ Scottish Tourism Alliance (2020), Scotland's Outlook 2030 [online] Available at: <https://scottishtourismalliance.co.uk/scotland-outlook-2030-overview/> (Accessed: January 2026).



3.2 Regional Strategic and Policy Context

3.2.1 The Ayrshire Growth Deal

The Ayrshire Growth Deal¹⁰ is a £251 million investment package involving the Scottish Government, UK Government, and the three Ayrshire Councils. It is the primary vehicle for economic transformation in the region.

The Deal is unique in Scotland for placing Community Wealth Building (CWB) at the heart of its strategy, aiming to build a "fairer, inclusive, and sustainable economy."

The Proposed Development supports the Growth Deal's strategic objectives by:

- **Strengthening the Energy Supply Chain:** Contributing to the region's ambition to be a leader in renewable energy generation and technology; and
- **Anchor Institution Collaboration:** The Applicant (Vestas with Force 9 Energy) acts as a private sector "anchor," providing the long-term stability required for local suppliers to invest in upskilling and growth.

3.2.2 The East Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2

East Ayrshire's second Local Development Plan¹¹ (LDP2) published by East Ayrshire Council, focuses on a number of strategic priorities, including contributing to net zero targets, stimulating population growth, and driving inclusive economic recovery and growth, over the next 10-20 years.

Under the theme of Energy, Resources and Resilience within the Plan's Spatial Strategy, East Ayrshire Council commits to supporting all forms of renewable energy, and in particular, support for wind energy developments such as the Proposed Development. To support inclusive economic growth, the Plan recognises the requirement to embed a CWB approach, and in particular encouraging developers to support the local supply chain by committing to buying goods and services locally. Developers are also encouraged to actively engage with the Community Renewable Energy (CoRE) Project and its implementation to deliver low carbon energy solutions.

3.3 Summary of Strategic and Policy Context

The Proposed Development strongly aligns with national and regional policies by generating renewable energy and supporting Scotland's transition to Net Zero. It advances key National Performance Framework outcomes and directly responds to the specific tests and ambitions set out in statutory planning documents like NPF4 and the East Ayrshire LDP2.

¹⁰ UK Government, Scottish Government, East Ayrshire Council, North Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Council (2020), Ayrshire Growth Deal [online] Available at: <https://www.ayrshiregrowthdeal.co.uk/> (Accessed: January 2026).

¹¹ East Ayrshire Council (2024), Local Development Plan 2 [online] Available at: <https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/PlanningAndTheEnvironment/development-plans-and-policies/ldp2/ldp2-information.aspx> (Accessed: January 2026).

4.

Socio-economic Context

This section discusses the socio-economic context of the Proposed Development, including population structure, economic activity, skills, and relative deprivation.

4.1 Study Areas

The aim of the socio-economic baseline is to set the Proposed Development and its potential for economic benefits within existing socio-economic conditions. This section considers the socio-economic structure of three study areas:

- **Local Area:** The **Annick** electoral ward (the immediate host community);
- **Regional Area:** **East Ayrshire** (the primary labour market and supply chain catchment); and
- **National:** **Scotland** (provided for comparative context).

4.2 Demographics

4.2.1 Population Estimates

Table 4-1 presents 2023 population estimates for East Ayrshire and Scotland, and 2022 estimates for the Annick ward (latest available).

In 2022, Annick had a population of 14,680, around 12.2% of East Ayrshire's total (120,750) and 0.3% of Scotland's (5,490,100).

The working-age population (16-64 years) made up 61.1% of Annick's residents, slightly below East Ayrshire (61.4%) and 2.2 percentage points lower than Scotland (63.4%). The proportion of residents aged 65+ was 21.8% in both Annick and East Ayrshire, compared to the national average of 20.3%.

Table 4-1: Population Estimates, 2023

	Annick	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Total	14,680	120,750	5,490,100
0-15	17.1%	16.8%	16.3%
16-64	61.1%	61.4%	63.4%
65+	21.8%	21.8%	20.3%

Source: NRS (2024), Mid-2023 population estimates; ONS (2025) Population estimates – local authority based by single year of age; NRS (2022) Electoral Ward population estimates by sex and single year of age, mid-2021.



4.2.2 Population Projections

Population projections are available for East Ayrshire and Scotland, but not for electoral wards. Given Annick's similar population structure to East Ayrshire, local authority trends are likely to reflect Annick's future trajectory.

Between 2023 and 2047, East Ayrshire's population is projected to fall by 3.6%, from 120,750 to 116,370. Over the same period, Scotland's population is expected to grow by 5.3%.

The working-age share in East Ayrshire is projected to drop from 61.4% to 58.0%, a decline of 3.4 percentage points (around 6,600 fewer people). This is a steeper fall than Scotland's projected 2.4 percentage point decline (from 63.4% to 60.9%).

The proportion of residents aged 65+ in East Ayrshire is expected to rise from 21.8% to 27.7% (+5.8 percentage points), compared to a national increase from 20.3% to 25.0%.

These changes suggest a smaller working-age population supporting a growing retired population. Employment generated by the onshore wind sector, including roles linked to the Proposed Development, could help retain and attract working-age residents, strengthening the local economy.

Table 4-2: Population Projections, 2023-2047

	East Ayrshire		Scotland	
	2023	2047	2023	2047
Total	120,750	116,370	5,490,100	5,782,683
0-15	16.8%	14.3%	16.0%	14.0%
16-64	61.4%	58.0%	63.4%	60.9%
65+	21.8%	27.7%	20.3%	25.0%

Source: National Records of Scotland (2024), Population Projections for Scottish Area (2022-based).

4.3 Industrial Structure

As shown in Table 4-3, in 2024 the highest proportion of employment in Annick was in manufacturing, accounting for 15.0% of total employment in the area. Employment in this sector was significantly overrepresented compared to East Ayrshire (7.3%) and Scotland as a whole (6.9%).

Of those working in Annick, 8.3% were employed in the construction industry, a higher proportion than that across East Ayrshire (6.1%) and Scotland as a whole (5.9%). This sector is one of the primary areas of opportunity for contracts associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

Table 4-3: Industrial Structure, 2024

	Annick	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Manufacturing	15.0%	7.3%	6.9%
Education	13.3%	6.1%	8.3%
Wholesale and retail trade	11.7%	12.2%	12.5%
Accommodation and food service activities	11.7%	8.5%	8.1%
Administrative and support service activities	10.0%	4.9%	6.4%
Construction	8.3%	6.1%	5.9%
Human health and social work activities	8.3%	26.8%	16.2%
Other service activities	4.2%	2.0%	1.9%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	3.3%	4.3%	7.2%
Information and communication	2.5%	0.9%	2.7%
Public administration and defence	2.5%	9.8%	6.5%
Transportation and storage	1.7%	3.0%	4.1%
Water supply activities	1.2%	0.9%	0.7%
Real estate activities	1.2%	1.0%	1.6%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.2%	3.0%	3.0%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.8%	0.3%	3.1%
Mining and quarrying	0.3%	0.1%	1.0%
Financial and insurance activities	0.3%	1.0%	3.4%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.0%	0.6%	0.8%
Total Employment	2,925	40,475	2,640,000

Source: ONS (2025), Business Register and Employment Survey. *Figure excludes farm agriculture (SIC subclass 01000).

4.4 Economic Activity

As shown in Table 4-4, the economic activity rate in East Ayrshire was 74.2%, which is 2.8 percentage points below the Scottish average (77.0%). The unemployment rate in East Ayrshire (3.6%) was also slightly higher than across Scotland (3.2%).

Over the same period, the median annual gross wage for East Ayrshire residents was £30,394, approximately 4.9% below the average for Scotland (£31,891).

Table 4-4: Labour Market Indicators

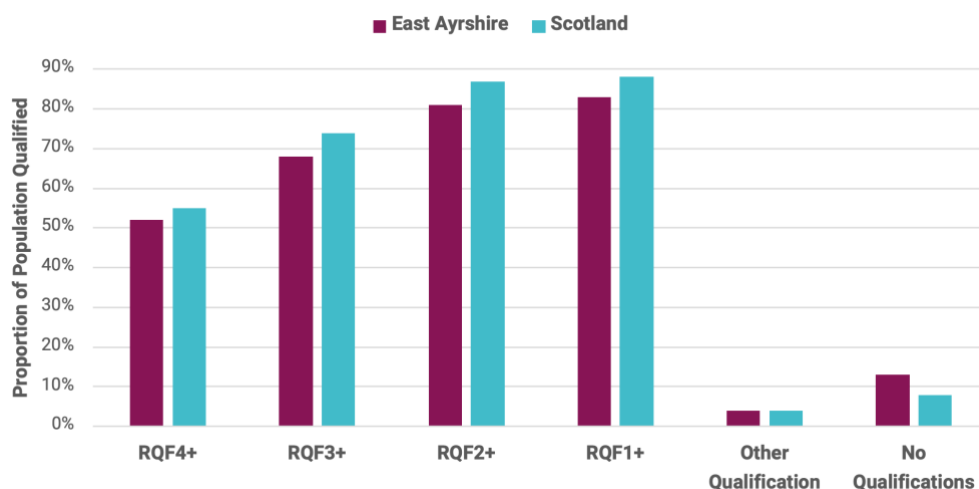
	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Economically Active (%)	74.2%	77.0%
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.6%	3.2%
Median Annual Gross Wage (resident analysis)	£30,394	£31,891

Source: ONS (2025), Annual Population Survey Jan 2023-Dec 2024 and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – resident analysis 2024.

4.5 Education and Skills

In terms of educational attainment, the workforce in East Ayrshire has a lower proportion of residents with degree-level (RQF4+) qualifications (52%) compared to Scotland as a whole (55%). Furthermore, the proportion of people who have achieved no formal qualifications in East Ayrshire (13%) is significantly greater than the Scottish average (8%).

Figure 4-1: Qualification Levels



Source: ONS (2025), Annual Population Survey Jan 2024 – Dec 2024.

4.6 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation which ranks small areas 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.

Annick has lower levels of deprivation than either Scotland as a whole or the wider East Ayrshire area. There are 18 small areas within Annick, none of which fall within the most deprived quintile. The largest proportion of areas within Annick are located

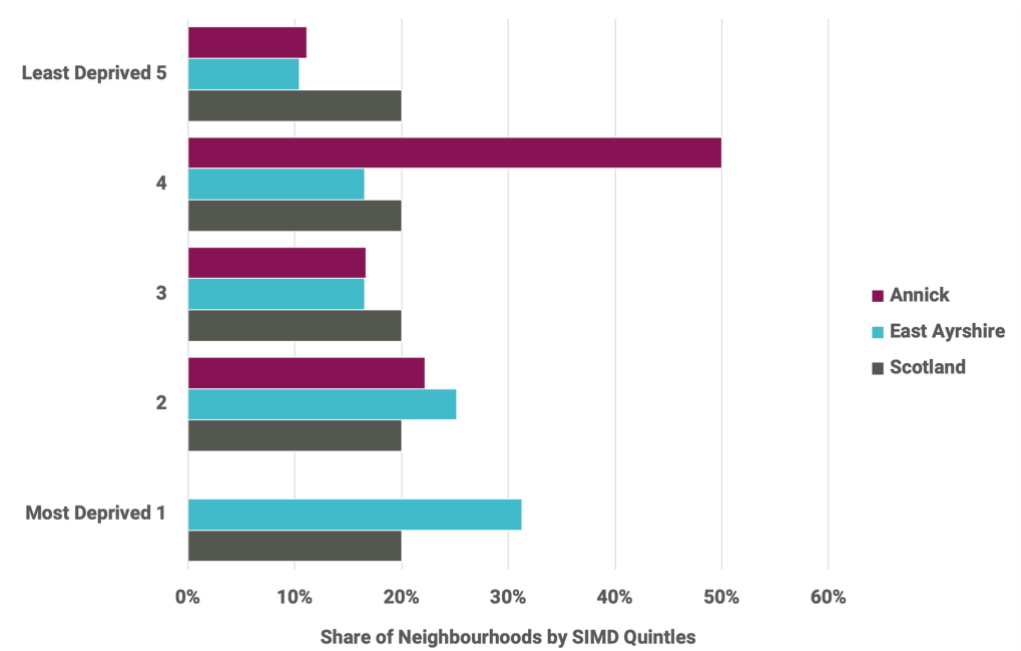
within the 2nd least deprived quintile (50%) and 11% of the small areas sit within the least deprived quintile.

The East Ayrshire region is made up of 163 small areas, of which 31% are in the most deprived quintile and 25% are in the second. The third and fourth quintiles both contain 17% of the small areas, with the remaining 10% being within the least deprived quintile.

Larger shares of small areas in the least deprived quintiles in Annick indicate higher levels of education and more favourable economic conditions. This is a positive factor for the Proposed Development, as it suggests that Annick has a stronger foundation in terms of skilled workers and financial resources. It suggests that the area is also more likely to have the necessary infrastructure and services to support growth and development.

While Annick experiences lower levels of deprivation compared to Scotland overall, there are still neighbourhoods falling within the most deprived quintile across the East Ayrshire region. The Proposed Development therefore provides an opportunity to contribute to more inclusive and equitable growth.

Figure 4-2: SIMD distribution of study areas



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

4.7 Summary of Socio-Economic Context

East Ayrshire is projected to experience an ageing population over the next two decades, and therefore the creation of employment in the region will be important in retaining people of working age, which will be key in supporting an increasingly older population.



Given that the proportion of employment in construction in Annick is almost twice that of Scotland as a whole, the local area will likely have the opportunity to benefit from contracts for the construction of the Proposed Development. High-quality and well-paid jobs would also benefit the median annual income in the region, which is lower than the Scottish average, and diversify the region's current economic base.

5.

The Economic Opportunity

Quantifying the scale of economic activity and subsequent benefits generated during the construction and operational phases.

5.1 Development and Construction

This assessment utilises BiGGAR Economics' extensive experience in the onshore wind sector, including a 2015 evaluation of existing wind farm developments commissioned by RenewableUK. The analysis has been updated with more recent project evaluations and developer insights across Scotland. This evidence base enables estimation of costs per megawatt (MW) based on turbine number and generating capacity. Further details on the assessment methodology can be found in Appendix A: Methodology.

The Proposed Development comprises 5 turbines with a total generating capacity of 36 MW. Total development and construction expenditure is estimated at £56.6 million, allocated across the following contract categories:

- Development and planning;
- Turbines;
- Balance of plant; and
- Grid connection.

The largest expenditure is associated with turbines, accounting for £36.3 million (64% of total spend), followed by balance of plant contracts at £14.4 million (25%). Development and planning contracts and grid connection each account for 5% of total expenditure.

Table 5-1: Development and Construction Expenditure by Contract Type

	% CAPEX	Value (£m)
Development and Planning	5%	2.9
Turbines	64%	36.3
Balance of Plant	25%	14.4
Grid Connection	5%	3.0
Total	100%	56.6

Source: BiGGAR Economics analysis of comparable wind farm case studies. Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Based on evidence from similar developments within East Ayrshire, approximately 36% (£20.3 million) of contracts are expected to be awarded to Scottish businesses,

with 13% (£7.6 million) likely to benefit businesses within East Ayrshire. The largest opportunities for Scottish and local businesses lie in balance of plant contracts, estimated at £12.7 million and £5.0 million respectively.

Table 5-2: Development and Construction Expenditure by Study Area

	East Ayrshire		Scotland	
	%	£m	%	£m
Development and Planning	32%	0.9	75%	2.2
Turbines	2%	0.9	10%	3.5
Balance of Plant	35%	5.0	88%	12.7
Grid Connection	26%	0.8	62%	1.9
Total	13%	7.6	36%	20.3

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

To estimate economic impacts, contracts were disaggregated into their component parts and assigned to relevant industrial sectors using Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)¹² codes. Direct Gross Value Added (GVA) was estimated by applying sector-specific turnover-to-GVA ratios from the UK Annual Business Survey (ABS)¹³.

The development and construction phases are expected to generate £3.1 million in direct GVA in East Ayrshire and £8.8 million across Scotland.

Table 5-3: Development and Construction Direct GVA by Study Area (£m)

	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Development and Planning	£0.4 m	£1.2 m
Turbines	£0.5 m	£1.7 m
Balance of Plant	£1.9 m	£5.2 m
Grid Connection	£0.3 m	£0.7 m
Total	£3.1 m	£8.8 m

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

Direct employment supported by the development and construction expenditure was estimated by dividing expenditure by turnover per job ratios for relevant sectors. This

¹² Office for National Statistics (2009), Standard Industrial Classification of industrial Activities (SIC 2007).

¹³ Office for National Statistics (2024), Annual Business Survey 2023.

analysis indicates that the Proposed Development will generate 39 direct years of employment¹⁴ in East Ayrshire and 106 in Scotland.

Table 5-4: Development and Construction Direct Employment by Study Area and Contract Type (Years of Employment)

	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Development and Planning	4	13
Turbines	9	27
Balance of Plant	21	57
Grid Connection	4	9
Total	39	106

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

Expenditure will also generate indirect and induced economic effects, reflecting supply chain activities and household spending from wages. To estimate these impacts, sector-specific Type 1 and Type 2 GVA and employment multipliers from the Scottish Government Input-Output Tables¹⁵ were applied. Adjustments were made to reflect the scale of impacts within East Ayrshire.

Combining direct, indirect, and induced effects, the development and construction phase is estimated to generate:

- **£4.3 million GVA and 50 years of employment in East Ayrshire;** and
- **£15.4 million GVA and 175 years of employment across Scotland.**

These impacts demonstrate that the Proposed Development will create high-quality local employment opportunities and optimise the value of local expenditure during construction, in alignment with NPF4 Policy 11(c).

5.2 Operation and Maintenance

The economic impact of operations and maintenance (O&M) is assessed by estimating the annual operational expenditure (OPEX) required. Based on turbine count and capacity, annual O&M costs are estimated at approximately £1.8 million.

As the Proposed Development is a partnership involving Vestas, there is a high degree of certainty regarding the retention of technical contracts. Vestas maintains a strong service presence in Scotland, supporting the assumption that 88% (£1.5

¹⁴ Years of Employment (Job-Years): A measure for short-term employment supported during construction. For example, one job lasting 18 months equals 1.5 years of employment. See Section 9 for more information.

¹⁵ Scottish Government (2024), Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables.

million) of annual expenditure will be retained nationally, with East Ayrshire businesses capturing £0.8 million (43%) of OPEX annually.

Table 5-5: O&M Expenditure by Study Area

	East Ayrshire		Scotland	
	%	£m	%	£m
Operations and Maintenance	43%	£0.8	88%	£1.5

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

Direct and employment generated from O&M contracts were estimated by applying sector-specific turnover-to-GVA and turnover-to-job ratios. The Proposed Development is expected to generate £0.3 million direct GVA and 2 direct jobs annually in East Ayrshire, and £0.6 million direct GVA and 5 direct jobs in Scotland.

Indirect and induced impacts were also estimated using the same multiplier approach as for construction.

Combined, O&M activities are projected to generate:

- **£0.5 million GVA and 3 jobs in East Ayrshire** annually; and
- **£1.2 million GVA and 8 jobs** annually across **Scotland**.

These figures demonstrate that the Proposed Development will provide sustained high-quality local employment and optimise economic value throughout its operational life, supporting NPF4 Policy 11(c).

5.3 Non-Domestic Rates

The Proposed Development is expected to generate an ongoing revenue stream for East Ayrshire through annual non-domestic rates payments. These contributions will support public sector finances and infrastructure investments supporting the requirements of NPF4 Policy 11(c).

Estimations of non-domestic rates were based on the development's rateable value and the appropriate poundage rates, following Scottish Assessors Association guidance¹⁶.

Projected annual non-domestic rates payments amount to approximately £0.4 million, accumulating to around £15.6 million over the Proposed Development's expected 35-year operational lifespan.

¹⁶ Scottish Assessors Association (2023). Practice Note 2: Valuation of Onshore Wind Turbines

5.4 Summary of Economic Opportunity

The quantitative analysis demonstrates that the Proposed Development will generate significant positive economic effects at both the local (East Ayrshire) and national (Scotland) levels. These benefits are split into three distinct categories: the immediate capital injection during construction, the sustained employment during operation, and the long-term fiscal contribution to public services.

During the construction phase, the Proposed Development is estimated to generate **£4.3 million GVA** and support **50 job years** within East Ayrshire. This represents a substantial, short-term stimulus specifically targeting the region's construction and manufacturing sectors, industries identified in Section 4 as key employers in the local area. Nationally, the project will contribute **£15.4 million GVA** to the Scottish economy, supporting **175 job years** and reinforcing the country's renewable energy supply chain.

Once operational, the wind farm will transition from a capital infrastructure project to a productive economic asset. It is projected to sustain **£0.5 million in GVA** and **3 permanent jobs** annually within East Ayrshire. While modest in absolute numbers, these roles are typically high-value, technical positions that contribute to diversifying the rural employment base.

A critical component of the economic footprint is the contribution to local government finances. The project is projected to generate approximately **£15.6 million in non-domestic rates** over its 35-year lifespan. This revenue is collected by East Ayrshire Council and is available to fund essential public services, from education to transport infrastructure, representing a direct dividend to the wider community.

Table 5-6 summarises the total net economic benefit quantified in this section.

Table 5-6: Summary of Total Economic Impact

Phase	Metric	East Ayrshire	Scotland
Construction (one-off impact)	GVA	£4.3 million	£15.4 million
	Employment	50 Job Years	175 Job Years
Operational (annual impact)	GVA	£0.5 million	£1.2 million
	Employment	3 Jobs	8 Jobs
Public sector revenue (35-year total)	Business Rates	£15.6 million	-

Source: BiGGAR Economics analysis.

6. Maximising Socio-economic Benefits

This section considers how the Applicant aims to maximise the local net socio-economic benefits generated by the Proposed Development and contributes to CWB.

As outlined in Section 3.1.6, NPF4 Policy 11 emphasises the importance in planning of maximising net socio-economic impact. While Section 5 demonstrates the scale of the economic benefits, it is equally important to ensure that these gains are felt locally and contribute to broader social and environmental outcomes.

To support the evaluation of the socio-economic benefits of the Proposed Development, this section draws on Scottish Renewables guidance on how to maximise socio-economic impacts within the planning process.

6.1 Framework for Delivery

In response to Scottish planning policy requiring developers to demonstrate they maximise net socio-economic benefits, Scottish Renewables have developed guidance to support applications. The guidance outlines a set of principles to support a developer's approach, which includes being:

- **Place based:** since every project and community are different, any approach to maximising benefits needs to be tailored to the community.
- **Innovative:** since many of the benefits from renewable energy projects have been because of innovation at the project level an approach needs to be innovative.
- **Collaborative:** many of the benefits may require input and support of others in the public, private and third sector to realise, making a collaborative approach essential.
- **Transparent:** transparency creates trust which is essential for building relationships with communities and collaborators.
- **Flexible:** since a lot can change between project inception and completion, a flexible approach helps realise benefits.
- **Deliverable:** providing communities with realistic expectations about what can be delivered helps achieve trust with relevant stakeholders and will help future projects.

In applying these principles to onshore wind and commitments in the Scottish Onshore Wind Sector Deal (see 3.1.4), the guidance has identified four broad themes. These include:

- Supply Chain Development;
- Skills and Workforce Development;
- Community Empowerment; and
- Environmental Protection and Enhancement.

These themes broadly align with the five pillars of CWB identified in Section 3.1.7 and help form the basis for structuring the assessment of the socio-economic impacts of the Proposed Development.

6.2 Supply Chain Development

A strong, well-connected local supply chain can play a vital role in supporting employment and retaining wealth within communities. Progressive procurement practices, particularly those that actively support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), employee-owned firms, co-operatives, social enterprises, and community-owned businesses, can help ensure that investment generates lasting value locally.

While specialised capital equipment may need to be sourced from further afield, procuring more general goods and services from local suppliers can deliver meaningful local economic benefit. By collaborating with local stakeholders and supporting the growth of regional supply chains, large-scale investors can help reshape the long-term economic trajectory of the places in which they operate.

6.2.1 Good Practice at the Local Level

Best practice in supply chain development begins with a proactive and informed approach. This includes undertaking a detailed review of the local business base to assess its capacity to deliver the goods and services required, and to identify opportunities for targeted supply chain development.

Developers should take reasonable and deliberate steps to maximise local supply chain content. This might involve actively promoting opportunities to local firms, adopting procurement practices that reduce barriers for smaller suppliers and social enterprises, and including reasonable clauses in contracts that encourage tier-one suppliers to prioritise local businesses within their own supply chains.

These actions should be supported by wider efforts to grow regional supply chain capability, such as engaging with local business networks, encouraging innovation and collaboration, and tracking the proportion of local content to inform ongoing improvement. Regular reporting of local content data can help identify where progress is being made and where further effort may be needed to strengthen local involvement.

6.2.2 Commitments

The Applicant's strategy for supply chain delivery is shaped by the structure of the Proposed Development. Force 9 Energy is responsible for the development and consenting phase, while Vestas will remain involved as the turbine supplier and long-term service provider. This structure allows for a two-tiered commitment to supply chain development.

The "Local Contractor Database": To ensure that local interest captured during the development phase is effectively integrated into the construction tender process, Force 9 Energy has established a Local Contractor Database.

- **Action:** Force 9 Energy is actively recording expressions of interest from local civil engineering, fencing, security, plant hire and other relevant firms during the planning process.
- **Implementation:** This database will be included as a key input in the tender documentation for the Balance of Plant contract. This ensures that the appointed Principal Contractor is provided with a "ready-made" list of capable East Ayrshire firms at the very start of the procurement process.

The Vestas Supply Chain (Turbine & Transport): Vestas typically operates on a Turbine Supply Agreement (TSA) basis. While the primary components (nacelles and blades) are manufactured at a European or UK level, the logistical and installation support relies heavily on established sub-contractors. Vestas has identified key potential framework partners with a strong Scottish footprint, including:

- McFadyens (Specialist Transport);
- R.J. McLeod (Civil Engineering / Balance of Plant); and
- Nixon Hire (Site Equipment).

By utilising these established frameworks, the project ensures that high-value technical contracts are directed towards firms with significant Scottish employment bases.

Existing Local Linkages (Forestry): The development site benefits from existing commercial forestry operations. The landowners currently utilise local forestry managers and contractors for ongoing harvesting and maintenance.

- **Commitment:** The project commits to utilising these existing local supply chains for the enabling forestry works required for wind farm construction. This ensures that the first phase of expenditure flows immediately into the established local rural economy without the need for complex new tendering processes.

Balance of Plant (Civil Works): Under the TSA model, the "Balance of Plant" (roads, foundations, substation) is procured separately from the turbines. This represents the most significant opportunity for local content. The Local Contractor Database provides the primary mechanism to optimise East Ayrshire's share of the contract package.



6.3 Skills and Workforce Development

A well-developed, future-ready workforce is essential to ensuring that major infrastructure investments translate into long-term economic and social value. Skills and workforce development are among the most effective ways to maximise local benefits, both by creating high-quality employment and by ensuring local people can access and thrive in these roles.

Large employers, especially those delivering nationally significant infrastructure, can play a defining role in setting standards and creating pathways for inclusive and sustainable growth. This section outlines existing good practice, commitments already identified, and further opportunities to ensure the Proposed Development delivers long-term benefits through workforce development.

6.3.1 Good Practice at the Local Level

Delivering local benefit through skills development depends on a number of key factors:

- **A commitment to continuous improvement** in employment and recruitment practices, ensuring alignment with evolving industry standards and good practice.
- **Understanding of local labour market priorities**, including both short- and long-term capacity and known skills gaps.
- **Strong relationships with education and training providers**, including long-term partnerships with local institutions to align training provision with future demand.
- **Collaborative working**, through joint initiatives with training bodies, education providers, and local organisations to co-develop bespoke workforce solutions.

6.3.2 Commitments

Vestas has a significant existing operational footprint in South West Scotland. With a service base in Prestwick and approximately 40-50 technicians already employed in the region, the Applicant is well positioned to offer genuine long-term career pathways.

The Ayrshire College Partnership (Apprenticeships): Vestas has an established, formal partnership with Ayrshire College. Vestas is currently the only employer sponsoring students through the specific wind turbine technician course. The Applicant commits to expanding this programme to support the Glenouther Wind Farm. The current model, which benefits 5 apprentices from the East Ayrshire area, follows a high-quality 4-year pathway:

- **Years 1-2:** Students attend Ayrshire College (funded by Vestas), achieving a National Certificate in Engineering Systems (Level 6). They complete Global Wind Organisation (GWO) safety training during Spring break, allowing them to work as active crew members on wind farms during the summer.

- **Year 3:** Apprentices achieve Competent Technician (CT) status, becoming part-time active crew members while finishing their studies.
- **Year 4:** The pathway aims for apprentices to reach Lead Authorised Technician (LAT) status, allowing them to be hired directly into the main workforce as senior technical staff.

Workforce Integration Strategy (Construction to Operations): To prevent the "boom and bust" cycle of employment often associated with infrastructure projects, the Applicant will implement a Workforce Integration Strategy.

- **Local Management:** The construction team aims to hire local candidates for Site Manager and Supervisor roles to minimise "fly-in fly-out" staff rotation.
- **Retention:** Construction staff will be on-boarded with the specific intent of familiarising them with the turbine technology during the build phase, facilitating their transition into long-term Operations and Maintenance (O&M) roles once the wind farm is live.

Educational Outreach: In addition to the formal apprenticeship scheme, the Applicant intends to develop its engagement with the wider student body:

- **College Visits:** Vestas will continue to support non-Vestas students at Ayrshire College by facilitating site visits and technical Q&A sessions with senior technicians.
- **Schools Programme:** The Applicant acknowledges that proactive outreach to schools is an area for development. As part of the Glenouther project, the Applicant intends to develop a programme of STEM engagement with local secondary schools (e.g., Stewarton Academy) to present wind energy careers to students prior to leaving school.

Green Transition (Fleet): Aligning with the net-zero ambitions of the project, Vestas is currently transitioning its entire service fleet from diesel to Plug-in Hybrid (PHEV) and Electric Vehicles (EV). This ensures that the local workforce is trained in the operation and maintenance of modern, low-carbon transport technologies.

6.4 Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is about creating the conditions for people to thrive - socially, economically, and environmentally, while also recognising and addressing the specific challenges that a community may face. A new development can have wide-ranging impacts on local communities, both positive and negative, and it is important that the overall legacy of a project leaves the community better off.

While job creation and business opportunities are important, developers must also consider broader effects, such as visual impacts, noise pollution, increased traffic, pressure on local services, and the protection of local character and green spaces. Promoting community empowerment requires a comprehensive approach that both

maximises benefits and mitigates harms, ensuring these are equitably distributed across the community.

6.4.1 Good Practice at the Local Level

At the local level, best practice for supporting community empowerment involves developing a nuanced understanding of local challenges and strengths. This means recognising the unique identity of the place and engaging with the community to understand concerns, expectations, and aspirations. Developers should commit to open dialogue and collaboration with residents and local organisations to identify concerns early, co-create solutions, and ensure that the development contributes to a healthier, more resilient, and more inclusive local environment.

A successful approach is one that promotes shared prosperity, by mitigating negative impacts, enhancing positive contributions, and fostering a sense of ownership and pride in the development among local residents.

6.4.2 Commitments

The Applicant's strategy prioritises flexibility and community-led decision-making. Rather than imposing a top-down structure, the Applicant commits to a model where the specific mechanism for fund distribution is chosen by the residents themselves.

The Community Benefit Fund (CBF): The Applicant commits to providing a Community Benefit Fund which is competitive, deliverable, and aligned with good practice at the time the project proceeds. Under current Good Practice Principles, the Scottish Government recommended rate of the equivalent of £5,000 per MW per annum (index-linked). Based on the proposed 36 MW capacity, this generates a significant long-term potential revenue stream for the local area:

- Annual Fund Value: **£180,000**
- Lifetime Fund Value (35 years): **£6.3 million**

Security of Funding (The MOU): To address community concerns regarding future divestment or changes in ownership, the Applicant commits to setting out the proposed Community Benefit Fund via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), if requested by participating communities.

- **Commitment:** This MOU will be agreed with the relevant Community Councils.
- **Transferability:** The MoU will live with the project and pass to any future owner of the wind farm, obliging them to protect the community's income stream regardless of who operates the site in the long term.

Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS): Feedback from initial engagement suggests that direct assistance with energy costs is a priority for local residents.

- **The Proposal:** The Applicant is keen to communicate the option of a Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS), similar to models successfully deployed elsewhere (e.g., the RES model). This would provide an annual discount on



electricity bills for properties closest to the wind farm, within an area agreed with the community.

- **Funding:** This initiative would be funded from the Community Benefit pot. The community will be empowered to decide whether they wish to allocate a portion of their fund to this direct discount model or retain the full amount for broader community projects.

Community-Led Governance: The Applicant commits to a process of ongoing engagement (via public exhibitions and the Community Liaison Group) to gather intelligence on local priorities. Whether the community chooses to "top up" existing funds or create a new bespoke administrative body, the final governance structure will be determined by the community, not the developer.

6.5 Environment Protection and Enhancement

This theme focuses on aligning development with environmental protection and proactive enhancement. Maximising environmental benefits requires more than minimising harm; it calls for developments to actively contribute to ecological resilience and sustainability. This means adopting a forward-looking approach that not only mitigates environmental impacts but also creates opportunities for long-term environmental gain.

Such efforts might include upgrading local infrastructure in ways that support both operational needs and community wellbeing, such as improving transport links or utility access. Crucially, biodiversity protection and enhancement must be embedded in project design. This involves taking steps to preserve existing ecosystems and deliver measurable improvements through actions such as habitat restoration, the creation of wildlife corridors, and reforestation efforts. The aim is to deliver a net positive environmental outcome, where natural systems thrive alongside new infrastructure.

6.5.1 Good Practice at the Local Level

At the local level, best practice means going beyond regulatory compliance to actively improve the local environment. This includes:

- **Clearly articulating** biodiversity measures and ecological enhancement plans;
- **Investing in local infrastructure**, such as improving or restoring roads affected by construction traffic;
- **Enhancing access to green and blue spaces**, potentially through new recreational facilities or landscaping improvements;
- **Planning for the long-term**, including how the site will be managed or repurposed post-operation;
- **Coordinating** with other nearby developments to create cohesive regional environmental strategies.

Engaging the local community in shaping environmental outcomes is also key to ensuring that enhancements reflect local needs and values, while fostering long-term stewardship.

6.5.2 Commitments

The Applicant's environmental strategy is driven by the specific ecological baseline of the Glenouther Moor. The commitments below focus on delivering "Nature Positive" outcomes that align with the biodiversity priorities of NPF4 Policy 3.

Habitat Restoration (Peatland vs Forestry): The site contains significant areas of peat bog currently overlaid by commercial forestry. The Applicant commits to a strategy of Peatland Restoration.

- **The Action:** The Habitat/Forest Management Plan (HMP) proposes the removal of commercial plantation forestry from deep peat areas with bog restoration techniques used to return the areas felled back to their natural environment.
- **The Benefit:** While this involves the loss of commercial timber crop, it facilitates the hydrological restoration of the underlying bog. This restores the land's natural carbon sequestration potential and improves biodiversity by re-establishing native wetland flora. The Applicant considers that, in this specific location, the long-term climate benefits of restored peat outweigh the commercial value of the forestry. This approach is directly supported by Annex C of the Scottish Government's 'Control of Woodland Removal' policy¹⁷, which identifies the restoration of peat bogs as priority criteria for woodland removal where it prevents the significant net release of greenhouse gases. Consequently, peatland restoration in these parts of the site is supported by national policy and represents a significant additional public benefit.

Transport Infrastructure (Protecting Local Roads): To protect the amenity of local residents and the physical condition of rural roads, the Applicant has developed a bespoke transport strategy.

- **Commitment:** Construction traffic and abnormal loads (turbine components) will be routed avoiding the use of smaller local roads through villages.
- **Benefit:** This minimises congestion, noise, and road surface degradation for local communities during the construction phase.

Access and Recreation: The Applicant is committed to maintaining public access to the countryside in line with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

- **Post-Construction:** Once the wind farm is operational, there will be no restrictions on access to the site. The network of new tracks will be open for use by walkers, cyclists, and horse riders, effectively expanding the recreational area available to the public.

¹⁷ Forestry Commission Scotland (2025), The Scottish Government's Policy on Control of Woodland Removal [online] Available at: <https://www.forestry.gov.scot/publications/control-woodland-removal-policy> (Accessed: January 2026).

- **Connectivity:** While the site layout does not currently facilitate a circular route, the new tracks will provide improved penetration into the moorland, offering new opportunities for informal recreation in an area that is currently difficult to access due to dense forestry.

6.6 Summary: Maximising Socio-economic Benefits

The Applicant has adopted the strategy outlined in this section to maximise the net socio-economic impact of the Proposed Development, ensuring that the project delivers lasting value beyond clean energy generation. By aligning with the principles of NPF4 Policy 11 and Community Wealth Building, the Applicant aims to secure tangible benefits for East Ayrshire through four targeted commitments:

- **Supply Chain:** Actively engaging local businesses through a Local Contractor Database to maximise local participation in the Balance of Plant contract.
- **Workforce:** Leveraging Vestas' regional presence to expand the Ayrshire College partnership, creating clear 4-year apprenticeship pathways for local young people.
- **Community Wealth:** Delivering a substantial **Community Benefit Fund** which under current best practice would be worth up to approximately **£180,000 per annum**, indexed linked (**£6.3 million** over the project life). This income stream will be set out in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), so it remains with the project, regardless of future asset ownership.
- **Environment:** Prioritising peatland restoration over commercial forestry in appropriate areas on site to deliver long-term biodiversity and carbon sequestration gains.

7. Tourism and Recreation Assessment

This section sets out the tourism context, including an overview of the tourism economy and attractions in the area, and considers the impact of the Proposed Development on tourism and recreation.

7.1 Tourism and Recreation Context

7.1.1 Sustainable Tourism and GVA Employment

In its 2015 economic strategy¹⁸ 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 Table 7-1, statistics for 2023 show that 3,000 individuals in East Ayrshire were employed in the sustainable tourism sector. Sustainable tourism employment in East Ayrshire has increased by 33.3% since 2020, returning to pre-COVID-19 pandemic figures.

Latest statistics show that in 2022, the sector generated £29.7 million Gross Value Added in East Ayrshire, accounting for 0.6% of the total £4.8 billion GVA generated by the sector across Scotland as a whole.

Table 7-1: Sustainable Tourism: Employment and GVA

	East Ayrshire	Scotland
GVA (£m)	29.7	4,803.3
Employment	3,000	245,000

Source: Scottish Government (2023), Growth Sector Database.

7.1.2 Visitors

Whilst tourism data was not available for Annick, a range of statistics are available on visitor numbers and visitor spend for Ayrshire and Arran, including the Great Britain Tourism Survey and the International Passenger Survey. These can be used to form a view of more localised trends.

Table 7-2 shows the latest data available on visitors and level of spending across Scotland. In 2023, Ayrshire and Arran attracted 705,000 domestic overnight visitors,

¹⁸ Scottish Government (2015), Scotland's Economic Strategy.

who spent an average of approximately £201 per visit, amounting to a total of £142 million. This accounted for 4.3% of the total spend in Scotland from domestic overnight visits in 2023.

Ayrshire and Arran also attracted 64,000 international overnight visitors in 2023, accounting for 1.6% of all international overnight visitors to Scotland and contributing £33 million in spending.

Table 7-2: Visits and Visitor Spending, 2023

	Ayrshire and Arran	Scotland
Visitor Numbers (million)		
Domestic Overnight Visitors	0.7	10.6
International Overnight Visitors	<0.1	3.9
Spend (£ million)		
Domestic Overnight Visitors	142	3,300
International Overnight Visitors	33	3,593

Source: Kantar (2023) Great Britain Tourism Survey, ONS (2023), International Passenger Survey.

7.1.3 Regional Attractions

The most visited attractions in Ayrshire are shown in Table 7-3. Of these attractions, two are located within 15km of the Proposed Development, including Dean Castle Country Park and Burns Monument Centre.

Table 7-3: Top Attractions in East Ayrshire

Attraction	Annual Visitors	Distance to Site (km)
Dean Castle Country Park	1,365,246	10.1
Burns Monument Centre	6,833	11.0
Dundonald Castle	24,718	17.8
Scottish Maritime Museum	73,310	19.0
Rozelle House	13,676	32.5
Maclaurin Galleries	40,066	32.5
Robert Burns Birthplace Museum	261,283	33.5
Culzean Castle and Country Park	333,965	45.2

Source: Visit Scotland (2019), Ayrshire and Arran Fact Sheet.

7.1.4 Local Visitor Attractions

Using VisitScotland and Google Maps, local visitor attractions within 15km of the Proposed Development are set out in Appendix B: Tourism and Recreation Receptors within Table 10-1, alongside a short description of the attraction and its distance from the site.

The tourist attractions identified within 15km of the Proposed Development are facilities and centres offering a variety of outdoor activities including archery, paintballing, fishing, and golfing, as well as indoor activity facilities such as trampolining and soft play centre. Other attractions identified within 15km of the Proposed Development include historical castles and grounds, country parks, and museums and galleries.

7.1.5 Local Accommodation Providers

Through online research on the VisitScotland portal and Google Maps, 54 accommodation providers were identified within 15km of the Proposed Development.

As shown in Table 7-4, of the 54 accommodation providers, just 5.6% were located within 5km of the Proposed Development, all of which were campsites or holiday parks.

Table 7-4: Local Accommodation Providers

Distance from the Site	Number of Accommodation Providers				
	Self-Catering	Campsites and Holiday Parks	B&B	Hotels	Total
0-5km	0	3	0	0	3
5-10km	9	2	2	5	18
10-15km	16	2	3	12	33
Total	25	7	5	17	54

Source: Visit Scotland (2025) Accommodation in East Ayrshire, Google Maps (2025).

7.1.6 Recreational Trails and Core Paths

Several trails were identified on Walkhighlands (2025) within 15km of the Proposed Development. These are shown in Table 7-5 alongside a brief description.

Table 7-5: Recreational Trails

Name	Description	Distance to Site (km)
Lochgoin Circuit, Whitelee Windfarm	13.5km trail visiting Europe's largest onshore wind farm and visitor centre.	4.5



Name	Description	Distance to Site (km)
Burn Anne walk, Galston	8.5km loop around the woods and meadows of the Irvine Valley.	12.1
The Magnificent 11, Glasgow Southside	17km loop visiting the green spaces to the south of Glasgow City.	12.8
Dyke walk, Darvel	6.5km hike from Darvel, providing views of the Irvine Valley.	13.4
Pollok Park, Glasgow	5km trail around Pollock Park, visiting Pollock House and the Burrell Collection.	14.2
Castle Semple Loch, Lochwinnoch	6.25km trail along the shores of Castle Semple Loch and visiting the ruins of a church.	15.0

Source: <https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/>

Approximately 520 core paths¹⁹ were also identified within 15km of the Proposed Development.

7.2 Evidence on Wind Farms and Tourism

Over time, a series of comprehensive studies have considered the relationship between wind farm developments and tourism activity.

7.2.1 Moffat Centre Study (2008)²⁰

A foundational study on the potential effects of wind farms on tourism was undertaken in 2008 by the Moffat Centre at Glasgow Caledonian University. The study assessed potential impacts and found that, although there might be minor effects on individual tourism providers or a small number of visitors, the overall effect on tourism expenditure and employment at a national level would be negligible.

Since the publication of this study, wind farms have become a common feature of the Scottish landscape. Consequently, if significant negative economic effects were to occur, they would now be evident in tourism statistics.

¹⁹ Scottish Government Spatial Data (2024), Core Paths – Scotland.

²⁰ Moffat Centre (2008), The Economic Impact of Wind Farms on Scottish Tourism.

7.2.2 BiGGAR Economics Study (2021)²¹

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 levels.

Nationally, the report found that while Scotland experienced a significant increase in onshore wind energy (with the number of turbines rising from 1,082 in 2009 to 3,772 in 2019), employment in tourism-related sectors simultaneously increased by 20%. This demonstrates that the rapid expansion of the wind sector has not impeded the growth of the tourism economy.

The report included detailed case studies of 44 onshore wind farms constructed between 2009 and 2019, tracking changes in tourism employment within the immediate 15km area of each site:

- **Pre-2015 Sites:** Of the 28 wind farms analysed, the local areas surrounding 18 of them experienced an increase in tourism employment that exceeded the Scottish average.
- **2015-2019 Sites:** Of the 16 newer wind farms, 11 local areas experienced tourism employment growth that outperformed the Scottish average.

These results suggest that tourism employment in local areas is driven by broader economic factors and changes independently of wind farm development.

7.2.3 Conclusion on Evidence

The report concluded that there is no pattern or evidence to suggest that the development of onshore wind farms in Scotland has had any negative effect on tourism economies at the national, regional, or local level.

This is not a surprising finding given that:

- **Public Support:** There are consistently high levels of public support for renewable energy²²;
- **Established Landscape:** Wind farms are now well-established; tourists visiting rural Scotland generally expect to see renewable infrastructure as part of the modern working countryside;
- **Driver of Success:** The factors that determine the success of the tourism sector (such as exchange rates, marketing, and accommodation quality) are distinct from the presence of onshore wind farms; and
- **Co-existence:** As evidenced by sites like Whitelee, wind farms can actively coexist with, and in some cases enhance, the recreational offer.

²¹ BiGGAR Economics (2021), Wind Farms & Tourism Trends in Scotland: Evidence from 44 Wind Farms.

²² BEIS (2022). Public Attitudes Tracker: Energy Infrastructure and Energy Sources. Winter 2021, UK.

7.3 Implications for Tourism and Recreation

The evidence presented in Section 7.2 demonstrates that there is no statistical correlation between wind farm development and negative tourism trends. However, to ensure a robust assessment for the Glenouther Wind Farm, it is necessary to consider the theoretical mechanisms by which an impact could occur.

7.3.1 Impact Mechanism

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

7.3.2 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 East Ayrshire, where the primary assets (as identified in Section 7.1) are "Activity-Based" rather than "View-Based".

- **Activity-Based:** Visitors to Dean Castle, The Burns Monument, 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.

7.3.3 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? (e.g., the proximity to Whitelee Windfarm).

Overall, existing evidence suggests that at wind farm sites across Scotland there have not been any negative impacts on tourism activity. Wind farms are well established within Scotland and there are no significant impacts on the tourism economy apparent.

7.4 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 5 Landscape and Visual Amenity;
- Chapter 8 Ornithology;
- Chapter 10 Noise and Vibration; and
- Chapter 11 Access, Traffic and Transport.

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

7.4.1 Local Visitor Attractions

As detailed in the baseline assessment, there are 74 local visitor attractions within 15km of the Proposed Development, including museums, castles, and golf courses (Appendix B: Tourism and Recreation Receptors). A review of the relevant technical chapters identified no significant primary effects; consequently, there is no plausible pathway for a potential impact on these local attractions.

7.4.2 Local Accommodation Providers

There are 54 accommodation providers within the 15km study area, including hotels, B&Bs, and campsites. A review of the relevant technical chapters identified no significant primary effects; consequently, there is no plausible pathway for a potential impact on these accommodation providers.

7.4.3 Recreational Trails and Core Paths

The study area contains six main recreational trails and over 500 core paths. Chapter 5 (Landscape and Visual Amenity) identifies primary significant visual effects on open sections of the Core Path network within 5km of the site, as well as localised sequential visual effects on short stretches of the M77/A77 and A719 corridors. However, Chapter 10 (Noise and Vibration) and Chapter 11 (Access, Traffic and Transport) confirm no significant residual noise or traffic disruption on these routes.

When assessing whether these primary visual changes lead to a potential impact on recreation and tourism, empirical research (Section 7.2) consistently demonstrates that visual changes from wind energy do not deter outdoor recreational use in

Scotland. This is particularly evident given the site's proximity to Whitelee Wind Farm, where wind farm infrastructure actively coexists with, and forms part of the established outdoor access network. Therefore, while primary visual effects are identified on localised core path sections within 5km, this does not result in a potential impact on recreational utility, trail usage, or the wider visitor economy.

7.5 Summary: Tourism and Recreation Assessment

The tourism and recreation sector is an important component of the East Ayrshire economy. This assessment has considered the potential for the Proposed Development to impact the region's visitor economy, drawing on a robust baseline of local assets and extensive national evidence.

National research confirms that the expansion of onshore wind energy in Scotland has occurred in parallel with growth in the tourism sector. Studies analysing 44 operational wind farms found no consistent pattern of adverse impacts on local tourism employment. This confirms that visitor motivations are complex and primarily "Activity-Based," meaning the presence of wind infrastructure is rarely a determining factor in destination choice.

The assessment of receptors within the 15km study area identified no primary significant environmental effects on specific visitor attractions or accommodation providers. While primary significant visual effects were identified on open sections of the core path network within 5km, no significant noise or traffic disruption is predicted on these routes. Consequently, there is no plausible pathway for a potential impact on the visitor economy.

The specific conclusions for each receptor group are:

- **Local Visitor Attractions:** Destination assets rely on the quality of the facility rather than the distant skyline. Consequently, visitor numbers and economic viability are not expected to be affected.
- **Accommodation Providers:** There is no evidence that wind farms deter visitors from booking local accommodation.
- **Recreational Trails:** The local recreational landscape is already characterised by renewable energy. The popularity of the nearby Whitelee Windfarm trails serves as a local precedent, demonstrating that wind farms can successfully coexist with the outdoor access network.

The Proposed Development is not expected to have any adverse effects on tourism or recreation. The tourism economy of East Ayrshire will continue to benefit from its established attractions and accommodation offer without material disruption arising from the Proposed Development.

8.

Conclusions

The Proposed Development will deliver clear economic benefits for the local community, East Ayrshire, and Scotland as a whole.

NPF4 Policy 11(c) requires renewable energy proposals to “maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business, and supply chain opportunities.” The assessment presented in this report demonstrates that the Proposed Development aligns with the principles of this requirement.

The expected benefits include:

- **Development and construction phase:** £4.3 million GVA and 50 years of employment in East Ayrshire; £15.4 million GVA and 175 years of employment across Scotland.
- **Operations and maintenance:** £0.5 million GVA and 3 jobs per year in East Ayrshire; £1.2 million GVA and 8 jobs per year across Scotland.
- **Public finance:** annual non-domestic rates of around £0.4 million, equivalent to £15.6 million over a 35-year operational lifetime.
- **Community benefits:** a community benefit fund of the equivalent of £180,000 annually (index linked), or £6.3 million over the lifetime of the wind farm (excluding indexation), best on current Scottish Government good practice guidance.

In addition to these quantified benefits, the Applicant has committed to optimising local opportunities by prioritising local contractors through a Local Contractor Database, expanding the Ayrshire College apprenticeship programme, and agreeing the principles of the community fund via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). These commitments will support wider economic and social development and enable the local community to fund projects that address local priorities.

On this basis, the Proposed Development outlines a clear pathway to generating significant positive socio-economic impacts. This is consistent with the objectives of NPF4 Policy 11(c) and provides the consenting authority with the evidence needed to determine that the project makes a significant contribution to maximising net economic impact at the local, regional, and national level.

9.

Appendix A: Methodology

This appendix describes the methodology used to assess the economic impact of the Proposed Development and to evaluate its contribution to the maximisation of net economic benefits, as required by NPF4.

9.1 Economic Impact Methodology

The methodology employed to assess the economic impact of onshore wind developments adheres to industry best practice. It leverages research, conducted by BiGGAR Economics in 2015 on behalf of RenewableUK²³, on the construction and operational costs from numerous onshore wind farm projects across the UK. Furthermore, the approach draws on more recent evidence gathered from a multitude of case studies of construction and operational costs in the sector.

9.1.1 Economic Modelling Approach

The analysis quantifies three types of economic impact:

- **Direct Impacts:** Activity from organisations directly involved in the delivery of the Proposed Development.
- **Indirect Impacts:** Activity within the supply chain of those direct businesses.
- **Induced Impacts:** The knock-on effects from employees spending their wages in the wider economy.

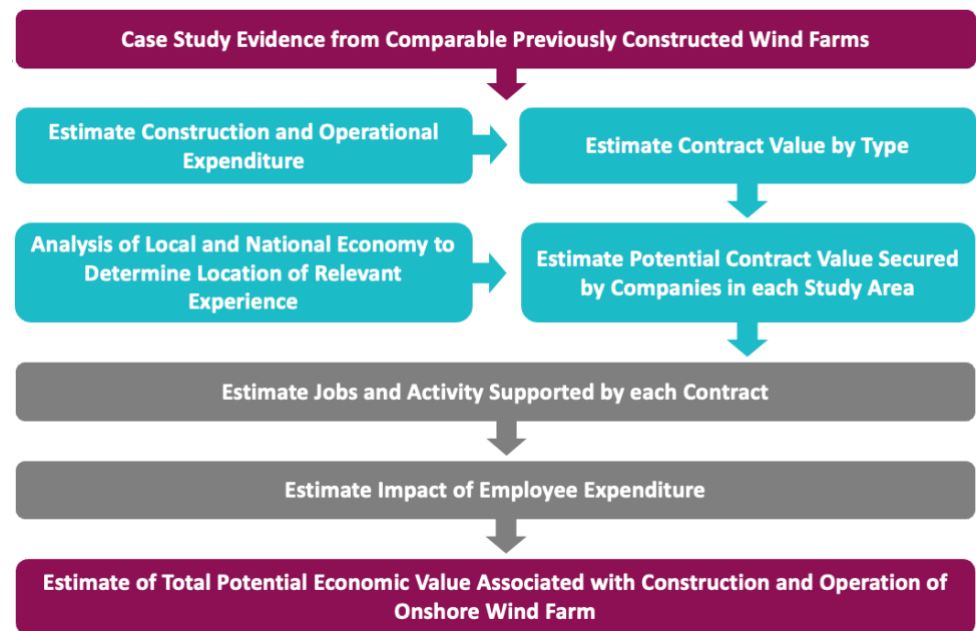
The assessment is based on a four-stage economic impact model:

- **Estimation of Expenditure:** Capital and operational expenditure for a project of this scale is estimated based on a cost-per-MW model derived from numerous case studies of comparable UK wind farms.
- **Value of Component Contracts:** Total expenditure is then broken down into the key component contracts (e.g., development, turbines, balance of plant).
- **Local Content Assessment:** The capacity of businesses within the defined study areas to secure these component contracts is assessed based on evidence from previous projects.
- **Estimation of Economic Impact:** The final GVA and employment impacts are calculated from this retained expenditure.

This process is illustrated in Figure 9-1.

²³ RenewableUK (2015), Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014.

Figure 9-1: Approach to Economic Impact



Source: BiGGAR Economics.

9.1.2 Economic Impact Metrics

The economic impacts are reported using the following key metrics:

- **Gross Value Added (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;
- **Years of Employment (Job-Years):** A measure for short-term employment supported during construction. For example, one job lasting 18 months equals 1.5 years of employment; and
- **Jobs:** A measure of long-term, full-time equivalent employment, used for the operational phase of the Proposed Development.

9.1.3 Study Areas

The assessment of economic impacts considered the following study areas:

- **East Ayrshire;** and
- **Scotland.**

9.2 Maximising Net Economic Impact: Approach

The Proposed Development is also assessed against the requirements of Policy 11(c), which states that projects will only be supported where they "maximise net economic impact."

Whilst there is currently no specific government guidance on how to assess this, this report draws on Scottish Renewables guidance on how to maximise socio-economic

impacts within the planning process. The assessment evaluates the project against a set of themes, specific commitments made by the Applicant, and a consideration of the factors that are within the Applicant's control.

9.2.1 Assessment Criteria

The project's contribution to maximising net economic benefit is assessed against its performance against the following themes:

- **Local Supply Chain Development:** The project's commitment to maximising the value of local expenditure.
- **Skills and Workforce Development:** The creation of bespoke opportunities that reflect the needs of the local labour market.
- **Community Wellbeing:** The provision of fair community benefit packages that generate tangible, lasting value for the host community.
- **Environmental Protection and Enhancement:** The project's commitment to maximising environmental benefits, ensuring net biodiversity gains and improving local infrastructure to the benefit of the local community.

The report's conclusion on the project's contribution to maximising socio-economic benefit is based on the findings of the assessment against these criteria.



10.

Appendix B: Tourism and Recreation Receptors

Table 10-1: Local Tourist Attractions

Attraction	Description	Distance to Site (km)
Whitelee Windfarm Visitor Centre	Visitor Centre and wind farm exhibition with a focus on renewable energy.	2.5
British Carriage driving	Carriage driving facility hosting events.	2.6
Lochgoin Museum	Covenanting museum and exhibition of martyrs from the local area.	2.6
Fenwick Field Dog Park	Secure dog run for training and off-lead activities.	3.6
Dodside Dogruns	Secure dog run for training and off-lead activities.	4.4
Fenwick War Memorial	War memorial as tribute to local men who died fighting in World War I and II.	4.8
Eaglesham Angling Association	Brown trout fishery for members and visitors.	5.2
Whitelee Windfarm Mountain Bike Trails	Mountain bike trails through Whitelee Windfarm.	5.3
East Renfrewshire Golf Course	18-hole golf course.	6.6
Craufurdland Activities & Treetop Trials	High ropes course and other outdoor activities such as archery.	6.9
Cowans Law Trout Fishing and Country Sports	Facility offering country sports such as archery, clay pigeon shooting, and fly fishing.	7.1
Duncarnock Fort (The Craigie)	Ruins of an iron-age fort linked to Mary Queen of Scots.	7.1
Rowallan Castle Golf Course	18-hole golf course within estate.	7.1
Morris Equestrian Centre	Equestrian centre and riding school offering horse riding experiences and lessons.	7.3
Paintball Kilmarnock	Paintballing centre with over 20 acres of playing zones.	7.8



Attraction	Description	Distance to Site (km)
Summit Else	Mountain guide and rock climbing to facilitate climbing, hill walking and mountaineering in the local area.	10.0
Dean Castle Country Park	Dean Castle set within a county park covering 200 acres.	10.1
Mearns Castle Golf Club	Driving range and 9-hole golf course with the opportunity play as an 18-hole.	10.2
Fereneze Golf Club	18-hole golf course covering almost 6,000 yards.	10.4
The Whitecraigs Golf Course	18-hole golf course.	10.6
Greenbank Garden	National Trust for Scotland walled garden.	10.9
Kay Park	Park with pond and hosts Burns Monument.	10.9
The Burns Monument Centre	A shared facility showcasing historical collections including newspapers, maps and photographs.	11.0
Wellington Gallery	Gallery showcasing Scottish artists and hosts craft workshops.	11.0
Dams to Darnley Country Park	Country Park providing a range of walking and cycling routes.	11.1
Palace Theatre & Grand Hall Complex	Multi-purpose theatre.	11.2
Cathcart Castle Golf Course	18-hole golf course.	11.3
Paisley Golf Course	18-hole golf course.	11.3
The Dick Institute	Gallery and exhibition space.	11.4
Gleniffer Braes Country Park	Country Park hosting a range of wildlife.	11.5
Above Adventure	Rope climbing and bouldering facility.	11.6
Glasgow Museums Resource Centre	Museum hosting a range of archaeological artefacts and art collections.	11.6
Red Frog Archery	Archery facility selling equipment and offering one to one coaching.	11.7

Attraction	Description	Distance to Site (km)
Scottish Assault Courses Ayrshire	Assault course facility offering a range of activities including paintball, axe throwing and bubble football.	11.7
The Garage	Activity centre hosting bowling, go-karts and other indoor activities.	11.7
Galleon Leisure Centre	Multi-purpose facility including a pool ice rink, squash courts and a sauna.	12.0
Barr Castle	Historical castle and museum.	12.1
Newmilns Snow and Sports Complex Limited	Dry ski slope offering skiing, snowboarding and tubing.	12.1
Mountain & Glen Outdoor Adventures	Offering tours and workshops including hiking, navigation training and survival skills.	12.2
Beith Golf Club	18-hole golf course.	12.6
Fun Street	Indoor play and interactive activity centre.	13.2
Caprington Castle	15 th century castle and grounds.	13.9
Beith War Memorial	War memorial to commemorate local men who died in World War I and II.	14.0
Pollok Golf Course	18-hole golf course overlooked by Pollock House.	14.0
National Museum of Rural Life	Museum, farmhouse and historic working farm.	14.1
Crookston Castle	Medieval castle in Pollock.	14.2
Pollok House	Estate and house managed by the National Trust for Scotland.	14.3
The Burrell Collection	Museum hosting the art collection of Sir William Burrell and Lady Burrell.	14.3
Paisley Thread Mill Museum	Museum illustrating the history of Paisley's thread manufacturers.	14.5
Pollok Country Park	Country Park within Glasgow providing woodlands, gardens, and walking trails.	14.5
William Wallace Monument & Birthplace	William Wallace's widely accepted birthplace and monument illustrating key historical moments in Wallace's life.	14.5

Attraction	Description	Distance to Site (km)
Air Thrill East Kilbride	Indoor facility providing trampolines, inflatables, basketball, football and other indoor activities.	14.6
Cochrane Castle Golf Course	18-hole golf course.	14.6
Paisley Born and Thread	Art gallery focused on Paisley's heritage.	14.6
Sma' Shot Cottages	Museum offering an insight into Paisley's textile history.	14.6
Wonder World Soft Play East Kilbride	Soft play centre.	14.6
Ferguslie Gardens	Park and gardens.	14.7
Holmwood House	Grecian-style home managed by the National Trust for Scotland.	14.7
Paisley Arts Centre	Exhibition and event space hosting drama, dance, comedy and theatre.	14.7
The Art Department	Exhibition space hosting workshops, art, and events.	14.7
Paisley: The Secret Collection	Museum showcasing the region's heritage and culture.	14.7
Paisley Abbey	Abbey located in Paisley offering guided tours.	14.8
Paisley Museum & Art Gallery	Museum illustrating Paisley's past and hosting art collections and exhibitions.	14.8
Coats Observatory	Currently undergoing refurbishment, the observatory provides a unique opportunity to view the night sky.	14.9
RSPB Scotland Lochwinnoch nature reserve	Nature reserve providing trails through woodland and wetland to view a variety of wildlife.	14.9
Lagoon Leisure Centre	Indoor facility with swimming pool and flumes, as well as offering sports such as badminton.	15.0
Linn Park Golf Course	18-hole golf course.	15.0

Source: VisitScotland (2025), Google Maps (2025).

BiGGAR Economics, Shandwick House,
67 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh, Scotland EH2 4SD

info@biggareconomics.co.uk

biggareconomics.co.uk

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