Chapter 1: Introduction

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1.1. Introduction and Background

1.1.1. In December 2019, SSE Generation Limited ('the Applicant') was granted consent by Scottish Ministers under Section 36 ('S.36') of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended) (the '1989 Act'), together with deemed planning permission under section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. This consent allows for the construction and operation of Tangy IV Wind Farm which comprised 16 wind turbines with maximum tip heights of 149.9 metres, alongside associated infrastructure ('the Consented Development'). The Consented Development is located within the Argyll and Bute Council ('A&BC') local authority area, and its Energy Consents Unit (ECU) reference is ECU00000673.

1.1.2. The Consented Development is a repowering of the operational Tangy Wind Farm, which is comprised of 15 turbines (Tangy I) and which has been operational since 2003. An additional 7 turbines were added in 2007 as part of Tangy II, bringing the total number of operational turbines on site to 22 with an installed capacity of 18.7 Megawatts ('MW').

1.1.3. The Consented Development is no longer deliverable in its current form, for two related reasons. First, turbines of the consented blade tip height of 149.9m are effectively no longer available on the market. The onshore wind turbine market has moved towards larger, more efficient machines, and manufacturers are increasingly phasing out turbines of the smaller dimensions consented in 2019. A variation to increase the consented tip height is therefore necessary simply to enable a turbine that is available to be procured and installed. Second, the Consented Development is no longer commercially viable in its current form, principally due to rising supply chain costs and high transmission charges affecting the onshore wind sector in Scotland. The taller, more efficient turbines proposed both restore the commercial viability of the project and allow a currently available turbine model to be procured.

1.1.4. The Applicant is, therefore, applying under Section 36C ('S.36C') of the 1989 Act to vary the existing S.36 consent to increase the height of all 16 wind turbine generators ('WTGs'), resulting in a maximum tip height of up to 200 metres. The revised design also requires enlarged hardstanding and foundation areas, together with minor adjustments to turbine locations and associated realignment of tracks and hardstands to accommodate the larger turbines. Collectively, these changes comprise the 'Proposed Varied Development'. The application also seeks a direction under section 57(2) for deemed planning permission, along with amendments to the conditions set out in Annex 1 of the S.36 decision notice.

1.1.5. The Consented Development's consent and deemed planning permission required development to commence within five years of the date it was granted. Works were undertaken in November 2024, including the construction

of passing places within the application boundary. A&BC confirmed that these works constituted commencement of the development under the deemed planning permission, and the ECU subsequently extended the relevant period under the S.36 Consent to December 2028. Confirmation of these matters is provided in **Technical Appendix 3.7: Planning Conditions Summary.**

1.1.6. The Applicant has submitted a suite of documents to satisfy planning conditions with A&BC prior to the intended commencement of construction. A summary of the status of each planning condition, proposed amendments to condition wording and S.36C relevant condition satisfaction documents is included as **Technical Appendix 3.7: Planning Conditions Summary** and discussed further in **Chapter 3: Approach to EIA**. Documents which have been submitted to satisfy conditions have also supported the impact assessments for the Proposed Varied Development and have been included in **Technical Appendices: 3.7a-d**.

1.2. Purpose of Report

1.2.1. This Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') Report is provided under The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the '2017 EIA Regulations'), with specific regard to the requirements of Regulation 28.

1.2.2. The Proposed Varied Development is considered to fall under paragraph 3 of Schedule 2 to the 2017 EIA Regulations, as 'a change to or extension of' an EIA development which has already been authorised (the relevant section 36 consent for the Consented Development). As a result, this EIA Report presents a comparison of effects of the Consented Development on the environment with the Proposed Varied Development, including any likely significant effects arising.

1.3. Needs Case and Benefits

1.3.1. Since consent was granted in 2019, the onshore wind sector has experienced a range of economic challenges, including supply chain cost escalation and significantly increased Transmission Network Use of System ('TNUoS') charges.

1.3.2. Following a detailed feasibility review and optimisation exercise, it has been determined that further optimisation of the site is necessary to ensure viability. In particular, increasing the tip height of the Wind Turbine Generators ('WTGs') from the consented 149.9 m up to a maximum of 200 m would enable the use of commercially available turbine models and substantially

increase energy yield, helping to offset increased costs and challenging market conditions.

1.3.3. The increased turbine height allows access to higher wind speeds, improving overall site efficiency and output. This change necessitates associated amendments to infrastructure, including revised hardstand dimensions, access track modifications, and limited turbine relocations. These refinements also provide an opportunity to further reduce impacts on deeper peat areas. Without these changes, the development would remain unviable and would not proceed, resulting in the loss of the opportunity to deliver the associated environmental and economic benefits at this existing wind farm.

1.3.4. The Proposed Varied Development would make an enhanced contribution to UK and Scottish Government decarbonisation targets through increased renewable energy generation. The higher output would supply more homes with clean electricity and deliver greater carbon savings than the Consented Development. Further detail is provided in **Chapter 4: Planning Policy** and the accompanying **Planning Statement**.

1.3.5. A **Maximising Socio-Economic Benefits Framework Report** has also been submitted in support of the application, setting out how the project would deliver significant benefits to the local community. These include job creation and opportunities for local businesses and suppliers during construction and throughout the operational lifetime of the project.

1.4. Consultation

1.4.1. A request for a Scoping Opinion was submitted to the Scottish Ministers in June 2025, in accordance with Regulation 12 of the 2017 EIA Regulations. The request was accompanied by the 2025 Scoping Report (**Technical Appendix 3.1: Scoping Report**), which set out a summary description of the Proposed Varied Development, identified the effects proposed to be included in the EIA Report and proposed an approach to the assessment of impacts in each case.

1.4.2. A Scoping Opinion was provided by the Scottish Minsters on 23rd September 2025, a copy of which, along with the consultation responses are presented in **Technical Appendix 3.2: Scoping Opinion**. Further consultation was undertaken as part of the ECU gate check process and details of which are contained within **Technical Appendix 3.3: Gatecheck 1 Report** and **Technical Appendix 3.4: Post Scoping Preapplication Consultation**.

1.4.3. While there is no statutory requirement to undertake pre-application consultation for S.36C variation applications, the Applicant nevertheless held two public community consultation events in August 2025 and March 2026.

Full details of these events and their outcomes are provided in the Pre-Application Consultation ('PAC') Report submitted in support of the S.36C application.

1.5. Proposed Variations to the Consented Development

1.5.1. The Consented Development comprises a generating station consisting of 16 WTGs with a maximum tip height of 149.9m, alongside associated infrastructure, including access tracks, hardstands, cabling and grid connection. The consented capacity of the project is up to 80MW.

1.5.2. The Proposed Varied Development would comprise a generating station, consisting of a wind farm with 16 WTGs of up to a maximum tip height of 200m, supported by ancillary development. The total installed capacity of the Proposed Varied Development, whilst dependent on the rated power of the turbine model procured, is anticipated to be approximately 96MW.

1.5.3. The Applicant is seeking to vary the Description of Development as described in Annex 1 of the Consented Development Section 36 decision letter by changing the specification of the proposed WTGs as summarised in **Table 2.1** in **Chapter 2: Design Iteration and Description of Proposed Varied Development** and on **Figure 1.4**.

1.5.4. Due to changes in the specifications and availability of potential candidate WTGs, the nominal rotor diameter of the WTGs has changed from 130m assessed in the 2018 EIA Report to 150m assessed in this EIA Report. More detailed information regarding the rationale for the proposed variations is presented in **Chapter 2: Design Iteration and Description of Proposed Varied Development**.

1.5.5. Figures to support this Chapter in describing the Proposed Varied Development and enable comparison with the Consented Development are presented in EIA Report Volume 2 and summarised in **Table 1.1**:

Table 1.1: Proposed Varied Development & EIAR Supporting Figures

Figure Title	Information Source	Comment
Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan	2018 EIA Report	No Change from Consented Development Location Plan
Figure 1.2 Proposed Varied Development Layout and Operational Development	New information	Presents the Proposed Varied Development alongside the currently Operational Development.

Figure 1.3 Proposed Varied Development Layout	New information	Presents the Proposed Varied Development.
Figure 1.4 Consented and Proposed Varied Layouts	New information	Overlays the Proposed Varied Development vs Consented Development Layout for comparison.

1.6. Approach to EIA

1.6.1. This EIA Report adopts a comparative assessment approach in line with the 2017 Regulations for variation applications. It builds on the previous assessment conducted in 2018 and evaluates the effects of the Proposed Varied Development against the Consented Development. Further detail on methodology, legislative context, and assessment structure is provided in **Chapter 3: Approach to EIA**.

1.6.2. This EIA Report has been prepared with having regard to relevant case law governing the definition of the 'project' for EIA purposes, notably the Inner House of the Court of Session's judgment in Raeshaw Farms Ltd v Scottish Ministers and Energiekontor UK Ltd [2026] CSIH 10. The case indicated that the competent authority is required to undertake a fact-specific evaluation of whether a wind farm and its grid connection constitute a single project requiring cumulative assessment before any consent is granted.

1.6.3. Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks ('SSEN') Transmission is in the course of applying to Scottish Ministers for consent under Section 37 ('S.37') of the 1989 Act for the construction of an overhead transmission line (the "Shared Use Grid Connection") connecting the Proposed Varied Development and Cnoc Buidhe Energy Hub to Carradale Substation in Argyll and Bute. The S.37 application is anticipated to be submitted to Scottish Ministers at the end of June 2026.

1.6.4. The Applicant recognises, however, that this is ultimately a matter for determination by the competent authority and not for the Applicant itself. A precautionary approach has therefore been adopted, and each technical chapter of this EIA Report assesses the potential effects of the grid connection alongside those of the Proposed Varied Development, to the extent that information on the Shared Use Grid Connection is reasonably available.

1.6.5. The information relied upon is drawn from SSEN Transmission's EIA Scoping Report (March 2025) and the Scoping Opinion adopted by Scottish Ministers on 18 June 2025 (ECU00006122), these being the most detailed publicly

available descriptions of the grid connection at the time of writing. This approach is consistent with the requirements of Schedule 4 (3) of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017, which provides that the information in an EIA Report shall be reasonable having regard to current knowledge and methods of assessment.

1.7. Structure of the EIA Report

1.7.1. The EIA Report is split into four volumes with accompanying supporting documents.

1.7.2. Volume 1 includes:

- Non-Technical Summary ('NTS')

1.7.3. Volume 2 of the EIA Report – the Written Statement, is structured as follows:

- Preface
- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Design Iteration and Proposed Varied Development
- Chapter 3: Approach to EIA
- Chapter 4: Planning and Renewable Energy Policy Context
- Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual
- Chapter 6: Ornithology
- Chapter 7: Ecology and Nature Conservation
- Chapter 8: Geology, Soils and Peat
- Chapter 9: Surface Water
- Chapter 10: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology
- Chapter 11: Noise
- Chapter 12: Access Traffic and Transport
- Chapter 13: Land-use, Socio-Economics and Recreation
- Chapter 14: Shadow Flicker
- Chapter 15: Aviation
- Chapter 16: Summary of Impacts and Schedule of Mitigation

1.7.4. Volume 3a contains Figures.

1.7.5. Volume 3b contains Visualisations.

1.7.6. Volume 4 contains the Technical Appendices.

1.7.7. A glossary of terms is also included at the front of Volume 2 of this EIA Report.

1.7.8. In accordance with EIA Regulations, capability statements for each competent expert who contributed to the preparation of the EIA Report are provided in **Technical Appendix 1.1: Capability Statement.**

1.8. About SSE and the Applicant

1.8.1. SSE's purpose is to provide energy needed today while building a better world of energy for tomorrow. We do this by developing, building, operating and investing in electricity infrastructure and businesses needed in the energy transition. This includes electricity transmission and distribution networks, onshore and offshore wind farms, hydro-electric power and flexible thermal generation technologies. We also provide energy products and services for businesses and other customers. Our Transformation for Growth investment plan sees us investing £33bn in critical electricity infrastructure across the five years to 2030.

1.8.2. A FTSE-100 company headquartered in Scotland with operations across the UK and Ireland, SSE also has a presence in carefully selected international markets. We employ around 14,000 people and are a proud to be a 'real Living Wage' and 'Living Hours' employer and to be accredited with the 'Fair Tax Mark'. SSE was also the first company in the world to develop a 'Just Transition Strategy' aimed at ensuring the benefits of the clean energy transition are shared by workers and communities.

1.8.3. The Applicant is part of SSE Renewables, the renewable energy arm of SSE plc, focussed exclusively on delivering clean power through onshore and offshore wind and flexible hydro generation. With a vision to make renewable energy the foundation of a zero-carbon world, SSE Renewables leads the development, construction and operation of some of the UK and Ireland's most significant renewable projects, supporting SSE's wider strategy to accelerate the energy transition.

1.8.4. SSE Renewables operates one of the largest onshore wind energy fleets in the UK and Ireland, with almost 5GW of installed green energy capacity and also progressing a secured pipeline of 1.7GW.The vision is to be a leading renewables company in a net-zero world with the aim of increasing their renewable energy output by ~40% over the next 2 years. SSE Renewables

continues to progress development options for new onshore wind farms and extensions to existing wind farms and is well placed to take advantage of any future opportunities as they emerge.

1.8.5. SSE Renewables is committed to supporting local supply chains through its Sustainable Procurement Code, which emphasises the importance of creating sustainable supply chains and sharing economic opportunities with local people and businesses. In addition to direct community engagement, the Applicant adopts a structured approach with its strategic suppliers, encouraging them to build constructive local relationships so that communities benefit from the Applicant's significant capital investment. The Applicant recognises the importance of being an active contributor to local communities and remains committed to sharing the value created through its developments.

1.8.6. SSE Renewables' Community Investment Funds support a diverse range of community projects near their renewable developments. In 2025/26 SSE Renewables invested over £17.1m supporting over 1,000 projects in communities across the UK and Ireland, this brings the Applicant's total investment in communities over the past six years to around £120m.